



Islamabad POST

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Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Shinzo Abe: Japan's PM to resign for health reasons

PML-N has lost trust of people: Shahbaz Gill

Khusro Bakhtiar thanks Japan for its support



Briefs

COAS pledges Rs 50 mln for PHF

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Brigadier Khalid Sajjad Khokhar (Retired), President Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Qamar Javed Bajwa. Secretary PHF briefed COAS on steps being taken to regain the standard of Hockey across the country. COAS said Army has always supported sports and especially hockey.

He said that Government is keen to revive hockey and this opportunity should be used to maximum. COAS pledged Rupees 50 Million out of Army's Welfare Fund for PHF. Secretary PHF thanked COAS for continued support to hockey and pledged enhanced efforts towards improvement of standards.

Pakistan Army has already made two Astroturf Stadiums available to PHF in Rawalpindi and Okara.

Trade deficit with Italy turns into surplus

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's trade deficit of US\$ 164 million with Italy has turned into a trade surplus of US\$ 210 million in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019-20, according to the Prime Minister's Adviser on Commerce and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood. In a Twitter statement on Friday, the adviser said that it occurred despite the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic and supply chain disruptions. Abdul Razak Dawood said that our exporters, the Ministry of Commerce and its Officials at Pakistan Embassy in Rome must be appreciated for their efforts.

Opposition urged to support FATF bill

FIJAZ CH

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Barrister Farogh Naseem has appealed opposition parties to support Present government for approval of a Bill of Financial Action Task Force (FATF), being presented in the next session of Parliament.

In an interview with a private channel, he said giving vote in favour of FATF by Opposition parties, was imperative to protect Pakistan from plunging into black list that could create financial and business trouble for this country. To a question regarding fake medical reports of Ex-Prime Minister, he said the court had granted bail to ailing Nawaz Sharif, on medical grounds.

Govt fully cognizant of Sindh issues

The Prime Minister assured every possible assistance to Sindh Chief Minister from the federal govt and its institutions

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan says he is fully cognizant of the issues and development needs of the people of Sindh, especially the residents of Karachi, and the federal government will play its due role in this regard. He was chairing a meeting in Islamabad [Friday] to review various development projects being completed in Karachi by the Federal Government.

A detailed review of federal government's projects in Sindh and Karachi was presented before the meeting. Governor Sindh Imran Ismail briefed the Prime Minister about the latest situation in Karachi in wake of recent rains. The Prime Minister said a comprehensive plan is being devised for provision of clean drinking water and to address issues of sewerage and drainage in Karachi. He said directions have been issued to all federal government departments to provide relief to the people of Karachi.

The Prime Minister assured every possible assistance to Sindh Chief Minister from the federal government and its institutions.

PM on reopening of schools

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan Friday directed finalization of recommendations in consultation with provincial governments and administrations of educational institutions, ahead of a Sept 7 meeting that would take decisions about reopening of schools from Sept 15. The prime minister was chairing a meeting of the National Coordination Committee on COVID-19 that discussed the roadmap on resumption of academic activities in view of the improving situation in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, and the precautionary measures needed to be taken at the educational institutions.

Imran Khan emphasized that Karachi is the most important city of Pakistan and all resources will be utilized to address the current emergency situation.

Rain continues its wrath upon Karachi

At least 23 people were also killed in the metropolis in various rain-related incidents, according to Karachi's police chief, Ghulam Nabi Memon

ATHAR SUFI

KARACHI: The city of lights was in a shambles after receiving unprecedented rains on Thursday as many areas remained flooded with rainwater.

Almost all the major roads of the city, including II Chungri Road, University Road, Shahr-e Faisal were inundated in some areas early in the morning, posing a grim challenge to those who had ventured out of their homes.

At least 23 people were also killed in the metropolis in various rain-related incidents, according to Karachi's police chief, Ghulam

Nabi Memon. Two people were killed in roof collapse incidents, four people drowned, one person died due to electrocution, while another died in a motorcycle incident, said the additional inspector general. Most of the remaining deaths were caused by collapsing walls.

Chief Meteorological Officer (CMO) of Pakistan Meteorological Department Sardar Sarfraz meanwhile predicted more showers, saying moderate spells of rain were possible in the city by the afternoon.

The PMD official said that Karachi had received unprecedented heavy rain due to the interaction of a

monsoonal system in Sindh and a westerly wave from Balochistan. Chief Meteorological Officer (CMO) of Pakistan Meteorological Department Sardar Sarfraz meanwhile predicted more showers, saying moderate spells of rain were possible in the city by the afternoon. The PMD official said that Karachi had received unprecedented heavy rain due to the interaction of a



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister For Narcotics Control, Muhammad Azam Khan Swati visits Model Addicts Treatment And Rehabilitation Centre (MATRC) of ANF. - APP



LAHORE: A gypsy family stands outside their slum inundated by heavy rains. - Shahbaz Sindhu

Armed Forces active in flood rescue

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Army, Navy, Sindh Rangers and other civic agencies are busy in draining the water and helping people affected during the rain-hit areas in Karachi.

Pak Army has established a Flood Emergency Control Centre to deal with flood relating emergencies while medical camps have also been established in the areas of Gulberg, Liaquatabad and New Karachi.

It may be pointed out that the current spell of rain in the metropolis broke the record of maximum rain recorded in one day with 223 millimeter rain recorded in just 12 hours. The previous record was 211 mm in 24 hours in July 1967. Furthermore, the government has asked the people to stay put and follow the safety measures and precautions to stay safe in these troubling times.

Virgin Atlantic to start Pakistan flights

ISLAMABAD: Virgin Atlantic will in December start services between Britain and Pakistan, where local airlines face a ban on flying to most European destinations due to a scandal over unqualified pilots. Virgin, 51% owned by Richard Branson's Virgin Group and 49% by US airline Delta, said its flights will go on sale next month, becoming the second western carrier after British Airways to serve destinations in the country.

"We're thrilled to announce that from December, we'll be flying direct to Pakistan," said a tweet from Virgin, whose trade creditors on Tuesday voted in favour of a 1.2 billion pound (\$1.6 billion) rescue plan. "We'll have flights from Heathrow to both Lahore and Islamabad, plus direct service from Manchester to Islamabad," the tweet said. - DNA

PIA, NHA sign projects with Chinese enterprises

The main works of this project include refurbishing the runway and upgrading the drainage ditch and avionics system

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) and National Highways Authority (NHA) respectively signed two traffic projects with Chinese enterprises.

According to Gwadar Pro on Friday, PIA this week signed the construction contract of the main runway upgrading project of Lahore Alama-Iqbal International Airport with a joint venture

led by China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC).

The main works of this project include refurbishing the runway and upgrading the drainage ditch and avionics system. According to a manager of CCECC, advance techniques and professional experts will be deployed into the upgrading so that the situations of Alama-Iqbal International Airport will be promoted significantly.

The implementation of the

project will further expand external connectivity window of nation. Meanwhile, it is expected to promote local employment and economic development as well. Also this week, Shaanxi Huashan Construction Group Co., one of the top 250 global contractors of ENR, won the bid by NHA for the addition of two lanes to N-55 National Road (Rotadero - Shikarpur). The 43.4 km project is the first winning project issued by NHA in 2020.

PML-N has lost trust of people: Shahbaz Gill

The card has been distributed among 4.9 million families in all 36 districts of Punjab

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs Shahbaz Gill has on Friday said that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has lost the trust of people.

Reacting to PML-N spokesperson Marriyum Aurangzeb's statement, Shahbaz Gill said that it ridiculous that the party which paralyzed the health system is now commenting on the issue. PML-N should at least stop giving lecture on the health subject, he said.

"Those who governed for decades could not even make a single hospital in which they could get medical treatment themselves. Funds for the health sector were used in the Orange Line project. "PML-N President committed embezzlements in welfare projects. Those who misused the aid collected for earthquake victims became a cause of embarrassment for Pakistan at international level.

"Fixing Rs 208 billion for the Ehsaas Programme is a representation of the incum-

bent government's welfare approach. Distribution of the Sehat Insaf Card is also an indication regarding the government's priority towards the health sector. "The card has been distributed among 4.9 million families in all 36 districts of Punjab. It is the first project in Pakistan's history which will provide free health facilities to the entire Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday admitted that letting former PM Nawaz Sharif leave the country was a "mistake" by his government. Citing Khan's interview on Thursday, media reported that the Prime Minister hinted that the government was pressurised into sending Nawaz Sharif abroad, saying that the reports presented to the government suggested that the PML-N supremo was severely ill.

Sharif, who has been convicted for corruption, had left for the UK in November last year for medical treatment. Khan further said the federal cabinet had held hours of debate over whether the government should let Sharif leave on humanitarian grounds.

Younus Dagha may be new administrator of Karachi

DNA

KARACHI: Former Finance Secretary Younus Dagha is likely to be appointed the new administrator of Karachi after Mayor Waseem Akhtar's tenure ends on Friday, August 28. Sources said that the federal government has suggested the name of Dagha, who will act freely and independently as the administrator of Karachi. The Sindh government has no objection to his appointment in place of current Karachi Mayor Waseem Akhtar whose term ends on Friday. The Federal and Sindh governments had jointly decided to solve the problems of Karachi, forming a committee in this regard. It includes representatives of MQM, PTI, PPP as well as state institutions.

Pak offers sympathy to Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Friday offered its sympathy and condolences to the government and people of Afghanistan at the loss of precious lives and material damage due to heavy rains in Parwan province. "We stand in solidarity with Afghanistan in this hour of grief and pray for recovery of missing people," the Foreign Office said in a statement. - APP

Customs urged to curb smuggling

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The FBR has directed customs authorities to step up their efforts to check smuggling of essential commodities in line with the directives of Prime Minister Imran Khan. The DG of Customs Intelligence, Chief Collectors of Customs North and Balochistan have been instructed to utilize all resources at their disposal to curb smuggling of food items out of the country in coordination with other institutions.

Japanese grant for waste management

The federal minister thanked and appreciated the government of Japan and the people of Japan for their support with assurance of extending facilitation for more meaningful cooperation

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Japan has extended grant assistance of worth US\$ 4.7m for the provision of machinery and equipment for waste management of the Metropolitan Cooperation Islamabad (MCI), the Japanese Ambassador to Pakistan MATSU-DA Kuinori told.

In a meeting with the Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Makhdoom Khusro

Bakhtiar in his Office at the Ministry of Economic Affairs in Islamabad on Friday, the Japanese ambassador expressed the hope that bilateral economic ties between Pakistan and Japan would be enhanced especially in the field of export and import substitute industries and natural calamities risk management in the future.

The federal minister thanked and appreciated the government of Japan and the people of Japan



for their support with assurance of extending facilitation for more meaningful cooperation in the testing time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Khusro Bakhtiar said that Pakistan valued close and friendly relations with Japan that would be strengthened

in multiple fields including energy, trade, industries, irrigation, water & sanitation, security, and social sector of Pakistan.

The minister voiced hope that Japanese companies could take advantage of the huge domestic market as well as export potential considering Pakistan having Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and GSP Plus Status with European Union Countries. Makhdoom Khusro Bakhtiar said that Japan and Pakistan

could enhance economic cooperation in human development and provision of basic necessities such as health, education, clean drinking water and housing sector as these areas are the central themes of our development policy. The federal minister for economic affairs and the Japanese ambassador expressed their strong commitment to further enhance the bilateral economic cooperation in the post-corona time to benefit both Countries.

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Govt establishing Economic Zones in GB, says Gandapur - Page 04

Briefs

CTP to deploy 506 Wardens on Ashura

RAWALPINDI: In order to provide foolproof security to the mourning processions of Ashura, City Traffic Police (CTP) have finalized all the arrangements for 9th and 10th Muharram. According to Duty Officer CTP Headquarter Muhammad Waseem, the traffic would be diverted on 48 different routes of the city on Ashura. 605 Traffic Wardens, 133 Traffic Assistants under the supervision of 41 Inspectors and nine DSPs would be deployed on city roads. As part of the security measures, entry of vehicular traffic from Committee Chowk to Iqbal Road would strictly be banned on Ashura. No vehicle would be allowed on DAV college road and Iqbal road. The public transport for City Saddar Road would be diverted to Mohanpura road while traffic from Novelty cinema would reach Pirwadhai through Kashmiri bazaar. Traffic coming from Gunjmandi would be diverted to TB hospital, Pirwadhai and Dhoke Dalal. - APP

Flood relief camp set up in Rawalpindi

RAWALPINDI: Rescue-1122 has set up a flood relief camp here to cope with any emergency situation during flash flooding particularly in low-lying areas near Nullah Lai. Commissioner Rawalpindi, Capt. (Retd) Muhammad Mehmood on Friday visited Christian Colony near Soan and inspected the area, hit by flash flooding on Thursday. He directed Managing Director (MD) Water and Sanitation Authority (WASA) Rawalpindi to utilize all available resources to drain out stagnant water. He informed that Rescue-1122 had set up flood relief camp where officers concerned of WASA and other staff along with machinery would remain present. The Commissioner said all the officers concerned had been directed to remain present in the field and regularly monitor water level in Nullah Leh and flood situation if any. He said, Nullah Leh and its 11 tributaries were cleared before start of rains. - APP

NLCC surveys 218,827 hectares

ISLAMABAD: The National Locust Control Center (NLCC) had conducted an anti-pest survey over 218,827 hectares land during last 24 hours as it had restricted the swarms outspread from 61 districts to only two districts in the country. The joint teams of the Ministry of National Food Security, provincial agriculture departments and Pakistan Army were conducting a comprehensive survey and control operation against locusts in different districts. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Secretary BOI, Ms. Fareena Mazhar acknowledged the efforts of all stakeholders and stated that Pakistan has consistently made efforts to improve the business environment in the country in collaboration with World Bank. - DNA

FBR assures to clear all pending refunds

ISLAMABAD: Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) will clear all pending refunds of business community with backlog, besides it is working to evolve a mechanism to promote ease of doing business and transparency. This was stated by Dr. Muhammad Ashfaq Ahmed, Member (Inland Revenue -Operations), FBR while, addressing the business community at Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry. He visited ICCI along with Zubair Khan Secretary Sales Tax, Nasir Janjua Chief IR Analysis FBR and others. He said that ICCI should share the list of pending refunds and exemption cases to address them. Dr. Ashfaq Ahmed said that the current fragmented tax system was not helpful for sustainable growth of economy and FBR was working to carve out a new tax system to reduce direct interaction, promote ease of doing business and transparency that would facilitate the taxpayers. This process would take 2-3 years and the business community would appreciate it. He said that promotion of industry, trade and exports was the first priority of FBR with revenue generation as second priority as promotion of businesses would translate into more tax revenue for the country. The new tax system would end harassment from taxpayers as direct interactions would be replaced with video link meetings for hearings. He said that FBR would adopt e-audit policy to select minimal cases for audit through the system and promote transparency. He said that all big cases have been shifted to Large Taxpayer Units and Regional Tax Offices would now deal with small traders/businesses with focus on news taxpayers. - APP

415 people tested positive in past 24 hours, 9 die: NCOC

Since the pandemic broke out a total of 295,053 cases detected so far including 2277 in AJK, 12742 in Balochistan, 2816 in GB, 15578 in ICT, 35923 in KP, 96636 in Punjab and 129081 in Sindh

DNA / IRRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: As many as 445 people tested COVID-19 positive and nine people have died due to coronavirus in the past 24 hours across the country. No COVID-19 affected patient was on ventilators in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Gilgit Baltistan (GB) and Balochistan. National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) Friday issued the latest statistics of

COVID-19 deaths, positive cases and recovered patients across the country.

As many as nine people have lost their lives due to COVID-19 during last 24 hours. Out of the total deceased 8 died in hospitals and one died out of the hospital on August 27. Almost 110 ventilators were occupied across Pakistan out of 1920 ventilators allocated for COVID-19 patients. During the last 24 hours, 415 people were tested COVID-19 positive where the total active

COVID-19 cases in Pakistan were 8,833 on August 27. However, 23,483 tests were conducted on August 27 across the country, including 6,337 in Sindh, 9,939 in Punjab, 2,929 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), 3626 in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), 167 in Balochistan, 295 in Gilgit Baltistan (GB) and 190 in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). Around 279,937 people had recovered so far across the country making it a significant count with over 90 percent recovery ratio of

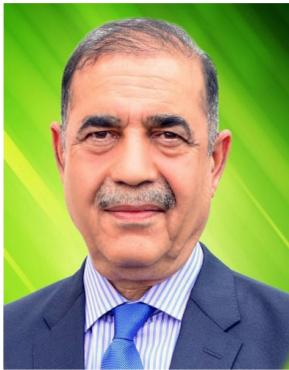
the affected patients. Since the pandemic broke out a total of 295,053 cases detected so far including 2277 in AJK, 12742 in Balochistan, 2816 in GB, 15578 in ICT, 35923 in KP, 96636 in Punjab and 129081 in Sindh. Since the contagion clutched masses across the country around 6283 deaths were recorded. In Sindh 2394 have died where 5 lost their lives in hospital and one out of hospital on August 27. In Punjab 2195 had died where two died in hospital on August

27, in KP 1250 were died while one died in hospital on August 27. However, in ICT 175 deaths were recorded, in Balochistan 141, in GB 67 individuals had died whereas the lowest deaths occurred in AJK which were 61. After tireless strides since the first coronavirus case reported in the country a total of 2,559,261 tests were conducted so far. Around 735 hospitals were equipped with COVID-19 facilities with 1,083 patients admitted across the country.

FBR appoints Sohail Altaf VC Regional Integrity Committee

ABID RAZA

RAWALPINDI: The Federal Board of Revenue has constituted Regional Integrity Committees to address grievances of the business community. The major purpose of the committee was to identify causes of integrity related issues/complaints against FBR officers/officials and furnish reports/recommendations to the chief commissioner Inland Revenue, Rawalpindi. Ms. Farhat Qayyum, Commissioner Inland Revenue, has been appointed as the chairperson of the committee while Sohail Altaf, former president and group leader Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce has been appointed as the vice chairman of the committee.



In a statement, Rawalpindi Chamber President Saboor Malik welcomed the formation of the committee and said that the move would help in respecting taxpayers and end check harassment by the FBR under the guise of tax collection. He said that the appointment of Sohail Altaf as Vice Chairman was a matter of honor for the Rawalpindi Chamber. Vice Chairman Committee Sohail Altaf has asked the chamber members to inform the Rawalpindi Chamber about any grievances related to FBR so that it can be redressed. The members of the committee include Additional Commissioner Inland Revenue, Rawalpindi, Amir Rehman and SO Legal RTO Rawalpindi Yousuf Khan.

TDAP assures to facilitate handicrafts manufacturers



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Handicrafts Association of Pakistan organized 1st Virtual Handicraft Forum moderated by Chairman HAP Mr. Fahad Barlas. Mr. Shahzad Ahmed Khan Director Trade Development Authority of Pakistan was the chief guest. Addressing on the occasion, he said TDAP would extend all possible assistance to provide opportunities of trade to handicraft manufacturers of Pakistan. He appreciated the efforts of HAP Chairman Mr. Fahad Barlas and Office bearers for organizing different events with

the objectives to highlight the significant importance and trade value of handicrafts. Mr. Shahzad pointed out that People Republic of China has great potential of Pakistani handicrafts and TDAP would help for trading of Pakistani handicrafts besides providing platform and all required facilities for the purpose. Addressing on the occasion Mr. Fahad Barlas said that cultural heritage of Pakistan has been depicted through handicrafts and our artisans and craftsmen are highly skilled and their contributions should be acknowledged. He also briefed about the HAP activities and future plans.

Security arrangements finalized for Ashura

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi District Police, on the directives of City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi, Deputy Inspector General, Muhammad Ahsan Younis have finalized security arrangements for 9th and 10th of Muharram with deputation of 6987 security personnel and 800 volunteers. According to a police spokesman, all available resources would be utilized to ensure strict security on Ashura. He informed that total 79 processions including six of category A, 18 of B category and 55 of C category would be taken out on 9th Muharram while 65 processions including 16 of A category, eight of B category and 41 of C category would be organized on Ashura. Law and order would be maintained at all cost and a peaceful atmosphere would be provided to the public, he added. Under the security plan, security personnel of Special Branch Police, Elite Force, Frontier Constabulary, Lady Police would be deployed to ensure security, he added. Leaves of all police personnel had been cancelled while a special 24/7 control room had also been set up in his office, the spokesman said. - APP

Shifa Hospital performs region's first TAVR procedure

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The cardiology team at Shifa International Hospital has performed first-ever TAVR (Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement) procedure in the region to replace degenerated surgical aortic valve of an elderly patient. The procedure was performed by Dr. Asaad A. Khan (Consultant Interventional Cardiologist) who has

experience of performing 500 TAVI procedures in the United States (US). Earlier, the same team also



performed first-ever TAVI (Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation) procedure in the region in January 2020 on a patient suffering from a critical heart condition. TAVI/TAVR (Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement) has emerged as a breakthrough in the field of interventional cardiology and is now recognized as an alternative for selected high-risk patients for a valve replacement without open-heart surgery.

Chinese Cultural Counselor meets with PAL chairman

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A long-term and fruitful relationship will be established with the Pakistan Academy of Letters to strengthen cultural exchanges and cooperation between Pakistan and China and rapid progress will be executed on the translation of China-Pakistan mutual literary creations. These views were expressed by the Chinese Cultural Counselor and Director of China Culture Center Zhang Heqing in a meeting with Dr. Yousuf Khoshk, Chairman, PAL in his office. He said that the Culture Office of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan would establish long and stable

good relations with the PAL to maximize exchanges and cooperation between the two brotherly countries in the field of Literature. Zhang Heqing appreciated the role of the PAL in enhancing cultural and literary ties and assured that the cooperation agreement through the MoU would bring the literary circles of the two countries closer through future literary exchanges. A new era of cultural and literary exchange will begin. Dr. Yousuf Khoshk said that both countries have a rich cultural heritage and rich literary traditions. The PAL aims to further strengthen the cultural and literary ties between the two countries through writers and to advance the

contacts of writers on an intellectual level through translations and other literary events. The Academy will further promote literary cooperation with the brotherly country of China and expedite the implementation of the MoU. All of these efforts come out with better results in the future and agreement is set to provide a broader platform for international exchange. Chairman, PAL said that the PAL has translated the literature of Pakistani languages and the works of Sufi poets into Chinese. The PAL has also done a lot of work of translations from Chinese literature, including translations of Chinese folk tales into Pakistani language,

and Urdu translations of fiction, poetry and Confucian thoughts. PAL has also published Urdu poetry by Chinese Urdu poet Intikhab Alam and Urdu poetry by Yuan Xei Shui and other books. The meeting was successful and it was agreed that a MoU would be signed soon to strengthen these literary ties between the two countries. It was also agreed that through the extensive translation work, the classical and valuable literary treasures of the two countries would be exchanged and translated so that people on both sides could enjoy the true colors of life. On this occasion exchange, the books from both were made as a token of love and appreciation.

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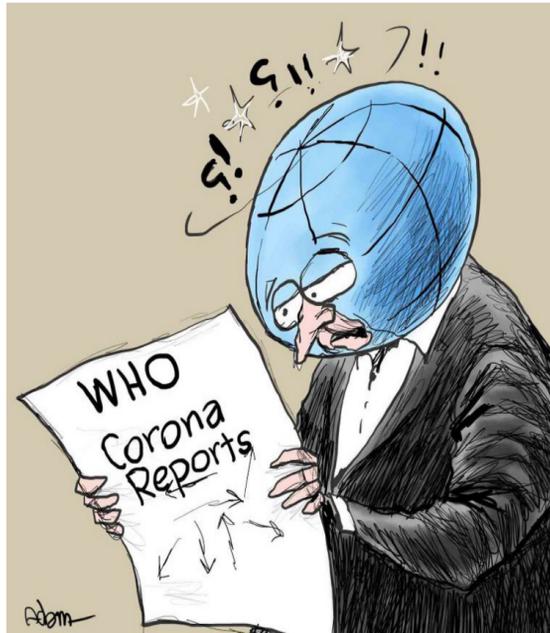
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Reopening tourism

PRIME MINISTER Imran Khan's interest in promoting tourism in the country has culminated in the formation of the National Coordination Committee for Tourism, which is going to be run by Special Assistant Zulfikar Bukhari as its convener. Mr Bukhari will be briefing Mr Khan every fortnight, which shows the high priority the prime minister attaches to this sector. The committee will implement a national tourism strategy. The ultimate long-term economic benefit of setting up a robust tourism industry is to generate revenue and jobs – an objective that has been greeted with some scepticism as resources are hard to come by and so far little has been done to tap the industry's potential. But there is no shortage of enthusiasm either. Experts have concurred with official projections regarding the country's treasures by coming up with their own positive assessments. There is a certain vibrancy to Pakistanis' urge to travel within the country. The increasing number of domestic tourists who set out on pleasure trips to famous holiday destinations, especially in the north and northwest of the country during summer, testifies to this. In fact, some spots are chock-a-block with people during summer, leading to calls for greater regulation and the promotion of less-crowded resorts. More systematic, reassuring handling of operations would boost tourist confidence and lift the industry as a whole. Once the infrastructure is created, some bold decision-making would be required to woo the average foreign tourist to Pakistan. Having said that, there are some issues that need urgent attention. In the recent past, the government came under attack for doing away with the staff and structure of the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation. The need to create an alternative is an immense challenge. Then there are health issues. Pakistan is certainly fortunate in having been less affected by the coronavirus as compared to other countries. But the health emergency is certainly not over. For instance, the Mansehra district administration recently sealed hotels after several staff members tested positive for the virus. They were reopened later after the premises was disinfected, but overall, popular vacation spots have seen a rise in Covid-19 cases, with tourists being blamed for not observing SOPs. This is a point of concern as holiday destinations are vulnerable to the virus. What is positive is the fact that thousands are waiting to get away from their dreary daily drill. After the pandemic, they should be facilitated in every way possible.



The peace process

ALMOST as important as it is for Afghanistan, the peace process in that country is crucial to Pakistan, its stability and its future. Pakistan has played an active role in facilitating the peace process by acting as mediators between the Taliban and the US. Islamabad now faces the equally difficult task of bringing together an Afghan government the legitimacy of which the Taliban have refused to accept. Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi as a part of this process met a visiting delegation of the Taliban in Islamabad on Wednesday. The effort to negotiate a settlement between the Taliban and the Afghan government of President Ashraf Ghani has run into some problems essentially over the release of prisoners the Taliban want out of jail. The US meanwhile is eager to pull out as many troops as possible from Afghanistan by November this year, possibly leaving only a few thousand in place. For Afghanistan, however, the question is whether the weak security forces managed by the Afghan government can control the Taliban, various warlords struggling for power and outside elements such as the IS and Al-Qaeda to whom the Taliban have promised to give no space. Whether this promise is kept is uncertain. The delegation representing the Afghan government is also likely to visit Pakistan over the coming weeks, possibly in about a month. Pakistan has the difficult task of finding a way to broker a settlement between these two forces. Washington already appears to have lost interest in the country after reducing it to its present plight and is interested mainly in making an exit. It is far from certain what shape Afghanistan will take in the coming months. But what unfolds in that country will be critical to the region. Shah Mahmood has said he recognizes that Afghanistan must solve its own problems. Pakistan however is willing to offer as much help as is possible. This will of course benefit Pakistan as much as Afghanistan. It is also vital that Islamabad and Kabul create a strong working relationship given that the issues they face are very similar and are interlinked in many different ways. These issues can be unraveled only if both nations work together and try to evolve a relationship that will serve them well over the coming years so that the current tensions can be wiped out and the people of Afghanistan can gain a respite from unending conflict.

Need for bold initiative for resolving Kashmir conflict

Iqbal Khan

Pakistan has apprised all international forums about atrocities by Indian security forces, including but not limited to: extra-judicial killings, use of rape as weapon to suppress the peaceful struggle by Kashmiris for their right of self-determination, firing at innocent civilians, protracted detentions without trial, and violence against non-combatants including women and children. This environment has indeed evolved into a new normal in occupied Jammu & Kashmir. Responding to a question from a reporter, Bozkir said, "Position of the UN on this region is governed by its charter and applicable Security Council resolutions as was previously expressed by the UN Security Council on different occasions"

INDIA'S contentions about Jammu and Kashmir being the so-called "integral and inalienable part" of India and an "internal affair" do not go beyond side-splitting fiction, which stands contrary to historical and legal facts and in violation of the relevant United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions. India must, at the earliest, vacate its illegal and forcible occupation of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and let the Kashmiris exercise their inalienable right to self-determination through a free and impartial plebiscite under the auspices of the United Nations as enshrined in the relevant UNSC Resolutions. With each passing day more and more voices are being added to the necessity of resolution of Kashmir dispute at the earliest. Yet, these are well short of the critical mass to impact Indian attitude and behaviour. India had scrapped the special status of IIOJK under Articles 370 and 35A of its constitution on August 5 last year in violation of UN Security Council resolutions and international law. US presidential hopeful Joe Biden has once again expressed concern over the deteriorating situation in Jammu and Kashmir, saying restrictions on dissent, such as preventing peaceful protests or shutting down the internet, weakens democracy. Biden called on the Indian government to "take all necessary steps to restore rights for all the people of Kashmir". Though statements by the US presidential hopefuls cannot be taken on face value, Biden, having done two Vice Presidential tenures, is expected to make measured statements on Kashmir—beyond wooing Muslim voters. Through his recently published paper, "Diplomacy in South Asia: a four step grand plan for Kashmir" Dr Claude Rakisits, has proposed a bold, four-step plan which would address the question of self-determination for Kashmiris. Two important elements of this plan are: the involvement of the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group to assist Kashmiris, Pakistan and India in the mediation of the plan; and, the holding of four UN-supervised referenda which would be held simultaneously but counted separately for Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir; Kashmir valley; Jammu; and Ladakh. All Kashmiris would have three options: Join Pakistan, Join India or independence. As an incentive to India and Pakistan, the international community would deliver substantial economic assistance for the development of all parts of Kashmir. But as a quid pro quo for the economic aid package, there would have to be guaranteed free movement of people, capital and goods between all parts of Kashmir after the referenda, regardless as to which option

had been chosen by the Kashmiris. While meeting with the United Nations General Assembly President-elect Volkan Bozkir on August 10, Prime Minister Imran Khan urged the United Nations to play its role in addressing the "grave" situation in Indian occupied Kashmir and to ensure that the people of the valley exercise their right to self-determination as promised under the UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions. Kashmir is an issue that has been on the UNSC agenda for over seven decades. "The prime minister highlighted the dire rights and humanitarian situation in occupied Kashmir since August 5, 2019, as well as the ongoing gross and systematic violations of human rights and attempts to change the demographic structure of the occupied territory." PM Imran expressed the hope that the 75th Session of the UNGA would accord priority to this issue. The UNGA president-elect also met with Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi at the Foreign Office where the latter sought "effective role of the UNGA to end human rights violations in occupied Kashmir." FM briefed him about the evolving situation of IIOJK facing military siege for the last one year, human rights violations, and illegal search and cordon operations. Pakistan has apprised all international forums about atrocities by Indian security forces, including but not limited to: extra-judicial killings, use of rape as weapon to suppress the peaceful struggle by Kashmiris for their right of self-determination, firing at innocent civilians, protracted detentions without trial, and violence against non-combatants including women and children. This environment has indeed evolved into a new normal in occupied Jammu & Kashmir. Responding to a question from a reporter, Bozkir said, "Position of the UN on this region is governed by its charter and applicable Security Council resolutions as was previously expressed by the UN secretary General on different occasions." He stated that solving the Kashmir issue was key to sustainable peace in South Asia. "Regional security should be maintained through political and diplomatic solutions. Difficult challenges can be resolved through meaningful, mutual engagement." "So if my assistance as the president of the General Assembly is requested by the parties, I will be ready to provide contributions within my mandate." Expressing his strong support for the longstanding dispute of Jammu and Kashmir, Bozkir linked it with peace and stability of the South Asian region. "The Jammu and Kashmir dispute needs to be settled through peaceful means," he said. The "meaningful

engagement of political and diplomatic channels" is significant to resolve the issue in accordance with the resolutions of UN Security Council, he added. Bozkir said Turkey's position on Jammu and Kashmir is well-known and its foreign ministry had issued a strong statement over India's action of August 5, 2019. The international community must play its role in bringing an end to the brutality in Indian Occupied Kashmir. Human rights organizations need to raise their voices, more forcefully, against India's barbaric acts particularly against women and children, who continue to face the wrath of Indian atrocities since the last seventy years. Pakistan will continue to lend moral, political and diplomatic support to Kashmir at all international fora. There are numerous UN Security Council resolutions under which the people of Kashmir have been promised the right to self-determination through a UN-mandated plebiscite. India and Pakistan need to resume dialogue to arrive at a political solution to the satisfaction of the Kashmiri people. According to Claude, "Bearing in mind the long history of political tension in Jammu and Kashmir, compounded by recent developments, it's obvious the present situation in Kashmir cannot continue and will quite possibly get worse". "India has always argued that Kashmir is a domestic issue and external interference will not be accepted. But however much the Indian government would like it to be the case, Kashmir is today very much in the international public domain". Over the last one year, there have been numerous short lived bursts of support from various quarters of international community, but things have not moved beyond lip service. Even at official level, the foreign office went into a sort of hibernation after Prime Minister Imran Khan's speech to the UNGA, as if speech itself was the end objective. Also, some of the allies—so called brotherly countries of the Middle East have been pressuring Pakistan to abandon the Kashmir cause. The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), did make some noises, but nothing beyond that. The regurgitation of false claims by India can neither change facts nor divert attention from India's state-terrorism in the IIOJK, and its egregious violations of human rights of the Kashmiri people. Rather than resorting to false and misleading assertions, India should faithfully implement its international obligations.

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Governments must wake up to the global warming threat

Ranvir S. Nayar



Both governments and businesses try to hide behind schemes such as compensatory afforestation, which is the process of introducing trees to areas not previously forested, plantations or more recent fads such as urban forests, as if they are adequate solutions to the global problem of increasingly few trees

LAST month Greenpeace International said that since the start of this year, fires in Siberia have destroyed nearly 21 million hectares of virgin forest. But it is not only Siberia that is going up in flames. With other major fires reported in Greenland, Alaska and northern Canada, the entire Arctic region has been burning at record levels, exacerbating the problems caused by global warming and climate change. Extensive fires have also been reported in the Amazon basin, Europe and Asia. The full scale of the damage caused by forest fires this year obviously will not be known for another five months but we do know that in 2019 the amount of global virgin forest lost was about 2.8 percent higher than the previous year, and the annual loss rate has remained high for the past two decades, despite efforts to curb deforestation. The Earth is already paying a heavy price for the loss of forests, especially primary forests, which are many thousands of years old. For one thing, burning trees release a lot of carbon into air and these emissions have been rising sharply for several years. In 2019, 7.8 billion tons of carbon was emitted. This was 26 percent more than in 2018 and represented about 21 percent of the year's total carbon emissions. In addition to releasing significant amounts of carbon while actively burning, forest fires have a longer-term negative effect. The soot from burning wood that ends up in the air absorbs sunlight and warms the globe more. And when the soot settles on ice or snow, or falls on it in raindrops, it becomes trapped, reducing the reflectivity of the ice and snow. As a result, more heat is trapped and the ice melts faster. Not only do burning forests create a lot of carbon and lead to increased melting of ice, they also affect global carbon emissions in another, very significant way. Forests are immense carbon sinks that capture the element from the atmosphere and

store it. Approximately 2.6 billion tons of carbon dioxide, which is one-third of the annual amount released by burning fossil fuels, is absorbed by forests every year. The world's forests currently store 300 billion tons of carbon, which is 30 times the global annual emissions from fossil fuels. Scientists say that if 2 billion hectares of degraded land around the world was restored and diverse forests replanted, they could fully neutralize global carbon emissions from fossil fuels. As well as delaying or even preventing global warming, forests also promote ecology in another significant way. Most of the world's oldest forests are among the richest repositories of biodiversity, both flora and fauna. They provide canopies that benefit birds, cavities that provide nesting places for animals, and dead trees that become homes for insects, reptiles and amphibians, while the moisture they create feeds lichen and mosses that also are habitats for insects. Each of these living creatures plays a crucial role in maintaining the ecological balance. When millions of square kilometers of ancient forests go up in flames each year, it causes irreplaceable damage to global biodiversity that is already under severe pressure. Forests are not only home to animals, insects and plants, they are also the habitat for hundreds of millions of human beings, the vast majority of whom are extremely poor and live on the edge of societies. The livelihoods of about 1.6 billion people, 23 percent of the world's population, depend on forests, mainly old forests, as these people are foragers who gather fruits and other forest produce. More than 80 percent of virgin forests in the world have already been lost to industrial logging, and the remaining 20 percent is under unprecedented pressure as a result of global warming, fires and ever-increasing logging activity that seems to continue with little oversight, even in this age of greater awareness about the need to preserve the environ-

ment and ecological balance. Despite the alarm bells that are ringing all around the world, governments and businesses seem to be continuing on the path to destruction with blinkers on. Industrial logging is thriving and has now reached areas that were once no-go areas, including areas deep in Africa, the Arctic Circle, the Himalayas and parts of central India that are home to forests that are millions of years old. Both governments and businesses try to hide behind schemes such as compensatory afforestation, which is the process of introducing trees to areas not previously forested, plantations or more recent fads such as urban forests, as if they are adequate solutions to the global problem of increasingly few trees. While these measures might help to restore some degraded lands or replace a few trees, they are in no way effective replacements for virgin forests. It is time that leaders around the world understood and recognized that the first and most significant measure that must be taken to prevent a global environmental catastrophe is to protect the biodiversity hot spots provided by older forests. Last year, the UN warned that more than a million plant and animal species are threatened with extinction, 75 percent of agricultural genetic biodiversity has been lost, as has 70 percent of fishery diversity, and that the unprecedented forest fires that have only been getting worse over the past two decades threaten to push many of these threatened species to the very edge of extinction. The only possible way to prevent, or at least delay, this catastrophe is for governments to take a more serious and urgent view of the situation, and for businesses to consider the potential long-term profits that would come from preventing the meltdown of planet Earth. So far, the signs of either of these things happening have been anything but hopeful.

— Courtesy: Arab News

Briefs

“SBP takes bold step to facilitate SME sector”

FAISALABAD: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has taken bold, innovative and revolutionary measures to facilitate the Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) sector and in this connection “Online Complaint Portal” of SBP on SMEs will help this important segment to play its role in improving the national economy. Addressing a Zoom conference, organized by the State Bank of Pakistan to give an introduction of the online complaint portal, Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) President Rana Muhammad Sikandar Azam Khan said that it is yet another landmark achievement of the SBP under the dynamic leadership of its governor Dr Reza Baqir. Appreciating the new and proficient tool to resolve complaints regarding the SMEs, he said that a help desk of the SBP was already working in the FCCI while similar arrangements would also be made in other leading chambers and trade associations. He said that SBP Faisalabad chief manager would visit the FCCI during the next month to give a practical demo of the online complaint portal which will definitely facilitate and guide startups and SMEs related persons. — APP

PM offers full support to CM Sindh: Asad Umar

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning and Development, Asad Umar has said that the federal government would provide every possible support to Sindh Government in relief activities in the rain hit areas. “Prime Minister Imran Khan has talked to Chief Minister Sindh assuring him of the Center and its institutions’ all out help to provide relief activities to the people affected by the torrential rains in the province” he said in a tweet. The minister said whatever support the Sindh Government would demand, the Center would provide on emergency basis. — APP

Rescue operation continues in Karachi: NDMA

ISLAMABAD: National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) with the coordinated efforts of other concerned functionaries were fully active and continuing its rescue and relief operations in rain affected areas of Karachi. Spokesperson of NDMA Shazia Haris in her exclusive talk with Radio Pakistan said that these operations and drainage activities were being carried out by the Pak Army in collaboration with local civil administration. “We will not let the affected people be alone in their hard time”, she assured. She said food, drinking water and other essential items are being provided to rain affected people while 56 relief camps have also been established. She said the NDMA also provided 3000 tents to Sindh government for rain-hit people. — APP

PTA asks YouTube to block indecent content

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Telecom Authority (PTA) has asked video-sharing platform YouTube to immediately block vulgar, indecent, immoral, nude and hate speech content for viewing in Pakistan. PTA has done so keeping in view the extremely negative effects of indecent/immoral/nude content available on YouTube and to prevent repugnant discord due to the presence of hate speech and sectarian material, said a news release issued here on Friday. — APP



ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of the State of Palestine to Pakistan, Ahmed Jawad Rubai, in a meeting with Chairman of the Council of Muslim Scholars, Tahir Ashrafi. — DNA

Shinzo Abe: Japan’s PM to resign for health reasons

In 2007 he resigned abruptly from an earlier term as prime minister because of his struggles with ulcerative colitis, a chronic condition affecting the large intestine, that he has lived with since he was a teenager

DNA

TOKYO: Japanese PM Shinzo Abe has resigned for health reasons. He has suffered for many years from ulcerative colitis, an inflammatory bowel disease, but his condition is thought to have worsened recently. Public broadcaster NHK said the 65-year-old wanted to avoid causing problems for his government. Last year, he became Japan’s longest serving prime minister. His current period in office began in 2012. In 2007 he resigned abruptly from an earlier term as prime minister because of his struggles with ulcerative colitis, a chronic condition affecting the large intestine, that he has lived with

since he was a teenager. Mr Abe has a reputation as a staunch conservative and nationalist, and for stimulating growth with his aggressive economic policy known as “Abenomics”. He has strengthened Japan’s defences and boosted military spending, but has been unable to revise the constitution’s pacifist Article 9, which bans a standing army for anything other than self-defence. Prime Minister Abe has long suffered from chronic ulcerative colitis. The disease forced him to resign in 2007 - the first time he headed the government. Now, after weeks of speculation about him being absent from the public eye despite a worrying uptick in Japan’s coronavirus cases, it seems



he is resigning yet again due to the same illness. As the longest-serving Japanese prime minister, he leaves behind a legacy of stability and a strong centralised power base that allowed forceful stimulus policies to revive the economy. He also improved relations with the US by courting President Donald Trump, often on the golf course.

Yet his government was also mired in scandal, including talk of favouritism and willful destruction of public records. When the pandemic struck, his responses were often criticised as being slow, ineffective, and out of touch. And perhaps importantly for Mr Abe, his cherished - and highly controversial - wish to revise Japan’s pacifist constitution under his

watch, has come to naught, at least for now.

Two hospital visits in one week sparked questions about whether Mr Abe’s health was deteriorating. He had been due to serve until September 2021. He has not revealed what the visits were for but one is reported to have lasted nearly eight hours. LDP officials have previously dismissed speculation that he would step down, saying the prime minister’s health was fine. At the Rio de Janeiro Olympics in 2016 Mr Abe appeared as video game character Mario Akira Amari, head of the LDP’s tax panel, dismissed the suggestion that the prime minister would dissolve parliament’s lower house for a snap general election soon. “There won’t

be a snap election for the time being,” he said. Still, rumours have persisted about Mr Abe’s growing fatigue as he fields growing scrutiny for his handling of the coronavirus pandemic, at a time when approval ratings for his cabinet have dropped.

Under Japanese law, an acting prime minister would step in temporarily if Mr Abe were unable to perform his role, with no limits on how long they can stay in post. Deputy Prime Minister Taro Aso, who is also finance minister, is first in line, followed by Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga. An acting prime minister cannot call a snap election but they lead on other matters such as treaties and budgets until a new party leader and premier is chosen.

Uzbek President pardons 113 citizens

The decree pardoned 113 citizens, who are serving sentences for committing a crime, who sincerely repented of their deeds and firmly embarked on the path of correction

TASHKENT: President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev signed a decree “On pardoning a group of persons serving a sentence of imprisonment, who sincerely repented of their deeds and firmly embarked on the path of correction”. The document was signed on the eve of the celebration of the most expensive national holiday - the 29th anniversary of the proclamation of our Motherland’s independence. The decree, in accordance with paragraph 23 of Article 93 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, pardoned 113 citizens, who are serving sentences for committing a crime, who sincerely repented of their deeds and firmly embarked on the path of correction. Of the pardoned 5 persons were completely released from serving the main sentence, 53 persons were released from serving the sentence on parole, the punishment imposed on 15 persons was replaced by a softer one. In addition, the terms of imprisonment imposed on 40 persons were reduced. Among those pardoned - 1 man over 60 years old, 2 citizens of foreign states, 105 persons who participated in the activities of banned organizations. As part of the implementation of the decree, the responsible ministries and departments were instructed to return pardoned persons to their families and loved ones, assist them in social adaptation, attract them to useful work, choose a healthy lifestyle and take a worthy place in society. — DNA

Qatar donates medical equipment

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of State of Qatar Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman Al Thani on Friday handed over a shipment of N-95 masks, medicines, Pulse Oximeters and other medical equipment to Minister of State for States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) Shehryar Khan Afridi to facilitate Afghan refugees to fight Covid-19 pandemic. According to the Press Release, Shehryar Khan Afridi expressing gratitude to Qatar Ambassador said the donations would greatly help Afghan refugees in fight against the pandemic. He said that the Ambassador’s passionate approach would largely help in further cementing Pakistan, Qatar friendly relationship. Afghanistan is a conflict zone where humanity suffered enormously. Qatar and Turkey greatly supported and facilitated the Syrian refugees too. — APP

Trump warns Biden will ‘demolish’ American dream

DNA

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump has warned his Democratic challenger Joe Biden will “demolish” the American dream if he wins the White House in November. Speaking on the final night of the Republican convention, the president depicted his opponent as “the destroyer of American greatness”. He said the Democrats would unleash “violent anarchists” upon US cities.

On Thursday night, the president asked voters for another four years in office, vowing to dispel the coronavirus pandemic that has ravaged the US economy and quell civil strife ignited by police killings of African Americans. Mr Trump accepted his party’s renomination from the South Lawn of the White House. “This election will decide whether we save the American dream,” he said, “or whether we allow a social-

ist agenda to demolish our cherished destiny.” He added: “Your vote will decide whether we protect law-abiding Americans, or whether we give free rein to violent anarchists, agitators and criminals who threaten our citizens.” While Mr Trump portrayed his challenger as “a Trojan horse for socialism”, Mr Biden’s lengthy record as a political moderate was a hindrance for him as he competed to capture his party’s nomination.

Govt establishing Economic Zones in GB, says Gandapur

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Ali Amin Gandapur has said that there is a huge opportunity for foreign investment in tourism sector in Gilgit Baltistan. Talking to Country Head of Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency Gökhan Umüt in Islamabad on Friday, he asked the Turkish investors to invest in tourism sector. He said about 2 million tourist visit the picturesque area of Gilgit Baltistan every year. The Minister said that the government is establishing Economic Zones in Gilgit Baltistan which will open new avenues of industrial development. Ali Amin Gandapur said that the Turkish President has always adopted a clear stance on the Kashmir issue and the government and the people of Pakistan thank Turkey for its continued support in this regard. — DNA

New geologic system under creation in Uzbekistan

Four resolutions have been signed by the President on these issues. Toward their execution, the industry is undergoing modernization and digitalization, prospecting works are growing in scale and efficiency

DNA

TASHKENT: On August 27, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev was presented report on the effectiveness of works in the geology sector. In his Address to the Oliy Majlis in January this year, the Head of the state noted that certain fields of science would be attached priority significance every year to secure their advanced development. This year, geology was identified as one of such. Four resolutions have been signed by the President on these issues. Toward their execution, the industry is undergoing modernization and digitalization, prospecting works are growing in scale and efficiency. “New geologic system is being

created in Uzbekistan. The purpose sought is to cash in the natural resources for the good of the nation, create jobs and improve the wellbeing of people”, Shavkat Mirziyoyev said. Foundation has been instituted for the revival of geology as science and training modern specialists. In particular, the University of Geological Science has been established to unite four research institutions. Cutting-edge drilling and laboratory equipment was procured. As a result, the drilling works’ productivity have increased by quarter compared to the same period last year. In addition, the number of elements discovered in ore has grown from 40 to 63. From the beginning of this year, 150 new deposits have been

registered. The resources and reserves of gold, silver, uranium and copper are enhancing. 3 new gold deposits are discovered in Kuljuktai and Auminzatau mountains in Bukhara and Navoi regions, along with 2 uranium ones in Kattakurgan district of Samarkand region and Arnasay district of Jizzakh region. Moreover, mining and geological data on 32 types of reserves have been transferred to JORC international standards. Within the framework of efforts designed to develop the agricultural sector, geological research based on express methods has been conducted on 155 thousand hectares of lands. Water reserves with 90 thousand cubic meters extraction a day have been confirmed in water-scarcity districts.

Chairman of the State Committee on Geology and Mineral Resources presented report to the President. The attraction of foreign investments towards the development of 20 new deposits was discussed during the presentation, through open and transparent procedures, by holding online bids. Instructions were given on public-private partnership in this sphere. Next measures directed at uplifting the effectiveness of works in the sector, strengthening its normative base and boosting the investment potential were discussed. The Head of the state gave concrete instructions to double the scale of geological prospecting next year, discover new prospective fields, accelerate the introduction of state-of-the-art

laboratory equipment. The State Committee on Geology and Mineral Resources has been tasked with the establishment of new prospecting on new fields based on cooperation, further expand the practice of transferring works on development of discovered deposits to the private sector. The need was noted for establishing, on the Namangan experience, constant geological expeditions, especially of hydrogeological designation, in every region. Tasks were defined to elevate the effectiveness in the exploitation of underground soils granted for use and promote research works. Officials in charge of the sphere were tasked to devise a roadmap for the implementation of the measures identified.

PMDC donates Rs 5 mln for corona fund

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation (PMDC) Managing Director Farhan Shafi Friday called on Minister for Energy Omar Ayub Khan and handed over Rs 5 million cheque for the Prime Minister’s Corona Relief Fund. “The contribution includes two days salaries of all PMDC employees,” a Petroleum Division news release said. Expressing gratification over the PMDC donation, the minister said that Petroleum Division and its attached organisations had made the significant contributions in the coronavirus (COVID-19) relief activities with a national spirit. Earlier, Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) had allocated Rs 38 million and Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) contributed Rs 30 million for relief activities across the country. The SNGPL Board had directed the company to deposit Rs19 million in Prime Minister’s Relief Fund and committed Rs 19 million to National Disaster Management Authority for procurement of medical supplies. Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) deposited an amount of Rs 53 million in the Fund, while its hostel at I-9 sector was being utilised as an isolation/ quarantine facility for COVID-19 patients in the federal capital. At the facility, the company also provided medicines, Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) kits for medical staff, food items and a fully-equipped ambulance. — APP

Emirates celebrate one-off A380 service

DNA

KARACHIL: The iconic Emirates A380 made a one-off service to Clark International Airport today, becoming the first commercial flight, utilizing the iconic aircraft, to operate to the Luzon-based airport. The special A380 service from Dubai to Clark and operating as EK2520, took off from Dubai International Airport at 02:40 and landed in Clark at 15:23 local time, and was greeted by a traditional water cannon salute upon arrival at the airport. More than 400 passengers, who were delighted to have experienced Emirates’ flagship aircraft on a route not regularly served by the aircraft, in addition to Emirates executives, were welcomed by the airport’s executive management team. VIPs, including Secretary of Department of Transportation, Mr. Arthur Tugade, as well as media were given a guided tour of the A380 by Emirates cabin crew. The popular Emirates A380 aircraft has resumed operations to five destinations so far, including London Heathrow, Paris, Cairo, Guangzhou and Toronto. Emirates has been serving the Philippines since 1990 and inaugurated its first service to Clark in 2016. In 2014, the Emirates A380 made a one-off trip to Manila, marking its first arrival in the Philippines.

Landmine blasts kill 13 in Kandahar

DNA

KABUL: At least 13 people killed and three more wounded in two separate land mine blasts in southern Kandahar province on Friday. A spokesperson for the provincial governor Bahir Ahmad Ahmadi said that the first blast occurred at around 9 a.m in Patan Khel area in Spin Boldak district of Kandahar. He added that 12 civilians were killed as their vehicle hit a roadside mine in the area. Meanwhile, a provincial council member said that nine of the victims were members of a family. The official added that another roadside bomb hit a Mazda at around noon in the same district. Ahmadi further said that a person was killed and three more were wounded in the incident. Immediately no group yet take responsibility for the attacks.