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Detailed News On Page-07

Italian envoy to inaugurate IPTTC in Faisalabad

Detailed News On Page-08

Shibli congratulate people of Gilgit-Baltistan on polls

Detailed News On Page-01

Briefs

Govt will work on package for GB: Asad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning Asad Umar Sunday said the federal government will jointly work with the newly elected government in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) for the development in the region. Asad Umar, in a tweet, said that after historic federal packages for Karachi and South Balochistan, now work will start on the package for Gilgit-Baltistan. Voting underway for the general elections of Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly amid tight security.

GB's people want democracy: Bilawal

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of Pakistan People's Party PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari Sunday said that enthusiasm of people of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) during election day is a testament to their commitment to democracy. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, in a tweet, lauded people for actively participating in the voting process and while urging the election commission to ensure that every vote is casted and counted, said that the commission must not fail the people.

PTI govt has to be sent packing

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) vice president Maryam Nawaz on Sunday has said that the government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has to be sent packing. In a post on social-networking website Twitter, the PML-N vice president claimed the incumbent government is so much afraid of PML-N that it had arrested leaders in Gilgit-Baltistan before every rally. The selected prime minister became nervous over the public gatherings of opposition leaders for Gilgit-Baltistan elections, she added.

Indian nasty designs to be foiled

Foreign Minister Qureshi says India wants to create unrest in Pakistan to destabilize the Country by sponsoring terrorism in the country

BUREAU REPORT / DNA

MULTAN: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has said India wants to create unrest in Pakistan to destabilize the Country by sponsoring terrorism in the country. Talking to media in Multan on Sunday, he said India wants to sabotage China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) because it knows that CPEC is a game changer project for Pakistan. Foreign Minister said New Delhi has allocated 80 billion rupees for terrorists and established terrorists training camps on its soil to disrupt CPEC projects. He said India also wants to create unrest in Gilgit-Baltistan during and after elections and the dossier, containing irrefutable evidence of Indian sponsorship to terrorism has exposed Indian plans. Shah Mahmood Qureshi said India has become a threat to the region's peace and sta-

UN urged to declare India a terrorist country

LAHORE: Governor Punjab Chaudhry Sarwar demanded from the United Nations to declare India a terrorist country and said that the government and the armed forces of Pakistan along with 220 Million Pakistanis are united to thwart the anti-Pakistan agenda of "RAW". - DNA

bility and International community should take notice of the Indian nefarious designs to destabilize Pakistan through terrorism. Foreign Minister said India is also using Afghan soil against Pakistan, therefore Pakistan and Afghanistan should devise a

Continued on Page 06

UAE widens residency 'golden' visa eligibility

All holders of doctorate degrees, medical doctors and also computer, electronics, programming, electrical and biotechnology engineers are eligible,

DUBAI: The United Arab Emirates will extend its "golden" visa system - which grants 10-year residency in the Gulf state - to certain professionals, specialised degree-holders and others, the UAE's vice president said on Sunday. Foreigners in the UAE usually have renewable visas valid for only a few years tied to employment. The government in the past couple of years has made its visa policy more flexible, offering longer residencies for certain types of investors, students and professionals.

All holders of doctorate degrees, medical doctors and also computer, electronics, programming, electrical and biotechnology engineers are eligible, UAE Vice President and the ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum said in a statement. Also eligible are those with specialised degrees in artificial intelligence, big data and epidemiology, as well as high school students living in the UAE who rank top in the country and students from certain universities with a GPA of 3.8 or higher.

After first announcing a long-term visa plan in 2018, the UAE in 2019 started granting 5- and 10-year renewable visas to certain foreign investors, entrepreneurs, chief executives, scientists and outstanding students. The emirate of Dubai, a Middle East trade and tourism hub, in September said it would grant visas renewable every five years to wealthy foreign retirees. An oil and gas producer, the UAE's economy has been hit by the coronavirus pandemic and low oil prices, prompting many expatriates to leave. - DNA

PPP flays restrictions on women voting

NAVEED MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: PPP Senator Sherry Rehman said Sunday she is "deeply concerned" over the "deliberate restrictions on women's voting" in the Gilgit Baltistan Election 2020, and voiced worry over alleged rigging at the polling stations.

Sherry Rehman said any attempts to deprive women of their right to vote in the Gilgit Baltistan Election 2020 are "unacceptable" and called for GB Chief Election Commissioner Raja Shehbaz Khan to immediately intervene and resolve the issue. The PPP leader alleged that the observers of the Free and

Continued on Page 06

2,443 new virus cases

A total of 4,921,050 corona tests have been conducted so far, while 735 hospitals are equipped with COVID facilities

ISLAMABAD: The total active COVID-19 cases in Pakistan on Sunday were recorded 26,538 as 2,443 more people tested positive for the deadly virus during the last 24 hours. 22 corona patients, 27 of whom were under treatment in hospital and five out of hospital died on Saturday, according to the latest update issued by the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC). No COVID affected person was on ventilator in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Gilgit Baltistan (GB) and Balochistan, while 196 ventilators were occupied elsewhere in Pakistan, out of 1,859 allocated for COVID-19 patients.

Some 39,410 tests were conducted across the country on Saturday, including 13,320 in Sindh, 12,639 in Punjab, 4,204 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), 7,420 in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), 754 in Balochistan, 310 in GB, and 763 in AJK. Around 323,225 people have recovered from the disease so far across Pakistan making it a significant count with over 90 percent recovery ratio of the affected patients. Since the pandemic outbreak, a total of 356,904 cases were detected so far, including AJK 5,349, Balochistan 16,393, GB 4,447, ICT 23,994, KP 41,990, Punjab 109,993 and Sindh 154,738. About 7,141 deaths were

recorded in country since the eruption of the contagion, including 2,738 Sindh among 12 of them died in hospital and four out of hospital on Saturday, 2,471 in Punjab eight of them died in hospital and one out of hospital on Saturday, 1,309 in KP four of them died in hospital on Saturday, 255 in ICT among two of them died in hospital on Saturday, 156 in Balochistan one of them died in hospital on Saturday, 93 in GB and 119 in AJK. A total of 4,921,050 corona tests have been conducted so far, while 735 hospitals are equipped with COVID facilities. Some 1,569 corona patients were admitted in hospitals across the country. - APP



TARBELA: Russian troops taking part in military drills, on Sunday. - DNA (Another picture on page 7)

DG ISPR shares video of Pakistan-Russian drills

NAVEED MIRAJ

TARBELA: The joint military exercise between Pakistan Army and Russian troops, Druzhba-V, continues at Tarbela, according to the ISPR. The director general of the military's media wing today tweeted a video showing Pakistan and Russian Federation Special Forces

Continued on Page 06

Armenia cedes Azerbaijan land

Residents of the Kalbajar district in Azerbaijan began a mass exodus of the mountainous province in the days leading up to the official withdrawal day

STEPANAKERT (AZERBAIJAN): Armenia on Sunday was due to begin handing over disputed territory to Azerbaijan as part of a peace accord that ended six weeks of fierce fighting over the Nagorno-Karabakh region. Residents of the Kalbajar district in Azerbaijan that was controlled by Armenian separatists for decades began a mass exodus of the mountainous province in the days leading up to the official withdrawal day. AFP journalists saw fleeing residents pile furniture and kitchenware into vehicles before leaving for Armenia and some among the departing ethnic-Armenians said they had exhumed graves they feared would be desecrated by Azerbaijanis. Thick plumes of smoke were rising over the valley

Continued on Page 06

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Inside...

Chinese investment in agri will determine path of prosperity - Page 02

Girl child needs more focused parenthood, opine experts - Page 03

Updated edition of Juma Khan Sufi's book launched - Page 04

Azerbaijan finally stands triumphed - Page 05

Life attempt on Armenian prime minister averted - Page 06

Turkmen leader insists his country is virus-free - Page 07

Crafts extravaganza at ISH draws huge interest - Page 08

Briefs

Workshops sealed

DNA

LAHORE: The Lahore Development Authority conducted an anti-encroachment drive in Johar Town on Sunday. It sealed shops and workshops illegally constructed in 126 empty plots. Residential apartments being used for commercial purposes were also sealed. There was heavy police presence during the operation.

Snow, rain send temperatures plunging

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The first snow, and rainfall in multiple parts of Pakistan have signaled the arrival of winter in the country. Northern areas such as Chitral, Abbottabad, parts of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Nathiagali experienced the season's first snowfall along with cool winds. Following this, the temperatures dropped, forcing residents to take out their jackets, sweaters and blankets. In Chitral, over three feet of snow was recorded in the last two days. Due to this, multiple roads to and from the city were blocked. Ghizar experienced a similar situation. On the other hand, rain was reported in Islamabad, Nathiagali, Abbottabad and neighbouring areas. According to the Pakistan Meteorological Department, rain-thunderstorms with snowfall is expected in Islamabad, Upper and Central Punjab, Gilgit-Baltistan, Kashmir and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Sunday. Light rain is expected in South Punjab as well. The Met Office has pointed out that this rainfall will be beneficial for the sowing of wheat crop in the rain-fed areas. Earlier this week, the people of Lahore were left choking after smog levels in the city increased. Due to the smog, visibility levels throughout Lahore reduced, causing problems for commuters.

Karachi man arrested for murdering wife

DNA

KARACHI: A man was arrested for murdering his wife with a knife outside her workplace in New Karachi, the police said on Sunday. The victim worked at a factory. According to the police, on Saturday, the suspect attacked her with a knife immediately after she left the factory. "The woman had registered a case against her husband for harassing her daughter last month," a police officer said, adding that the suspect killed her in an act of revenge. The body has been returned to the family after a post-mortem examination.

Chinese investment in agri will determine path of prosperity

There is a long history of interactions between people living in China and Pakistan. So after our two countries became independent, this history and cultural affinity brought them closer and closer to each other

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) on Sunday welcomed the newly-appointed Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, Nong Rong and hoped that he will boost mutual cooperation between the two friendly nations. Pakistan and China have remained closely connected with through thick and thin and we have always stood with each other sharing joys and the newly-appointed Ambassador

who is a trade and commerce expert who will take these ties to new heights, she said.

PBF Vice President, Ahmad Jawad hoped that Ambassador Nong Rong will not only boost bilateral trade and strategic relations but will also play a central role in improving work on developmental projects backed by China as he has all the required expertise and motivation and he has a great track record of achievements. "There is a long history of interactions between people living

in China and Pakistan. So after our two countries became independent, this history and cultural affinity brought them closer and closer to each other, he said, mentioning the two sides signed their first cultural cooperation agreement in 1965" He assured that PBF will join hands with Ambassador Nong Rong to enhance the momentum of high-level exchange between Pakistan and China in the area of promotion of Pakistani handicrafts, embroidery and traditional jewellery.

Jawad also emphasized that more and more from Pakistani delegations may be sent to China to enhance better understanding of their culture and civilization. Now the second phase of CPEC is very important to strengthen two countries bilateral trade. "we hope focused Chinese investment in the field of agriculture will determine the path of prosperity for the rural sector" he added and said "timely completion of CPEC II would be benefited for both countries at

the time where 5th generations war fate at its glance" Though Pakistan is the biggest supporter of Belt and Road Initiatives and host of one of the six planned corridors and learning from Chinese model we are at way to set up different SEZ's in our country which will provide opportunities for investors from China and other countries. Ahmad Jawad also lauded the personal efforts of Chinese President Xi Jinping who generously supported Pakistani in COVID-19 pandemic.

Anti-pollution plan prepared

DNA

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Forest Department has prepared a comprehensive plan to combat environmental and air pollution in cities through whopping plantations under 10 billion trees afforestation project (10BTAP) to improve air quality. Gulzar Rehman, Conservator Southern Circle, KP Forest Department told APP on Sunday that controlling of environmental, vehicular, industrial and air pollution in big cities including Peshawar was a big challenge and solid efforts was being made to reduce it through massive afforestation under 10 BTAP. Under the plan, he said, whopping plantations would be carried out on sides of GT road, Islamabad-Peshawar motorway, link roads, canals, water channels, schools, colleges and universities' lawns from February next year. Non-productive lands in nearby villages, towns and cities of adjoining districts would also be utilized for plantations. With the help of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and others relevant stakeholders and departments, he said, constructive measures would be taken to im-

prove air quality by using the best available technologies and implementing Clean & Green Pakistan (CGP) program in letter and spirit. Terming air pollution a silent killer, he said, it take lives of hundreds of thousands of people every year world over due to different diseases including lung cancer, heart, EN, allergies and respiratory system disorders especially during the winter season due to shortfall in rainfalls because of climate change and make negative effect on the country's economic growth. He said pollution and climate change was incurring about nine percent loss to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per year and this huge amount could be saved by combating these challenges for which the constant support of public support was vital. "Air pollution is very much a cross-border issue in many Asia-Pacific and South Asian countries, where inhabitants share the same air and vulnerable to the above diseases," he said, adding cooperation of SAARC countries were imperative to tackle this invincible killer on collective basis before it pose serious health implications on human, aquatic and wildlife creatures.

Chairman NHA visits roads projects

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman National Highway Authority Capt. (Retd) Sikander Qayyum visited National Highway N-25 from Karachi to Uthal zero point and onwards Makran Coastal Highway N10. During the site visit, the Chairman, National Highway Authority was briefed by the Member (West Zone) about the ongoing Maintenance Activities on National Highway N-25 and N-10, worthy Chairman NHA instructed to execute the works as per quality standard besides ensuring that the works are completed on time by providing maximum relief to the road users, said a press release. Ground Breaking Ceremony of Hoshab-Awaran, Section of M-8 was executed by Prime Minister Imran Khan on 13th November 2020. Worthy Federal

Minister Communication Murad Saeed accompanied the Prime Minister. Federal Minister Communications addressed the dignitaries of the occasion and informed that NHA has launched various projects in Balochistan Province for development of far flung areas of the province and also spending huge amount for maintenance of existing highway network to keep the roads motor able round the clock. Chairman NHA briefed the participants about the importance of Hoshab-Awaran project as this project is an integral part of CPEC Central Alignment which connects Gwader Port with the Sindh Province. This project will improve the socio, economical condition of the most deprived southern Balochistan districts. Hoshab-Awaran Project is 146 km in length with 7.3 meter road width and 2 meter treated shoulders.



LAHORE: Members of Hindu community celebrating Diwali festival with traditional zeal. Shahbaz Sindhu. - DNA

Efforts afoot to prevent virus outbreak at 'Panahags'

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Focal Person on Shelter Homes Naseem ur Rehman has said that concerted efforts were being made to sensitize 'Panahags' dwellers about standard operating procedures (SOPs), issued by the government to curb the coronavirus pandemic second layer in the country. "We are ensuring strict enforcement of the health guidelines such as mask wearing, hand washing and social distancing at the facilities to keep the virus at bay," he told the media at the 'G-9 Shelter Home' during his routine inspection visit.

He said all the service providers at shelter homes were sensitized about the precautionary measures that were imperative to prevent the pandemic outbreak at crowded places.

To a question, the focal person said some six 'Panahags' at the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad had more than 30 staffers who were being educated regularly so that the health messages could be delivered to the dwellers by them in a face to face interaction. He said large size radios had also been installed at the shelter homes to convey the health messages to the residents directly. Special programmes were being broadcast on the

Need for more trained manpower

FAISALABAD: The need for highly-trained manpower should be met before "relocation" of Chinese industries under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects, said President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) Engineer Hafiz Ehtesham Javed here Sunday. Addressing a meeting of the FCCI Standing Committee on CPEC, he said that under the great initiative, China was shifting some of its state-of-the-art industrial enterprises to our EPZs including Allama Iqbal Export Processing Zone in Faisalabad. Work on export processing zone of Faisal-

abad was in full swing and it is expected that the phase of setting up industries in it would begin soon. Modern technology based industries would be set up in this zone so that their surplus produce could also be exported. In order to meet needs of these industries, we must focus on preparation of our manpower immediately. Our idea and thoughts in this regard should be very broad so that highly trained manpower can be prepared and sent abroad. In this way, we will not only solve our unemployment problem but foreign remittances can also be increased, he added. He asked Engineer Asim

Munir President District Board of Directors Toyota to introduce training courses for existing manpower as well as for newly educated youth through which our future needs in terms of manpower could be met. He also demanded to start on-job training course for the existing manpower. Secretary General FCCI Malik Abdul Qayyum Raza, Engineer Ahmed Hassan, Patron of the Committee, Committee Chairman Tahir Yaqub, Muzammil Sultan, Zeeshanul Haq, Asif Javed, Mohammad Din Tahir and Mohammad Aslam also attended the meeting. - APP

Prices of dried fruits surged in KP

PESHAWAR: With an advent of winter and rainfall season in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a substantial increase in prices of dried fruits was being witnessed these days in Peshawar where the commodities were almost out of reach of common man. According to different markets' survey on Sunday, best quality almonds were being sold at about Rs1000 per kilogram, walnut Rs 1,200 per KG, pistachio Rs 2,500 per KG, peanut

Rs320 per KG, figs Rs 1400 per KG, apricot Rs500 per KG, dates Rs 250 per KG and pine nut Rs 6,000 per KG respectively. With rise of chill in Peshawar in wake of cold breeze and rainfall, prices of dry fruits especially of nuts have almost gone out of reach of the middle class and low income groups due to its increasing demand of people and transportation to merged areas, Islamabad and Punjab province. In Peshawar, prices of dry fruits are sky high

as compared to others areas of the province where dried fruit was available in substantial quantity. Apart from regular shops located in markets, dry fruit vendors have become a common sight in the city earning maximum profits. A dried fruit shopkeeper at Firdus bazaar told APP that most of dried fruits were being imported from Afghanistan to Peshawar and were later transported onward to Punjab and Islamabad due to high profits there. - APP

RAC to hold Qawali Night

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A Qawali Night will be held at Rawalpindi Arts Council on November 16, aiming to keep alive the culture of Qawali. The night aims to promote the virtues of peace and harmony to rekindle the Qawali music. Famous international master Qawal Imran Aziz Mian will enthral the audience with his soulful and melodious tunes. Commissioner Rawalpindi, Muhsin Ahmed will be the chief guest, an official told on Sunday. He said that the famous Qawal Imran Aziz will spellbound the audience with skillful rendition of Sudi Qawali. He will take you on a journey of soulful devotion with their renditions of some of Qawali's most timeless classics", he said. Families as well as singles are invited to enjoy themselves with the best organized setting arrangement and peaceful atmosphere. The participants will also be entertained by various food stalls and all necessary precautions will be taken along with Hand Sanitizers and complimentary masks, he stated.

Govt to construct 31 National parks

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Climate Change has finalized a plan to develop 31 national parks across the country under Ramsar Convention through Protected Areas Initiative project to improve conservation and strengthen biodiversity and ecosystems. According to the details received through official sources, the national parks would be developed in Punjab, Sindh, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. A sum of Rs 571.58 million has been reserved for community development parks conservation. The overall objective of Protected Areas component under the 'Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Programme' was to improve the overall conservation of the existing Protected Areas; encourage eco-tourism, community engagement and job creation through the conservation and also to improve quality and sustainable management of these areas. - APP

Imported wheat to be provided to consumers

PESHAWAR: The provincial government has imported ample quantity of sugar that would be provided to people at Rs. 87.50 per kilogram. A official of food department said that imported sugar has reached various divisions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa which would be provided to people at cheaper rates. Imported sugar would be available at Sasta Bazaars established by District Administration in various districts of the province and general stores at Rs. 87.50 per kilogram, he told APP here on Sunday. He said sugar imported from abroad has reached Karachi port under the supervision of industries department, adding that its transportation to different parts of the province is in full swing. - APP

'Modi threat to regional peace'

DNA



MUZAFFARABAD: Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir Shehryar Khan Afridi Sunday said that the Indian Prime Minister Narendra

Modi's jingoistic designs are a threat to regional and global peace and world leaders must take cognizance of the evidence presented by Pakistan of Indian state terrorism to destabilise Pakistan. Mr Afridi was speaking to media here following his visit to CMH Hospital and inquiring after the health of the civilians got injured in Indian shelling at the Line of Control (LoC). Flanked by President Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Masood Khan and other officials, Shehryar Afridi said that he was visiting the injured as directed by Prime Minister Imran Khan to ensure best facilities to the injured Kashmiris and their families. He said that Pakistan stands by its Kashmiri brethren and would keep providing them diplomatic, moral and political support against Indian occupational forces. He said that warmongering Indian Premier Modi today wore military fatigue & rode tank in Rajasthan to reflect his jingoistic designs. "We have and we will fight back India's expansionist designs. I would urge United Nations Secretary-General Antonio

Guterres and other world leaders to take notice of evidence presented by Pakistan of Indian state terrorism and take action," he said. "World must fight India-backed terrorist Daesh now. Afghanistan must not allow India to use its soil. We have generously hosted four million Afghan refugees for four long decades and also helped the Afghan peace process to succeed. Afghanistan must now allow hostile forces and Indian intelligence to use Afghan soil to destabilise Pakistan," he added. Afridi said that people on the LoC are happy with Pakistan's support and are ready for any sacrifice for Pakistan. India will never succeed in its expansionist ambitions, he added. "India has become hostile to all its neighbours and countries of the region. India's successive and unabated violations of the LoC ceasefire are a challenge for the United Nations and the world community," remarked Afridi. He said that on the one hand, India raises the slogan of Rising India while on the contrary, it puts the peace of the entire region in a jeopardy under its expansionist agenda. He lauded the swift support medical help by CMH doctors and the Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir for the timely medical assistance to the injured Kashmiris. "Salute to the resolve of the people living along the LoC who has become a symbol of resistance against Indian shelling. I also salute the bravery of our valiant forces fighting the enemy at the LoC and working boundary," he concluded.

specific radio channels to enhance their awareness level against the contagion, he added.

With the help of a Strengthening Public Health Organization, the health workers in at least three hand-washing booths at each panahags of Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad and Lahore and others to ensure their safety against the coronavirus.

In the prevailing situation, hand-washing booth at the panahags will work as a critical tool in combating the deadly virus which has devoured several lives across the world. The local person remarked. He said all the public and

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Briefs**645 VIPs fined during ongoing year**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Remaining steadfast to one of the basic objectives of eliminating VIP culture, Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) fined 645 VIPs during the current year including parliamentarians, diplomats and bureaucrats. "Elimination of VIP culture and equal application of law are the operational codes of the ITP which has become the model of excellence for all law enforcement agencies in the country," SSP (Traffic) Farrukh Rasheed said on Sunday. He said performance of traffic police personnel is being reviewed continuously and every possible effort would be made to improve it. As per basic objectives defined at the time of inception of Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) on January 28, 2006, SSP (Traffic) said its personnel are ensuring equal implementation of law and they fined 645 VIPs on traffic rules violation during the ongoing year. VIPs fined during the ongoing year included 38 MNAs/MPAs, 14 Senators, 16 army officials, 112 government officials, 200 senior police officers, 24 diplomats, 87 media persons, 54 Judiciary officers among others. "Whether there is any VIP or common people on the road, everyone is equal to us and it is our responsibility to save his life through ensuring implementation on traffic rules," the SSP (Traffic) maintained.

Govt should not chase opposition but mafia

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former President ICCI Shahid Rasheed Butt on Sunday said the government should not chase opposition but mafia to provide relief to the masses reeling under inflation. The government is fully occupied with cornering opposition while mafia is busy in bleeding poor white, he said. Shahid Rasheed Butt said that masses are not interested in statistics but bread which is not available at a reasonable price. He said that wheat and sugar imports have failed to reduce prices in the market which indicates the influence of mafia. The reasons behind the price spiral are said to be smuggling, hoarding, inaction by authorities, the influence of cartel and profiteering by whole sellers and retailers, he said. Shahid Rasheed Butt said that authorities are expressing weakness while price control mechanism has become dysfunctional which is adding to the onslaught of mafia on helpless masses.

Sehat Sahulat Program – another promise fulfilled

ISLAMABAD: Sehat Sahulat Program of the federal government has emerged as another flagship program to facilitate the ailing poor mitigating their sufferings. Hundreds of thousands poor in the country are benefiting from this program as it is fulfillment of yet another promise made to the poor people in the manifesto of the PTI government. Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination is executing this program in collaboration with provincial and regional governments. Sehat Sahulat Program is a social health protection initiative meant for providing free of cost health insurance, in door health care services to poor, vulnerable and marginalized families in Pakistan. During 2016 and 2018, the program started with phase-I of the initiative with focus on below poverty families, providing benefit package of Rs: 50,000 per family per year for low cost secondary care diseases and Rs: 250,000 per family per year for expensive 7 priority care diseases. – APP



ISLAMABAD: A beautiful view of Faisal Mosque after rain on Sunday. – DNA

Girl child needs more focused parenthood, opine experts

Talking about the social taboos, they said the early marriages deprive the girls of their education, healthy physical and social growth. The teen mothers are more prone to weaker health, pregnancy complications and maternal deaths

KHAYAM ABBASI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed said the parents in our society have proved to be very rigid towards their daughters. All the teachings of our religion and the awareness campaigns could not bring the change we required to prioritize the social, mental and physical growth of our daughters. Islamabad – The experts speaking at a webinar urged the parents to focus more on mental, social and physical healthy growth of their girls. Prioritizing girls in the family-life would make them equally mature, nurtured and responsible citizens. Physical protection is the major challenge facing the minor and teenage girls to avoid physical and sexual abuse.

Talking about the social taboos, they said the early marriages deprive the girls of their education, healthy physical and social growth. The teen mothers are more prone to weaker health, pregnancy complications and maternal deaths. The webinar on the role of healthy and educated girls for a prosperous society was organized by the Development Communications Network (Devcom-Pakistan) and DTN on Saturday. The panelist included chairperson National Commission on the Rights of Children (NCRC) Afshan Tehseen Bajwa, Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed, former parliamentarian from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Miraj Humayun, consultant with an Asian Development Bank (ADB) project Muniza Tarar, and educationist and social activist Meeran Malik.

The NCRC chairperson Afshan Tehseen Bajwa said girls are the children of a lesser god in our society despite our religion has given much more rights to them. We need to change our social behaviours towards our daughters. They need to have equal opportunities of education, health, food and nutrition and social protection. Once it would be fully functional, she said the NCRC would play a pivotal role to ensure their physical protection of their rights according to the religion, national and international commitments. Despite no funds and facilities, we are still putting our efforts to highlight the crimes against children especially girls and consistently follow-up the cases of rape, physical abuse and other sort of victimization.

Devcom-Pakistan Executive Di-

rector Munir Ahmed said the parents in our society have proved to be very rigid towards their daughters. All the teachings of our religion and the awareness campaigns could not bring the change we required to prioritize the social, mental and physical growth of our daughters. Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (2017-18) has revealed that 37 percent of the girls were married by the age of 18 while 8 per cent got married when they were 15 years old. Around 70 percent of the girls lacked adequate nutrition. The pregnancy complications and maternal deaths were far less in the girls married at the age of 25-29. Munir Ahmed said more girl-child focused parenthood and public funding would help improve the health and wellbeing indicators of the SDG-3, and quality educa-

tion (SDG-4) and gender equality (SDG-5) and decent work and economic growth (SDG-8). Girls' education is crosscutting to all the SDGs. Educating the girl child helps in the improvement of a good life, improved health as they bring an awareness of the importance of hygiene and health. Through education, they can lead a healthy lifestyle. The women that are educated can care for their children better. Former parliamentarian from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Miraj Humayun said the situation in KP was much embarrassing as the girls' education, health and social growths deteriorated over the years. Population and poverty index both are rising in the province unchecked. Parents do not have sufficient resources to feed and educate their children despite knowing the benefits.

President directs to give insurance money to widow

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Sunday rejected a representation of State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan (SLICP) and directed it to give insurance money to widow of a policy-holder, along with profits. The President upheld a decision of Wafaqi Mohtasib against SLICP, which had denied payment of insurance claim to a widow on grounds that her husband had pre-insurance ailment of Hepatitis C and chronic liver disease. The Wafaqi Mohtasib in its verdict had asked the SLICP to give widow the due amount of insurance claim following the death of her husband. Endorsing the decision of Wafaqi Mohtasib, the President termed as "unfair" the SLICP's rejection of insurance policy on flimsy grounds that the deceased had lied about his ailment.

President Alvi said it was responsibility of the company to ensure the same at time of insurance, adding that the "onus to prove the pre-insurance ailment rested upon the Agency". He called it "very traumatizing" for the widow, who had been waiting for over three years for settlement. He directed the SLICP to settle the claim as per direction of the Wafaqi Mohtasib's order and ensure that payment was made with profits up to the date of settlement. The deceased Abid Bajwa had obtained a life insurance policy from SLICP in 2008 for a sum assured of Rs. 100,000. After his death in 2017, his widow Riffat Sultana filed the death insurance claim, which was repudiated by SLICP. Feeling aggrieved, the complainant approached the Wafaqi Mohtasib who passed the impugned order, against which the SLICP filed a representation with the President. – APP

IBCC, IUCPSS sign MoU

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Inter Board Committee of Chairmen (IBCC) and Inter University Consortium for Promotion of Social Sciences Pakistan (IUCPSS) signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Through the signed MOU, both organisations agreed to cooperate and collaborate through fostering mutual cooperation and collaboration, conducting joint awareness sessions, career counseling sessions, advocacy seminars, consultative workshops, conferences, competitions, Student Convention & Expo and other academic activities. It was agreed to promote curricular and co-curricular activities. Speaking on the occasion, Secretary Inter Board Committee of Chairmen Dr Ghulam Ali Mallah said that students are future leaders, hence, as per mandate of the IBCC.

COVID impacts second hand clothes business

ISLAMABAD: The increase in prices due to the overall inflation, reduced movement of people during the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic and a fear of catching virus from the used clothes have badly impacted the business of second hand clothes in the city along with changing the life styles of the citizens. Second hand clothes which were considered as the most selling items at the advent of Winter season have become out of reach for the common citizens owing to the increasing prices of each and every commodity and their reduced purchasing power. While the COVID related factors including buyers' reluctance to visit Landa Bazars as a precaution to avoid rush and not buying second hand clothes for their children due to fear of catching virus were also

hindering good sales. Shaukat Ali, who is a vendor at a stall of second hand clothes at Sunday Market, said the customers for used clothes have been reduced up to 50 percent this Winter season as compared to the last year due to the COVID. Majority of the customers complains that the COVID has affected their businesses and limited their purchasing power in the present price hike situation in the country. The customers even bargain while purchasing a single sweater which cost only Rs 100, he said while talking to APP. Israr, a vendor at ladies sweaters' stall said actually the customers are not visiting the second hand clothes market due to the fear of COVID despite strict implementation of COVID Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) by the Capital Devel-

opment Authority. He said that the decrease in customers up to 60 percent this year has affected our business. "Our regular customers are from Islamabad and Rawalpindi and they are not visiting the market". Many of the customers seems to be hesitant of buying used things considering these clothes will affect them with the virus as these clothes come from other countries which are more affected. While others buy these with an intention to first wash these with antiseptics before using. Sayed Ghulam, who is a second hand shoes retailer, said customers of second hand clothes and shoes reduced to a large extent due to the sense of fear prevailing among most the buyers amid COVID as well as less purchasing capacity due to exorbitant price. – APP

Drug pushers go scot free in the sector G-12

The badly affected segment happens to be the youth in this case since many schools are located around the area. The drug pushers penetrate into these schools; lure young lads and thus make them addicts. This practice regrettably continues since long

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Amidst the fully developed sectors of Islamabad lies Sector G-12, known locally as Mehra Abadi. The thousands of acres of land occupied by the locals has become a 'No Go Area' for many since the illegal encroachment, construction of commercial and private property and other criminal activities continue unabated. So much so, the said sector has become haven for the drug pushers; addicts and anti-social elements. As alleged by the residents living in the nearby sectors, people hiding in G 12 commit robberies and disappear in this sector. They also allege, police unfortunately either has not ac-

cess to this sector or do not want to purge the Aegean stables. The badly affected segment happens to be the youth in this case since many schools are located around the area. The drug pushers penetrate into these schools; lure young lads and thus make them addicts. This practice regrettably continues since long. The resident living nearby have time and again registered their complaints with the local authorities or on Prime Minister Portal but nothing significant has been done so far and consequently illegal practices remain in operation. The proposed Sector G-12 is an anomaly in an otherwise well-planned, well-developed and CDA maintained capital city. The civic agency had acquired the land from

locals but for past three decades it has failed to take possession. Although the award for G-12 land was given back in 1986, the local residents didn't accept the terms and condition and refused to vacate. In the 1990's and 2000's multiple anti-encroachment operations were undertaken by CDA with assistance from Police and District Administration with little or no substantial results. Also, due to the illegal occupancy by locals, sectors like G-13, G-14, F-14 and housing society near motorway are connected to mainland Islamabad with only one road, the Kashmir Highway. No service road and inter-sector roads exist. Meanwhile, during past decade many shops, showrooms, marriage halls, marquee and other

structures have been erected in and around the disputed sector. Since the land is not regulated under the domain of CDA, the sale and purchase of land is done through stamp papers. The absence of regulations and rules has made sector G-12 a safe choice specially for middle sized businesses like supply, hardware, car wash, cement etc. It is pertinent to mention that sector G-12, the long disputed sector of Islamabad for the past two decades, is witnessing unbridled infrastructure development on its fringes. One can witness the development along the Kashmir Highway while entering and leaving Islamabad. Dozens of shops, marriage halls, marquee and showrooms can be spotted along

the borders of G-12. Few months ago the district administration and CDA launched a massive operation to remove these encroachments, and they were able to remove some, however after strong resistance from the local the operation was left in half way. On papers, CDA had acquired the sector back in 1985, however, the locals refused to give possession as they found the compensation to be insufficient. The sale and purchase of land in the sector has been barred since then. At present, many businessmen and property dealers are selling and purchasing the land in the sector. The sales and purchases are being done without a lawful transfer of title, allocation of a plot on the map and registry.

Entries sought for documentary competition

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Punjab government has sought submissions for documentary competition on the life of Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), aiming to pay homage to the last Prophet, messenger of peace (PBUH).

According to official sources, the aspirants have been asked to submit their documentaries for competition by November 20, 2020.

Punjab government is offering hefty prizes for the makers of best documentaries. In category I, the applicants are required to submit their entries of five minute documentary. Likewise in category II, the documentaries spanning 120 seconds should be submitted for competition participation.

In category I, first prize will be Rs 1 million, followed by Rs 700,000 and Rs 500,000 as second and third prizes respectively. Similarly in Category II, the first, second and third prizes will be Rs 500,000, Rs 300,000 and Rs 200,000 respectively. Best documentaries would be aired on TV channels and social media.

The competition is the part of ongoing Hafta e Shan e Rehmatul lil Aalamin being observed from Oct 30 to Nov 7, to pay homage to the Holy Prophet (PBUH). The documentaries (with English and French subtitles in FHD version) should be submitted alongwith the name, computerized national identity card (CNIC) and phone number to shaanumhamadweek@gmail.com via google drive/we transfer.

Muslim heritage treasure trove

LAHORE: The beautiful saying of Hazrat Ali Bin Abi Talib (RA), the fourth caliph of Islam, reads as "the beauty of writing is the tongue of the hand and the elegance of thought." Another famous saying which is attributed to him narrates as, "the art of calligraphy is defined as tongue of the hand and elegance of imagination". Calligraphy may be defined as a visual art which is associated with writing, an art of giving attractive form to written letters that incites and catches the emotions of the viewers.

In calligraphy, most often a broad tip instrument, a brush, pen, pencil or similar other writing tools and instruments are used. Islamic history reveals that the recognition of Islamic calligraphy is attributed to Hazrat Ali Bin Abi Talib (RA) and the Islamic calligraphy script was originated in Kufa, which is the oldest of all scripts, so this is the reason that style was named as Kufic.

The attribution of the discipline of Islamic calligraphy has a direct association with spiritual elevation and its fusion with art is spellbinding. Fashion of calligraphy is not new, by viewing history, its roots resonate within Islamic culture since the early centuries. There is a famous saying that purity of writing is the purity of soul, as the art of Islamic calligraphy is not only a medium of expression but also food for the soul of both the reader and the calligraphist. – APP

Shibli condole death of mother of Sirajul Haq

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz has expressed grief and sorrow over the sad demise of mother of Ameer Jamaat e Islami Senator Sirajul Haq. In a message of condolence, he prayed Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear the loss with fortitude.

Briefs

Govt bringing anti-rape ordinance

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has on Saturday said that the government is bringing a stringent and holistic anti-rape ordinance closing all loopholes next week. The premier took to Twitter and said he spoke to ASI Buriro lauding his and his daughter's exemplary initiative and courage in arrest of Kashmir rapist. The nation is proud of them and he has given positive uplift to image of police, Imran Khan said.

Spoke to ASI Buriro lauding his & his daughter's exemplary initiative & courage in arrest of Kashmir rapist. The nation is proud of them & he has given positive uplift to image of police. Next week we are bringing a stringent, holistic anti-rape Ordinance closing all loopholes. It is pertinent here to mention that ASI Buriro and his daughter helped to arrest Rafiq Malik, the man involved in the gang-rape of a woman and her four-year-old daughter in Kashmir. Rafiq Malik was later shot dead by his own accomplice when he was taken to Bakhshapur for identification. Kashmir police apprehended the attacker, Khairullah Bugti.

Drug pusher held for supplying narcotics

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Kohsar police on Saturday arrested an accused supplying drugs at educational institutions and various areas of the city and recovered heroin, hashish and Ice, a police spokesman said.

Following orders of IGP Islamabad Aamir Zulfiqar Khan, he said DIG (Operations) Waqar Uddin had categorically directed all police officers to accelerate their efforts against drug dealers/smugglers to purge this menace from the city. Following these directions, SP (City-Circle) Omer Khan constituted special anti-drug police team under supervision of ASP Ayesha Gul including SHO Kohsar Police Sub-Inspector Shabbir Tanoli, Sub-Inspectors Nawazish Khan along with others officials. This team nabbed drug pusher from Saidpur and recovered 4 kilogram hashish, 2 kilogram heroin and 500 gram Ice from him. The accused was identified as Muzamil Shah ails Zamli. During the preliminary investigation the suspect confessed their involvement in intercity smuggling drugs at various educational institutions, while case has been registered and further investigation is underway from him IGP Islamabad Aamir Zulfiqar Khan and DIG (Operations) Waqar Uddin appreciated the police performance.

Three dacoits held

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Shams Colony police station has arrested three members of a dacoit's gang and recovered snatched cash, mobile phones, three motorbikes and weapons from them, a police spokesman said on Saturday.

According to details, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Aamir Zulfiqar Khan ordered crackdown against criminal elements. Following these orders, DIG (Operations) Waqar-Ud-Din has directed all zonal officers to accelerate their efforts to curb the crime in the city. Following these directions, SP (Industrial Area) Zubair Ahmed Sheikh constituted a team to ensure arrest of those involved in it. This team headed by DSP Khalid Mehmoood Awan including SHO Shams colony police station Sub-Inspectors Turab-Ul-Hassan, Tajamal Shah and others worked hard and succeeded to arrest three alleged gangsters involved in committing dacoities at gunpoint. The nabbed dacoits have been identified as Imran s/o Zarmalash, Ishmael s/o Islam Gul and Shohaib s/o Kamran, while police recovered three motorbikes, cash, 10 mobile phones and weapons from their possession.



ISLAMABAD: Artists from Sindh perform on the occasion of Sindi cultural night at PNCA. – DNA

Updated edition of Juma Khan Sufi's book launched

The book also exposes how Kabul and Delhi developed a nexus to garner support of Pashtun and Baloch nationalists living in Pakistan with the objective of breaking up Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Authored by Juma Khan Sufi – a renowned author, scholar and expert on Pak-Afghan Affairs – the fourth edition of the book Faraib-e-Natamam was launched in a ceremony held at Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad. The book, which is published by the Institute's publishing arm 'IPS Press', reveals how Kabul and Delhi have been hand-in-hand in instigating violence and secessionist movements in Pakistan, while maintaining that 'Pashtunistan' card was concocted by Kabul during Zahir Shah's rule to have an excuse for interference inside Pakistan. The book also exposes how Kabul and Delhi developed



a nexus to garner support of Pashtun and Baloch nationalists living in Pakistan with the objective of breaking up Pakistan. Delineating the role of foreign powers, the book mentions how nationalist figureheads from Sindh, Balochistan and the former NWFP received monetary and arms support from Kabul and Delhi in their efforts to destabilize Pakistan. The event was chaired by Khalid Rahman, Executive President IPS, who said the book is a valuable contribution for researchers stuck at the crossroads in the war of narratives. Later, Sufi presented his book to researcher Dr Lutfur Rehman, Ambassador (r) Ayaz Wazir and Brigadier (r) Said Nazir Mohmand who attended the event.

Early treatment of diabetes could save millions of lives

DNA

ISLAMABAD: November is observed as World Diabetes Day in response to growing concerns about the escalating health threat posed by diabetes. This year's theme focuses on promoting the role of nurses in the prevention and management of diabetes. Consultant Endocrinologist at Shifa International Hospital, Dr. Osama Ishtiaq said that overall diabetes prevalence in Pakistan is almost 19 percent and over 522 million people are currently living with diabetes globally. He stated that 90 percent of diabetic patients have type 2 diabetes, which is largely preventable through regular physical activity, a healthy and balanced diet, and the promotion of healthy living environments.

He said risk factors may include genetic, being overweight, gestational diabetes and polycystic ovary in women. He stressed the need to educate the masses about diseases and the importance of a suitable environment to live and adopt a healthier lifestyle. Consultant Endocrinologist SIH, Dr. Tayyab Badshah said that type 1 diabetes is not preventable but can be managed with insulin injections, and if a patient with diabetes goes untreated for

a long time, there can be serious effects on the patient as he may suffer from organ failure, stroke, stroke, lower limb amputation, and even heart attack. Consultant Endocrinologist SIH, Dr. Umar Yousaf Raja Khan explained that Diabetes is a chronic disease that occurs when the pancreas is no longer able to make insulin, or when the body cannot make good use of the insulin it produces. Over the long-term high glucose levels are associated with damage to the body and failure of various organs and tissues. 1 in every 2 people currently living with diabetes is undiagnosed. Early diagnosis and treatment are key elements to prevent the complications of diabetes and achieve healthy outcomes, he stated. Consultant Endocrinologist SIH, Dr. Tehjmal Rehman talked about prevailing diabetes in children. He said type one diabetes is common among children where the pancreas fails to make insulin necessary to maintain blood glucose and the patient needs to be injected with external insulin. Symptoms include frequent urination, weight loss, affected growth, extreme tiredness, loss of appetite. He said that a child must be tested for diabetes if parents observe any of the above symptoms.

CDA to procure machinery for garbage collection

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) has decided to procure new machinery for extending its secondary waste collection services to the densely populated areas of Islamabad. The decision to this effect was taken in the CDA board meeting which met here with Chairman, Aamer Ali

Ahmed in the chair a couple of days ago, Sanitation Director Sardar Khan Zimri told APP. He said it was also decided to hire more than 100 sanitation workforce under third party arrangements for collection and transportation of garbage from Bhara Kahu, Lehtrar road, Sihala and other ru-

ral areas. Services of more than 400 workers would also be hired to ensure clean and green environment in Red Zone and F-series sectors, he added. The director said the machinery including skip lifting vehicles, mechanical sweepers and other equipment would be procured shortly.

Explaining the secondary waste collection, he said garbage from roads and markets were collected under such arrangements. To a query, he said a consultant had been hired to carry out feasibility study for solid waste management on scientific lines the capital city. – APP

Expensive gas to hit masses, double circular debt

FIAZ CH

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Sunday said the government is importing costly gas which will hit masses and industrial sector. Expensive gas will add to the problems of masses and the dejected business community while it will double the volume of the circular debt in the gas sector, it said. Expensive gas import contracts have been finalised at rates ranging between 16 to 18 percent of Brent crude while the gas purchased by the previous government was around 13 percent, said Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President PEW. He said that the former government purchased gas at a lower price despite stable market but now it is being purchased at a higher cost when the market is down which is amazing.

FIEDMC to support ICCI for new industrial estate

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Mian Kashif Ashfaq, Chairman, Faisalabad Industrial Estate Development and Management Company (FIEDMC) said that his company was specialized in developing and managing industrial zones and would extend all possible support to the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) for the establishment of a new industrial estate in the federal capital. He announced to set up a facilitating desk of FIEDMC at ICCI to brief the foreign delegations and diplomats visiting ICCI about potential investment opportunities in SEZs of FIEDMC. He stated this while giving a presentation about FIEDMC projects to the business community at Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry. Aamir Saleemi,

CEO and other officers of FIEDMC were also present at the occasion. Mian Kashif Ashfaq stated that FIEDMC has set up M3 Industrial City at 4356 acres to house medium and large scale industries. He said that Allama Iqbal Industrial City was being set up at an area of 3217 acres for medium and large scale industries. Similarly, Value Additions City has been set up at 225 acres for SMEs. He said that FIEDMC Business Zone was being set up at 250 acres for commercial activities besides establishing CPEC & Bond to Bond model as a supply chain. He said an Agro Zone would also be set up at 1500 acres for SMEs and agro businesses. He said that Health City, Apparel City, Light Engineering and Furniture City would also be set up in SEZs to promote industrialization. He said that FIEDMC was constructing state-

of-the-art infrastructure in its SEZs and a grid station would be set up to provide 15-20% cheap electricity to industries. A shuttle train would also be launched for labour. He said that FIEDMC would set up a one window service centre to facilitate the local and foreign investors for investing in its SEZs. He said that FIEDMC SEZs were providing a 10-year tax holiday and land could be purchased with 15% deposit with rest payment spread over 4 years. He further stated that blocks of Turkish, Chinese, Asian, Saudi & European investors have also been set up in Allama Iqbal SEZ. Speaking at the occasion, Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry lauded the efforts of FIEDMC Chairman for promoting industrialization, which would strengthen our economy.

Working staff to be cut after spike in COVID-19

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Amid the second wave of coronavirus pandemic, the Establishment Division has decided for slashing its working staff up to 50 per cent and issued orders to half of the employees to work from home. The division issued directives to the 50 per cent employees of its subordinate offices for continuing work from home during the second wave of COVID-19 and ordered the workforce to strictly follow the social distancing steps by avoiding handshaking and hugging. The usage of paper documents was banned and only electronic files will be used for documentation purpose. In the case of using paper documents, it will be sanitised first. All sessions of the offices will be conducted through video link and disinfectant spray will be conducted twice a day including all rooms and furniture. Moreover, the division imposed a ban on the arrival of visitors in its offices. Earlier in the day, the statistics of the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) has shown that 2,165 new cases of COVID-19 and 17 more deaths were recorded across the country during the last 24 hours. The tally of deaths reached up to 7,109 in Pakistan, whereas, the number of active cases of COVID-19 reached up to 24,938. On November 11, the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) had discussed and recommended a ban on big public gatherings in the country in view of soaring rate of COVID-19 positive cases in the second wave of the disease. A review meeting of the NCOC, chaired by federal minister Asad Umar, had discussed spike in novel coronavirus positive cases and recommended ban on large public gatherings in the country as a precautionary measure. The NCOC session had also recommended tightening of precautionary measures in the high risk areas.

Early treatment of diabetes could save millions

DNA

ISLAMABAD: November is observed as World Diabetes Day in response to growing concerns about the escalating health threat posed by diabetes. This year's theme focuses on promoting the role of nurses in the prevention and management of diabetes. Consultant Endocrinologist at Shifa International Hospital, Dr. Osama Ishtiaq said that overall diabetes prevalence in Pakistan is almost 19 percent and over 522 million people are currently living with diabetes globally. He stated that 90 percent of diabetic patients have type 2 diabetes, which is largely preventable through regular physical activity, a healthy and balanced diet, and the promotion of healthy living environments. He said risk factors may include genetic, being overweight, gestational diabetes and polycystic ovary in women. He stressed the need to educate the masses about diseases and the importance of a suitable environment to live and adopt a healthier lifestyle. Consultant Endocrinologist SIH, Dr. Tayyab Badshah said that type 1 diabetes is not preventable but can be managed with insulin injections, and if a patient with diabetes goes untreated for a long time, there can be serious effects on the patient as he may suffer from organ failure, stroke, stroke, lower limb amputation, and even heart attack.

Visitors want display of cultural heritage

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The 10-day Lok Mela 2020, which concluded in the Federal Capital's picturesque Shakarparian on Sunday, attracted hundreds of thousands of residents of the twin cities, who felt that the annual folk festival this year lacked to fully display cultural heritage of different areas of the country. Home to around 15 major ethnicities which are different in dress, music, cuisine, physical appearance and customs, Pakistan before its inception had remained under influence of various foreign nations such as Central and Western Asian people, Afghans and Arabs. The colours of mixed cultures were omnipresent in all parts of

the country, including Punjabis, Sindhis, Baloch, Pashtuns, Kashmiris, Hazaras, Makranis and Baltis, and there was need for more mega festivals, like the Lok Mela for promoting national harmony, in addition to effective projection of cultural traditions, visitors to the Lok Mela said. They called for inclusion of more pavilions and sub-pavilions so as to showcase the cultural heritage of country in its entirety. "Currently, there are pavilions of all the federating units such as Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Balochistan, Gilgit Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Sindh but more structures space should be created in the next annual Lok Mela for full-spectrum display of cultural heritage," Muhammad

Usman, a resident of Rawalpindi, said. He pointed out the absence of cultures, cuisine and arts of various regions such as South Punjab, Pothohar and Indus, and suggested setting up separate pavilions next year for their display. Usman said dedicated stalls could also have been set up to promote truck art, blue pottery of Multan and Sindh, and calligraphy. Sehrish Irfan, who came along with her children, said she was obsessed with Kalasha traditions after hearing from many people about their unique culture, but unfortunately, no such pavilion was set up this year. She called for inclusion of a Kalash pavilion in the next Lok Mela as it would help the persons like her to know about the Kalash cu-

lure. An official of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority, requesting anonymity, agreed to the proposal of setting up multiple sub-pavilions to ensure proper representation of all the regions of the country. He cited the financial constraints faced by the provincial cultural departments as one of the major reasons behind the absence of different regional cultures from the Lok Mela. Lok Virsa's Executive Director Talha Ali Kushvaha contended that the Mela was a success despite the surge in coronavirus cases across the country. "There is always a room for improvement," he said. He said the Lok Virsa management did not interfere in the domain of provincial departments

and only gave them space to set up pavilions and stalls for display of their cultural traditions, food, arts and handicrafts. He said the management, after evaluating the current year's festival, would recommend the provincial departments to set up more organized pavilions to ensure display of all their regional cultures, traditions, foods, handicrafts and arts. To a query, he said the mega folk festival was arranged in quite an impressive manner with the addition of a number of performances and musical nights. According to an official of Lok Virsa, at least 0.7 million people visited the festival amid strict implementation of the anti-COVIDs standard operating procedures.

Indian subversive acts in Pakistan

IN an explosive press conference, DG ISPR Maj-Gen Babar Iftikhar, accompanied by Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, has presented a dossier containing "irrefutable evidence" of Indian-sponsored terrorism in Pakistan. The foreign minister has also asked the international community to take notice of this proof and ensure peace in South Asia. As National Security Adviser Moeed Yusuf had warned in a recent interview with Karan Thapar, the Pakistani team has indeed presented evidence of Indian intervention promoting terrorism in the country, with details of bank transactions and audio evidence placed before the media.

The dramatic, and for India seemingly highly damaging, details point to the involvement of Indian consulates and embassies located in neighbouring countries playing a role in running terrorism operations in Pakistan with the support of local elements, including the Taliban and Baloch groups. Other groups based in Pakistan have also been termed traitors with evidentiary ties with Indian RAW. Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has however made it clear that Islamabad hopes to see an international reaction to the dossier. Let us not forget that till now Pakistan has been disappointed over the lack of international response to its complaints about Indian intervention inside Pakistani territory, with constant urging to 'show proof'. Now that it has, there is expectation that something will be done about this.

We will no doubt need to see how the world reacts and how effectively. The press conference came just a couple of days after India launched completely inhuman and illegal attacks across the Line of Control targeting both civilian and military targets in Azad Kashmir. The firing across the line dividing the free and occupied parts of Kashmir killed at least five civilians and one soldier in different sectors of Azad Kashmir. Many other civilians and some soldiers were injured and as inevitably happens when such hostility takes place people were left terrified and once again facing the unrest that has been with them now for over seven decades. This year alone over 2700 persons have become the victims of Indian firing which in the latest incident Pakistan states is a response to action by freedom fighters inside Indian-held Kashmir. The firing is an open violation of the 2003 ceasefire agreement between the two countries.

But evidently human lives and agreements have no meaning for New Delhi. We have seen this kind of aggression in the past and we are watching it once again. The time has come when we will need to move beyond this kind of violence. Pakistan cannot achieve this alone. The international community must step up to stop the atrocities which continue in Kashmir and save its people from their misery. Agreements between Pakistan and India which had intended stability in the region must be respected and honoured. And the international community must try and ensure India sticks to the ceasefire agreement as well as abstains from trying to create chaos within Pakistan.

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Unified educational system

MUHAMMAD OMAR IFTIKHAR

THE unified educational system as proposed by the government of Pakistan is expected to be rolled out and implemented by March 2021. While it seems it will take the educational setup of Pakistan in a new direction, it may create some conflict. Implementing a new system is not the problem. The difficulty arises when the mindset of the people needs to be changed. The syllabus as pursued, implemented, and followed by the educational institutes from the public and private sector represents a mindset etched into the thought process of the students, parents, and the management overseeing the workings of such institutions. A unified syllabus would mean to shun the processes and procedures, especially the course content they have been following, and pursue a new system. This may as well take Pakistani into an era of advancement, as suggested by Prime Minister Imran Khan, but it may also create chaos and confusion. This will arise when various mindsets will follow a single curriculum. The concerned authorities must be aware that the varying syllabus has created mental boundaries that differentiate various students belonging to diverging strata of the population. The students pursuing education in the Cambridge (O and A level track) have always thought of themselves to be superior to the students following the Intermediate track.

In this regard, the government needs to pursue Phase-I of implementing the unified curriculum in March 2021. In this phase, the unified curriculum for classes one to five will be implemented. This will become a litmus test for the government to observe what results does the new system bode for the students and teachers. A gradual progression of the plan is imperative. The Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training must observe all impacts created by the implementation of the syllabus before applying the same for higher classes. According to reports, the phase-II (for class 6 to 8) will be implemented by March 2022 and the phase-III (for class 9 to 12) will be implemented by March 2023.

Azerbaijan finally stands triumphed

Dr Mehmoed Ul Hassan Khan



Illegally occupied Armenia has been notorious for genocide activities against peaceful people of Azerbaijan for centuries. The attackers have been disturbing geographic equation and social propositions of illegally occupied areas through holding of fake elections and referendums which ultimately proved inadequate to settle the Nagorno-Karabakh

AFTER almost 46 days the Republic of Azerbaijan triumphed the war against Armenia which intentionally started cross border heavy shelling and bombardments on various civil population and installations. Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia have now signed an agreement on November 10 to end fierce fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh.

The aggressor Armenia's military preparedness proved insufficient, demotivated and demoralizing that day after day it confronted with retreat and defeat. During this war faith superseded fascism, harmony conquered horrendous crimes and last but not least, nationalism defeated regional and global terrorist franchises of Armenia.

More than 29 years of principal stance, 348 months of restraint, 1508 weeks of political advocacy and 10585 days of peaceful persuasion Azerbaijan succeeded the ultimate goals of solid commitments, and guarantees of de-occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh and all other adjacent regions. Fall of strategic area of Shusha proved to be terminal for Armenia which decided to sign a deal with Azerbaijan along with Russia and Turkey as peacekeepers to be deployed on the frontlines to make 4th truce effective and meaningful. Illegally occupied Armenia has been notorious for genocide activities against peaceful people of Azerbaijan for centuries. The attackers have been disturbing geographic equation and social propositions of illegally occupied areas through holding of fake elections and referendums which ultimately proved inadequate to settle the Nagorno-Karabakh. During all these painful years, the leadership has been advocating a just solution for Nagorno-Karabakh in accordance with the various resolutions (884 adopted unanimously on 12 November 1993, after reaffirming resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993) and 874 (1993), of the United Nation Security Council clearly rejected illegal occupation of Armenia and demanded de-occupation of the same. But unfortunately complex and complicated regional and international power dynamics could not resolve the issue which has been swinging between frozen and fascist pendulum for the last 29 years. Now Azerbaijan ousted Armenia form its regions in which after the signing of deal, houses are being burnt and public installations are under fire.

It was a war between tanks and think-tanks during which human capital and national narratives outrooted Armenia propaganda. It was a fierce tussle between two armies in which well-prepared armed forces of Azerbaijan became winner. Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev termed the deal historic and glorious victory which constitutes Armenia's capitulation to puts an end to the years-long occupation he further added. Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan described it as unspeakably painful and has now in deep dooms and glooms because of general masses outrage.

Russian president Putin said both Azerbaijan and Armenia will remain in the positions they control. There will be complete cessation of all hostilities in occupied region. Armenia will vacate large parts of occupied Karabakh. Armenia will vacate areas of Aghdam, Kalbajar and Lachin districts in near future which reconfirmed superior leadership qualities of Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev who tirelessly pursued a peaceful resolution of the lingering conflict at various regional as well as international platforms for so many years. Armenia as a defeating country will also guarantee transport from mainland Azerbaijan to Nakhchivan exclave (Nakhichevan-Azerbaijan transportation will be unblocked, the link will be controlled by Russia). Russian peacekeepers will monitor front line (Russian peacekeepers will be in Lachin corridor for 5 years). Turkish peacekeepers will also join Russian to monitor frontline. Internally displaced persons and refugees will return to Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding regions under the control of the UN Refugee Agency. Last but not least, prisoners and bodies will be swapped. It hopes that fourth truce/ceasefire deal will create the necessary conditions for a long-term and comprehensive solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh crisis on a fair basis in line with the interests of all the stakeholders.

Recent clashes in the Nagorno-Karabakh started on 27 September. The Azerbaijani army decided to respond to several Armenian provocations and consequently started its offensive peace enforcement operation. The aggressor Armenia escalated the situation and shelled on civilian population (Tovuz) and settlements during April 2020. Azerbaijan-Turkey series of joint military exercise further enhanced Azerbaijan operational and tactical preparedness which proved lethal for Armenia in this war. The various UAVs and its extensive and systematic operationalization and channelization has changed war theater in which struggling Armenia had no match and ultimately confronted with huge losses. In this context, Israeli-made kamikaze drones IAI Harop, and Turkish-made Bayraktar TB2 UAVs further strengthened the Azerbaijan air force capabilities. Azerbaijan military/war drones initially softened Armenian targets and paved an easy landing of ground troops into the battlefield. It also preserved its armed forces and created a huge loss to Armenian forces.

On the contrary, Armenia followed human shield policy to match with Azerbaijan's superior drone war. Armenia adopted an anti-human strategy consisting of spreading hostilities beyond the occupied region Nagorno-Karabakh to other Azerbaijani territories. While the Azerbaijani Army is successfully de-occupying major parts of Nagorno-Karabakh, Armenian forces wasted its time and resources by using Soviet-made short and mid-range missiles to hit Azerbaijani towns such as Ganja, Tartar and Barda.

It was deliberate and the main aim was to inflict massive civilian losses and raise the political and economic cost for Baku. According to Azerbaijan figures 4-5 big cities, one major settlement, one strategic mountain and 300 villages have been liberated from Armenian forces since September 27, 2020. Fascist Armenia did not even care about strategic energy facilities, such as Mingachevir HPP and Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline and bombarded both. It demonstrated the Armenian frustration and ill designs to undermine the energy security and infrastructure of the entire region. Moreover, the targeting of civil population of Azerbaijan and infrastructure was planned to try and draw Baku into attacking Armenia directly. Such a reaction would boost Yerevan's propaganda and would offer Armenia a legitimate case to call the CSTO to send its troops to Armenia.

Azerbaijan restrained from it and responded Armenia in the battlefield. Not a single civilian Armenian killed during 6 weeks long war. Not a single schools, home, hospital or educational center was put under fire from Azerbaijan which showed its international commitment having superior human values. Historically, the Karabakh conflict instigated from communal unrest in 1988-1990 and small scale civil war involving militias and irregular units in 1991 to an all-out war between two newly established states in 1992-1994. Loss of several territories left a deep wound in Azerbaijan's common consciousness. Afterwards, Baku dealt with a massive humanitarian disaster as hundreds of thousands of displaced persons moved from Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding districts to Azerbaijan.

With better leadership qualities having strategic vision, President Ilham Aliyev cemented relations with Turkey and both the states developed a strategic partnership. It also developed trilateral strategic dialogue with Pakistan which supported it's just moral and political rights on all international forums. Pakistan sharpened its military skills

through joint drills and training sessions which ultimately boosted martial strategies.

Azerbaijani president Aliyev also maintained a good relationship with Russia's President Vladimir Putin. He did not try to upset the Kremlin and understood Moscow's red lines in the region. In the Karabakh conflict, Aliyev tried the diplomatic route for a long time and was open to compromise.

On the other hand, Armenia's Prime Minister, Pashinyan displeased the Kremlin by attempting to insert pro-Western elements within Armenia's bureaucracy and security services. His administration also opened criminal cases against Russian companies. Moreover, Pashinyan multiplied the provocations and declared his inclination to annex the occupied territories, thereby dashing hopes for a negotiated settlement and paving the way for military escalation. Turkey helped Azerbaijan modernise its army. The Turkish army trained the Azerbaijani army, supplied Baku with some of the latest equipment in terms of electronic warfare and armed drones, and helped design an efficient strategy that neutralised Armenia's arsenal of armoured, mechanised, and motorised formations. Resultantly, Azerbaijan's armed forces had the upper hand over the battlespace. Armenia targeted Azerbaijan's population centres with ballistic missiles to provoke retaliation. However, Baku remained focused on the Karabakh operations, thus neutralising any possible Russian direct intervention.

It is indeed a great geopolitical victory for Azerbaijan which further enhanced Turkish footprints in the region starting from Qatar in 2017, Libya in 2019 and Azerbaijan in 2020 all opted for Ankara as an ally. France openly supported aggressive policies of the Armenian government and did nothing to bring Armenia back to the negotiating table. Azerbaijan's victory is an additional failure for Macron, who once more engaged in petty politicking at the expense of international peace.

Its victory has also opened the door for greater regional connectivity, socio-economic integration and food and energy cooperation. In this context, the opening of a land corridor connecting Turkey to Azerbaijan could enable more economic and cultural exchanges with other Turkic countries, namely Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan. All in all, this is a big victory for Azerbaijan. It will certainly be written in golden letters in the history of the country.

Human blood is a sacred commodity which has its own unbending and uncompromised chemistry unleashed with action-reaction theories and geopolitical bitter realities. Series of genocide of Armenia against peaceful people of Azerbaijan could not tamp spirits of self-determination, freedom, liberty and of course nationalism which remained in the hearts and souls like an unexploded volcanoes. Resultantly, Azerbaijan's bravery out placed Armenian belligerence and superior human traits out classed traitors and finally martyrdom overridden Armenian maliciousness.

Re-occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh has now become reality in which Armenians are on flee which once again shows that fascism does not have any place in the world. Co-existence and concept of shared prosperity is the way forward. It is indeed a wake-up call for all the supporters of ethnic cleansing that humanity may be the only bench-mark for regional cooperation and horrendous crimes and conspiracies are always short-lived.

Mixed messages or signals?

Abbas Nasir



Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari welcomed the report saying it would serve to "increase the integrity" of the army as an institution; Nawaz Sharif took the opposite view as he 'rejected' the findings as a cover-up which scapegoated junior officers

IF it is mixed signalling from the PDM leadership as part of a deliberate deception strategy it would be one thing, but altogether another if it is mixed messaging and reflects disagreements among the alliance leadership over fundamental issues.

Since the start of the Gilgit-Baltistan election campaign, in which first PPP leader Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari and then PML-N leader Maryam Nawaz Sharif plunged with considerable vigour, a number of interviews and statements have emerged that seem to not be coming from the 'same page'. First the PPP leader differed publicly with PML-N supreme Nawaz Sharif over the latter's naming of the army chief and the ISI DG for their alleged role in destabilising the last elected government and paving the way for Imran Khan to become prime minister.

To be fair, Mr Bhutto-Zardari also hastened to acknowledge Mr Sharif's right to say whatever he wanted to and howsoever he chose to. He asserted that even as allies they both had their own parties and policies and did not pick words for each other or tell each other what to say. While all sides may have spoken about a need for a national dialogue, there are few specifics about how the paradigm can be reset.

Then, differing perceptions appeared in the public domain when the ISPR announced the findings of the Commander, 5 Corps, inquiry into last month's kidnapping of the Sindh IGP by ISI-Rangers officials and forcing him to order the arrest of PML-N's Capt Muhammad Safdar. Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari welcomed the report saying it would serve to "increase the integrity" of the army as an institution; Nawaz Sharif took the opposite view as he 'rejected' the findings as a cover-up which scapegoated junior officers and spared those at the top who ordered the move.

Finally, Ms Sharif's BBC interview again triggered speculation she was softening her hard line in saying it was "my army" and that she would not object to an open, transparent and public dialogue after the "puppet gov-

ernment is removed".

The following day, addressing throngs of supporters gathered in Swat, her father reiterated his position, not budging an inch from his tough stand, I suspect not without reason. He is receiving real-time information on how his stance is playing with the support base in Punjab. Also that this support base is now fully reflecting the country's current demographics and has a big share of young, charged-up workers and supporters who are said to be prepared to go — are raring to go, as one source told me — the mile for their cause and leader.

Perhaps this new reality is having an impact on those tasked with gathering on-the-ground information because they are exposed to it. One manifestation was that a key establishment figure recently acknowledged the need for a broad-based national dialogue.

To discerning observers, his remarks appeared necessitated by the changed ground reality, which is mainly due to Nawaz Sharif's relentless hammering of his no-holds-barred narrative and the resonance it is finding among his supporters in Punjab in particular.

Mr Sharif has been chipping away at the establishment resolve and who knows what dividend, if any, his persistence will deliver over the medium to long term. In the short term, it is causing considerable anxiety among government ministers, as evident in their daily statements. Also, if the establishment figure's thoughts were not merely his own and echoed a possible changed, wider view in the institution, then we are in for an interesting few weeks as winter approaches. Who knows what political games, palace intrigues, etc are on the cards. The faltering economy, galloping inflation and shortages of food items, gas and other essentials may also be weighing on the minds of the government backers. The international environment is also challenging, with a new US president to enter office and the continued aggressive, intransigent tone of the Modi government.

Even then, while all sides may have spoken about a need

for a national dialogue, there are few specifics about how the paradigm can be reset to reflect any changed realities and the extent to which stakeholders would agree with such a scenario.

To give him his due, PML-N's Shahid Khaqan Abbasi has been the first politician over the past few years to have spoken about the need to talk to all players in national politics. He has argued this is inevitable as the current scheme of things is not workable, and will repeatedly suffer breakdowns.

Apart from Mr Abbasi, and way before him, PPP leader Benazir Bhutto talked in similar terms of the need for a new social contract. Of late, 'new social contract' is a term also used by PML-N supreme Nawaz Sharif.

At least the politicians are clear on what they mean to achieve or get out of a dialogue such as the one they are proposing: free and fair elections and then respect for the principle of civilian supremacy, the bedrock of any constitutional democracy.

This is a globally acknowledged principle, but in our case it has repeatedly been evidenced how much contempt it evokes in some institutions. So the question is: if a dialogue were ever to happen, would, Nawaz Sharif, for example, be willing to concede anything to the establishment?

Equally, how much give and take is possible or even acceptable? For surely no politician would take matters to a fever pitch and threaten protests, or actually take to the streets to press for demands, and then surrender the initiative and most of the gains at the negotiating table. Also, in the event of such an agreement ever being possible, who will underwrite it or be its guarantor? These are but some of the questions that come to mind as potential impediments. Answers will have to be found, and quickly, if we are ever to come out of the morass we find ourselves in. Perhaps the 'good cops' in the opposition could become the vehicles of a dialogue.

— Courtesy Dawn

Briefs

Armenia
cedes
Azerbaijan
land

From Page 01
near the village of Charektar after residents set their homes on fire preferring to leave devastation in their wake and homes that would be uninhabitable by Azerbaijanis. A Russian peacekeeping contingent deployed this week to Nagorno-Karabakh. They set up checkpoints and positions in the region's administrative centre, Stepanakert, as part of the terms of the accord that sees Armenia cede swathes of territory that Azerbaijan's forces gained in the fighting. Moscow's peacekeeping mission, which the military said included soldiers that previously were stationed in Syria, comprises some 2,000 troops for a renewable five-year mission. The ex-Soviet rivals agreed to end hostilities earlier this week after efforts by Russia, France and the US to get a ceasefire fell through during the nearly two months of clashes. A key part of the peace deal includes Armenia's return of Kalbajar, as well as the Aghdam district by November 20 and the Lachin district by December 1, which have been held by Armenians since a devastating war in the 1990s. Armenia conceded on Saturday that 2,317 fighters were killed in clashes in which both sides accused the other of targeting civilian infrastructure. Kalbajar was almost exclusively populated by ethnic Azerbaijanis before they were expelled by Armenians in the 1990s war following the breakup of the Soviet Union, and a majority of the homes being abandoned previously belonged to Azerbaijanis

Indian nasty
designs to be
foiled

From Page 06
comprehensive strategy to fight against the terrorism. Qureshi also remarked that inflation was also observed across the world. Economic recession, due to coronavirus, severely hit the world. Many governments at international level mishandled economies during COVID 19 situation. The incumbent government also announced support price and subsidy for wheat. Similarly, crushing season of sugarcane commenced and it would lower prices remarkably, he added. Prime Minister Imran Khan had categorically stated that he would not give any NRO to corrupt elements, said Qureshi. About Nawaz Sharif's return, Qureshi stated that incumbent government wrote letter to British Government. British Home Secretary was reviewing it. Besides, Pakistan government also discussed the matter with British High Commissioner in Pakistan. Nawaz Sharif is healthy now. Legally and morally, he should come back.

DG ISPR
shares video
of Pakistan-
Russian
drills

From Page 01
troops practicing drills and procedures for hostage rescue, cordon, search operations, heli-rappelling and sky diving as part of Druzha-V. The joint Pakistani-Russian military exercise, codenamed Druzha (Friendship) V, had kicked off on November 8. The opening ceremony of the drill was held in Tarbela. Pakistan-Russian Federation Special Forces are participating in the two-week-long counterterrorism exercise, said the ISPR. On November 5, a contingent of Russian troops arrived in Pakistan to participate in the military exercise. The ISPR said the exercise is aimed at sharing both armies' experiences in the counterterrorism domain. Sky diving and hostage rescue operations will be the highlights of the exercise.

PML-N
ex-MNA
arrested

MULTAN: The anti-corruption wing of police on Sunday arrested Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader and former member of the National Assembly (MNA) Malik Abdul Ghaffar Dogar on corruption charges in Multan. According to police, Ghaffar Dogar was allegedly involved in fraud, acquired property through illegal means and causing damage to the national exchequer and a private bank. Sources said that a case pertaining to the kidnapping of an assistant commissioner was also registered against the PML-N leader. — DNA



LAHORE: Multan Sultans bowl against Lahore Qalandars in second eliminator. — DNA

Life attempt on Armenian
prime minister averted

Pashinyan had come under pressure with thousands of demonstrators protesting since Tuesday and demanding he resign over a cease-fire that secured territorial advances for Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh after six weeks of fighting

NEWS DESK

YEREVAN: Armenia prevented an assassination attempt on Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and the seizure of power by a group of former officials, the National Security Service (NSS) said on Saturday. Pashinyan had come under pressure with thousands of demonstrators protesting since Tuesday and demanding he resign

over a cease-fire that secured territorial advances for Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh after six weeks of fighting. The NSS said its former head Artur Vanetsyan, the former head of the Republican Party parliamentary faction Vahram Bagdasaryan and war volunteer Arshot Minasyan were under arrest. "The suspects were planning to illegally usurp power by murdering the prime minister



and there were already potential candidates being discussed to replace him," the NSS said in a statement. Pashinyan said earlier this week he had no choice but to sign the agreement to prevent further territorial losses. He said he was taking personal responsibility for the setbacks, but rejected calls to step down. The cease-fire halted military action in and around Nagorno-Karabakh, an enclave

internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan but populated by ethnic Armenians. Under the agreement, 2,000 Russian peacekeeping troops are being deployed to the region. Since the early 1990s, ethnic Armenians had held military control over all of Nagorno-Karabakh and substantial swathes of Azeri territory surrounding it. They have now lost much of the enclave itself as well as the surrounding territory.

Greece bans
gatherings ahead of
uprising anniversary

ATHENS: Greek police on Sunday announced a ban on public gatherings of four or more people as hospitals were overwhelmed with coronavirus cases, ahead of the annual anniversary of a 1973 anti-junta uprising. Greece on Saturday said it would shut primary schools, kindergartens and daycare centres as coronavirus deaths crossed a thousand. The anti-junta demonstration is a treasured anniversary for many Greeks, and more than 30,000 people demonstrated in Athens and other major cities last year under a heavy police presence. At least 24 people were killed in the 1973 crackdown, an event generally considered to have broken the junta's grip on power and helped the restoration of democracy. This year, however, all public gatherings of four or more people would be banned from 6 am on Sunday to 9 pm on Wednesday to stem the spread of coronavirus, police said in a statement. Fines of 5,000 euros will be issued to legal entities like political parties and 3,000 euros for individuals who organise gatherings, while those participating will be fined 300 euros. Citizens' Protection Minister Michalis Chrysochoidis said on Friday that the events and marches commemorating the November 17 Athens Polytechnic student uprising will not take place this year. "We did

not celebrate March 25th or October 28th, we did not celebrate Easter, we did not celebrate any of the things that unite us in 2020. The same will be the case with the Polytechnic anniversary," the minister said, referring to three national holidays that were not celebrated because of the coronavirus pandemic. "The virus is the enemy and large gatherings are its main weapon," he added, prompting opposition parties to pledge they would proceed with demonstrations. Communist KKE party leader Dimitris Koutsoumpas in an interview on Saturday stressed that "the Polytechnic march was never organised by the government". "All the measures will be strictly observed with the use of face masks and antiseptics, keeping the necessary distances and of course we urge people belonging to vulnerable groups or those who are ill to stay at home," Koutsoumpas said. Greece's former finance minister Yanis Varoufakis, leader of the Diem25 party on Saturday accused the government of announcing in advance the arrest of his party's members. On Friday, Greek police evacuated the premises of the historic Polytechnic building that now houses the National Technical University of Athens and another university campus and arrested 92 people for trespassing, disturbance and disorder. — APP

Iraq appoints new Olympic
chief ahead of Tokyo Games

DNA

BAGHDAD: Iraq's national Olympic Committee on Saturday elected its former treasurer Sarmad Abdellah as president, filling a vacancy that threatened to jeopardise the country's participation at next year's Tokyo Games. The embattled organisation

had been suspended and put under the supervision of the International Olympic Committee after a long-running conflict with the sports ministry. The IOC oversaw Saturday's election via video link. The 46-year-old Abdellah, an ex-international swimmer, received 19 votes, with 17 for outgoing president Raad Hammoudi, the former Iraq goalkeeper

elected to lead the committee for a second time in 2019. "The task that awaits promises to be difficult, we will have to put the whole of Iraqi sport back on track," said Abdellah following his election at a Baghdad hotel. Iraq's Olympic Committee was dissolved by US-led occupation forces in 2003 because it was led by Uday Hussein, the son of former

dictator Saddam Hussein. The committee regrouped with new members and was active for 15 years, until the outgoing youth minister suddenly cancelled its 2018 membership elections. The ministry claimed the committee's status was never properly re-established after 2003, adding that its finances should therefore be managed by the ministry.

Damage,
injuries as
Vamco hits
Vietnam

HANOI: Storm Vamco barreled into Vietnam on Sunday, damaging buildings and injuring at least five people after wreaking devastation in the Philippines. The storm made landfall on Sunday morning with winds of up to 90 kilometers per hour (56 mph), according to media reports, uprooting trees and blowing the roofs off houses and schools. Vamco is the latest in a series of storms that have pummeled Vietnam over the past six weeks causing flooding and landslides that have killed at least 159 people and left 70 others missing. Initial reports from the Disaster Management Authority on Sunday said that five people were injured while they were trying to secure their houses. — APP

Scotland places at Euro 2020
up for grabs, says Clarke

LONDON: Scotland manager Steve Clarke says his players will start competing for places in his Euro 2020 squad when they face Slovakia in the Nations League on Sunday. The Scots reached their first major tournament for 22 years when they defeated Serbia in a nerve-jangling penalty shoot-out in Thursday's play-offs. Footage of Clarke's players drinking, singing, dancing and doing a conga emerged from Belgrade dressing room as they celebrated a famous success. But Clarke insisted they had now set aside that achievement and were fully focused on gaining more success in the Nations League. Scotland will guarantee top spot in Group B2 and promotion to the top tier plus a



potential World Cup play-off place if they win one of their remaining two matches against Slovakia and Israel. And Clarke believes the effects of Thursday's celebrations will have no bearing on his selection for Sunday's clash in Trnava. Lyndon Dykes will drop out through suspension, while Andy Robertson is a doubt with a tight hamstring and other players will be assessed. When asked if he would make more changes than normal, Clarke said: "The short answer is yes.

The long answer probably takes in the fact the celebrations wouldn't have anything to do with it. It was a good celebration but it wasn't crazy, it wasn't silly and over the top. "I trust all the players, that's why I select them. The ones I brought into the camp last month, I trusted them and they deserved to be on the pitch. "I watched the training session this morning and I said to one of my coaching staff, they are already playing for their place at Euro 2020. I could see it in training. "And that's what it's all about. That qualification is in the cupboard, it's something waiting on us next summer, and all the lads can put themselves in the squad by their performances in the camp or out the camp." — APP

PPP flays
restrictions
on women
voting

From Page 01
Fair Election Network (FAFEN), a non-profit NGO, had been removed from polling stations. "FAFEN observers should be at the polling stations during the counting of votes" and "should be permitted to remain at the polling stations", she said, adding that there were 600 observers. "The absence of observers at the polling station raises questions about the transparency of the election," she said, warning that such incidents could damage the credibility of the Gilgit Baltistan Election 2020. Earlier in the day, the PPP leader had raised the issue of the FAFEN observers allegedly not being let inside the polling stations on Twitter, calling for the Election Commission to take note.

Trade team
to visit
Afghanistan

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD, Advisor to Prime Minister on Commerce and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood Sunday said that a trade delegation would leave for Afghanistan on Monday (Nov 16) to further boost bilateral trade ties. The delegation will start discussions on a new era of trade and investment cooperation so that the two economies may integrate more and further enhance our exports to Afghanistan and beyond, the Advisor said in his tweet. He informed that during the visit, the delegation would hold discussions on various topics including bilateral trade, transit trade, discussion on a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) and moving our trade to a more formal and documented arrangement.

'Around
4.37% surplus
witnessed in
Pak-UK trade'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's goods and services trade with United Kingdom (UK) witnessed surplus of 4.37 percent during first three months of current financial year (2020-21) as compared to the corresponding period of last year. The overall surplus was recorded at US \$252.8 million July-September (2020-21) against US \$422.2 million during July-September (2019-20), showing positive growth of 4.37 percent, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported. Pakistan exports to UK were recorded at US \$427.5 million during the period under review as against the exports of US \$426.4 million during same period of last year, showing nominal increase of 0.25 percent, SBP data revealed. On year-to-year basis, the exports to UK increased by 8.64 percent by going up from \$141.5 million in September 2019, against the exports of \$153.7 million in September 2020. Meanwhile, on month-on-month basis, the exports to UK also rose by 20.17 percent during September 2020 as compared to the exports of \$127.9 million in August 2020, the SBP data revealed.

Ruet-e-Hilal
Committee
meets today

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The meetings of Ruet-e-Hilal Committee would be held on Monday, 29th of Rabi-ul-Awwal (Nov 16) at their respective areas for sighting the crescent of Rabi-us-Sani 1442 AH. Chairman Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee Mufti Muneeb-ur-Rehman will chair the Zonal committee, meeting at Pakistan Meteorological Department building, Main University Road, Gulistan-e-Jauhar in Karachi, an official of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony told APP Sunday. The other Zonal and District Ruet-e-Hilal committees would meet at their respective places on the same date and time.

Trump loyalists mount last stand in Washington

WASHINGTON: Thousands of die-hard Donald Trump supporters rallied for a last stand Saturday in Washington, chanting "four more years" and blaming fraud for an election defeat that will force the president to vacate the White House after just one term. Trump himself made a drive-past in his armored motorcade, on his way to play golf, smiling through his limousine window to wild cheers and signs saying "Best prez ever" and "Trump 2020: Keep America Great." "We wanted to show our support, we're feeling they are trying to steal the election," said Pam Ross, who drove eight hours from Ohio to join the rally, referring to the president's political opponents. The Republican incumbent is sticking to discredited claims of mass fraud and claiming he defeated President-elect Joe Biden in the November 3 vote, marking another

unprecedented challenge to US democratic norms as his time in office runs down. Later Saturday, he took to Twitter with a series of tweets and retweets that included claims of voting machines potentially being hacked and complaints about news networks' coverage of the rally. Twitter slapped labels on at least eight of the posts as containing "disputed" information. At least 10,000 people — few wearing masks — massed on the city's Freedom Plaza before marching to the Supreme Court in a raucous atmosphere reminiscent of a Trump campaign rally. "President Trump deserves to see who's behind him, he deserves to feel the love," Kris Napolitana, from Baltimore, told AFP. "I believe that he's going to win when all the fraud and cheating is found out." With right-wing militia group the Proud Boys among those attend-

ing, a large security presence was deployed to prevent clashes with anti-Trump events outside the Supreme Court. Groups of counter-protesters stood nearby, some yelling about social justice and Trump supporters not wearing masks. There were a number of scuffles, but no major violence had been reported. As night fell, police formed lines on either side of a street leading to the White House, separating hundreds of rival protesters. "We're just holding back people who want to fight," one officer told AFP. Authorities reported at least 10 arrests during the day, including four for firearm violations and one for assault on a police officer. The latest vote tallies gave the Democrat Biden a clear win in the state-by-state Electoral College that decides the presidency, with 306 votes against Trump's 232. Two hun-

dred seventy votes are required for election. But Margarita Urtebe, 49, a horse breeder from Miami, said the election was "so corrupt," adding, "Trump won by a landslide. We are here to march for the 'stop the steal' of this election, to make our voice heard." Trump tweeted that "hundreds of thousands" had turned out — while his spokeswoman Kayleigh McEnany made the greatly exaggerated claim that more than a million people were present. But the turnout was undoubtedly high for a strongly Democratic city, boosted by protesters from around the country, from Florida to Pennsylvania to Colorado. Darion Schaublin, who drove from Columbus, Ohio, said "the whole system's rigged... in the way that the information is getting to the people." "The truth never actually gets out," said the 26-year-old, who

was lost his job in a restaurant after refusing to wear a mask to help stop the spread of Covid-19. Kathlin Erickson, who said she flew from Colorado on a plane "filled with Trump supporters," kept alive hopes of a second Trump administration. "A Trump victory? That's a long shot, but anything is possible with God," she said. Trump is impeding Biden's transition ahead of inauguration on January 20 and has filed numerous lawsuits — unsuccessfully — to challenge vote counts around the country. He said Friday "time will tell" if he remains refusal, in a momentary slip of his president to concede defeat. Despite his own intelligence officials' declaration this week that the election was "the most secure in American history," Trump and his right-wing media allies show no sign of giving up their quest to get the results overturned. — APP

Briefs

India's capital awakes to 'severe' smog

DNA

NEW DELHI: Toxic smog blanketed India's capital early Sunday after firecrackers were set off throughout the night to mark the country's biggest annual festival Diwali despite a ban, further worsening the city's air quality levels. India's environmental court had imposed a ban to stop millions of the explosives being lit up to mark the Hindu Festival of Light, stressing that residents were already reeling from the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and the pollution crisis that arises every winter. But the sound of firecrackers regularly was heard in the city of 20 million people late Saturday, and sporadically on Sunday.

"The overall air quality of Delhi is in the Severe category as of today morning," the state-run System of Air Quality Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR) said Sunday. "Significant local additional emissions (probably firecracker related) during yesterday night... build up stubble fire-related pollutant concentrations." But the meteorological body added that wind speeds in the capital were picking up on Sunday, helping to clear the choking air, while "isolated scattered rainfall" later in the day was also expected.

Delhi is infamous as having some of the world's dirtiest air, with cracker smoke mingling with car exhaust, factory emissions, construction dust and crop stubble burning from nearby states turning the winter air into a putrid grey-yellow. Scientists have also been warning that this year's Diwali celebrations have increased health risks amid crowding at markets ahead of the festival, the cold and the air pollution, which studies have linked to increased coronavirus deaths.

Humanitarian ship brings 255 migrants to Sicily

ROME: The humanitarian ship Open Arms reached the coast of the Italian island of Sicily on Saturday and transferred 255 migrants to the Italian authorities, the Spanish NGO said on Twitter.

A total of 184 adults and 71 unaccompanied minors from 20 African nations, were taken aboard two Italian boats where they will undergo quarantine to ensure they are not carrying the coronavirus, the group said.

The Open Arms ship had rescued them from boats in distress on the water on Tuesday and Wednesday.

At least five other migrants had died after an overcrowded rubber dinghy overturned off the coast of Libya, according to the NGO.

A six-month old baby also died, despite the efforts of the medical team onboard the Open Arms. There has been a marked rise this year in the number of migrants seeking to reach Europe in unseaworthy boats, most of which embark from Libya or Tunisia. Warm weather over the past week has encouraged more migrants fleeing war and poverty to make the perilous trip across the Mediterranean, but about 100 people drowned on Thursday alone. — APP

Peru sees more demos, first protester killed

LIMA: Peru saw another day of protests on Saturday and the first death in connection with them as thousands took to the streets in opposition to new President Manuel Merino following the ouster of his predecessor. The mostly young protesters gathered in various cities to oppose what they call a parliamentary coup against ousted president Martín Vizcarra, who was impeached on corruption allegations on Monday.

Congress Speaker Merino replaced him as Peru's third president in four years. The public ombudsman's office reported a 25-year-old protester dead with pellet wounds to the head during clashes with police in the capital Lima, the first person killed in the demonstrations that began Tuesday. Three others were taken to hospital wounded, said Alberto Huerta of the ombudsman's office. The largest march in Lima attracted thousands of people, with police again using tear gas fired from helicopters to disperse protesters who were threatening to march towards the Congress building. — APP



TARBELA: Russian army helicopters taking part in drills. — DNA

Turkmen leader insists his country is virus-free

Dissident-led media based in Europe have reported an explosion of coronavirus cases, but their websites are banned in the country where there is no free press or political opposition

ASHGABAT: Turkmenistan's strongman leader Gurbanguly Berdimukhamedov insisted his reclusive country had no coronavirus cases on Saturday, state media reported Saturday, even as he opened a new hospital for infectious diseases. Berdimukhamedov hailed the country's "big achievement" in avoiding the coronavirus in comments reported by the state newspaper Neutral Turkmenistan. "As a result of the preventive measures taken, no cases of coronavirus infection have been registered in

the country to date," Berdimukhamedov said. Hardline Turkmenistan and North Korea are among less than a dozen countries yet to declare a single coronavirus case. The other countries are Pacific island nations. The Solomon Islands, Marshall Islands and Vanuatu all declared their first cases in recent weeks but have avoided community transmission. Berdimukhamedov's virus-free claim is his first since a visit in July by a World Health Organization delegation prompted the govern-

ment to implement a national lockdown. Dissident-led media based in Europe have reported an explosion of coronavirus cases, but their websites are banned in the country where there is no free press or political opposition. WHO's Senior Emergency Officer for Europe Catherine Smallwood recommended the government adopt measures "as if COVID-19 were already circulating" during her visit but stopped short of publicly doubting the government's virus-free boast. Prior to the

visit Turkmenistan held several events involving thousands of people to mark important dates in the state calendar like Horse Day in late April and World Bicycle Day in June. The new hospital opened by Berdimukhamedov has a 200-bed capacity and can treat "viral hepatitis, infectious diseases of the upper respiratory tract... and diseases transmitted by airborne droplets," Neutral Turkmenistan reported. The hospital's equipment includes mechanical ventilators manufactured by the Swedish

medical technology company Geringe, according to the report. Turkmenistan's government has closed the country's borders to foreigners until next year while prohibiting places of worship, all restaurants and most shops from working until December 1. Domestic passenger trains and intercity buses are also forbidden from working until January 1. Turkmenistan's health ministry in July recommended citizens wear masks due to "high concentrations of dust" and "pathogens" in the air. — APP

'Bad planning resulted in shortage of wheat'

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) on Saturday asked the government to prioritise agriculture sector in its economic planning to avert shortages of essential goods. PBF Vice President and FPCCI Former Chairman Standing Committee on Agriculture, Ahmad Jawad said we have been experimenting with different ideas like rapid industrialization and private sector investments in the services sector in an attempt to give the economy a boost, and for it to function beyond the sphere of agricultural influence, however, the situation remained economically precarious. "We have to understand that it is only a preponderant agriculture sector that would guarantee a prosperous future for country". Food security and to increase yields have been the top priorities for all

developed countries. They have been exploring new avenues to achieve their targets of food self-sufficiency. Whereas we are still banking upon the primitive and antiquated ways of research at NARC and PARC. The budget allocation for the agriculture sector had been slashed by 48 per cent in the current fiscal. The agriculture sector has been witnessing a paradigm shift of capitalizing its most fertile pieces of land to the housing societies. "Agriculture sector has proved to be the weakest link in the current macroeconomic planning and strategies," "Locust attacks, poor governance, bad planning, climate change and lack of investment in seed technology and agriculture research have already resulted in shortage of wheat, sugar and cotton. Import bill of cotton will also be substantially high owing to record low production."

Wedding hall owners refuse to close halls on Nov 20

KARACHI: Shadi Hall Owners Association has refused to close wedding halls in Karachi on November 20, saying that wedding halls remain closed for six months during Coronavirus and millions of people are employed in this industry. Addressing a press conference at Karachi Press Club, the leaders of Shadi Hall Owners Association said that they have received money in advance from citizens and now they cannot close wedding halls. The wedding halls have been open for two months and we have made advance bookings. How we will pay the salaries to the employees, said wedding hall owners. We have already closed the marriage halls for six months following the government's SOPs. "We have not been given any relief by the government," association said. Wedding halls owners association said that no relief given by the government in terms of rent, utility bills and salaries for the marriage hall industry. — DNA

Biden's possible India links spark genealogical frenzy

DNA

WASHINGTON: Already bursting with pride at Kamala Harris's ancestry, India has now started digging up potential local roots for US President-elect Joe Biden. The next leader of the United States has speculated that he might have had relatives in colonial India. While there is no proof, the Biden name has become a genealogical target of investigation across the country. A plaque commemorating 19th-century British ship captain Christopher Biden has been a popular selfie spot in the eastern city of Chennai since the US election. And a Biden family in western India says it has become "exhausted" by calls since their namesake staked his claim to the White House. The American vote has been under the spotlight in India because Biden's running mate is the daughter of a migrant from Tamil Nadu state. The 56-year-old Harris has made much of her Indian connections and how she

likes to eat "idli with a really good sambar" — typical food from the south. Less attention has been paid to Biden, who has established Irish links. But he spoke of possible Indian connections on a trip to Mumbai in 2013 when he was vice president. Biden said in a speech that he had received a letter from an Indian Biden after becoming a senator in 1972, suggesting they could be related. "One of the first letters I received and I regret I never followed up on it," he said. The letter said their "mutual, great, great, great, something or other worked for the East India Trading Company back in the 1700s". It sparked excitement in Chennai, capital of Tamil Nadu state, which is also home to Harris's Indian relatives. A plaque at St George's Cathedral in Chennai that celebrates Christopher Biden, born in 1789, has suddenly become a local tourist draw. "We've come to know the records of two Bidens — William Biden and Christopher Biden — who were brothers and became captains of the

East India Company on merchant ships in the 19th century," the Bishop of Madras, Reverend J. George Stephen, told. "While William Biden died at an early age, Christopher Biden went on to captain several ships, and eventually settled down in Madras," which is now known as Chennai. Despite the speculation, there has been no confirmation that the Biden brothers are related to the 77-year-old American. If the president-elect does have an Indian ancestor, Christopher is considered the most likely candidate, according to experts who have studied family records. There are also Bidens in Mumbai and Nagpur in Maharashtra state who could be descendants of Christopher, one of eight children of a John Biden who could be the common link. The media attention has been overwhelming, according to the Maharashtra Bidens. Indian media has speculated that their late grandfather Leslie wrote to the US politician.

American immigration policy changes

DNA

WASHINGTON: Major changes expected in the US immigration policies under President-elect Joe Biden will favour Muslims nations, according to political analysts. In October, Biden promised to end Donald Trump's "un-constitutional Muslim ban" on day one of his presidency. Biden could overturn these "tough" guidelines using executive orders, according to experts. "In theory, presidential proclamations and executive orders can be rescinded by the new president," said Michele Waslin, program coordinator at the Institute for Immigration Research at George Mason University, Virginia. But in many cases the change will not be immediate since extensive plans will need to be made to carry out the changes, she added. Biden's first 100 days in the office will be crucial as he is expected to revoke Trump's executive orders targeting Muslim nations, according to a report by National Public Radio, Washington. The Trump administration in 2017 had placed a ban on travellers from seven Muslim-majority nations, including Iran, Iraq, Syria, Sudan, Libya, Yemen and Somalia.

PARC to introduce improved rice varieties

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Fakhar Imam, Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research along with Chairman PARC Dr. Muhammad Azeem Khan and DG NARC, Engr. Shamim-Ul-Sibtain Shah visited Green Super Rice (GSR) fields at National Institute for Genomics and Advanced Biotechnology (NIGAB) NARC, Islamabad on 12 November, 2020. He was briefed about the progress in GSR project and on-going activities of PARC. Addressing the scientists, Minister emphasized the need to adopt modern breeding techniques for increase in per acre yield of crops. By highlighting the progress of China in establishing genomics and biotechnology based breeding institutes, he encouraged the training of scientists in these institutes to harness the true benefits of genomics and biotechnology in agriculture. Chairman PARC, Dr. Azeem Khan while indicating the yield potential of 80 to 120 mounds per acre and grain length of 8.6 mm told that GSR could be the harbinger of economic prosperity. Also by holding our position strong in the global export market of long grain rice, we can promote and protect food products against our competitors. Chairman also informed that apart from 4 acres at NARC, GSR has been cultivated in 9 different locations across the country.

Does Brexit free Europe to seek closer union?

BRUSSELS: British politicians often speak of Brexit as an opportunity to escape Brussels' shackles but does the divorce also free Europe to go its own way? London's departure strips the bloc of its second largest economy after Germany's and of France's only peer as a nuclear-armed European military power. But it also removes the biggest sceptic of a closer union. Some of those who support deeper integration of the remaining 27 member states sense an opportunity but the split could also unveil deeper fault lines masked by the Brexit storm.

For some, the decision in July at a marathon EU summit to move towards joint borrowing to fund a post-coronavirus recovery plan for the union is a sign of what can now be achieved. "With the British, we wouldn't even have discussed this, they'd have said 'no' straight away," French professor Robert Frank, who wrote a book on Britain's difficult European relations, told AFP. The stimulus plan, which emerged from four straight days and nights of haggling between EU leaders, was hailed as a breakthrough by EU enthusiasts. "It's going to create a common fiscal policy for the EU that it hasn't ever had before," says Andrew Duff, a British former MEP and European federalist, now a visiting fellow at the European Policy Centre. — APP

Diabetes increases coronavirus risks: UN

Diabetes is a major cause of blindness, kidney failure, heart attack, stroke and lower limb amputation, and the COVID-19 pandemic has brought additional pain to those requiring regular care and treatment who struggle to access therapies for their condition

DNA

UNITED NATIONS: Secretary-General United States, Antonio Guterres has warned that people with diabetes are at increased risk of severe disease and death from COVID-19. In a message for World Diabetes Day, on Saturday, the United Nations' (UN) chief called for working together to limit the disease that effects a large number of people worldwide. He said many efforts have been made to prevent and treat diabetes, but the disease continues to rise rapidly in low and middle income countries

— those "least well-equipped with the diagnostics, medicines, and knowledge to provide life-saving treatment". Globally, some 422 million adults are living with diabetes (latest figures from 2014), according to the UN World Health Organization, compared to around 108 million in 1980 — rising from 4.7 to 8.5 per cent in the adult population. This reflects an increase in associated risk factors, such as being overweight or obese, the agency said. Diabetes is a major cause of blindness, kidney failure, heart attack, stroke and lower limb amputation, and the COVID-19 pandemic has



brought additional pain to those requiring regular care and treatment who struggle to access therapies for their condition. A healthy diet, physical activity and not smoking can prevent or delay Type 2 diabetes, formerly called non-insulin-dependent or adult-onset diabetes, the UN said. Moreover, the disease can

be treated and its consequences avoided or delayed with medication, regular screening and treatment for complications. Next year, WHO is launching the Global Diabetes Compact, "a new initiative that will bring structure and coherence to our complementary efforts to reduce the burden of diabetes", Guterres said. "Let us work together to make sure that, through this ambitious and much-needed collaboration, we will soon be talking about the decline in diabetes as a public health problem". The theme for World Diabetes Day 2020 is "The Nurse and Diabetes", which aims to raise

awareness around the crucial role of these health care professionals in supporting people living with diabetes. Nurses, who currently account for over half of the global health workforce, also help people living with a wide range of health concerns. People living with diabetes face a number of challenges, and education is vital to equip nurses with the skills to support them. "As we strive to overcome the pandemic, let us do our utmost to ensure Universal Health Coverage, strengthen health systems and advance good health and resilience for all", the UN chief said.

Briefs

Rupee likely to gain further

NEWS DESK

KARACHI: The rupee is expected to strengthen further against the dollar next week where it may drop below 158 against the dollar. However, the present gains could not sustain, as the domestic currency could weaken to 159 to 161 by the end of this year. "We expect the rupee to post more gains, hovering below 158 during the next week on the back of higher inflows in the shape of remittances and exports proceeds, a currency dealer said. "Moreover, foreign exchange inflows from international financial institutions and overseas Pakistanis under the umbrella of Roshan Digital Account could lend support to the rupee," the currency trader added. During the outgoing week in the interbank market, the rupee rose 75 paisas to 158.16/US dollar. In addition, a poll conducted by Tresmark with more than 70 participants from bank treasuries to traders, brokers, and corporate treasurers, revealed that 70% expect the year will end with the local currency to hover in the range of 159 and 161, and, the same percentage thought the rupee will close in the 163 and 164 range in June 2021.

"Shan-e-Rehmatul-Lil-Alameen (PBUH) week



ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister of Punjab on Information and Culture, Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan said on Sunday that the Punjab government will be celebrating "Shan-e-Rehmatul-Lil-Alameen (PBUH) week. Talking to a private news channel she said that on the directions of Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar "Shan-e-Rehmatul-Lil-Alameen (PBUH) Week will be observed from 16 to 22 November to pay homage to Holy Prophet (PBUH) who is a source of light and guidance for all the human beings. She said that the CM had directed the entire provincial department to commemorate "Shan-e-Rehmatul-Lil-Alameen (PBUH) week with reverence. In this regard, planned activities have been planned at division, district and Tehsil level. It was also decided to hold recitations, Naat, essay and speech along with Islamic calligraphy exhibitions, Mehfil-i-Sama and Naatia Mushaira, she added. She said a separate mehfil-e-milad would be held for women while the calligraphic exhibition will be arranged at Bagh-e-Jinnah.

Crafts extravaganza at ISH draws huge interest

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah believed that Pakistan could only progress if the women participated in industrious activities side by side with men: First Lady Samina Alvi

NEWS DESK / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels sponsored a three-day crafts extravaganza with Behbud Association called "Embroidering Dreams", which kicked off on Friday night with an inaugural event featuring an exclusive fashion show. Addressing the opening ceremony of the exhibition, the First Lady Samina Arif Alvi said that even Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah believed that Pakistan could only progress if the women participated in industrious activities side by side with men. She applauded Serena Hotels for supporting Behbud Association, a non-profit organization providing employment to thousands of women artisans for over 50 years at the grassroots level and reaching out to the underprivileged women in urban slums. The opening event was attended by notable members from the diplomatic corps, foreign dignitaries, corporate and business sectors. Stringent compliance with Covid-19 health and safety protocols and SOPs were observed at the event. Embroidering Dreams was an exhibition of exquisite handmade products promoting traditional needlework and embroideries of Pakistan. The three-day exhibition aimed to celebrate home based workers and women artisans of Pakistan, that continue to produce such marvelous artefacts



under trying circumstances. Guests witnessed different types of traditional crafts/needlework that come from various regions of Pakistan including Ralli, Kantha, Chikankari, Block Printing, Smocking, Cutwork, Cross-stitch, Taarkashi, Phulkari, Crochet, Knitting etc. The master artisans were present at the stalls to showcase a live display of their craft and technique. A large number of people attended the exhibition on all three days and enjoyed the detailed tour of the exquisite crafts.

Mr. Aziz Boolani, CEO Serena Hotels appreciated Behbud Association for the wonderful work which he said was very inspiring and a model of learning for Serena Hotels, which also actively projects and promotes traditional crafts as part of its overall CSR initiative of supporting empowerment of rural women by enhancing their economic prospects. Mr. Boolani said Pakistan was blessed with so much talent in traditional crafts and it was a privilege for Serena to play a role in showcasing them.



Ms. Abida Malik said that Behbud was run entirely by women volunteers and has over the years evolved into Pakistan's premier brand for ethical and sustainable fashion. Behbud, inaugurated in 1972, is ranked as one of the largest and oldest non-profit organizations in Pakistan, providing employment to thousands of women artisans for over 50 years. Having trained 300,000 artisans spanning five generations, Behbud, at its core, aids marginalized women by providing them with free of cost vocational training in local embroideries, free healthcare, counseling and education for their children. The non-profit also provides educational facilities in the form of a comprehensive adult literacy program, has set up a Behbud Primary School (in the capital's Saidpur Village), a Behbud Model High School (in Rawalpindi) and eight home schools (from Pre-Nursery till Grade 5), for the children of the underprivileged communities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

10 Covid patients die in Romania hospital fire

BUCHAREST: Ten Covid-19 patients were killed and others were in critical condition after fire broke out in an intensive care unit in northeast Romania on Saturday, a hospital spokesperson said. The fire occurred in the early evening in the intensive care of the hospital in the town of Piatra Neamt. It was under control an hour later by the emergency services. "Ten people have been declared dead and seven people are in critical condition," including a doctor, said hospital spokeswoman Irina Popa. Eight of the victims died in the flames and two others were pronounced dead following their evacuation.

The doctor on duty, who tried to help the victims, suffered second and third degree burns to 80 percent of his body, the rescue service said. The cause of the blaze was unclear and the prosecutor general opened an enquiry into the tragedy. The health ministry suggested the fire could have been caused by an electrical short circuit. The local prefect set up a crisis

Pakistan expresses condolences to Romania over loss of lives

ISLAMABAD: The government and people of Pakistan have expressed their deepest condolences and sympathies to the Government and people of Romania as well as to the families of the victims of fire at Covid-19 intensive care unit in Piatra Neamt, the Foreign Office spokesperson said in a tweet on Sunday. He further posted "We wish the injured quickest recovery". According to Romanian officials quoted by press, a fire spread through the intensive care ward designated for COVID-19 patients in Piatra Neamt had killed at least 10 people and critically injured seven others. - DNA

cell and Health Minister Nelu Tataru was expected to visit the scene. Largely spared during when the first wave of the coronavirus hit Europe, Romania has in recent weeks seen mounting numbers of cases and hospitalisations. On Saturday it reported 129 new virus fatalities, bringing total deaths to 8,813 since the start of the pandemic. The country of 19 million

residents is one of the poorest in the European Union and ill-equipped to deal with a spike in hospital cases. Its dilapidated health system suffers from a severe shortage of doctors, especially in small towns. It was the deadliest fire in Romania since October 2015, when a pyrotechnics display caused a blaze at a Bucharest nightclub which left 64 people dead. - APP

Pak Rosewood handicrafts hailed by Chinese buyers

DNA

BEIJING: Pakistan's Rosewood handicrafts were well received by Chinese buyers during the recent four-day China Yiwu Import Commodities Fair held in Zhejiang Province, says a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Sunday. Since its establishment, Yiwu Imported Commodities Fair has become one of the best trade platforms for foreign goods to enter the Chinese market. "This is not only my first time to Yiwu city and my

first time to the Yiwu expo, but also my first participation of an expo this year," said Usman Anjum, CEO of Sanaullah Handicraft Pakistan. According to Usman, a lot of Pakistani people who do business in China went back to Pakistan due to the COVID-19. There are only 3 Pakistani exhibitors in this year's Yiwu expo, which is much fewer compared with the normal years. Usman has a store in Kunming, where the China-South Asia expo is held every year. This year that expo was canceled as well.

Usman this time had to use buses to transport goods from Kunming to Yiwu. The products that he sold are mostly big wooden furniture. "The transport is quite expensive. He hoped that the sale this time will be good. "In Usman's expectation, the four day's sale during the whole Yiwu expo should be 100,000 Yuan. "Chinese customers love Pakistani wooden furniture. It's handmade and made of Pakistani rosewood, and it's much cheaper than Chinese ones." "This little box is 80 yuan, while the same size

one in China made of Chinese rosewood is around 800 yuan." Pointing a delicate wooden box, Usman said. "Hearing the price, many people's first instinct is that it must be fake." According to Usman, the hardness and stability of Chinese rosewood and Pakistani rosewood are the same, while the color and the scent might be a bit different. Usman stated that now more and more Chinese people know about Pakistani rosewood. "When we go to different cities, people ask where you come from.

Italian envoy to inaugurate IPTTC

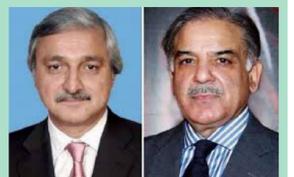
Italian Ambassador to Pakistan Andreas Ferrarese will visit NTUF here on Monday (November 16) and inaugurate the IPTTC

ASHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: National Textile University Faisalabad (NTUF) has established Italy-Pakistan Textile Technology Center (IPTTC) to exchange latest technology for boosting up textile productivity with new inventions. In this connection, Italian Ambassador to Pakistan Andreas Ferrarese will visit NTUF here on Monday (November 16) and inaugurate the IPTTC. All arrangements in this regard have been completed to hold inaugural ceremony of IPTTC in a most befitting manner at 10 a.m. on Monday, said a spokesman of NTUF today.

Tareen, Shehbaz Sharif booked in sugar case

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has registered two separate FIRs against industrialist and PTI member Jahangir Tareen



and PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif in the sugar crisis case. Other accused include Tareen's son Ali Tareen, and Hamza and Suleman Shabbaz, the sons of Shehbaz Sharif. They were booked on charges of cheating, criminal breach of trust, fraud and money laundering. The FIRs were registered at the FIA's Anti-Corruption Circle Lahore. An inquiry commission made stunning revelations in May about how sugar barons had cheated farmers, benefited from subsidies and created conditions so that the price of sugar would go up. The commission was formed by the PTI government and headed by FIA Director-General Wajid Zia. Tareen was among those accused of benefitting the most. The report said that six major groups control 51% of the total sugar production and Tareen's JDW Mill has the biggest share-20% of the total production. His mills made Rs200 billion in three years. They were also found to be running double books. The mill was underreporting its revenue. Tareen and his son left Pakistan for London soon after the report was made public. They returned recently, after seven months. The PTI leader was disqualified from holding public office on January 30, 2018 but remained a senior member of the party. - DNA

Pak, China working on transportation projects, says Ambassador Moin

DNA

BEIJING: Pakistan and China are discussing and working on many other transportation projects under the framework of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in major cities, including Karachi, capital of Sindh province, and Quetta, capital of Balochistan. The CPEC, in its first phase, focuses on infrastructure and energy development, referencing Gwadar Port projects in Southwestern Pakistan under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The port will enhance connectivity between our two countries and the rest of the world, he said in an interview with Global Times. Ambassador Haque said the metro line is an extremely important project under the CPEC that will provide a modern, efficient, and affordable transport services to the people of Lahore, a metropolis of 12 million people with serious traffic congestion. The line will also help reduce car-

bon emissions and air pollution in the city as more people use it to commute, he added. Pakistan's first metro line, built by Guangzhou Metro Company, opened on October 25 in Lahore. It will be jointly operated by Chinese and Pakistani companies. In the second phase, he said, the CPEC will mainly concentrate on the areas of agriculture, science and technology, and vocational training, which are very important for Pakistan's poverty alleviation, and economic and social development. By learning China's experience, we are building a number of special economic zones across the country, which will provide opportunities for investors from China and other countries, he said. Ambassador Haque noted that Pakistan and China have a long history of interaction and people-to-people exchanges, helping foster their relationship and mutual understanding in a variety of cultural sectors. The two neighbors are getting closer than ever, from arts and culture,

infrastructure and poverty alleviation to cooperation in regional security, he added. While commenting release of Parwaaz Hai Junoon, the first Pakistani film which hit Chinese mainland theatres in decades, he said that he expects the movie to be warmly welcomed by Chinese audiences. It is one of the most popular and highest-grossing movies to be made in Pakistan, which had done very well in box office in Pakistan and across the world, he said. So we are very happy that it has become one of the first movies after a gap of almost 40 years to be screened in China, and would like to thank Fire International Media for its role in screening of the movie. He mentioned the two countries are also planning joint production in the film industry. So this movie will be a trailblazer and a starting point for such a cooperation. Ambassador Haque said there is a long history of interactions between people living in China and Pakistan. So after our two countries became independent, this history and cul-

tural affinity brought them closer and closer to each other, he said, mentioning the two sides signed their first cultural cooperation agreement in 1965. Since then, we had numerous events between Pakistan and China in the fields of art, festivals, sports, literature, and music. We have also established a number of sister cities and sister provinces between the two sides, he added. We are also planning a number of cultural activities to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the establishment of our ties in 2021. Cultural and people-to-people exchanges between the two countries help foster their relationship and mutual understanding, he said. "We have also set up Pakistan study centers in a number of Chinese universities, and similarly, there are also Confucius Institutes in Pakistan which are teaching Chinese language and history." According to the ambassador, China is the top overseas destination for Pakistani students, 28,000 of whom are studying in China.

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