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Saima Mohsin: The 1st Muslim woman US prosecutor

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PDM has multiple narratives, says Shibli Faraz

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Final decision for playing XI is mine: Babar

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Briefs

PDM has multiple narratives

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Senator Shibli Faraz said on Monday that the opposition alliance Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) component parties were pursuing conflicting narratives. In a tweet, he said Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has been insisting on no confidence motion, Ahsan Iqbal has reservation on this strategy and PML (N) leader Maryam Nawaz has been stressing on the long march. He said this clearly indicates that the opposition parties' alliance was disintegrated.

Pak wants fresh start to US relations

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on National Security Division Dr. Moeed Yusuf says Pakistan is looking forward to having bilateral relations with the new US administration, which is built around fresh conversations. Addressing an event in Islamabad on Monday, he said number one priority of Pakistan is to establish an economic partnership, while other priorities include tackling global challenges, formalizing security partnerships, and ensuring regional peace.

First Muslim woman US prosecutor

DNA

WASHINGTON: Pakistan-born Saima Mohsin becomes first federal Muslim woman prosecutor in the United States. Saima Mohsin will take charge as acting US attorney for Michigan's Eastern District on Feb 2. Born in Pakistan, Mohsin has been a federal prosecutor for decades, working since 2002 in the U.S. Attorney's Office. As an immigrant of Asian descent who is Muslim, she will bring diversity to an important position that is the chief federal law enforcement officer in the eastern part of the state.

Pakistan's economy is back on track

The incentives given to the industries including the construction sector have triggered an economic activity

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-I-Insaaf (PTI) government has started yielding results in the form of improved economic indicators which is providing necessary cushion to further strengthen the social safety nets. The government managed to put the economy back on track with introducing financial discipline and taking politically tough and unpopular decisions. "Putting the economic indicators back on the positive trajectory was a herculean task for the present government as it inherited an economy with a major balance of payment crisis which led to high inflation and low growth," official press release said. According to the documents, the Large Scale Manufacturing (LSM) has shown significant growth so far in the current fiscal year. The LSM grew by 7.4 percent in October and 14.5 percent in November which is the highest monthly growth in twelve years. The manufacturing recovery is also becoming broader with 12 out of 15 sub sectors

registering positive growth leading to employment generation. The incentives given to the industries including the construction sector have triggered an economic activity in the country. With the industries operating at its full capacity, there has been a significant increase in the exports. The exports remained \$ 2.3 billion in December 2020, highest in seven years. The exports of textile industry went up by \$ 1.4 billion in December 2020, thus achieving the highest ever growth for any month. The cement sale witnessed highest ever sale in October 2020. According to official press release, regardless of debt servicing of about \$10 billion dollars annually, the foreign exchange reserves have reached about \$ 20 billion dollars, highest since January 2018. Commercial bank deposits have witnessed highest growth in eighteen years. The current account has shown a surplus of \$1.6b during first five months of current financial year against a deficit of \$1.7b in the corresponding period last

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Adam Mulawarman Tugio, Indonesian ambassador to Pakistan called on Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Chairman Senate Foreign Affairs Committee. - DNA

PML-N formally decides to contest Senate elections

Sources said that PDM leaders are mulling over fielding joint candidates for the Senate polls

SHUJAAT HAMZA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has formally decided to participate in the Senate elections, days after announcing that it would not participate in the polls owing to the legitimacy of the 2018 general elections. The decision, which was taken and announced by the top leadership of the party earlier, on Monday was finally given a nod by the parliamentary party committee of the PML-N. PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz conveyed the message of the party supremo Nawaz Sharif regarding the participation in the Senate polls.

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'Land mafias enjoyed PML-N patronage'

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan claimed on Monday that people who illegally occupied state lands enjoyed the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) patronage. Chairing a meeting of government spokespersons and party leaders, he opined: "Nobody can encroach upon state land without political patronage." He wondered that the operation to clear state land of encroachments is being billed as political move by opposition leaders. The prime minister directed the government spokespersons to apprise the nation on the anti-encroachment operation. The current political situation, foreign funding case, operation against land grabbers and Broad-sheet issue came under discussion during the meeting. Prime Minister further said those who tried to embroil us in the foreign funding case have got themselves entangled. "Our stance stood vindicated before the Election Commission of Pakistan," he added. He reiterated the government's resolve to ensure a fair and just probe into the Broadsheet issue. "We will bring to light every character who inflicted losses on the national exchequer," he resolved. - DNA

Australia supports Pak development: Dr Shaw

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Dr Geoffrey Shaw marked Australia Day (26 January) with a special message. The High Commissioner said "Australia Day, when Australians celebrate our nation's achievements and its people, is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the relationship between our two great countries. The High Commissioner highlighted that Australia was one of the first countries to formally recognise the new nation of Pakistan in 1947. Since then, the relationship has strengthened and deepened. We have much in common - in-



cluding our shared love of cricket and historical ties - which provides a solid foundation to advance the relationship further. Our strong linkages are shown by the more than 80,000 people of Pakistani origin who now call Australia home, the High Commissioner added. And many Pakistani students choose to study in Australia's high quality uni-

versities and other educational institutions. These young alumni contribute to Pakistan's bright future and build on their links with Australia. Dr. Geoffrey Shaw further said that Australia is a supporter of Pakistan's prosperity, stability and development. In 2020, Australia has re-oriented its development cooperation to help Pakistan deal with the COVID19 emergency, such as by funding the purchase of ventilators, supporting Ehsaas nutrition centres and assisting women in lockdown. This has been in addition to our long-running development cooperation to better manage scarce water resources.

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ISLAMABAD: MATSUDA Kuninori, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan and Noor Ahmed, Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs exchanging the Grant Agreement. - DNA

PM, COAS, DG ISI discuss security

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chief of Army Staff, General Qamar Javed Bajwa called on Prime Minister Imran Khan here on Monday. Director General Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) Lt. Gen. Faiz Hamid was also present during the meeting. Matters pertaining to national security were discussed during the meeting, a statement issued by the PM Media Wing here said.

Japan grants \$19m for weather radar

NAVEED MIRAJ

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Japan has agreed to provide grants approximately worth 1,986 million Japanese Yen (Equivalent to around 19 million USD / around 3,057 million PKR) for installation of weather surveillance radar in Sukkur, Sindh province.

Notes to this effect were signed and exchanged between H.E. MATSUDA Kun-

inori, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan and Mr. Noor Ahmed, Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs in Islamabad and a Grant Agreement (G/A) on the details of implementation of the project was signed and exchanged between Mr. FURUTA Shigeki, Chief Representative, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Pakistan Office and Ms. Syeda Adeela Bokhari, Joint Secretary (Japan/NGO/INGO), Ministry of

Economic Affairs. Weather surveillance radars have been upgrade in Islamabad, Karachi and to be established in Multan under JICA's grand aid. Under this project, a new weather radar is developed in Sukkur, Sindh province. It covers a gap for weather surveillance and develops a weather surveillance radar network which can cover around 90% of the whole country.

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Briefs

Agha Siraj
accepts
Naqvi's
resignation

DNA

KARACHI: Speaker Sindh Assembly (SA) Agha Siraj Durrani on Monday accepted the resignation of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Firdous Shamim Naqvi as the provincial assembly's opposition leader. Firdous Shamim Naqvi was asked by Prime Minister Imran Khan to step down as the Leader of the Opposition in the Sindh Assembly, earlier this month. The requisition to notify Haleem Adil Sheikh as PA opposition leader would be submitted on Monday by the PTI lawmakers. According to sources Muttahida Qaumi Movement Pakistan (MQM-P) leadership had expressed reservations over the nomination of Haleem Adil Sheikh for the position. Naqvi had said in a statement that he tendered resignation as the Sindh Assembly's opposition leader and he had also sent the copy of his resignation to the prime minister through WhatsApp. He had said that the responsibility of the opposition leader was given by the PTI leadership. Naqvi also congratulated Haleem Adil Sheikh for being appointed as the new opposition leader.

4 witnesses
record
statements in
Asif case

LAHORE: Four witnesses have recorded their statements to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in connection with the assets beyond income case against Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Khawaja Muhammad Asif. Another progress was made in assets beyond income case against Khawaja Asif as four witnesses recorded their statements to the anti-corruption watchdog. According to NAB documents, a bank peon in Lahore had submitted over Rs28 million to the bank account of Khawaja Asif following the orders of senior officers. It stated that the nephew of Khawaja Asif, Khawaja Sultan, had submitted Rs20 million to his bank account after being told by his paternal uncle. A senior political worker Rana Abdul Waheed had submitted Rs30 million to Asif's account and told the NAB that the money was given to him by Asif. — DNA

Separate
women
passage
allocated

DNA

CHAMAN: Separate passage has been allocated at the Pakistan-Afghan border crossing in Chaman. The 12-foot long passage has been allocated for women from the NADRA to the Friendship Gate (Baabe-Dosti). The people of the area, tribal leaders and the political parties were demanding separate passage for the women at the Pak-Afghan border since long. Lauding the decision of the federal government, the tribal leaders thanked the government for accepting their long-awaited demand and added that separate passage for women as per the tradition of the tribal area is a good omen. The Chaman border crossing is one of the major international border crossing between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

PARC intends to modernize
Gilgit Baltistan's agriculture

Chairman CDA said that the process of actions against the encroachments will be continued without any break. Strict action should be taken against those who have grabbed the government's land and forest's land, he added



RANA FARRUKH

ISLAMABAD: Agriculture Minister for GB Mr. Muhammad Kazim Mesam arrived at PARC National Agricultural Research Centre on 24th January, 2021 where he was warmly welcomed by Chairman PARC Dr. Muhammad Azeem Khan.

Dr. Muhammad Azeem Khan led him to various institutes of NARC and briefed him thoroughly about the establishment and objectives

of the Centre. Intending to collaborate in the areas of Horticulture research, chairman sought for establishment of high value fruit/dry fruit orchards and high tech vegetable farms with improved yield so that the local production could reduce import bills. GB is a high potential area for olive cultivation therefore in future olive production with the help of PARC will also be made possible. PARC will assist GB Agriculture in promoting low cost farming in the region. Establishment of quality check

certified laboratories, Mombasa grass production technology for high milk production in animals, certified seeds of crops were discussed for future collaboration. After briefing they visited NIGAB which is brilliantly working in the agricultural research of plants, animals and microbes and recently it has handed over 50,000 Potato tubers to GB Agriculture Department for disease free potato production and research. Whereas various crop seeds were also given in which banana tissue culture

research is also included. PARC will also open a PATCO display center at GB. Minister further visited Livestock and fisheries departments and showed great interest in different activities and laparoscopic models in sheep and goats. Chairman stressed on the participation of local women in the development of Angora Rabbity at GB and also told him about the bright future of trout fish farming. These trainings of farmer in fish hatchery and rabbity will be conducted by PARC that will gen-

erate income for the poor farmers. At this occasion Mr. Mesam asked for cooperation in training of GB locals at NARC, continuous functioning of PARC-MARC Skardu and research sharing of water management and crop production technologies. He praised the work done by institutes and continued the same eagerness for future collaboration of GB Agriculture Department with PARC, so the GB farming community could also get benefit from PARC research works.

MOU signed for
ending violence
against women

DNA

KARACHI: Mohammad Ali Jinnah University, Karachi (MAJU) and OXFAM Pakistan signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for "Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Through Education and Entertainment" at MAJU. The purpose of this MOU is to set forth the framework for a collaboration between two organizations in the areas of gender-based violence through education in parallel with entertainment approach in the university domain. The MOU was signed by the Dr. Areeb Ahmed, Director, Quality Enhancement Cell, MAJU and Sartaj Abbasi, Gender Specialist, Oxfam. It is mentioned here that Oxfam is for non-profit organization registered in United Kingdom and working in Pakistan since 1973 in collaboration

with Australian High Commission, Islamabad. As per terms and conditions, Oxfam will hold reflection sessions with the students and teachers. Both the institutions agreed to strengthen the Harassment Complaint Cell in line with HEC's Policy on Protection Against Gender Harassment. MAJU also agreed to cooperate with Oxfam in paintings and murals in the institute reflecting various dimensions of gender-based violence, gender stereotypes and gender power imbalances. Project Coordinator, Oxfam Sadaf Zakoullah, Associate Dean, Faculty of Computer Science, Dr. Shoukat Wasi, Associate Dean, Business Administration, Dr. S.M. Nooman Shah, HoD, Computer Science Department, Dr. S. K. Raazi and other senior faculty members of the university were present during MOU signing ceremony.

Rear Admiral Abid takes over
as Commander Logistics

KARACHI: Rear Admiral Abid Hameed has taken over the Logistic Command of Pakistan Navy (PN) in an impressive change of Command ceremony held at PN Dockyard. He took over the command from Rear Admiral Adnan Khalig, said a news release on Monday. Rear Admiral Abid Hameed would now be in charge of Logistic support to all PN Units, Ships, Establishments and repair/maintenance facilities of Pakistan Navy. Guard of honour was also presented to the newly appointed Commander Logistics during the ceremony. Later, Commanding Officers of the units under Command were also introduced to Commander Logistics. The ceremony was attended by a large number of officers, civilians and sailors of Pakistan Navy. — APP

Naheed.pk welcomes Wasim
as its brand ambassador

ATHAR SUFI

KARACHI: Naheed.pk, the commerce initiative of Naheed Supermarket, a leading name in retail shopping in Pakistan, announced its association with the cricket legend Wasim Akram and welcomed him as their official Brand Ambassador. The agreement was signed in Karachi, at a simple but impressive ceremony. Expressing his joy on the association, the legendary Cricketer Wasim Akram



said, "I am very happy to be associated with Naheed.pk, which is backed by over 40 years of trust of Naheed Supermarket, the leading supermarket from Karachi." He further shared his personal experience of online shopping with Naheed.pk, "In these testing COVID times, for me and my family, Naheed.pk has been the

most convenient and trust worthy option. You can expect original products with timely delivery from them". Speaking at the occasion, Mr. Munsub Abrar, CEO of Naheed Supermarket, said: "Naheed.pk is proud associated with Wasim Akram since long time, and now we formally welcome Wasim Akram as our Ambassador. It shows his trust on our brand, our products, and our delivery methods, which he has experienced himself extensively over the last year."

Daraz and IRD
join hands

DNA

KARACHI: With the increase of COVID-19 cases, Pakistan's leading e-commerce platform Daraz has collaborated with global health delivery and research network Interactive Research Development (IRD) to spread awareness of the novel coronavirus and the ensuing pandemic. In collaboration with Daraz, IRD has distributed safety awareness flyers in Daraz packages across Pakistan. The two organizations stand together to ensure

safety for all as the rate of infection intensifies. Daraz also hosted an informative session live with Dr. Kamran Iqbal, Program Manager for the IRD Model COVID - 19 Response, to discuss the IRD COVID-19 model and address questions related to COVID-19 management. His expertise allowed him to talk about the IRD Model and oxygen therapy and its importance with respect to COVID-19 and debunked myths related to the virus and elucidated in detail how to continue to work safely during the second wave.

Police arrest
eight drug
paddlers

DNA

ATTOCK: Police have arrested eight accused from different areas for their alleged involvement in drug peddling and possessing illegal fire arms besides recovering 30 litre liquor, three pistols and 750 gram charas has been recovered from their possession. Separate cases have been registered against them. Those arrested include Tanveer Hussain, Ahmad Sultan, Shahidullah, Abdul Sattar, Matiullah, Jamshed Khan, Sanobar Khan and Ikram. Meanwhile, a meeting of District Peace Committee was held which was presided over by ASP Muhammad Jawad Ishaq. On the other hand Special Desks have been set up in all the police stations, police check posts and at police headquarters Attock to facilitate people.

EFP to hold
"Employer
of the Year
Award"

DNA

KARACHI: Employers' Federation of Pakistan (EFP), is holding its well sought and prestigious event "Employer of the Year Award 2019-20" for the 8th year on March 16, 2021, at Karachi. This event provides a platform and an opportunity to recognize companies that have created a stimulating and supportive work environment that fosters employee engagement, resulting in the most productive and rewarding working environment possible. "It will also provide an opportunity to the winners to present their success stories and measures taken to meet the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and its implication on business and economic sustainability and employment". This was informed by Zaki Ahmed Khan, Vice President & Focal Person of EFP in a press statement. Zaki Ahmed Khan disclosed that this year, there would be nine contest areas such as corporate & general management, human resource management & employment practices, labor laws & core ILS compliance, working conditions-health and safety at work, corporate social responsibility, training & skill development initiatives, compliance with social protection floors, strategic alignment with SDGs, women empowerment & response to COVID-19 challenge.

Family
thrashed by
unknown
motorcyclists

DNA

LAHORE: Four unknown assailants severely thrashed a Lahore based family due to unknown reasons near Bund road in the area of Shafiqabad Police Station in the recent past, when the family was going to meet their relatives in Sialkot. FIR lodged by the Shafiqabad Police station on the request of the head of the said family Syed Ali Murtaza S/o Syed Abid Hussain Rizvi, Ali Murtaza was travelling in his car from his residence situated in Islamia Park, Pooch Road to meet his relatives in Sialkot. He was accompanied by his brother Syed Furqan Abbas, sister-in-law Syeda Kubra Fatima, Aunt Kaneez Fatima and her daughter AweenAli and her cousin Laiba Awan.

US Foreign Policy under President
Biden discussed in Webinar

DNA

KARACHI: As part of the continuing series of monthly webinars on various topics of political and economic significance, a webinar on "The Foreign Policy of the US under President Joe Biden" was held on January 24, 2021. It was organized by the Global and Regional Studies Center (GRSC), Institute of Business Management (IoBM), Karachi. The moderator was Former Ambassador Ghulam Rasool Baluch. Among the panelists were Ambassador Najmuddin Sheikh, Fmr. Foreign Secretary, and Ambassador Javid Hussain, Fmr. Pakistan Ambassador. During the opening statement, Ambassador Baluch said that days before the election the Capitol Hill was stormed by Trump's supporters. This affected the soft power image of the US and its allies. He mentioned that bringing po-

litical unity in the US will be President Biden's priority as his regime must address a plethora of domestic and international perils. Ambassador Shaikh said that President Biden must focus on mending US domestic affairs. He mentioned that time will tell how much faith we can place on President Biden's claim to rebuilding old ties. He viewed that Europe-US ties will play a fundamental role in determining US-Russia relations. When touching upon the Indo-Pacific Strategy of Trump, Amb. Shaikh said the Kargil episode handled by the then US government in consultation with India created trust between the US and India. He further mentioned that to counter the rise of China in the region, the US choose India as an ally. In this regard India was needed to develop pertinent expertise in nuclear fields akin to China and that it should be regarded as

the counterweight to China. Ambassador Javid said that Biden has a gigantic task of initiating economic recovery especially in the era of the Covid-19. When commenting on the US foreign policy, he shared that the China-US rivalry will continue as the US will challenge China's economic rise. This will strengthen US-India strategic partnership. The US will also fortify its relations with Japan, South Korea, and Australia. Amb. Javid said that President Biden will focus on multilateral decisions such as re-joining the Paris Agreement, issues of disarmament and is expected to take a tougher stance with Russia. Amb. Baluch thanked Amb. Shaikh and Amb. Javid for sharing pertinent diplomatic insights on the topic. He was hopeful that these recommendations should be taken up by the government to develop a diplomatic course of action.

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Briefs

12 private members bills introduced

DNA

ISLAMABAD: As many as 12 private members bills were introduced in the Senate on Monday and the chairman referred all bills to the concerned standing committee for detailed deliberation. The bills were included the Guardian and Wards (Amendment) Bill, 2020, the Public Complaints (Removal of Grievance) Bill, 2020, the Islamabad Rent Restriction (Amendment) Bill, 2020, the Right of Access to Information (Amendment) Bill, 2020, the Islamabad Women University Islamabad Bill, 2020, the Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020, the Factories (Amendment) Bill, 2020, the Pakistan Arms (Amendment) Bill, 2020, the Islamabad Educational Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2021, the Pakistan Penal Code (Amendment) Bill, 2021, the West Pakistan Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill, 2021, the General Clauses (Amendment) Bill, 2021. The bills were moved by Muhammad Javed Abbasi, Mohsin Aziz, Sajjad Hussain Turi, Seemee Ezdi, Syed Sabir Shah and Kauda Babar in the house. Meanwhile, Sirajul Haq withdrew the constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2020 (Amendment of Article 213), introduced on January 20, 2020 from the house.

Six held for carrying illegal weapons

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Police have arrested six persons and recovered illegal arms and ammunition from their possession here on Monday, informed police spokesman. Ganjmandi Police arrested Asad Rehman and recovered pistol 30 bore from his possession while Bani police arrested two persons identified as Mohammad Irfan and Ali Asghar and recovered 02 pistols 30 bore with ammunition recovered from their possession. Similarly, Civil Line police arrested Muhammad Waqas and recovered 01 rifle 12 bore with ammunition from his custody. Morgah police held Bilal Javed and recovered pistol 30 bore with ammunition from his possession. Jati police arrested Qamar Zaman and recovered pistol 30 bore with ammunition from his possession. Separate cases have been registered against all of them. City Police Officer CPO Muhammad Ahsan Younas appreciated the performance of police teams adding that cracking down on illegal arms holders must be continued without any discrimination.

'Welfare of policemen on top priority'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Qazi Jamil ur Rehman Monday said that police officials and jawans were assets of Islamabad police force and welfare steps would be ensured for them and their families. After assuming charge as head of Islamabad police, Qazi Jamil ur Rehman has initiated various steps for welfare of policemen. The ambulance has been provided at police dispensary while doctor has been also appointed there. Free life saving medicines were also being provided to policemen free of cost. A separate counter has been established to facilitate the families of martyred personnel while a special committee has been constituted for timely payment of pension and arrears to retired policemen. The IGP said that various welfare steps have been initiated for the force which would be further extended. He said that such steps would boost the morale of the force and to improve its efficiency along with.

ANF seizes 2037.522 kg drugs, 120 liters chemical

All cases have been registered at respective ANF Police Stations under CNS Act 1997 and further investigations are underway

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Anti Narcotics Force Pakistan seized 2037.522 Kgs narcotics and 120 Liters Prohibited Chemical valuing US \$ 757.78 Million internationally, arrested 8 culprits and impounded 5 vehicles while conducting 14 counter-narcotics strikes throughout the country. The seized drugs comprised of 1063 Kg Opium, 715 Kg Morphine, 58,022 Kg Heroin, 200.1 Kg Hashish, 1.4 Kg Methamphetamine (Ice) and 120 Liters Acetic Anhydride. ANF Balochistan, the staff of Police Station ANF Quetta recovered 715 Kg Morphine near Railway Station, Killi Khan Muhammad Yaro, District Pishin. In another operation, the staff of Police Station Regional Directorate ANF Balochistan recovered 1063 kg Opium from Killi Agberg, Tehsil &

District Quetta. As per initial information, the recovered drugs were stored for handing over to some other narco gang. In third operation, the staff of Police Station, ANF Quetta recovered 120 Liters Acetic Anhydride from a Toyota Corolla Car at Chaman, Kuchlak Road, near Agriculture College, District Quetta. Resultantly two accused persons namely Asmat Ullah and Abdul Nasir both resident of Quetta were arrested during the operation. In fourth operation, The staff of Police Station Quetta recovered 30 Kg Hashish from a Suzuki Mehran Car parked near Said Meer Cross, Gulistan Road, District Qila Abdullah. In fifth operation, the staff of Police Station ANF Turbat recovered 30 Kg Heroin from a dry nullah located at general area of Dasht, District Kech. In sixth operation, the staff of police station ANF Quetta intercepted a Yamaha

Motorcycle near Meer Hotel, Joint Road, Quetta and recovered 6 Kg hashish from personal possession of arrested accused namely Nazar Muhammad resident of Quetta. ANF Punjab, the staff of Police Station Lahore intercepted a suspected parcel from main International Courier Service Center Lahore and recovered 1,400 Kg Meth. The Parcel was booked for Bahrain. The parcel was consisted of 1x Bag and 1x Wooden Kitchen accessories set. Drug was tactfully concealed in bottom of 1x bag. In another operation the staff of police station ANF Sialkot raided near Govt High School, Majira Kalan Tehsil Sambrial, District Sialkot and recovered 5,000 Kg Hashish from the personal possession of accused person namely Sakhawat Ali Malik resident of Sialkot. In third operation, the staff of police station ANF Lahore inter-

cepted a UK bound Parcel from a cargo shed located at Allama Iqbal International Airport, Lahore and recovered 2,212 Kg Heroin which was tactfully concealed in 7x small packing boxes of decoration pieces. Sender of the parcel Muhammad Sammar was arrested in the operation. ANF Sindh, the staff of Police Station ANF Korangi, Karachi in collaboration with Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) Karachi conducted an intelligence based raid at Creek Area Korangi Karachi and recovered 25 Kg Heroin and 1,000 Kg Hashish kept in bushes. In another operation the staff of police station ANF Regional Directorate Sindh, Karachi conducted a raid near Madina Masjid, Korangi Road, Karachi and recovered 18 Kg Hashish from personal possession of two accused persons namely Khalil Ur Rehman and Ikram Ullah both resident of Qilla Abdullah. In

third operation the staff of police station ANF Hyderabad conducted an operation near Water Pump Station, Hali Road ,Hyderabad, intercepted a Toyota Corolla GLI car and recovered 40 Kg Hashish from said vehicle. An accused namely Ghulam Qadir Chandio has escaped from the spot. ANF KP, on a tip-off Police station ANF Peshawar in collaboration with FC(N) seized 77x Packets of Hashish total weighing 100,100 Kg which was concealed in 4x Plastic Sack on Road side near FC Post POC Auragha Afghan Sarhad Border District Khyber ANF Rawalpindi, staff of police station Regional Directorate ANF North arrested an accused namely Abdul Aziz resident of ghotki at Islamabad International Airport and recovered 810 Gram Heroin which was concealed in plastic stool. He was boarding for Riyadh (KSA) on Flight No SV-723.

RCB resolves 5170 complaints

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Public Facilitation Centre of Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB), received as many as 5762 complaints regarding electricity, water supply and sanitation problems during last six months and made all out efforts to resolve them while 5170 were addressed on urgent basis. According to RCB spokesman, Qaiser Mehmood, the RCB's facilitation centre received total 5762 complaints during the period and addressed 5170. He further informed that the board received 2700 complaints through Pakistan Citizen Portal, out of which 2431 were addressed within shortest possible time frame while 351 are under process. He said, CB care center issued 3941 birth and 1954 death certificates during the period.

NH&MP distributes free 'First Aid Boxes'

RAWALPINDI: The National Highways and Motorway Police (NH&MP) in collaboration with a private company, Monday distributed free 'First Aid Boxes' among the motorists here at the Islamabad Toll Plaza. Speaking on the occasion, Sector Commander Ashiq Hussain said the Motorway police was engaged in the welfare of road users round-the-clock and free distribution of the 'First Aid Boxes' was a constructive initiative to avoid any odd situation during travelling on the Motorway. - APP

IRSA releases 31,200 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: IRSA on Monday released 31,200 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 40,200 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1470.73 feet, which was 78.73 feet higher than its dead level 1386 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 15,000 cusecs each. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1173.45 feet, which was 133.45 feet higher than its dead level of 1040 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 9,300 cusecs and 3,000 cusecs respectively. - APP



ISLAMABAD: A vendor preparing Kashmiri tea in a local market. - APP

'7 to 8 million children benefited from teleschool'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Shafiqat Mahmood Monday said according to a survey seven to eight million children got benefited from the teleschool launched by the government to teach them during the COVID 19. Speaking in the Senate here, he said the government took a range of measures to make it possible

for children in educational institutions to continue receiving their education during the coronavirus pandemic. The minister said the government also launched Radio School to deliver lectures to children confined to their homes, adding, after coronavirus reached Pakistan early last year and the schools were closed the government launched its distance learning programme. As many students faced

the issue of non availability of internet in far flung and border areas, the Universal Service Fund will be used to provide internet access and connectivity in all areas of the country. The government was working on facilitating blended learning with use of all the available technologies including tablets, computers and smartphones. Now the focus will also be on teacher training, adult learning and education of out of school children, he

informed. Later, the Senate passed a resolution of Senator Seemee Ezdi stating that the house was cognizant of the fact that COVID-19 had adversely affected education in Pakistan resulting in the closure of over 300,000 schools in the country since March 2020 as majority of the students did not have access to smartphones, 3G/4G wireless and internet especially in the far flung areas of the country.

Govt spends Rs 3 billion to control locust: NA told

ISLAMABAD: Minister for National Food Security and Research Muhammad Ameer Sultan Monday informed the National Assembly that the government had spent Rs 3 billion to control locust in the country. Responding to a question during question hour, he said that Rs one billion had been provided by the federal government while Rs 2 billion had been given by the Sindh, Balochistan and Punjab provinces to control the locust. He said that no major loss had been reported in the country due to locust attack as effective and timely measures had been taken by the government. He said that three helicopters of Pakistan Air Force with special fitting were used for aerial spraying of medicines to control the locust. Ameer Sultan said that dialogue was underway with Turkey to take aircrafts on lease to use to eliminate the locust if it attacked again. "No significant loss to agricultural crops is reported by any Provincial government due to locust attack so far. However, partial damages to few crops were reported by farmers through NLCC in few districts," he added. As a result of effective management, the locust had been eliminated from all 62 affected districts and at present Pakistan was free from locust. He said Locust Emergency and Food Security project was prepared in consultation with all the stakeholders and got approved from ECNEC. - DNA

COMSTech int'l workshop on viral diseases begins

More than 300 virologists, scientists and students from around the OIC member states are participating in this workshop

DNA

ISLAMABAD: COMSTech International Workshop on "Fundamental Techniques in Viral Diseases Diagnostics" inaugurated on January 25, 2021 at COMSTech. More than 300 virologists, scientists and students from around the OIC member states are participating in this workshop. Thirteen national and international experts from Germany, China, Sweden and Pakistan will give lectures on different aspects of viral diseases during the next two days. Keynote address was delivered by Prof. Dr. Khalid Saeed Khan of University of Granada, Spain. He

emphasized the need of medical research. Prof. Khalid emphasized the research-based decision making. He mentioned that existing knowledge, and text books available could not help out in coping with COVID-19. It was only research which helped scientists to generate new knowledge to cope with this pandemic. He urged the public to take interest in research process and get involved into it. Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General COMSTech said that good governance, science and society connection, science culture, and science itself helped the humanity to tackle with the current pandemic. He said that it was the practice of open science that helped conducting

genome sequence of the virus and exploring its entire biological characteristics within a few months of the outbreak. Dr. Choudhary said it was exceptional to provide COVID vaccine to the world in such a shortest period of time. It happened first time in the arena of vaccine development only due to the practice of open science and cooperation by the scientists around the world. Dr. Choudhary advised the nations that we need to be prepared for future pandemics - which are not far - by developing our capacity and institutional infrastructure. This three-day workshop consists upon four technical sessions and would conclude on Jan. 27, 2021.

Islamabad records 102 corona cases

ISLAMABAD: COVID-19 cases continued to surge in the federal capital as 102 new Corona cases were reported in city during the last 24 hours, National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) said on Monday. According to an official, as many as 84 cases were reported on Sunday while 81 cases were reported on Saturday. He said so far 40,815 cases were reported from the federal capital while 468 deaths were reported from ICT. He added that 38,737 patients had been recovered completely. Meanwhile, on the direction of Ministry of National Health Services, the district administration of Islamabad had continued smart lockdown in different streets of the capital to reduce transmission of the infection in the selected streets and other sectors. They also started taking actions for violating Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) related to corona while visiting marriage halls, markets and petrol pumps by its inspection teams. The administration also sealed schools, shops, workshop and restaurants on violation of SOPs. The inspection teams also issued notices to marriage halls besides imposing fines on owners of different shops. - DNA

AIOU asks students for electronically composed assignments

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has directed its students to submit only electronically composed assignments, either in Word or PDF format. This direction has been given as AIOU is gradually switching to automation of key university processes. In this regard, university has made it mandatory for the students of the programs offered in autumn 2020 semester including B Ed, M Ed, MA, MSc and BS to submit electronically composed assignments, either in Word or PDF format, on Aaghi LMS portal. The students registered in these programs would log in to (www.aaghi.aiou.edu.pk) and submit their assignments in either Word or PDF format. According to a notification issued by the competent authority, university would not accept neither handwritten assignments nor images or scanned copies of the assignments. - DNA

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Briefs

13 suspects held during search operation

ISLAMABAD: The police on Monday held 13 suspects during a search operation conducted in the area of sector H-12 and adjoining slums.

All the suspects were shifted to police station for interrogation, said a news release issued here. DIG (Operations) Afzaal Ahmed Kausar said that the purpose of the search operations was to heighten the security of federal capital and to curb the crimes. He further directed all police officials for high vigilance and monitoring against those involved in anti-social activities.

The DIG stressed upon the citizens to remain alert in their surroundings and inform the police if found any suspicious activity for timely action against them.

"Safety of life and property of the citizens is our prime responsibility and no stone would be left unturned in this regard" the news release said while quoting DIG as saying. - APP

Police reunites boy with parent

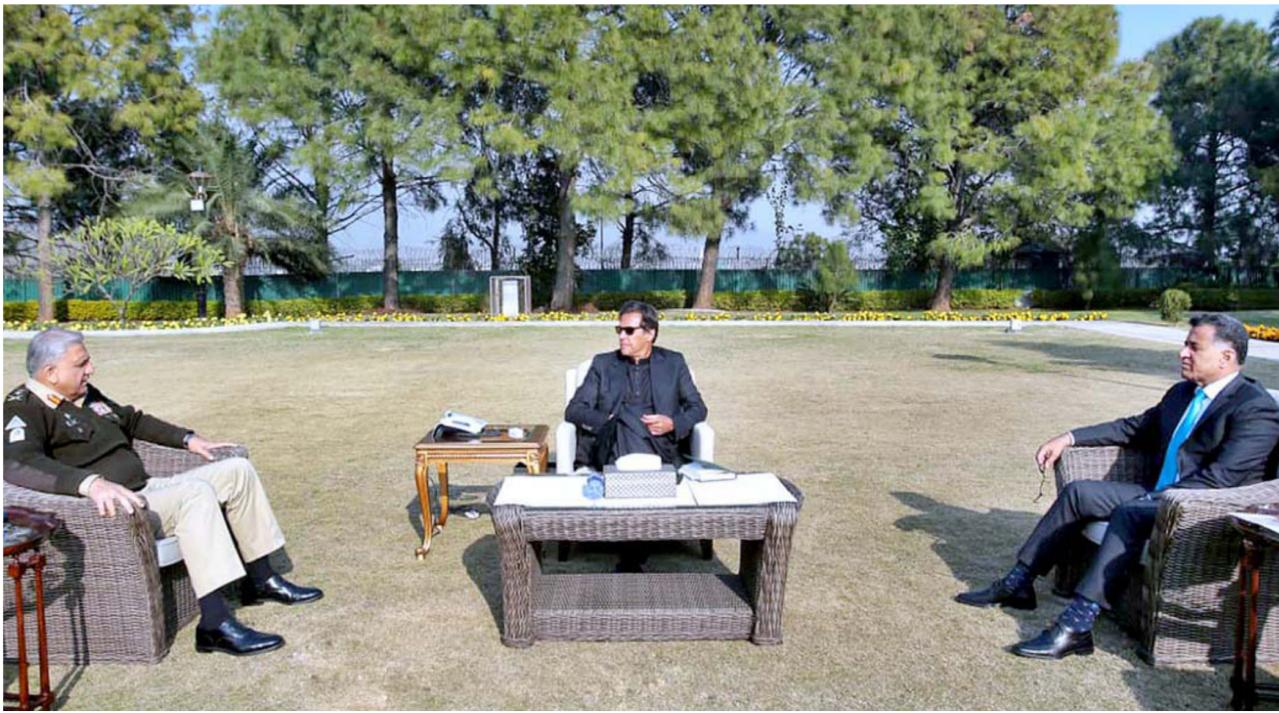
ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Shams Colony police on Monday reunited an eleven years old boy with his family who had been missing from the area of sector H-13. According to police spokesman, a woman informed Shams Colony police that her 11-years old son MUSAAB Bin Umair who was mentally disabled had been missing and could not be traced despite hectic efforts by family members.

Following this information, SP (Industrial-Area) Liaqat Hayat Niazi constituted a special team under supervision of DSP Khalid Mehmood Awan to trace the missing boy. This team including SHO Shams Colony police Aamir Abbas searched various under-construction buildings, houses and garbage heaps. Various people were inquired about the missing boy and finally succeeded to recover him safely. The family has thanked the police team over safe recovery of the boy. IGP Islamabad Muhammad Qazi Jamil ur Rehman and DIG (Operations) Afzaal Ahmed Kausar have appreciated the performance of police team, the spokesman added.

World adventurers called to experience Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Sayed Zulfiqar Abbas Bukhari Monday exhorted world adventurers to experience Pakistan's mountain tourism. In a tweet, he congratulated Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government and others over organizing International Snowboarding Championship 2021 in Malam Jabba, a popular skiing resort of Swat located at 2,804 meters height.

"Pakistan hosts another successful season of winter sports festivities. Congratulations to organizing team participants and winners in International Snowboarding Championship 2021 in Malam Jabba. Our mountains are calling all snow lovers.. see you here next season!" Zulfiqar Bukhari, who also heads National Tourism Coordination Board, tweeted. The five-day championship, hosting over 80 participants local and international player, was concluded at Malam Jabba on last Sunday. The tournament featured four games of parallel giant slalom and giant slalom for male and female participants and other sports activities to promote the snowboarding as professional sport in the country. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa called on Prime Minister Imran Khan. Director General ISI Lt. General Faiz Hamid Gul is also present. - APP

Government should immediately revoke SRO 237: Sardar Yasir

Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan said that ICCI has been pursuing this matter almost for the last two years but still there was no positive response from the Government. He said that the inflation has gone beyond the means

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The importers of halal products in a meeting with Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry have expressed their great concern on the issuance of SRO 237 by the Ministry of Commerce & Textile. They said that as per the said SRO importers will have to comply with the strict conditions while importing halal food products including ingredients and details of the products of the food products should be printed in Urdu and English language on the consumer packaging, the

Logo of the halal certification body should be printed on the consumer packaging, and the labeling should not be in the form of a sticker, overprinting stamp or scratched labeling. The delegation said that the majority of the halal food products are small importers and it was not possible for them to comply with such strict conditions especially writing details of ingredients and products in Urdu and printing of Logo of Halal Certification body on the packaging. They said that most of the small importers buy halal food products from the wholesale markets around the globe as they don't have direct access to the produc-



ters that makes it extremely difficult for them to fulfill conditions that were mentioned in the said SRO. They said that import volume of halal products was normally very low and factories do not offer services of customized labelling in case of small orders. Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan said that ICCI has been pursuing this mat-

ter almost for the last two years but still there was no positive response from the Government. He said that the inflation has gone beyond the means and it was not affordable for the consumers to buy imported Halal food products at high price. He said that it has also become difficult for the importers to continue their businesses with the current policy because in the present covid-19 situation business community has suffered huge financial losses. Sardar Yasir Ilyas urged the Ministry to consider the request for revoking the SRO 237 on immediate basis in order to avoid further closure of business or going them

in default. He said that imposition of such conditions would make it difficult for the small importers of halal food products to comply with the condition of printing details of the products in Urdu language. He said that the government should ease out conditions and allow importers to paste information on the packing in Urdu in the form of stickers. He further said that Halal Certificate should be accepted and the condition of printing of Halal Logo on the consumer packaging should be removed. He said that such conditions which are being imposed through the said SRO would curtail the imports and also increase the price of imported halal food products.

NAB asked to give details of contract with Broadsheet



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Chairman Senate Saleem Mandviwala on Monday said that his legal team is not hampering any NAB investigation. "Whenever I have been called I have always appeared before the courts. My legal team has not received any NAB notice yet," Saleem Mandviwala said in a press statement issued here today. The Deputy Chairman Senate has said that if he receive any notice from the National Accountability Bureau, he will consult his legal

team for its response. "Apart from this NAB should give details of its shady contract with Broadsheet Ilc company," he remarked. Mandviwala said thousands of NAB affectees across the country have contacted him to raise their voice in the parliament. I have exposed NAB's witch hunting in the upper house senate and I will keep on exposing NAB ill practices in future too," he said. The Deputy Chairman Senate said that the whole country knows that NAB is only framing opposition members in fake corruption cases.

Rehman Malik for reviewing MTI decision for PIMS

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Interior Senator Rehman Malik on Monday said that all genuine issues of employees of Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) should be addressed on priority basis. Addressing the protesters at PIMS, Rehman Malik asked to review the decision about the Medical Teaching Institutions (MTI) Ordinance for better functioning of the hospital matters. He said that PIMS was the major hospital of federal capital where people from far-flung areas of the country visit here for treatment of medical complications. He said that sincere steps should be taken for better-



ment of employees of PIMS and Federal Government Polyclinic (FGPC) hospital for having efficient service delivery sys-

tem. "If hospitals staff are satisfied they will provide their service in better way. Departments concerned should consider the problems of PIMS protesters and resolve immediately." Chairman Grand Health Alliance Dr Asfandyar Khan said that if their demands were not met by the competent authorities then there will be complete strike in the hospital. He said that all departments including OPDs will remain non-functional except corona ward and emergency department while administration, nursing college and purchase department will also remained closed. - APP

ADB calls for far-reaching reforms to build resilient education systems

ISLAMABAD: The governments and stakeholders in Asia and the Pacific should initiate far-reaching reforms to strengthen the resilience of education and training systems as they deal with the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, according to a new guidance note from the Asian Development Bank (ADB). "With the right resources, strengthened capacity, and deliberate actions, the region can put its education systems on a new and positive path as we settle into a new normal post-COVID-19," said ADB Sustainable Development and Climate Change De-

partment Chief Sector Officer Robert Guild. "Powered by knowledge, skills and human capital, the recovery in education will also help to support the recovery in other sectors." COVID-19 and Education in Asia and the Pacific calls for developing countries to identify critical policy reforms, such as re-vamping teacher professional development, and concrete actions to improve the quality, relevance, and inclusion of education systems over the long-term. Framed as the three Rs—Response, Recovery, and Rejuvenation—the note outlines specific responses from the

kindergarten level to higher education (K-12), and for technical and vocational education and training. Education and training systems have experienced unprecedented disruptions due to COVID-19 with an estimated 1.7 billion students affected by school closures worldwide. Technology has enabled distance and personalized learning and will continue to be instrumental to education post-COVID-19. While education technology tools can be a game changer, the note stresses that ensuring students achieve high-quality learning must remain the central objective. - APP

RCB centre resolves 5170 complaints

RAWALPINDI: The Public Facilitation Centre of Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB), received as many as 5762 complaints regarding electricity, water supply and sanitation problems during last six months and made all out efforts to resolve them while 5170 were addressed on urgent basis. According to RCB spokesman, Qaiser Mehmood, the RCB's facilitation centre received total 5762 complaints during the period and addressed 5170. He further informed that the board received 2700 complaints through Pakistan Citizen Portal, out of which 2431 were addressed within shortest possible time frame while 351 are under process. He said, CB care center issued 3941 birth and 1954 death certificates during the period. He informed, the Cantonment Executive Officer Muhammad Umar Farooq Malik had issued special instructions to the officials to facilitate the citizen and address their problems on urgent basis so as to provide better facilities to the residents. - APP

AGP recovers Rs 353 billion in six months

ISLAMABAD: The Office of Auditor General of Pakistan (AGP) has made recoveries of Rs 353.5 billion during first six months (July-December) of current fiscal year. Overall during the first two and half years from July 2018 to December 2020 the AGP office made recoveries of Rs 490.476 billion.

According to data released by the AGP on Monday, during the fiscal year 2018-19, the recoveries from federal government departments stood at Rs 91.417 million, while in the year 2019-20, an amount of Rs 46.033 billion was recovered. The recoveries from federal government departments stood at Rs347.297 billion in July-December 2020-21 while during the fiscal years 2018-19 and 2019-20, the recoveries were recorded at Rs 84.7 billion and Rs 39.8 billion respectively.

The recoveries from the provincial and district offices were recorded at Rs 6.603 billion, Rs 6.195 billion and Rs 5.724 billion in fiscal year 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21 (Jul-Dec) respectively. The highest recovery was made by Director General Audit (DGA) PNR, Lahore which recovered Rs 160.369 billion in the year 2018-19, Rs 8.851 billion in the year 2019-20 and Rs 307.147 billion in the first six months of current fiscal year. - APP

PTDC to launch 'Brand Pakistan'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Digital marketing holds promise for tourism promotion and that's what exactly the present government is doing by rolling out an inclusive project -Brand Pakistan in coming days to transform the country's image by projecting its breath-taking tourist resorts at international level through online means.

"The competent authority has given approval for Brand Pakistan and now our focus is on its launch as bids from event management firms have been invited to formally roll out the mega tourism project at the earliest," a senior officer of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) said in a media interview on Monday. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government, soon after coming into the power, tasked the PTDC with transforming the local tourism industry by developing a brand for local tourism industry at global level.

He said the initiative, which includes Brand Pakistan, exclusive tourism portal, a ten-year road-map for tourism promotion, a five-year action plan and national minimum standards for hospitality sector, was meant to boost tourism activities in the country. All the components of project would be unveiled at its launching ceremony, he added. Giving details of the project, he said international experts were hired to prepare the project, which was finalized after holding thorough consultation with all stakeholders.

'Engage Africa policy to enhance ties'

Ms Paraiso informed that India and China have a very strong presence in the continent but Pakistan lags behind in this respect. She further stated that Engage Africa policy is very welcoming in this regard and it will help enhance bilateral ties between Pakistan and African nations

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East & Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) hosted Ms. Fatchima Elise Hassane Paraiso, Founder & Chairwoman of Engage Africa Organization here on . Director CAMEA, Ms. Amina Khan and Team CAMEA had an interactive session with her. Director CAMEA, Ms. Amina Khan welcomed her to the Institute and gave her a briefing on activities of ISSI and CAMEA. Ms. Paraiso said that the people of the African continent are eager to reach out to Pakistan. However, language is a major barrier between Pakistan and African countries. While talking about the importance of African Continent she stated that Africa presents endless opportunities for trade and investment as it is a massive market of diverse popu-

lations spanning 54 countries. Ms Paraiso informed that India and China have a very strong presence in the continent but Pakistan lags behind in this respect. She

further stated that Engage Africa policy is very welcoming in this regard and it will help enhance bilateral ties between Pakistan and African nations. She said

that in order to increase our linkages, the language barrier must be removed. She also talked about a French language teaching program that she planned to initiate in the near future to help bridge the communication gap between the Pakistani and African people. Ms. Amina Khan, Director CAMEA outlined the several aspects of the Engage Africa Policy as envisioned by Prime Minister Imran Khan and expressed the desire to work closely with African nationals in Pakistan for enhancing between both sides. She also discussed several ideas on increasing interaction between Pakistani and African people as well as talked at length about creating trade opportunities through encouraging investment and communication between businessmen on both sides. Both sides pledged to strive for establishing lasting linkages and continued cooperation between Pakistan and Africa on all levels.



Manufacturing the vaccine

FOLLOWING the generous donation of 500,000 CanSino doses, the Covid-19 vaccine created by China, the federal government has announced its plan to produce it locally as well. While the intention is noble, skipping medicinal processes to avail a quick solution in the hopes of eradicating the pandemic is a recipe for disaster. The blatant risk associated with such an uninformed initiative is bound to risk the lives of many, as can be learnt from the recent fire at the manufacturing institute in India. As such, we must take another route all the while accepting that getting through this pandemic will require patience, caution and diligence.

All vaccines that have been created globally have gone through the typical process before they are approved for use and mass distribution. Ordinarily, extensive research into the mix of ingredients used, human clinical trials and quality assessments are carried out before the vaccine can be termed as a successful antidote to the virus. Furthermore, a brief period of observation follows which takes into account special considerations for the side effects of the vaccine or potential drawbacks, if any. If the vaccine clears all these steps, then only is it approved.

The reason why this is a tedious process is because the intention is to preserve the health and lives of the people and eliminate risks. To bypass this protocol to cater to the large domestic demand, in the hopes that the difficulties posed by the pandemic will evaporate immediately, is severely misguided. Risking the lives of the people, whether those receiving the vaccine or those producing it, is not acceptable. We should learn from the failures of our neighbour which experienced fatalities due to a lack of technical knowhow and experience in regards to the local production of vaccines. As a long-term objective, this is something that Pakistan must definitely hope to achieve. However, the way to reach that goal is not to embark upon hurried and rash projects that will result in the status quo getting worse. Instead, taking the more comprehensive course of action is advised.

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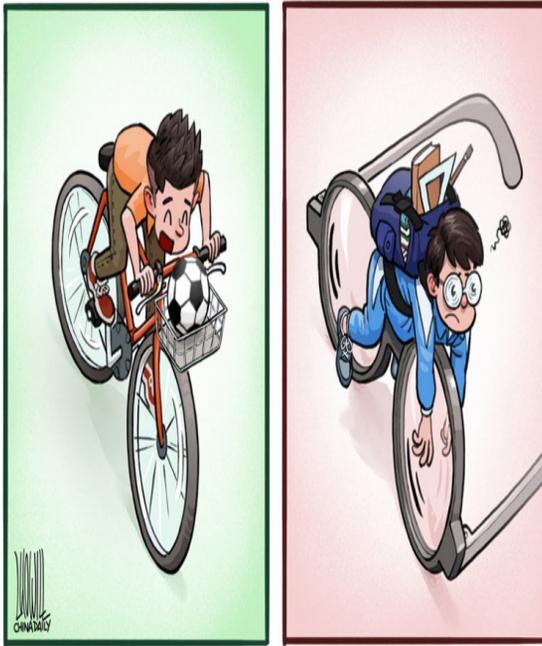
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The English-Urdu debate

MUHAMMAD OMAR IFTIKHAR

THE recent debate on social media about the importance of Urdu that was instigated following the viral video of two owners of a high-end restaurant defaming their manager brings various questions. The video clearly showed how the owners were making fun of their manager who could not speak English. Social media users instantly came forward to defend the manager and criticized the owners' behaviors. While the retaliation from the social media users was correct in its context, perhaps we responded because this is who we are. As a nation we do – consciously or subconsciously – value those who speak or know the English language.

We give value to those who wear Western attire and want to be associated with those who own a luxury car. This video that went viral across Pakistan in a matter of hours reflects our social consciousness. We intend to follow the Western culture. However, when one is following too much of it, then retaliation also occurs. A case in point is our female celebrities. When they share their pictures from foreign trips, they are seen wearing Western attire. The bashing against their choice of wardrobe begins on social media. Many cite they should not be wearing such skimpy clothing for they are Muslims and Pakistanis. However, we tend to watch Indian and American movies where it is a norm for female actors to wear such attire.

Following the owners' video that went viral, people began sharing the importance of speaking in Urdu and why the Urdu language must be preserved. A group of people even planned an Urdu mushaira in front of the restaurant. The problem here is the reaction to the video. Urdu is certainly important to us all. Its sanctity must be upheld and preserved every day. A viral video should not compel us to try to share the importance of the Urdu language. The same goes for all the regional languages of Pakistan that are dear to us and represent Pakistan's cultural dimensions.

Turkey's immaculate defense

Dr. Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan



The US-based publication the Defense News (2019-2020) focuses Turkish emerging strength in military production. During 2020-2021 the number of Turkish companies on the "Top 100 List" upgraded to seven from five. Turkey had launched four frigates in recent years. Turkey made a big investment in improving its naval defences in the last decade, increasing the number of warships and military vessels and relying on homegrown technology

DESPITE US sanctions on its national defense industry, Turkey is indeed marching towards achieving self-reliance in military production and modernization of its armed forces. The world-fame of its armed drones & UAVs (Azerbaijan-Armenia war, Syria, Libya, Kurds), prototype testing of armed helicopter engine, electronic warfare, modern submarines and tanks all showcase its "superiority" against its regional "competitors" and "enemies" too. Most recently, for the further strengthening of its National Defense System (NDS) Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has launched the country's first indigenous frigate Istanbul (F-515) and pledged to take the country's navy to a very strong position with five major projects in the coming years.

Indigenous frigate is produced as part of the MILGEM project, a National Warship Program (NWP). According to the Turkish Presidency of Defense Industries (January 23, 2021), it was designed & developed with national resources, and over 75 percent of its systems are of indigenous manufacture. The 113 meter-long frigate would perform Advanced Air Defense (AAD) and Surface Warfare (SWs), Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASWs), and patrol activities. It is expected to be delivered to Turkey's Naval Forces Command in 2023.

While speaking to launching ceremony for the frigate and welding ceremony of the third ship under "Pakistan MILGEM" corvette project Turkish president Erdogan showcased his country's capabilities in diverse fields of military training, production and modernization due to which Turkey has been rated among the 10 countries that can design, build, and maintain its own warship in the world. It is indeed a great "strategic achievement" of brotherly country Turkey which has been debarred from purchasing modern electronic warfare system, ballistic missiles and fighter jets by the USA and the EU.

It has multiplier socio-economic, geopolitical and geostrategic effects. It will definitely, further strengthen its naval defense, professional and tactical preparedness against any external aggression in the days to come. It will also protect Turkish blue economy's commercial and business interests in the Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea and Arabian Sea in the future. Turkish more than 87 percent trade is carried out via maritime ports and a number

of transnational pipelines passing through Turkish territorial waters which will be now protected through the country's enhanced naval capabilities. Along with the launch of the Istanbul frigate, the ceremony also marked the groundbreaking of the third ship to be constructed for the Pakistani navy under the MILGEM project. Turkish president Erdogan highlighted the "extraordinary" defense relations between the two countries. He termed bilateral ties as "historic" and "trustworthy" with desire to help each other in "defying" emerging geopolitical and geostrategic threats.

The Pakistan Navy inked an agreement with Turkey's Military Factory and Shipyard Management Corporation (ASFAT) in July 2018 to acquire four MILGEM-class ships.

The MILGEM project was initiated in 2000 to locally design and build a fleet of multipurpose corvettes and frigates that will replace older ships. Turkey has built four corvettes so far in line with the program, namely the TCG Heybeliada, the TCG Büyükkada, the TCG Burgazada and the TCG Kinaliada, while the fifth vessel, the first MILGEM I-class frigate of its kind, the Istanbul Frigate, was recently added to the inventory of the Turkish military with Saturday's ceremony.

The MILGEM project was launched to build corvettes and frigates to be used for a wide range of purposes, including reconnaissance, surveillance, early warning, anti-submarine warfare, surface-to-surface and surface-to-air warfare, and amphibious operations.

It will put into service six of its new submarines starting in 2022 with Piri Reis. Turkey is boasting significant skills in Submarine Technology (ST). It has already started its Stealth Submarine Project (unmanned) which will be completed within next two years. President also projected significance of Turkish drones and UAVs technologies and rated it best among the first three to four countries globally in terms of the production of unmanned and armed unmanned aerial vehicles. Furthermore he highlighted that Turkey will take Gokdeniz, the naval version of Korkut low-altitude air defence system into the inventory for the first time with Istanbul frigate. He outlined his future road map by narrating that an aircraft carrier will also be designed indigenously, following Anadolu Ship.

Hopefully, it will take Turkey to the top league in the field. In this connection, world has already acknowledged Turkey's superiority in diverse fields of military production as seven Turkish companies, including two new entries, have made it to the list of the world's top 100 defence firms.

The US-based publication the Defense News (2019-2020) focuses Turkish emerging strength in military production. During 2020-2021 the number of Turkish companies on the "Top 100 List" upgraded to seven from five. Turkey had launched four frigates in recent years. Turkey made a big investment in improving its naval defences in the last decade, increasing the number of warships and military vessels and relying on homegrown technology.

In recent years, Ankara has not only increased its number of vessels and warships, protecting its coasts and sailing in international waters, but also made self-sufficiency a priority to upgrade its naval force, relying on its own native sources to decrease dependency on outside powers.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government has drastically increased defence spending and has worked diligently to promote state cooperation with native defence contractors.

The Turkish Navy has had 112 military vessels until now, but Ankara plans to add a total of 24 new ships, which include four frigates, before the Republic reaches the 100th anniversary of its founding in 2023. Turkey desires to compete with its Mediterranean neighbours on equal terms to claim its marine rights in the region by improving its naval capabilities, which are also crucial to secure the country's vital economic interests. The Turkish defense industry has taken a significant leap from 2002, increasing from 62 to almost 700. Due to which Turkey has become a country that develops its domestic industry but also meets the needs of its allies. Being prominent regional expert I term the launching and inclusion of indigenous frigate Istanbul (F-515) and welding ceremony of the third ship under "Pakistan MILGEM" corvette project is a "paradigm shift" in the regional security. It will definitely, safeguard Turkey's trade & commerce activities, oil & gas exploration and defend its coastal areas from any external aggression. It will also further strengthen Pak-Turkey military cooperation in "real sense" in the days to come.

Indian republic day: The back day for Kashmiris

Sajjad Shaukat



The UNSC adopted resolution of April 21, 1948, which promised a plebiscite under UN auspices to enable the people of Jammu and Kashmir to determine whether they wish to join Pak or India. On Feb 5, 1964, India backed out of its commitment of holding plebiscite. Instead, Indian Parliament declared Kashmir an integral part of the Indian union

ON the one side, every year, 26th of January, is being celebrated by India as the Republic Day, while, on the other side, the day is being observed by the Kashmiris on both side of the Line of Control (LoC) and all over the world, including their Pakistani brethren as the Black Day in protest against Indian illegal occupation of Kashmir.

Although apparently, India claims to be the largest democracy, acting upon the principles of liberalism and secularism, yet in practice, all political, economic and social fields of the country are divided on the religious and caste lines.

Theoretically, Indian Constitution safeguards the rights of minorities, but in practice, ideology of Hindutva (Hindu Nationalism) prevails. And showing complete disregard to the Constitution, the leader of the ruling BJP party the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has accelerated implementing the Hindutva ideology. Now, Indian internal policies are totalitarian. Various developments like unprecedented rise of Hindu extremism, persecution of religious minorities such as Sikhs, Christians and particularly Muslims, including even of lower cast-Hindus—the anti-Muslim Indian Citizenship Amendment Act 2019, the National Register of Citizens show that the Hindu fanatic groups have been promoting religious and ethnic chauvinism in India.

Despite criticism of the rights groups, foreign leaders, the UN and moderate Hindus in wake of violent protests which killed hundreds of persons—mostly Muslims by the police and prejudiced Hindus, Modi's regime has not withdrawn the CAA/NRC.

While, Indian Constitution was torn into pieces when on August 5, 2019, Indian Parliament revoked articles 35A and 370 of the Constitution, which gave a special status to the disputed territory of the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). The act split the IIOJK into two territories to be ruled directly from center. Thus, Indian fanatic Prime Minister Modi's government led by extremist party BJP unilaterally annexed the IIOJK to turn Muslim majority into minority. Now, more than 17 months have been passed. But, Indian strict military lockdown in the IIOJK continues. Despite the deployment of more than 900,000 military troops in the IIOJK, who have martyred thou-

sands of the Kashmiris, including women and children through brutal tactics—fake encounters—closure of mosques, shortage of foods, medicines for the patients and coronavirus-affected persons, the use of pellet guns and phosphorus bombs, Kashmiris continues war of liberation.

In order to conceal India's state terrorism, Kashmir has been cut off from rest of the world.

Besides, New Delhi also amended a law in October, last year regarding the Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK), allowing Indian citizens to buy land there. Indian prejudiced rulers' various other measures such as issuance of domicile certificates to more than 500,000 non-Kashmiris show Indian fascist campaign.

It is notable that during the partition of the Sub-continent, the people of the state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) which comprised Muslim majority decided to join Pakistan according to the British formula. But, Dogra Raja, Sir Hari Singh, a Hindu who was ruling over the J&K in collusion with the Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Governor General Lord Mountbatten joined India.

The Radcliffe Boundary Award gave the Gurdaspur District—a majority Muslim area to India to provide a land route to the Indian armed forces to move into the J&K. Indian forces invaded Srinagar on October, 27 1947 and forcibly occupied the J&K in utter violation of the partition plan and against the wishes of the Kashmiri people.

When Pakistan responded militarily, on December 31, 1947, India made an appeal to the UN Security Council to intervene and a ceasefire ultimately came into effect on January 01, 1949, following UN resolutions calling for a plebiscite in Kashmir.

The Security Council adopted resolution of April 21, 1948, which promised a plebiscite under UN auspices to enable the people of Jammu and Kashmir to determine whether they wish to join Pakistan or India. On February 5, 1964, India backed out of its commitment of holding plebiscite. Instead, Indian Parliament declared Kashmir an integral part of the Indian union. Since 1989, Kashmiris have already been enduring various forms of state terrorism; no Indian soldier has ever been taken to task. Hence, since the military clampdown started, Indian forces have intensified the

employment of cruel tactics. Almost, 100,000 Kashmiris have died in the past 30 years.

UN human rights experts on August 4, 2020 called on India and the international community to take urgent action to address the "alarming" human rights situation in Jammu and Kashmir—"to investigate all cases of human rights violations, including extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, torture and arbitrary detentions."

Amnesty International said on September 29, last year that it is "stopping its work in India because the government has frozen its bank accounts on September 10 [2020] for highlighting rights violations in Jammu and Kashmir...the government had sought to punish it for that".

In the recent past, the UNSC in its meetings has thrice reiterated that the Kashmir issue requires to be settled in accordance with the principles of the UN charter and the related Security Council resolutions, as the world has refused to believe in the Indian story that its actions are its internal matter.

Moreover, Indian extremist rulers are escalating tensions with Pakistan to divert attention from the drastic situation of the IOK and Indian internal issues. For the purpose, Indian forces have also accelerated shelling inside Pakistani side of Kashmir by violating the ceasefire agreement in relation to the LoC.

In a recent statement, ISPR said that on December 18, 2020, Indian troops deployed along Line of Control in Charikot sector specifically targeted a United Nations vehicle carrying two officers of the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan—the vehicle was damaged by the firing, but the officers remained unhurt.

Nonetheless, by exposing the myth of Indian claim of the largest democracy—26th of January which is celebrated as the Indian Republic Day is being observed by the Kashmiris and Pakistanis across the globe as the Black Day to express solidarity with the freedom fighters of Kashmir.

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Briefs

Pakistan's economy is back on track

From Page 01

The press these further says that there has also been the lowest rise in the external debt in the financial year 2020 and that the loans taken by the present government were used to retire the ones taken by the previous governments. "Pakistan's improved ranking in the Ease of Doing Business index and the steps taken to facilitate the investors will also attract both foreign and domestic investment," the official said adding, "Apart from bringing improvement in economy, the government is also focusing to provide relief to the disadvantaged segments of the society." The official said budget of Ehsaas program has been doubled if compared with that of the year 2018. The cash assistance provided to millions of deserving families in most transparent manner in the wake of Covid-19 outbreak helped to protect and mitigate the sufferings of vulnerable segments of society. Similarly, the official said Sehat Sahulat Cards scheme is being implemented on fast track basis both in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces which will bring a visible change in the lives of the people.

Japan grants \$19m for weather radar

From Page 01

It is expected that this project will enhance capacity on weather surveillance of Pakistan and contribute to mitigation of damages caused by natural and hydro-meteorological disasters. In the signing ceremony, H.E. MATSUDA Kuninori, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan stated "the Government of Japan will continue to work together with Pakistan to make this country disaster-resilient, making good use of experience and expertise Japan has gained from many disasters in the past." and Mr. FURUTA Shigeki mentioned "Enhancement of weather surveillance capacity will mitigate the damage caused by natural disasters". Both emphasized importance of disaster management. Through this grant aid, the Government of Japan and JICA continues to assist disaster management conducted by the Government of Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Islamabad to host national AFL c'ship

ISLAMABAD: Australian Football League (AFL) in Pakistan has decided to hold the National Australian Football League Championship in Islamabad in the last week of March 2021. The decision was taken in the meeting in Islamabad yesterday under the chairmanship of President Sardar Tariq Mehmood Khan. The representatives of the Punjab, Sindh, KPK, Sindh, Azad Jammu Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan, Islamabad and various clubs were also part of the meeting. Secretary-General, AFL Pakistan Chaudhry Zulfiqar Ali also presented the one year report of the AFP. After the meeting, President Sardar Tariq Mehmood Khan told the media that the various issues were discussed in the meeting, including the holding of the National Australian Football League Championship and amendments to the current AFL constitution and other issues. "National Australian Football League Championship will be played in the last week of March. Ten teams from across the country will take part in the championship, including two teams from Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Sindh, Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Islamabad," President announced. "The championship will be played under the auspices of Australian Football League Pakistan and AFL rules on a league basis," he added. Meanwhile, he said that the next special meeting of the AFL Pakistan will be held in March. — APP



KARACHI: Pakistan cricket team captain Babar Azam and South African captain Quinton de Kock posing with Test series trophy. — DNA

Final decision for playing XI is mine: Babar Azam

On the other hand, Babar thinks that it's not good to be harsh on players as it gives a bad impression across the cricketing world. "Sometimes getting aggressive is good but off the field not on the field. It's crucial to execute the plan and back the side on the field," he maintained

DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan captain Babar Azam has stated that the decision to select the final playing XI is on him but coaches also give collective input. "I have to lead the side on the field and I also try to select it, although, it's necessary to get coach input but the final decision is on me," Babar said in a presser ahead of first Pakistan-South Africa Test.

The 26-year-old Babar also dismissed Proteas' batsman Faf du Plessis's statement that the Pakistan team is mostly dependent on him. "I don't think that's the case as other players are also performing well. Azhar Ali and Mohammad Rizwan are outstanding, Fawad Alam performed well in New Zealand. We always try what's best for the team and everyone contributes" he added. On the other hand, Babar thinks that it's not good to be

'Pak must win SA tests to improve ranking'

KARACHI: Former Pakistan captain Inzamam-ul-Haq believes that Pakistan should win the two-match Test series against South Africa in order to improve rankings in ICC World Test Championship. Pakistan is placed at the sixth spot while South Africa is at the fifth. Both teams have no chance to qualify for the final of the inaugural WTC final scheduled to take place at Lords in June 2021. — DNA

harsh on players as it gives a bad impression across the cricketing world. "Sometimes getting aggressive is good but off the field not on the field. It's crucial to execute

the plan and back the side on the field," he maintained. On the first Pakistan-South Africa Test, Babar looked confident and is excited to lead the national team for the first time in this format of the game.

"We are quite excited to play against a team like South Africa on our home ground. The boys are practicing for the last week where we played practiced matches. We will try to pull the result in our favor," Babar added.

Hasan Ali ready to comeback



SPORTS DESK

KARACHI: Pacer bowler Hasan Ali is all set to make his comeback after almost one and a half years when Pakistan take

on South Africa in the first Test tomorrow at National Stadium, Karachi. The 26-year-old Hasan took to Twitter and posted a photo of a pre-series photoshoot with the caption 'Eyes Forward. Mind Focused. Heart Ready'. It must be noted Hasan had an outstanding Quaid-e-Azam (QeA) Trophy season where he took 43 wickets in nine matches and scored 273 runs at a strike rate of 98.50. He has played nine Tests for Pakistan and has picked 31 wickets with one five-wicket haul.

Remembering Tahrir Square, 10 years on

CAIRO: After watching the protests in Tahrir Square on January 25, 2011, from afar, Abdelrahman Ashraf, 34, a multimedia producer now based in Turkey, returned to Egypt to participate in the revolution. Here, he recalls how protesters stood firm in the face of water cannon, bullets and tear gas. The protests, which marked the explosion of the Arab Spring in Egypt followed mass protests in Tunisia which had culminated in the flight of Tunisian President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali from the country on January 14. Egypt's protests continued for 18 days until Hosni Mubarak — in power for 30 years — also succumbed to popular de-

mand and stepped down on February 11. I was working in the newsroom at Al-Hiwar TV in London when the events in Tunisia started in late 2010. We were following the developments there but nobody had expectations of a revolution, the thought of [Tunisia's President] Ben Ali leaving never crossed our minds. The protests were dismissed as mild disturbances, clashes happening in this neighbourhood or that. How I envied the Tunisians in my workplace when Ben Ali fled! Many of them were dissenting Tunisians, some self-exiled, who hadn't returned for years and in their nostalgic dreams, I saw myself and my

dreams for my country. Egypt at the time was a distant dream for me; we'd seldom visit. My father previously was in the political opposition and had spent years in prison. He was a surgeon and board member of Egypt's Doctors' Syndicate, but after he was issued with another arrest warrant because of his political activities, he was forced to leave Egypt, unable to return for 20 years. The amount of injustice in Egypt created anger, poverty and need. An emergency law of over 30 years meant that justice was impossible; at any time a civilian could be prosecuted in a closed military court with no defence. — Agencies

New Zealand's new COVID case is South Africa variant

FOREIGN DESK

WELLINGTON: New Zealand's first case of coronavirus in the community in months has been identified as the South African variant, health minister Chris Hipkins said on Monday, adding that the 56-year-old woman probably caught it from another returning traveler just before leaving quarantine. The woman, who recently returned from Europe, tested positive on Saturday, 10 days after she completed her compulsory two weeks in isolation at a hotel in the city of Auckland. The case represents the first time the virus has breached a quarantine facility in more than two months, after New Zealand eliminated community spread of the virus. The Pacific nation has been widely praised for its handling of

the pandemic, with just 25 deaths from 1,927 confirmed virus cases in a population of five million.

"We can confirm that the strain of infection is the South African variant and the source of infection is highly likely to be a fellow returnee during the person's stay at the Pullman hotel," Hipkins told reporters in the capital, Wellington.

Genome testing indicates the woman may have contracted the virus from a person on the same floor of the hotel who tested positive two days before she left quarantine, he said. "The two people occupied rooms in close proximity to each other on the same floor of the Pullman hotel and I'm advised by officials that they're confident that the infection was a direct one and that there's no other missing link in between those two people," Hipkins added, urging travellers who stayed at the same hotel

to "self-isolate" immediately.

The 56-year-old toured around the Northland region near Auckland after her release from quarantine and showed symptoms for several days before being tested.

Two people close to her, including her husband, have since returned negative tests and New Zealand's Director-General of Health Dr Ashley Bloomfield said they probably avoided contracting the illness because of the type of infection.

"She didn't talk about respiratory symptoms, it was more muscle aches, so she may not have been sharing or spreading the virus much," he said.

"I don't think that's peculiar to this variant, it's just how it was expressed in this woman." The World Health Organization has said there is no clear evidence the South African variant leads to more severe disease or a higher death rate.

'Pakistan's victory to depend on wickets prepared'



ISLAMABAD: Former pacer Shoaib Akhtar believes that Pakistan team's win against South Africa in the two-match Test series beginning Tuesday, would depend on the kind of wickets the hosts prepare for the games. "South Africa is touring Pakistan after 14 years which is great news for the whole nation. I think Pakistan's chances of winning the

series will depend on what kinds of pitches are prepared and the team combinations," he said in a video on his YouTube channel. However the Rawalpindi Express hoped that Pakistan doesn't make flat wickets. "I hope Pakistan doesn't make flat wickets as this would result in 500-plus runs total and drawn matches, which we don't want to see," he said. Akhtar, who bagged 178 wickets in 46 Tests, feels that the spinners can prove vital in the series. "We can put in two three spinners as they will prove beneficial against the South African team, but this is what the head coach Misbah ul Haq and team management has to decide. — APP

PML-N formally decides

From Page 01

The parliamentary party gave its approval to Sharif's decision. After much deliberations, the party's Parliamentary Committee that met on Monday decided to participate in the Senate polls 2021. It is pertinent to mention here that the Pakistan Democratic Alliance (PDM) leaders have started consultations for the upcoming Senate elections which is likely to be held in February this year.

Sources said that PDM leaders are mulling over fielding joint candidates for the Senate polls. The opposition leaders have started consultations to field joint candidates in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan assemblies. Sources closer to Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz said that the PDM parties will be convinced to field joint candidates besides appealing Pakistan People's Party (PPP) to support PML-N in Punjab. A consultation session will be summoned soon to discuss the strategy to field joint candidates of the opposition parties. PML-N sources said. Earlier in the day, Maryam Nawaz talking to media persons before the Parliamentary Committee meeting said, "Now this government will not get any NRO Inshallah. The no-confidence motion will be discussed in the next meeting of the PDM. Bilawal Bhutto has said that he will put up this in the PDM meeting." "When the PDM feels it is the right time to resign, it will. We will not do anything under the pressure of anyone. That time is not far away. There will be a long march and we will also resign," she added. Maryam Nawaz said people are aware now after the performance of the government that is in front of everyone. PMLN Vice President said the whole Pakistan will apply for the PMLN ticket but no one will apply for their (PTI) ticket.

Australia supports Pak

From Page 01

improve agricultural productivity and promote gender equality. Growing trade and investment will be critical to the post-pandemic recovery. There is significant potential to unlock in our growing business relationship, particularly in education and agriculture. Australia also offers excellence in innovation, science and technology. "As Australia's High Commissioner, I am confident that our two nations will continue to strengthen the positive relationship well into the future," the high commissioner concluded. Observed annually on 26 January, The Australia Day marks the anniversary of the 1788 arrival of the First Fleet at Port Jackson in New South Wales, and the raising of the British flag at Sydney Cove by Arthur Phillip. In present-day Australia, celebrations aim to reflect the diverse society and landscape of the nation and are marked by community and family events, reflections on Australian history, official community awards and citizenship ceremonies welcoming new members of the Australian community.

Plane crash in Brazil kills football players

WEB DESK

LONDON: Four players and the president of Brazilian football club Palmas have died in a plane crash in the northern state of Tocantins. The accident occurred when the plane suddenly plunged to the ground at the end of the runway while on takeoff, the club reported in a statement. The players were on their way to Goiania, in the central region of the country, to play a match against Vila Nova. Brazilian media reported that the players were traveling in a private plane because they had tested positive for COVID-19, that Sunday would be their last day of isolation, and the rest of the players would travel on a commercial flight. The victims were identified as president Lucas Meira and players Lucas Praxedes, Guilherme Noé, Ranule and Marcus Molinari, as well as the pilot. There were no survivors, the club said. Palmas Futebol e Regatas was founded in 1997 and plays in Brazil's fourth division.

Russia: Putin slams pro-Navalny protests

FOREIGN DESK

MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin has described mass protests held at the weekend demanding the release of Alexey Navalny as illegal and dangerous, as he faces mounting pressure from the West and thousands of Russians over the leading Kremlin critic's arrest. Putin on Monday fielded questions from students in a video call from his Zavidovo residence after tens of thousands of Russians demonstrated against Navalny's detention in several cities and towns on Saturday. "All people have the right to express their point of view within the framework of the law. Everything that goes beyond the

framework of the law is not only counterproductive but also dangerous," he said. "In the history of our country, we have repeatedly encountered situations when the situation went far beyond the law, and shook our society and the state, where not only people who were engaged in it suffered but also those people who had nothing to do with it. "All these events about which I just talked about — no one should use them trying to reach their ambitious goals and objectives, especially in the field of politics. This is not how politics is done, at least not a responsible politics." Police detained more than 3,000 protesters and used force to break up the rallies, which saw people ignore extreme cold and police

Top EU envoy to visit Russia

BRUSSELS: EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell will visit Moscow early next month to press the Kremlin on the arrest of Alexey Navalny, diplomats have said, as Brussels weighs fresh sanctions. "Borrell will go to Moscow in early February to deliver a clear message from the EU," a senior diplomat told AFP, despite earlier calls from several member states for the trip to be scrapped. The visit was confirmed during a meeting in Brussels where foreign ministers from the 27 nations debated their response to the arrest of Kremlin critic Navalny and crackdown on demonstrators. "Sanctions are a possible tool, but it is necessary to wait to see what happens in Moscow," a second diplomat said. European diplomats had earlier said Brussels was expected to hold off on sanctions until Navalny goes to court on February 2 to see if the Kremlin puts him behind bars for an extended term. — Agencies

warnings to publicly call for the 44-year-old's immediate release. Several protesters were injured in clashes with riot police, the

OVD-info protest monitor group reported. Navalny, Putin's most prominent critic, was arrested on January 17 as he returned to

Russia after five months in Germany spent recovering from an alleged poisoning he blames on the Kremlin. The Kremlin says it has seen no evidence that Navalny was poisoned. After landing in Moscow and being immediately arrested, he was soon jailed for 30 days over alleged parole violations relating to a case dating back to 2014 over embezzlement charges which Navalny believes were politically motivated. Meanwhile, Navalny's allies called for more demonstrations across Russia on January 31 — Sunday — to demand his release. If they take place, the protests would come just two days before Navalny is due in court on February 2, on charges of breaking the terms of the 2014 suspended sentence.

Briefs

COVID has worsened inequality: Oxfam

FOREIGN DESK

LONDON: It could take more than 10 years for the world's poorest people to recover from the economic fallout of the ongoing COVID-19 induced pandemic, according to a new report published on Monday by Oxfam International, urging governments to act fast and "set concrete, time-bound targets to reduce inequality". At the same time, the recession is over for the world's richest billionaires who have recouped their losses within nine months since the pandemic began spreading across the globe, the United Kingdom-based charity said. "The deep divide between the rich and poor is proving as deadly as the virus," said Gabriela Bucher, the executive director of Oxfam International, adding, "the fight against inequality must be at the heart of economic rescue and recovery efforts." The top 1,000 billionaires, mainly White men, had recovered all the wealth they had lost ... even while the real economy faces the deepest recession in a century," the report said. The findings were released as the World Economic Forum kicks off virtually on Monday from its perch in the Swiss mountain town of Davos.

Nepal's caretaker PM removed from CP

WEB DESK

KATMANDU: Nepal's caretaker Prime Minister Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli has been removed from the country's governing Communist party, his opponents said, in protest against his abrupt move in December to dissolve Parliament and call for an early general election. Despite being stripped of party membership, Oli remains in office. Meanwhile, judges in the Himalayan country's top court are hearing more than a dozen petitions from independent lawyers and Oli opponents on whether his move to dissolve Parliament and call an early election was legitimate or unconstitutional. The court is expected to deliver its verdict next month. The ruling Nepal Communist Party has split over Oli's call for a new parliament to be elected more than a year ahead of schedule on the basis that his colleagues were not cooperating with the government on policy interventions. "We have expelled Oli from the party on the grounds that he was not following the party rules and was working against collective decision-making," said Pampha Bhusal, a senior leader of the faction opposing Oli. But Surya Thapa, an aide to Oli, said the expulsion holds no political meaning as the leader remains prime minister, adding that Oli was confident of a legal and political victory.

Biden seeks to reinforce 'Made in America' approach

WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden will sign an executive order Monday giving priority to US companies and products in contracts with the federal government, pushing a "Made in America" approach favored by predecessor Donald Trump. The order, senior White House officials said, aims to boost national production and save industrial jobs by increasing investments in manufacturing industries and workers in order to "Build Back Better." Less than a week after his inauguration, Biden is pushing his priorities through with executive orders, even though his Cabinet is not fully in place, with the roles such as Secretary of State still to be approved. The new executive order should reduce the possibility of skirting rules requiring federal authorities to prioritize buying US-made products. Biden wants to limit the way federal agencies stamp the products they buy as "Made in America" in order to eliminate legal loopholes used by companies that often manufacture in the US only a small portion of the products offered to the government. decision echoes those of his predecessors, particularly Trump. — APP



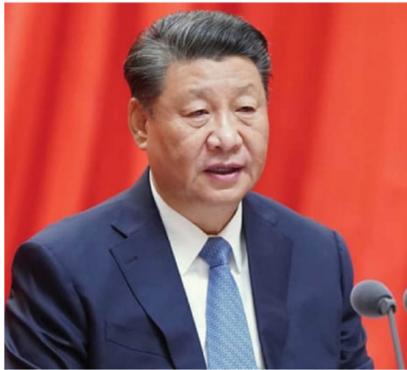
ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Tunisia to Pakistan, Borhene El Kamel in a meeting with Advisor to PM on Commerce & Investment, Razak Dawood. — DNA

China's Xi warns world against 'new Cold War'

President Xi Jinping called on the world to abandon "ideological prejudice" and shun an "outdated Cold-War mentality" as he signaled that China will continue to forge its own path regardless of western criticism

FOREIGN DESK

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping warned global leaders at an all-virtual Davos forum Monday against starting a "new Cold War", and urged global unity in the face of the coronavirus pandemic. Having largely curbed the spread of the pandemic within its borders, Xi wants to position China as a key player in a new multilateral world order as the US remains crippled by the pandemic. "To build small cliques or start a new Cold War, to reject, threaten or intimidate others... will only push the world into division," said Xi in a likely veiled attack on US President Joe Biden's plans to revitalise global alliances to counter China's growing influence. In a swipe at moves targeting China launched by the previous US administration under President Donald Trump, Xi said confrontation "will always end up harming every nation's interests and sacrificing people's welfare". The Chinese leader also reaffirmed Beijing's ambitious climate pledges to slash carbon emissions by 65 per cent by 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2060 — both significant commitments as China emits a quarter of the world's greenhouse gases. "Meeting these targets will require tremendous hard work from China. But we believe that when the interests of the entire humanity are at stake, China must step forward, take action and get the job done," he said. Xi also called for stronger global governance via multilateral organisations, the removal of barriers to international



trade, investment and tech exchanges, as well as stronger representation on the world stage for developing countries. He stressed the importance of strengthening macroeconomic policies to combat the pandemic-induced global economic downturn. "We must build an open world economy, firmly safeguard the multilateral trade system, and refrain from making discriminatory and exclusive standards, rules and systems, as well as high walls that separate trade, investment, and technology," he said. China saw its GDP

increase 2.3 percent last year, according to official data — the lowest growth rate since 1976 — but it is nonetheless expected to be the only major economy to have expanded in the pandemic-ravaged year. Its economy is also forecast to grow by 7.9 per cent in 2021, according to the International Monetary Fund — trimmed down from initial predictions by a harsh geopolitical climate, global economic downturn and risks from a messy technological decoupling from the US. It also overtook the US as the world's biggest recipient of foreign direct investment (FDI) in 2020, according to a UN report released Sunday. Bolstered by confidence in his country's management of the pandemic, Xi has made ambitious climate pledges and vowed to uphold multilateralism as US-China relations entered their worst phase in decades under the Trump administration. But the Chinese government has been accused of mishandling the initial Covid-19 outbreak and covering up information, while a World Health Organisation expert team is currently conducting a long-delayed probe into the origins of the virus. How Biden decides to handle the mounting tensions posed by China's rise will be one of the biggest strategic challenges he faces. Under Trump, China and the US traded blows on a wide range of issues ranging from the virus to trade, media freedoms, human rights and technology competition. Biden, busy handling several urgent domestic crises, did not participate at Davos and tasked US climate envoy John Kerry with representing Washington. Xi last addressed Davos in 2017, presenting himself as the champion of free trade on the eve of Trump's inauguration.

Riots sparked by anti-curfew protests in Netherlands

WEB DESK

AMSTERDAM: Protests against a curfew to curb the spread of Covid-19 in the Netherlands have degenerated into clashes with police and looting in cities across the country, authorities and reports said. Police used water cannon and dogs in Amsterdam, public television NOS reported, after hundreds gathered to protest the curfew which is set to last until February 10 and is the country's first since World War II. In the southern city of Eindhoven, police fired tear gas to disperse a crowd of several hundred, regional television Omroep Brabant reported. At least 30 people were arrested there, according to police. A number of vehicles were burned and businesses at

Eindhoven's central train station were also looted, media reports said. Dutch rail company NS called on travellers to avoid the Eindhoven station, where it said train circulation was interrupted due to the intervention of emergency services nearby. Eindhoven mayor John Jorritsma told reporters that if the country continued "down this path, then I think we are heading for civil war." Incidents were also reported in The Hague, Breda, Arnhem, Tilburg, Enschede, Apeldoorn, Venlo and Ruremond. A Covid-19 testing centre was set on fire on Saturday evening in the village of Urk in the north of the country, local authorities said. "The fire in a screening centre in Urk goes beyond all limits," Health Minister Hugo de Jonge said on Sunday.

Turkey, Greece launch Mediterranean crisis talks

FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA: Turkey and Greece have opened their first direct talks over their explosive eastern Mediterranean standoff in four years. The talks in Istanbul on Monday, led by retired Greek diplomat Pavlos Apostolidis and Turkish Deputy Foreign Minister Sedat Onal, are not expected to make substantive progress but could help ease tensions between the two NATO neighbours after their gunboats collided in August as they dispute over energy and borders threatened to spiral out of control. But the meeting adds to the positive tone Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has been setting as he tries to repair relations with Europe. And it could lay the groundwork for the eventual delineation of one of the world's most recently discovered regions of proven natural gas reserves. Turkey's Defence Minister Hulusi Akar on Saturday expressed hope that lawful solutions to bilateral issues will be found during talks with Greece

starting in Istanbul on Monday. "In talks with Greece, we hope that issues will be dealt with within the framework of rights, law, and equity, and that solutions are found," National Defence Minister Akar said at launch and welding ceremonies for new Turkish-built ships. Akar further underlined Turkey's expectation that Greece "respect [Turkey's] rights in the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean and avoids actions that may cause misunderstandings." Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis said Athens was entering the so-called exploratory talks "with optimism and hope" — a comment echoed by Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu. Ankara and Athens held 60 rounds of talks between 2002 and 2016 that they broke off without making progress in a dispute that has lingered for much of the past century. Hostilities flared anew last year when Ankara sent a research ship accompanied by a navy flotilla into waters near the Turkish shore which Greece claims with EU support. Ankara last year sent several drillships

to explore for energy in the eastern Mediterranean, asserting its rights in the region, as well as those of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Turkey is furious that Greece is using its vast web of islands to lay claim to huge swathes of the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas. Turkey, which has the longest continental coastline in the eastern Mediterranean, has rejected maritime boundary claims by Greece and the Greek Cypriot administration, stressing that their excessive claims violate the sovereign rights of Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots. The two sides cite a range of decades-old treaties and international agreements to support their conflicting claims. NATO has set up a hotline to stave off a military conflict, while Germany has spearheaded efforts to solve the dispute through negotiations. These will not be easy as Ankara and Athens clashed over their agenda last week. Greece wants to limit the discussions between the two countries' deputy foreign ministers to continental shelf borders and the size of exclusive economic zones.

Baku welcomes Iran in restoration of Karabakh

"We will be very happy to see companies from Iran among the companies who will participate in the reconstruction of the liberated areas. That will be natural. Aliyev told Zarif

DNA

BAKU: Iran has shown great interest in cooperation with Azerbaijan to rebuild territories liberated from Armenia's 30-year occupation in the recent war. Close cooperation in this sphere was discussed at a meeting between Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif in Baku on January 25. President Ilham Aliyev welcomed Iran's involvement in the restoration of Azerbaijan's liberated lands. "We will be very happy to see companies from Iran among the companies who will participate in the reconstruction of the liberated areas. That will be natural. Because as I said, only friendly countries will be our partners. And of course, Iranian companies have an advantage because of the close proximity, logistics and great experience," Aliyev told Zarif. In turn, Zarif expressed Iranian

companies' readiness to get involved in the restoration activities. "These are areas where would be our priority and our companies are ready to engage... We look forward to engaging in those areas from the South-North Corridor to the South-West Corridor, to other power production, energy, Khudafarin, Qiz

Qalasi, other probably good areas of cooperation. And we are very happy that during the visit by your officials to Iran these projects moved very rapidly and now we can have a common border a much longer common border of friendship," Zarif said. During the meeting, President Aliyev expressed his satisfaction with

the level of Azerbaijani-Iranian cooperation. He stressed that numerous meetings held at the level of presidents and on the level of high-ranking officials had been very productive. "We see very good results in the political area, where two brotherly countries became much closer during the last several years, in the

economic area, in the area of transportation, energy and all the projects which today we are focusing on like the North-South Transportation Corridor and projects related to energy infrastructure are moving forward successfully. The North-South Transportation Corridor is working. I have just got information that last year we had growth in cargo transportation of almost 20 percent, which is very positive," Aliyev said. The head of state stressed that the new regional situation opened up new opportunities for private investors and government agencies. "The new transportation connections are now in the phase of discussion. And of course, our cooperation on the Khudafarin water reservoir and future plans with respect to the construction of a power station are already in a very active phase. So, hopefully, in a coming couple of years we will be able to complete this project fully and to supply new power generation to both sides," the head of state said.



Bahrain approves Oxford COVID vaccine

FOREIGN DESK

MANAMA: Bahrain has granted emergency approval for the use of a coronavirus vaccine produced by the UK's AstraZeneca drug company in collaboration with Oxford University. The National Health Regulatory Authority (NHRA) approved the vaccine on Monday, according to Bahrain's state news agency. Approval was based on a study carried out by NHRA in participation with the clinical research committee and the health ministry immunization committee, Bahrain News Agency reported. With a population of 1.6 million, the small country has reported more than 99,800 cases and 367 deaths, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University. The Oxford-AstraZeneca shot is the third to be approved in the Gulf country. Bahrain has already given the green light for emergency use to a Chinese-made vaccine produced by Sinopharm, and it was the second nation worldwide to approve the Pfizer/BioNTech jab. AstraZeneca, whose vaccine's trials have shown to have a 70.4 percent efficacy rate, has come under increasing scrutiny since last week when it informed European Union's officials it would cut deliveries by 60 percent in the first quarter of the year because of production problems. Bahrain News Agency did not report the amount or timing of the vaccine's delivery. The shot has to be given in two jabs, 28 days apart.

Jakarta records 3,512 new COVID cases

FOREIGN DESK

JAKARTA: Indonesia's capital city, Jakarta reported 3,512 new COVID-19 cases on Sunday, thereby taking the total tally to 249,815 since the pandemic began to hit the Indonesian capital. The count of new COVID-19 cases was derived from the result of swab tests conducted on 15,531 specimens the day before, with 3,512 of them testing positive and 10,100 others testing negative for the infection, according to data from the Jakarta provincial government on its official website corona.jakarta.go.id. The single-day count of COVID-19 cases within the course of 24 hours, ending on Sunday, was higher than that of Saturday (Jan 23) at 3,285, Thursday (Jan 21) at 3,151, Tuesday (Jan 19) at 2,563, Monday (Jan 18) at 2,361, and Sunday (Jan 17) at 3,395. However, the figure was below the number of new cases on Saturday (Jan 16) at 3,536, on Wednesday (Jan 20) at 3,782, and Friday (Jan 22) at 3,792, an all-time high during the pandemic. "This is the highest in terms of cases found in daily tests, with 3,619 positive cases resulting from the PCR tests held on Thursday (Jan 21), while the other 173 cases are based on the results of tests conducted at a laboratory of a private hospital in the previous period of seven days," the report stated.

Israel 'closes skies' to air travel

FOREIGN DESK

TEL AVIV: Israel on Sunday announced a week-long ban on most incoming and outgoing flights in a bid to slow the spread of new variants of the novel coronavirus. The measure will begin at midnight (22:00 GMT) from Monday into Tuesday and remain in effect until the following Sunday, a statement from the prime minister's office said. Exceptions will be made for cargo and firefighting flights, as well as trips for medical treatments, funerals and legal procedures. A panel of health and interior ministry officials will be able to issue exemptions on request "for humanitarian or personal needs", the statement said. The decision came with the country in its third national coronavirus lockdown, initiated in late December and on Tuesday extended until the end of the month due to a surge in deaths from COVID-19. Earlier on Sunday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had announced his government's intention to close the airport, after variants of the coronavirus were detected among the rising numbers.

Briefs

Iraqi envoy calls on Sindh Governor

DNA

KARACHI: Ambassador of Iraq Hamid Abbas Lafta Monday called on Sindh Governor Imran Ismail here at Governor House. On the occasion, they discussed issues of bilateral relations. The governor said that Pakistan accorded highest value to its relations with Iraq, said a Governor House statement. He said that Pakistan and Afghanistan were connected to each other owing to their great history and religion. The ambassador said that Iraq's relations with Pakistan were the result of mutual sincerity.

'Small dams vital to tackle water scarcity'

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser has said that constructing small dams is inevitable to tackle water scarcity and energy issues in the country. He said that small dams are imperative for increasing level of underground water. He said that the major segment of the population is linked with Agriculture Sector and small dams would enhance water availability for Agriculture purposes also. He expressed these views in a meeting held in Parliament House today to review the progress of construction of Bada Dam in district Swabi KPK. Speaker Asad Qaiser recommended utilizing public money keeping in view the best exchange value. He also stressed on the need to protect the interest of the local areas. He also assured to fully support the KPK government for construction of small dams.

Vaccinators training done, NCOC told

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) on Monday was apprised that the provinces have almost completed the training of the staff of teaching hospitals, Tehsil and District Head Quarters Hospitals regarding Covid-19 vaccination for swift inoculation of the vaccine. The NCOC meeting with National Coordinator Lieutenant General Hamood Uz Zaman Khan in chair discussed update from the provinces on positivity and critical data, non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) or alternate measures to treat Covid other than medical treatment) implementation, preparations for vaccine inoculation and national vaccine strategy. In their briefing to the NCOC, the Provincial Chief and Health Secretaries including that of GB and AJK informed that all necessary measures were being taken prior to the availability of coronavirus vaccination. The Chief Secretaries also informed the forum about the steps being taken to ensure standard operating procedures (SOPs) and NPIs implementation. They also briefed about the positivity ratio in their respective provinces and cities with higher positive cases.

The Forum was told that a large number of fines had been imposed while restaurants, shops and business centers had also been closed for not complying with the SOPs. The Forum also reviewed overall situation of coronavirus in the county. It was informed the forum that all foreign travellers especially from UK and South Africa were being tested at the airports. Those tested positive for coronavirus, were being quarantined. The Forum also discussed in details the complete procedure of vaccination, its time of availability, distribution process and most demanding areas where it can be used at the earliest. The Forum also stressed for purchasing of the quality of vaccination to ensure successful treatment of COVID-19 patients.



ISLAMABAD: Celebrating the success of the Nepalese Team with the General Manager of the Islamabad Marriott Hotel and his staff. The mountaineers that made history, by making a historic winter ascent of Pakistan's K2. - DNA

PM Imran calls for fair distribution of vaccine

The prime minister was the keynote speaker at the fourth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Intergovernmental Group of Experts (IGE) on Financing for Development (FfD) in Geneva

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Monday shared a five-point agenda to address the structural barriers in global prosperity, proposing equitable supply of the coronavirus vaccine in the developing countries and once again appealed for the suspension of debt repayments for the most stressed countries until the end of the pandemic. The prime minister was the keynote speaker at the fourth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and

Development (UNCTAD) Intergovernmental Group of Experts (IGE) on Financing for Development (FfD) in Geneva. "The coverage of the COVAX facility must be expanded. This would enable the developing countries to spend their precious resources on socio-economic development needs," he said. PM Imran told the UN body that the pandemic is an opportunity to address the structural barriers hampering global prosperity and development. He suggested the suspension of debt repayments for the most stressed countries until the

end of the pandemic and restructuring of their public-sector debt under an agreed and inclusive multilateral framework. "Moreover, the expansion of concessional financing through multilateral development banks is also essential," stated the premier. PM Imran called for a general allocation of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) of 500 billion dollars to help alleviate balance-of-payment pressures. Reiterating his decades-old stance of return of stolen assets held by corrupt politicians and criminals, the prime minister viewed that the illicit financial

outflows from developing nations caused more poverty in that world than any other factor. "Reportedly, a staggering amount of 7 trillion dollars is parked in 'haven' destinations. And it is also reported that one trillion dollars annually leave the developing countries for these 'haven' destinations," he told the meeting also addressed by the prime minister of Barbados, vice president of Plurinational State of Bolivia, and second vice president of Government of Spain. The fifth point of the proposed agenda was meeting the agreed target of mobilizing

100 billion dollars annually by developed countries for climate action in developing countries. "Termining the economic malaise and recession "highly communicable" like the coronavirus, PM Imran Khan said the global policy measures, along his proposed lines, were urgently needed to save lives, revive economies, and build back better. He also thanked the UNCTAD Secretary-General for organising the extremely important session and said the world was grappling with a series of inter-linked and unprecedented public health and economic crises.

Qureshi, Afghan FM discuss Afghan peace process

SAIFULLAH / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi has said that Pakistan has always wanted a peaceful, comprehensive and lasting solution to the Afghanistan. According to details, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi has telephoned his Afghan counterpart Mohammad Hanef Atmar. During the telephone conversation, issues of mutual interest, including bilateral relations and the Afghan peace process, were discussed. Shah Mehmood Qureshi said that Pakistan and Afghanistan are committed to establishing a border market on the special directive of Prime Minister Imran Khan to increase the volume of trade in the border area. The Foreign Minister stressed the need to finalize the draft of this bilateral agreement soon. He added that Pakistan had played a conciliatory role under the joint responsibility for the peace agreement between the



United States and the Taliban. Shah Mehmood Qureshi said that Pakistan considers holding inter-Afghan talks as a rare opportunity for lasting peace in Afghanistan. The success of the inter-Afghan talks is essential for peace and stability in the region. The Foreign Minister also raised the issue of early release of Pakistanis imprisoned in Afghan jails for petty crimes. The two Foreign Ministers agreed to continue consultations for peace and stability in the region, including the Afghan peace process.

Schools again under virus threat

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Eight teachers in Lahore on Monday tested positive for the coronavirus as the health department has started taking samples to confirm the presence of pandemic at provincial capital's schools. According to details, the virus has been detected in two teachers of Government Girls High School, Rawind and three teachers of Government Boys School, Thokar Niaz Beg. Similarly one teacher at Government High School, Awan Town and two teachers at Lahore Grammar School, Johar Town have been diagnosed with Covid-19.

Turkish envoy calls on Qadri

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Sahibzada Noor-ul-Haq Qadri and the ambassador of Turkey in Pakistan Ihsan Mustafa Yurdakul on Monday discussed issues of mutual interest and reiterated their commitment and firm resolve to forge unity, brotherhood and cooperation among the Muslim Ummah. Speaking on the occasion, the minister said Pakistan and Turkey were all weather friends and success of Turkey was tantamount to the victory of Pakistan. The history of Turkey was depleted with the sacrifices for the glory of Islam and peace. - DNA

Bill seeking to empower PEMRA rejected

RAJA PERVAIZ

ISLAMABAD: Opposition parties in Senate rejected the government introduced PEMRA Amendment Bill on Monday that sought more powers to Pakistan Electronic Regulatory Media Authority PEMRA. The bill was introduced by Senator Faisal Javed. Reacting to the opposition rejecting the Bill, Senator Faisal Javed said it is incomprehensible that there is opposition against the rights of working journalists and media workers. He alleged opposition always asked for waivers of their cases and amendments in the NAB Ordinance against every public interest legislation. Senator Faisal Javed vowed that NAB cannot be amended as per their wishes and Prime Minister Imran Khan will never give NRO to the opposition. PTI leader in the Senate Shehzad Waseem said, "Today everyone knows who against the rights of the workers. The opposition is also politicizing the protection of workers." Reportedly, The House passed Pakistan Environmental Protection (Amendment) Bill, 2020 to amend EPA Act, 997. Senator Faisal Javed moved the Bill.

ECP Scrutiny Committee to meet today

ZUBAIR AHMED

ISLAMABAD: A meeting of the Election Commission of Pakistan's scrutiny committee has been convened today (Tuesday) in connection with the foreign funding probe against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). The petitioner Akbar S. Babar has also been summoned by the scrutiny committee. In the last meeting, the committee had walked out on the objections of Akbar S. Babar. Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) said last week that open hearing of foreign funding case will be held after scrutiny committee submits its report. Spokesperson of the commission reiterated that working of the scrutiny committee cannot be conducted publicly. The process of the case will continue as per the rules, he added. ECP had said that proceedings of scrutiny committee in PTI foreign funding case cannot be broadcasted.

No CPEC project on hold: CPEC Authority chief

ISLAMABAD: No China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project was on hold and the work was never slowed down, Chairman CPEC Authority Lt. General Asim Saleem Bajwa (ret'd) said, Gwadar Pro reported on Monday. Work on the eastern, western and central alignments was in full swing, and the second phase of the project was just beginning. The CPEC Authority Chairman said that underdeveloped areas, especially southern parts of Balochistan were being given importance under CPEC. He said a dam and a desalination plant had been built in Gwadar in a bid to resolve chronic water shortages affecting the inhabitants. "An airport with the biggest runway of Pakistan worth \$ 230 million is also being built in Gwadar," he said. Speaking to a delegation of senior officials and researchers of the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) at the CPEC Authority's Secretariat, he said that Pakistan attached great importance to CPEC, according to an official statement released here. Bajwa said CPEC was a national project, and Pakistan was ready to pay any price for its success. IPS delegation comprised its Executive President Khalid Rahman, General Manager Operations Naufil Shahrukh, senior associates Amanullah Khan, Mirza Hamid Hasan and others. - DNA

Sino-Pak Cooperation Center on Chinese medicine launched

DNA

BEIJING: Sino-Pakistan Cooperation Center on Traditional Chinese Medicine (SPCCTCM) was launched respectively in Hunan University of Medicine in Huaihua China and the University of Karachi. According to China Economic Net (CEN), the SPCCTCM will further strengthen cooperation between the iron brothers on the Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and benefit the people of the two nations. It will carry out various cooperation, including the R&D of medicines and healthy and

nutritious foods, education, medical treatment, academic and cultural exchange, and industrial cooperation. As TCM played an irreplaceable role in the fight against COVID-19, China has shared efficient TCM prescriptions and clinical experiences with over 80 countries and regions including Pakistan. Chinese government and enterprises also donated TCM products to foreign countries, for example, an enterprise from Hunan Province, China has donated medicines to University of Karachi in 2020. "We hope that SPCCTCM will promote TCM in Pakistan and bring tangible

benefits to Pakistanis," said Wang Qiong, the vice director of SPCCTCM, professor of Institute of Food Science and Technology, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, who has been engaged in China-Pakistan cooperation and exchanges on TCM for many years. According to Wang, SPCCTCM will integrate a team of experts in the fields of traditional medicine from China and Pakistan, to carry out R&D of herbal medicines, including cultivation of medicinal plants, botanical identification, phytochemistry, quality control, efficacy and safety

evaluation and clinical trial. They will also promote the registration of herbal plants and herbal products in China and Pakistan. Wang told CEN, long before the launch of SPCCTCM, Liu Xinmin, Co-Director of SPCCTCM, a professor of Institute of Medicinal Plant Development, Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences and a member of Expert Advisory Panel on Traditional Medicine, WHO, had cooperated with Dr. Atta-ur-Rahman, a scientist and the Chairman of the Pakistani PM's Taskforce on Science and Technology on TCM, and Prof. Iqbal, Director of ICCBS, University of Karachi.