



Islamabad POST

Thursday, March 25, 2021

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

"Greece today, after a course of 200 years"

Detailed News On Page-08

FIFA extends ban on Blatter until 2028

Detailed News On Page-06

Influence of Shanghai Spirit keeps growing

Detailed News On Page-08



Briefs

Erdogan re-elected party head

DNA

ANKARA: Turkey's president on Wednesday was unanimously re-elected leader of the ruling Justice and Development (AK) Party in a congress in the capital Ankara. After being nominated by top party officials, Recep Tayyip Erdogan was re-elected chairman for a seventh term at the party's 7th Ordinary General Congress. Out of 1,431 ballots, Erdogan got 1,428 valid votes, and there were three spoiled ballots, according to Ali Ihsan Yavuz, the party's deputy chair. Speaking after the vote, Erdogan thanked his fellow party members for deeming him worthy of the post.

Asad Umar welcomes Modi's step

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Asad Umar, Federal minister for planning, wrote on his Twitter account that Modi's "message of goodwill on 23rd March is a welcome step." Umar went on to note that Khan had been expressing "his desire for a peaceful South Asia with relationships with all our neighbor's based on mutual respect & (peaceful) coexistence." Earlier, Prime Minister Imran Khan had received a rare "message of goodwill" from his Indian counterpart, Narendra Modi, the latest in a series of moves signaling rapprochement between the nuclear-armed rival countries.

Fazl's politics hanging in the air

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed on Wednesday said that situation of JUI-F head Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman is pitiable as his politics are hanging in the air. Talking to media persons, Sheikh Rashid said that Maryam Nawaz has managed to secure bail from Lahore High Court but she is still calling people on the streets. On March 26, nation will witness how much public support they enjoy, he added.

Educational institutions to remain shut

This was decided in meeting of Inter-Provincial Education and Health Ministers here at the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOCC)

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Shafqat Mahmood on Wednesday announced the extension in educational institutions closure till April 11, in the high-risk areas and specific districts of the country keeping in view the spike in prevalence of the novel coronavirus. Addressing a press conference after holding an important meeting of Inter-Provincial Education and Health Ministers here at the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOCC) to review the spike in current wave of the epidemic, he said more educational institutions could be closed in high-risk areas and selected districts as per discretion of the provinces. All educational institutions – schools, colleges, universities, madrassas, academies – in the nine districts of Punjab including Rawalpindi, Lahore, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Sargodha, Sialkot, Faisalabad, Multan, Sheikhupura and Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) would be closed till April 11, he mentioned. He said the COVID-19 spike had observed in urban centers especially

Schools in Sindh to remain open

ATHAR SUFI

KARACHI: Sindh Education Minister Saeed Ghani on Wednesday said that all educational institutions in the province will remain open under strict coronavirus related SOPs. The education minister said that schools can remain open with only 50 percent attendance and if a coronavirus case is found in a school, only that institution will be sealed. He further announced that all examinations will be held as per the schedule. He added that all private and public schools will follow government orders and warned that a strict action will be taken against institutions as well as individuals found violating the official guidelines. Earlier, Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Shafqat Mahmood announced to keep all educational institutions in nine districts of Punjab closed till April 11 as third wave of coronavirus grips Pakistan, especially Punjab.

Ex-diplomat slams Sharif's India policies

"Instead of standing up for the interests of Pakistan, they wanted to accept Modi's contentions," said Basit

BUREAU REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's former high commissioner to India, Abdul Basit, has levelled some serious allegations against the country's former prime minister, Nawaz Sharif – a move that could potentially intensify the already tense political climate between the government and the Opposition in the country. "PML-N supremo and former prime minister Nawaz Sharif wanted to fulfil the aspirations of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi



unilaterally and unconditionally," alleges Abdul Basit. "In line with the same aspirations, Nawaz Sharif had refused to talk about the Kashmir issue at a meeting in Delhi," he said. In a recent interview with

Indian journalist Karan Thapar for The Wire, Basit further said that Nawaz Sharif "did not involve Pakistani diplomatic staff in India when holding talks with Narendra Modi in New Delhi." He went on to say that two of Nawaz Sharif's senior advisers – Sartaj Aziz and Tariq Fatemi – bore "apologetic mindsets" with regard to their approach to India. "Instead of standing up for the interests of Pakistan, they wanted to accept Modi's contentions and understand his concerns," said Basit.

Govt issues guidelines for AstraZeneca vaccine

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Wednesday issued guidelines for the AstraZeneca vaccine as Pakistan all set to receive 17 million doses of the Oxford-AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine. The guidelines for the AstraZeneca vaccine were issued by the national expert committee on the COVID-19 vaccine. As per guidelines, the AstraZeneca vaccine will be administered to people over 18 years of age. Citizens under 18 years of age won't be administered the Oxford-AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine.

Continued on Page 06

COVAX to provide Oxford vaccine

ISLAMABAD: The COVAX scheme will provide AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine free of charge to Pakistan, sources informed Wednesday. Following the development, according to the publication, the federal government has approved the SOPs for the vaccine's rollout after a nod from the National Expert Committee. As per the standard operating procedures, two doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine will be administered with a 12-week gap, while it will be stored at a temperature of 2-8 degree Celsius. – DNA



ISLAMABAD: The outgoing High Commissioner of Brunei Darussalam, Brigadier General (R) Dato Mahmud Saidin, called on President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr. – DNA

Dubai's deputy ruler dies

DNA

DUBAI: The deputy ruler of the emirate of Dubai, Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum, has died at the age of 75. Sheikh Hamdan, also the UAE's finance minister, was the brother of the current ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum. Sheikh Hamdan had been unwell for a few months. On Wednesday, Sheikh Mohammed posted a picture of his brother saying: "We belong to God and to Him we shall return ... May God have mercy on you, my brother, my support and my companion."

No differences with Bilawal, says Maryam

The LHC approved Maryam's interim bail till April 12 and barred the NAB from arresting her

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Vice-President Maryam Nawaz on Wednesday declared that there are no differences with Pakistan People's Party (PPP). Talking to media after getting pre-arrest bail from the Lahore High Court (LHC), Maryam said the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) is being run by everyone except the institution itself. "I am not an easy target now," she added. The PML-N leader said Prime Minister Imran Khan's government is in

IHC dismisses Gilani's petition

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court has dismissed a petition filed by PPP leader Yousaf Raza Gilani against the election of Sadiq Sanjrani as the Senate chairman. IHC Chief Justice Athar Minalal declared that Sadiq Sanjrani will remain the Senate chairman as the petition is not maintainable. In its 13-page written verdict, the IHC Chief Justice dismissed Gilani's petition as not maintainable. Announcing the reserved verdict, Chief Justice Islamabad High Court (IHC) hoped that the supremacy of Parliament will be ensured and parliament's issues would be resolved in parliament. The verdict further stated that the court cannot intervene in the parliamentary affairs under Article 69 of the constitution. Earlier, the IHC Chief Justice reserved the verdict on the maintainability of the petition challenging the Senate chairman's election.

Military parade today

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The grand military parade in connection with Pakistan Day celebrations will be held in Islamabad today (Thursday). The contingents of the three armed forces and the security forces will conduct march past whilst fighter jets will present aerobatic maneuvers. The parade was rescheduled due to inclement weather in the capital. As per the notifications of the Deputy Commissioners of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, there will be a local holiday in the twin cities tomorrow (Thursday) in connection with the military parade. To facilitate the Parade, Islamabad Traffic Police will restrict traffic on Islamabad Expressway from Khanna Bridge to Zero point between 5:00 in the morning to 2:00 in the afternoon. Alternate routes are Peshawar Road to Golra and Kashmir Highway, Murree Road Cricket Stadium and 9th Avenue and Khanna Bridge to Tramari Chowk then Rawal Dam Chowk and Serena Chowk.

Rouhani sends Nowruz greetings



NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Iran's President Hassan Rouhani has sent greetings to President Dr Arif Alvi on the advent of Nowruz, the new Iranian calendar year. "I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Your Excellency and also your great nation on the arrival of the ancient-old Nowruz, spring of nature and beginning of the year 1400 solar AH," the Iranian president said in a letter addressed to President Alvi. President Rouhani wrote, "Like an adept painter,

Spring infuses spirit of freshness and liveliness into the heart and soul of the earth, through making impressions on nature's canvass to spread images and patterns of refreshment and flourishing across the globe."

Following the example of nature and with renewal of season, he said, the humans could introduce a new spring into their hearts and well-being into their bodies. The Iranian president mentioned that the world experienced the COVID-19 pandemic with its

COAS, UK commander discuss Afghan peace

NEHAL MIRAJ

RAWALPINDI: General Sir Patrick Nicholas Yardley Monrad Sanders, Commander Strategic Command UK, called on General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at GHQ, on Wednesday. During the meeting, matters of professional & mutual interest and regional security issues were discussed. Visiting dignitary acknowledged and appreciated Pakistan Army's sincere efforts in fight against terrorism and efforts for bringing peace and stability in the region, especially the Afghan Peace Process. COAS thanked the dignitary and said that Pakistan Army greatly values its friendly relations with the UK.

Ministry seeks details of Nawaz' treatment

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Interior has sought details of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif's medical treatment in the United Kingdom. A letter by the interior ministry written to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has sought details of the following: (a) Current diagnosis by the medical doctors (b) Name and address of doctors under whom you are receiving medical treatment (c) Copies of all the medical reports including tests undertaken in the UK with results of the tests (d) Details of treatment (if any) received in the UK hospitals

Continued on Page 06

Afghan talks: Pakistan warns against spoilers

Efforts must be made to ensure that such efforts complement, not subvert, peace process, he said, adding, "Bringing in 'spoilers' to the table will retard prospects of an early settlement"

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW YORK: Pakistan has welcomed the recent efforts to re-energize the process aimed at ending the war in Afghanistan, but warned against spoilers' attempts to subvert the peace negotiations and prevent a political settlement in the strife-torn country. In a statement submitted to the UN Security Council, Ambassador Munir Akram called on all sides to work towards reduction of violence leading to a ceasefire, a natural expectation from the peace process. The Pakistani envoy's statement followed a briefing, via video-link from Kabul, by Deborah Lyons, the Special Representative for Afghanistan, about the situation in that country during which she sounded alarm about soaring rates of violence that continue to hamper human-

itarian efforts and erode public confidence more broadly. "Continuation of violence will strengthen the hands of 'spoilers', both within and outside Afghanistan, to subvert the peace negotiations and prevent a comprehensive political settlement in Afghanistan," Ambassador Akram said in his remarks. "We must guard against those who desire to frustrate a peaceful settlement on the pretext of safeguarding democracy and human rights and to continue to use Afghan territory against its neighbours." "Terrorism has had a devastating impact on Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries," the Pakistani envoy said. Pakistan, he said, shares

the international community's determination not to allow Afghan soil to be used by Al-Qaeda, ISIL/Da'esh or other groups to threaten or attack any country. "Some who have waxed eloquent about terrorism today are the very ones who wish to continue to foment terrorism from Afghanistan's ungoverned spaces to conduct their war of terrorism against my country," Ambassador Akram said with obvious India in mind. He regretted that the Security Council has been prevented from considering the evidence of their sponsorship of terrorism. He hoped that despite multiple challenges, and possible periodic

setbacks, all Afghan parties will persevere in the pursuit of a political settlement. Efforts must be made to ensure that such efforts complement, not subvert, the peace process, the Pakistani envoy said, adding, "Bringing in 'spoilers' to the table will retard the prospects of an early settlement. Pakistan, he said, facilitated the commencement and the conclusion of last year's US-Taliban Peace Agreement and the subsequent Intra-Afghan Negotiations. In this regard, Ambassador Akram said Pakistan will support the consensus between Afghan leaders and the Taliban on any inclusive political settlement in Afghanistan. "It is the Afghans who must be the masters of their destiny and decide their own future, without outside influence or interference," he added.



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Briefs

2 foreigners arrested, cocaine recovered

ATHAR SUFI

KARACHI: Customs officials thwarted a bid to smuggle over two kilogrammes of cocaine worth around Rs49 million into the country. The officials said two Nigerian nationals, who arrived at the Jinnah International Airport, Karachi from Nigeria on board a Qatar Airways flight, were found to have swallowed plastic capsules when they were subjected to an x-ray examination. Subsequently, the officials said both men were taken into custody and an FIR was registered against them. After obtaining their physical remand from a relevant court, the two were shifted to Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre JPMC where 161 plastic capsules were removed from their stomach. Cocaine recovered from these capsules weighed 2.450 kilogrammes and its value is estimated at Rs49m in international market.

Digital Pakistan is for economic prosperity

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of IT & Telecommunication has initiated the development process on the Digital Pakistan 2021 Policy. The Policy will also serve as the foundation for the construction of a holistic digital ecosystem with advanced concepts and components for the rapid delivery of next generation digital services, applications and content. It will serve as an aggregator of demand for innovative digital services and as a supplier of data for value added services and applications. Member IT, Ministry of IT & Telecom, Syed Junaid Imam, kicked off the Digital Pakistan Policy 2021 Roundtable sessions in Lahore on Wednesday. The Consultations sessions with all the relevant stakeholders will also be held in Karachi and Islamabad, and would include a broad cross section of Pakistan's ICT Industry. Federal Minister for IT Syed Amin Ul Haque in his message to the participating stakeholders said "Pakistan is on the verge of digital revolution as we see progress happening in the country on daily basis."

Shehbaz appears before NAB court

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) president and opposition leader in National Assembly Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday has appeared before the accountability court in Ashiana Housing reference. During the hearing, the witnesses have recorded their statements. On the occasion, stringent security arrangements were ensured to avoid any untoward incident. Earlier, accountability court had nullified the decision of exempting Shehbaz from the hearings in connection with Ashiana Housing reference. The court had summoned Shehbaz in personal capacity and said that it's not appropriate to exempt an accused in one case while he was appearing in another one.

Sarmad Ali, Naz Afreen elected as President, Secy General of APNS

CENTRELINE magazine, a sister concern of Daily Islamabad POST elected as Member of the Executive Committee for the second time; the newly elected Executive Committee appreciated the performance of the Election Commission. The members gave standing ovation to Mr. Hameed Haroon



KARACHI: Members of APNS Executive Committee posing for a group photo. — DNA

DNA

KARACHI: The Annual Meeting of the APNS General Council held on March 24, 2021 at APNS House, Karachi unanimously elected Sarmad Ali as President, Jamil Ather as Senior Vice President, Shahab Zuberi as Vice President, Ms. Nazafreen Saigol Lakhani as Secretary General, Mohsin Bilal as Joint Secretary and Owais Khushnood as Finance Secretary of the Society. Earlier, the General Council elected unopposed the Executive Committee

for 2021-22.

The AGM was held under the chairmanship of Hameed Haroon, President, at the lawns of the APNS House completely observing SOPs for Covid-19. The Council unanimously approved the report of the Executive Committee for the years 2019-2021 as well as the Annual Accounts of the Society for the years 2019 and 2020. The General Council attended by 146 members from across the country, formed an Election Commission headed by Ms. Shaima Matri Dawood with Nasir Daad Baloch and Mumtaz

Ali Phulpoto as members. The Election Commission conducted the election of the Executive Committee for the year 2021-22.

Following were elected unopposed to the Executive Committee of the APNS for the year 2021-22 at the Annual General Meeting held on March 24, 2021:

Karachi Daily Seats: Aghaz, Business Recorder, Deynat, Dawn, Jasarat, Jiddat
Lahore Daily Seats: Jang, Khabrain, Tijarat, Dunya, Abtak, Pakistan
Rawalpindi/Islamabad Daily

Seats: Ausaf, Sahafat
Balochistan Daily Seats: Awam Quetta, Mashriq Quetta
Khyber Pakhtoon Khwa Daily Seats: Mashriq Peshawar, Wahdat Peshawar
Sindh (Excluding Karachi) Dailies: Kawish Hyderabad, Kaleem Sukkur
Punjab (excluding Lahore/Rwp/Ibd.): Aftab Multan, Paigham Faisalabad, Business Recorder, Faisalabad.
General Seats (Metropolitan Dailies): Pakistan Observer Islamabad, City 42 Lahore
General Seats (Regional Dailies): Halchal Hyderabad,

Sayadat Bahawalpur Periodicals Seats: Naey Ufaq Karachi, Dastak Karachi, Rookhani Digest Karachi, Naya Rukh Karachi.
News & News Comments Periodical (Punjab / KPK): CENTRELINE Islamabad
News & News Comments Periodical (Sindh / Balochistan): Ibrat Magazine Hyderabad
News & News Comments Periodicals (General): Cricketer Karachi
The new Executive Committee elected Daily Nau Sij, Karachi on woman - publishers seat.

The newly elected Executive Committee appreciated the performance of the Election Commission. The members gave standing ovation to Mr. Hameed Haroon, the outgoing President for his services to the newspaper industry. Earlier, the Extra-Ordinary General Council of the Society held a meeting in the morning and adopted a Special Resolution whereby non holding of the AGM due to pandemic for the year 2020-21, was condoned and the actions and decisions taken during the previous year were validated.

FPCCI hails FBR for trade facilitation

BUREAU REPORT

KARACHI: Mian Nasser Hyatt Maggo, President and Mr. Nasir Khan Vice President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry appreciated the FBR for its efforts to improve ease of doing business and trade facilitation by allowing clearance of goods imported by ERSTWHIL FATA/PATA and installations of tracking devices manually to ensure en-route monitoring and tracking till the development of the functionality in the WEBOC system. They further informed that under this FBR directives the processing of such consignments may be cleared in the system by the respective Collectorate after implementation of the required con-

ditions as prescribed in the CGO and Board instructions. M/s. TPL Trakker (Pvt.) Ltd. as been assigned for manual installation of tracking devices for consignments. Control mechanism for clearance of such consignments will remain with the Collectorate while it may get the written confirmation for concerned clearing agents/bonded carriers.

While referring FBR's Order issued on 17th March 2021 they said that FPCCI have been emphasizing for development of economically deprived regions through enhancement of transit trade by improving trade facilitations.

They further added that the global economic scenario has drastically changed, e-commerce and digitalization has gained significance for international trade.

Tripartite task force formed in Sindh to promote FPRW

NAZIR SYAL

KARACHI: "Change of mindset is essential to meet the gap between Labour standards and compliance in the agricultural economy particularly when it comes to implementing Fundamental rights of workers and Decent Work." This was stated by Ijaz Ahmed Mehesar, Secretary Livestock and Fisheries, Government of Sindh. He was speaking as the Chief Guest at the Multi-Stakeholders Consultative meeting to promote FPRW and Decent Work at Hyderabad. The meeting was organized by Employers Federation of Pakistan in collaboration with ILO to establish Social Dialogue Platform. Ms. Ingrid Christensen speaking online at the occasion thanked EFP for organizing the event and

said that the commitment made by the stakeholders to promote FPRW and fight against forced Labour and child Labour in the cotton growing communities is highly appreciable. She stressed upon the need for education of children by taking them away from the workplace so that they can be shaped into better citizens. She said that all stakeholders have an important role to play particularly in the campaign against child Labour and forced Labour. Earlier Syed Nazir Ali, Director EFP Board welcomed the participants to the consultative meeting and expressed the hope that it will positively contribute in creating conducive atmosphere in which the stakeholders in the agricultural sector will be able to mutually discuss their issues and challenges. Haji Ghulam Asghar Khum-

bar, President PWF Interior Sindh speaking on the occasion assured his complete solidarity with the efforts of Employers' Federation of Pakistan in developing a Social Platform to promote FPRW and Decent Work in the Cotton Growing Community particularly in the lower tiers of cotton supply chain. Ijaz Ahmed, ILO Project Coordinator in his remarks explained the role and structure of ILO in promoting FPRW and Decent Work Agenda and hope that the participants will find this meeting a great learning opportunity. Ghulam Nabi Memon, Former Joint Director Labour and currently Labour Expert/consultant made a presentation on the need and importance of the Social Dialogue Platform for promoting FPRW and Decent Work. In his presentation he explained why principles of

FPRW are important in the context of Changing Global Working Environment. He emphasized the need of Social Dialogue as a strong tool for sustainability. The group discussion moderated by Ms. Nuzhat Jahan, Project Consultant, came out with issues and challenges faced by the cotton growing industry with recommendations and suggestions to improve cotton productivity, working conditions and Social Protection. Thereafter Fasihul Karim Siddiqi, Advisor EFP proposed the establishment of tripartite taskforce comprising of representatives from the Employers, Workers and Government. The taskforce is formed to promote FPRW and Decent Work and continue Social Dialogue for their sustainability in the cotton growing community particularly in lower tiers.

Turkish Consul calls on Sindh Governor

DNA

KARACHI: Consul General (CG) of Turkey in Karachi Tolga Ucak called on Sindh Governor Imran Ismail here at the Governor House on Wednesday.

Matters of mutual interests were discussed in the meeting. Governor Imran Ismail said Pakistan had exemplary relations with Turkey.

Karachi was the economic hub of the country and the government would provide incentives and facilities to the Turkish businessmen for investment in the metropolis. He said Pakistan was a land of beautiful scenic spots which could attract tourists from across the world. The present government was making all-out efforts for the promotion of tourism to pull the country out of economic crisis and create job opportunities, he added.



LAHORE: Maryam Nawaz along with party officials and workers going to appear in LHC. — DNA

B2W program launched for working women

DNA

LAHORE: The global COVID-19 pandemic and the economic situation that followed, has impacted the working class on every level. Among the most at risk are the working women, who for one reason or the other had to take a career break, and couldn't return to the jobs, creating a vacuum in their professional life. To help overcome this career gap, and to improve the economic woes of these women, the leading global manufacturing concern, Atlas Copco Pakistan launched "Back-to-Work" or B2W program.

US delegation calls on Sanjrani

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: An 8-member delegation of American Democratic Party led by Tahir javed called on Chairman senate Sadiq Sanjrani here at Parliament House on Wednesday.

The delegation felicitated Sadiq Sanjrani on being re-elected as a chairman of the upper house of the parliament, said a press release. The US delegation also congratulated Mirza Muhammad Afridi on being elected as Deputy Chairman Senate.

During the meeting, the Chairman senate said that the bilateral relations between the US and Pakistan would be further strengthened. The Chairman Senate added that significant steps have been taken for promotion of democracy in Pakistan.

He emphasized that Pakistan has played a vital role in eradicating terrorism and further promoting peace in the region. The US delegation, during the meeting, said that democracy is flourishing in Pakistan which will

not only solve the problems of the people but will also help the country move towards prosperity.

While expressing the confidence in the leadership of Pakistan, the delegation said that the steps taken by the country for establishing peace are commendable.

The delegation further said that relations between the two countries have become stronger over time and the new US leadership want to further strengthen its bilateral relations with Pakistan. The Joe Biden administration wants to further enhance bilateral ties with Pakistan, added the US delegation.

The visiting dignitaries conveyed a goodwill message of the US Senators to the Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani and Deputy Chairman senate Mirza Muhammad Afridi.

The delegation informed the Chairman Senate that many Pakistani are rendering services in the United States and the problems of those Pakistani residing in the United States are being resolved in an efficient manner.

DC appeals to follow SOPs against COVID-19

He clear that people noticed the message of Ulama so they should spread this message through pulpits. Deputy Commissioner said that their excellent services in maintaining the atmosphere of social peace and religious tolerance were commendable

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: The District Peace Committee meeting was held in the DC Office, which was chaired by Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali. SSP(Operations) Muhammad Afzal, ADC HQ Muhammad Khalid and other officers were also present. Deputy Commissioner welcomed the participants and told them about the current situation of third and most dangerous wave of corona virus. He informed that wards of govt hospitals were nearly filled from patients and precautionary measures/implementation on SoPs are utmost necessary to defeat the virus. He appealed to the cleric of

all sects to sensitize the people to stay mostly at home and use face mask while going out. He said that we should proved to be a responsible citizen because precaution was a only way to save from Corona and district govt is also using all source of publicity in this regard. He said that give a brief sermon in Arabic on Juma and there should be a proper distance between the people. He urged that ulama should sensitized people to take wazu from their house. He said that mosques should be thoroughly washed with chemical water and prayers should be prayed on the open floor.

He clear that people noticed the message of Ulama so they should spread this message through pul-

pits. Deputy Commissioner said that their excellent services in maintaining the atmosphere of social peace and religious tolerance were commendable. He said that district administration would maintain close contact with the religious scholars and would always welcome their suggestions for the establishment of peace.

He paid tribute to the exemplary cooperation and active role of the members of the peace committees specially during the corona situation. Deputy Commissioner said that peace and security is the hallmark of Islam which makes the world and the hereafter better therefore, we will not spare to keep Faisalabad as the cradle of peace, the credit of which goes to

the scholars of all sects. He informed that District mosques Committee has been made functional and ADCG will hold regular meeting of committee to resolve the prolonged issues. SSP also appealed the Ulama for co-operation during the current wave of corona virus. Molana Muhammad Yousof Anwar, Sahibzada Zahid Mehmood Qasmi, Pir Faiz Rasool Rizwi, Muf-ti Muhammad Zia Madani, Maulana Muhammad Riaz Khari, Syed Jaffar Naqvi, Dr. Iftikhar Naqvi, Mumtaz Hussain, Chacha Abdul Rasheed and other Ulama appreciated the administration's steps to prevent citizens from corona virus and assured their full cooperation to implement SoPs during prayers time. They also appreciat-

ed to functional District Mosque Committee and said that the fireworks should be stopped on the occasion of Shabrat. In the end special prayer was also offered.

547 malls, schools and restaurants sealed
As many as 547 shopping malls, private schools, wedding halls and restaurants sealed in last 9 days for violating Corona SOPs and lock down while Rs 493,000 fine was also imposed to the shopkeepers for non compliance instructions. Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Ali said that Assistant Commissioners were checking points on daily basis for ensuring implementation of Corona SOPs and zero tolerance policy is being implemented in this regard.

CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
(Directorate of Estate Management-II)

POSTPONEMENT

CDA'S OPEN AUCTION OF COMMERCIAL PLOTS ON 29TH, 30TH AND 31ST MARCH, 2021

CDA's Open Auction of Commercial Plots scheduled to be held on 29th, 30th and 31st March, 2021 has been postponed due to COVID-19 pandemic. New dates and time will be intimated later.

DIRECTOR
Estate Management-II
Capital Development Authority
Phone: 051-9252481

PID (I) No. 5216/20

Briefs

NCRD delegation attends Albayrak workshop

SHAHEEN HANIF

RAWALPINDI: A fifty-member delegation of National Center of Rural Development (NCRD) here on Wednesday attended the first day session of five-day training workshop on solid waste management in Pakistan by a Turkish solid waste management company Albayrak.

The delegation was briefed by Albayrak General Manager Operations MüratSengür and Deputy Manager Operations Engr. Babar Abbas about different systems and operations related to waste management which are conducted by the Company. HSE team head Saeed Ahmad Abbasi led the delegation to all three parts of workshops. Manager Communications Aneela Suleman briefed the delegation regarding the communication campaigns.

They were given an overview about parking area, mechanical area, vehicles management, their fueling system, transfer section and depot for inventory management.

The visiting delegation was also informed about various cleanliness drives and awareness activities performed by the cleaning crew and communications squad in different UCs of Rawalpindi.

Capital's air quality makes hat-trick of healthy days

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: The air quality of the federal capital has remained healthy for consecutive three days amid strong spell of rain that lashed the region since Sunday where the metropolis' ambience had remained unhealthy for sensitive masses during past dry weather.

The recent air quality data by Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) reported record decline in hazardous pollutant tainting the atmosphere below permissible limits, an official of EPA told APP. The Pak-EPA daily air quality report recorded particulate matter of less than 2.5 microns (PM2.5), nitrogen dioxide (NO2) and Sulphur dioxide (SO2), temperature and humidity in the air.

The health hazardous pollutant PM 2.5 was responsible for causing premature deaths, chronic respiratory diseases and other health complications globally.

It is the most health-damaging environmental pollutant causing chronic respiratory diseases and premature deaths as it could easily penetrate human blood through lungs cells, she added.

IGP reviews security arrangements at Red Zone

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Inspector General of Police (IGP) Qazi Jameel-ur-Rehman Wednesday visited Red Zone here and reviewed the security arrangements.

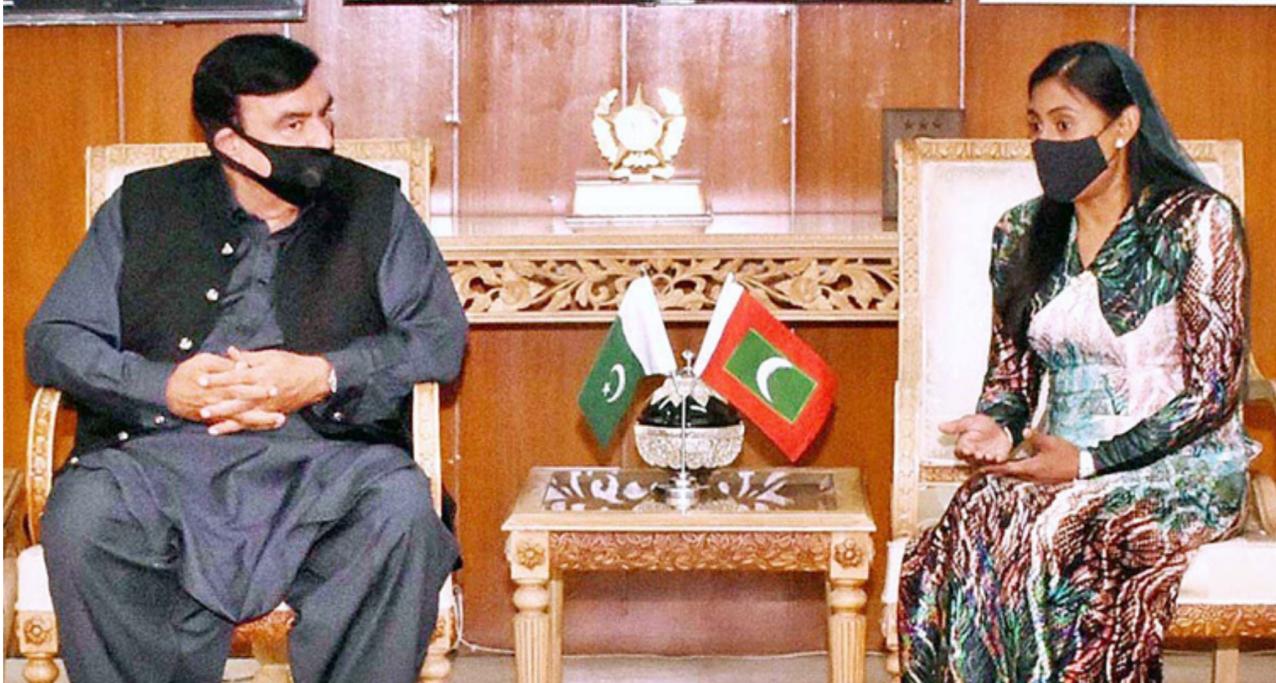
He examined all the checkpoints leading to the Red Zone and met with the deployed staff to encourage them.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanvir apprised the IGP over checking procedure and other security measures.

Qazi Jamil Ur Rehman directed the deployed staff to stay alert during duty hours and asked them to ensure foolproof security of important buildings, offices and embassies present at the area.

All the officers and Jawans on duty must wear bulletproof jackets, helmets and surgical masks to avoid any untoward situation, he added.

"No negligence will be tolerated in that regard," the IGP strictly warned.



ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner of the Republic of Maldives Ms. Farzana Zahir called on Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed. —DNA

ICCI calls for development of Capital industrial areas

Acting President ICCI said that the advanced countries have achieved fast economic growth by promoting the development of industrial zones, but industrial areas in Islamabad were facing multiple problems due to which industrial activities were suffering

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Fatma Azim, Acting President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry along with a delegation of local industrialists called on Tariq Sadiq, former President ICCI and congratulated him on being elected as the President, Islamabad Industrial Association (IIA). Abdul Rehman Khan Vice President ICCI, Mian Akram Farid Chairman Founder Group, Khalid Javed, Mian Shaikat Masud, Nasir Khan, Ch. Waheedud Din, Sheikh Atifkram, Karim Aziz Malik, Umer Hussain, OmaisKhat-tak and Hafiz Bilal Munir were in the delegation.

Speaking at the occasion, Fatma Azim, Acting President ICCI said that the advanced countries have achieved fast economic



growth by promoting the development of industrial zones, but industrial areas in Islamabad were facing multiple problems due to which industrial activities were suffering. She called upon the CDA & MCI to focus on better development

of industrial areas in the federal capital that would boost industrialization in the region and enhance exports. She assured that ICCI would cooperate with IIA in its efforts for resolving the key issues of local industries. Mian Akram Farid, Chair-

man Founder Group said that the best option for the government to uplift the economy, reduce unemployment and enhance tax revenue was to promote industrialization. He said that the domestic industry needed upgrada-

tion for JVs and investment in CPEC and urged that the government should minimize taxes and duties on the import of industrial machinery, plants and equipment for upgradation of industrial units and make them more competitive for

producing value added products & promoting exports. He said that the government should also cooperate in upgrading the skills development and knowledge of the industrial workforce to make them more productive. He said that the Overseas Pakistanis were sending remittances of USD 24 billion, which could be further enhanced to USD 40 billion if the government takes more measures to facilitate them. Speaking at the occasion, Tariq Sadiq, newly elected President, Islamabad Industrial Association said that he would work in coordination with ICCI for improvement of infrastructure in industrial areas of Islamabad. He said that the roads and footpaths in Islamabad's industrial areas were broken due to which heavy duty vehicles were facing problems in transportation of goods.

CDA takes action against illegal buildings



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) is taking action against those who are violating the building by-laws and doing constructions without NOCs. 17 commercial buildings have been sealed for not getting NOCs. Notices have been

issued to 245 owners and show cause notices have been served to 73 owners. According to detail, the administration of CDA is committed for implementing the building by laws. CDA has been taking action against the constructions without having NOCs. However, the current administration of CDA has completed

preparations for a grand action against those who are violating the building by laws and are doing constructions without NOCs. Department of Building Control in collaboration with the department of Enforcement sealed 17 commercial buildings at Sawan Garden Zone 5. The action was taken under CDA Build-

ing Regulation 2020 and Building by Laws. Assistant Commissioner and reserve police were also present at the occasion. Notices have been served to 245 owners in Gulberg Green, Bahria Enclave, F-17, E-11, Zone 2, GT Road, Sawan Garden, River Gardern, Bahria Phase 6, Express Way, Lehtar road, and others.

14 AIOU's disabled students get free laptops

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) on Wednesday distributed laptops among its 14 disabled and transgender students under Higher Education Commission Laptop Scheme in order to provide them an opportunity to get modern education.

Addressing at a laptop distribution ceremony here, Director General Regional Services AIOU Inamullah Sheikh said that the university was specially facilitating transgender community, handicapped, prisoners, orphans,

children of 'Shuhada' by offering them free education. He said the university was encouraging transgender community to acquire higher education for bringing positive change in the society.

He said transgender were equal as other human being of the society and bringing them into mainstream would help them to earn respectable livelihood. They could also play active role in socio-economic development of the country, he said. Inamullah said earlier transgender were dealt as discarded segment of society but now many opportunities were available to them to grow and flourish.

NHNP returns jewelry to owner

RAJA PERVAIZ

ISLAMABAD: National Highways and Motorway Police handed over the lost jewelry worth Rs 450,000 to the owner. According to the details, a man Fahad was traveling with his family on a private vehicle number MNY 2019 from Lahore to Attock via the motorway.

During his journey they stopped at KalarKahar rest areas for refreshment. After resuming their journey they found out that ladies bag in the car which contained gold ornaments worth about Rs 450,000 was missing. He contacted the Motorway Police Helpline 130, and informed that he had forgotten a lady purse in the Mini Service Area.

Sub-Inspector Adnan and car owner Fahad were kept in full touch so that they could reach the spot in the shortest possible time. Eventually, they reached the spot, took the purse into custody and informed the owners.

Court extends judicial remand of five lawyers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: An Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) on Wednesday extended the judicial remand of five lawyers accused of vandalizing the Islamabad High Court's (IHC) building during a protest. The five lawyers including Qaiser Nawaz, Asadullah Khan, Raja KhurramFarrukh, LiaqatManzor and Khalid Hussain Taj were produced before the ATC Judge Raja Jawad Abbas Hassan.

The court extended the judicial remand of the accused till March 31, and sent them jail till that. The same court also granted time to defense lawyers for arguments till March 26, in post-arrest bail petitions of three other lawyers including Akhter Hussain, AyubArab and Hamad Saeed.

PAL chairman condoles poet's demise

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL) Chairman Dr. Yousuf Khushk Wednesday expressed deep sorrow and grief over the demise of renowned poet and journalist Amin RahatChughtai.

In a condolence message, he said Chughtai was a multi-faceted creator. He wrote nine books as a poet, NaatKhawan, critic and Islamic scholar. His literary services will always be remembered.

He said with the demise of Amin RahatChughtai, Urdu literature had lost an important writer. Khushk prayed to Allah Almighty to grant the deceased a high position in paradise and patience to the bereaved family. — APP

New metric included in governance observatory: Sania

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Poverty Alleviation, Senator Dr. Sania Nishtar on Wednesday said a new metric was also included in the framework of the Governance Observatory. "We took a decision that no Ehsaas implementing agency will be allowed to get a post-facto approval on its budget," she said. Dr. Sania Nishtar chaired a stock take meeting for the Ehsaas Governance Observatory, says a press release issued here. The Governance Observatory was established in June 2020 to monitor adherence to the Ehsaas Governance and Integrity Policy, which was approved by the cabinet in November 2019. The Governance Observatory aims to review and improve governance sys-

tems and practices of all four executing agencies which are instrumental in implementing Ehsaas programs and initiatives. The purpose is to build systems that strongly discourage corruption, and to promote efficiency, transparency and accountability for results and compliance with rules.

All four executing agencies of Ehsaas including BISP, PPAF, Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal and TVO came to the table together with Secretary Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Division (PASSD), Additional Secretary PASSD, and officials from Ehsaas Delivery Unit. Under the observatory, semi-annual reviews are conducted to review Ehsaas Governance and Integrity metrics focusing on board efficiency, financial control, risk & compliance, and business operations. Several indicators are tracked in these categories.

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LARGEST CIRCULATED DIPLOMATIC MAGAZINE

Briefs

COVID-19 claims 8 lives with 131 new cases

DNA

RAWALPINDI: With an increase of 131 more COVID-19 positive cases during the last 24 hours, the total number has reached 16,682 including 15,231 belonged to Rawalpindi and 1,451 from other districts. According to a daily situation report issued by the district administration here on Wednesday, 14,390 patients tested positive results were discharged after recovery while 1,361 were quarantined at homes. "Presently 193 confirmed patients are admitted to various facilities of the city including 13 were admitted in Holy Family Hospital, 23 in Benazir Bhutto Hospital, 56 in Institute of Urology, 13 in Fauji Foundation Hospital, and one in Hearts International Hospital," the report added. The report said 915 patients had been died due to this deadly disease including 705 from Rawalpindi and 210 from other districts so far, adding eight more deaths of the victims were reported during last 24 hours with six belonged to Rawalpindi and two others.

IESCO notifies 2-day power suspension

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Wednesday issued 2-day power suspension programme for Thursday and Friday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period on Thursday from 09:00 AM to 02:00 PM, Jand City-2, Jund City-1, Parea, Salar-1 & 2, Alipur, Farash Town, Karpa, Tufail Shaheed, Gharial, KRL, Fazahiya, Jinnah Camp, Falcon, CDA, FHS, I-8/4, Kurry Road, Khurram Colony, PAF Mureed, Chakral, Eid Gah, Raja Sultan, Bagh Sardar, Abu Bakar, Bani, Gulshanabad, Dharik, Hussainabad Feeders, from 09:00 to 12:00 Noon, Danda Shah Bilawal, Mogla, Power Channel Colony, Hameed, Attock Rural, Dar es Salaam Feeders, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Jahangir Road, Kalia, Abrar Shaheed, Lehtar-2, Nara Motor, Old Road, New Kalam, Eid Gah, Affandi Colony, Shakrial, Alnoor Colony, City, Gulshanabad, Jinnah Road, Azizabad, Lethar Road, Misryal Road, Kamalabad, Azharabad, Shams Colony, Chakra, BB Shaheed, Feeders, from 09:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Calab-1, Koral, Alipur, Tramri, NIH, Kaldana, Barian, Patriata, Angori Feeders.

Another school sealed in Attock

DNA

ATTOCK: The district health authorities Wednesday sealed another educational institution in Jand tehsil after some of the staff members tested positive for coronavirus. Deputy District Officer Health Dr. Shahida Khattak confirmed that soon after the health authorities received report of infection of some staff members, the disinfectant spray was carried out under the supervision of the health officials. She said that samples of the other fellow staff members and students were also collected and sent for testing. Assistant commissioner Jand Ijaz Abdul Kareem has said the school was sealed and closed for 14 days in connection to precautionary measures. Moreover, the district health authorities Monday sealed three different educational institutions after their staff members were tested COVID-19 positive, confirmed health authorities. Chief executive District health authority Dr Jawad Ellahi informed that those institutes which have been sealed include Government Degree College for Women Attock, Government Higher Secondary School Nara and Government Girls High School Baryar.

PRCS, NDMA agree to collaborate on disaster management

Abrar ul Haq stresses need to create synergies for efficient and swift response during emergencies by avoiding duplication of work

ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) and National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) agreed to enhance mutual collaboration in tackling disasters and other emergency situations in the country. PRCS Chairman Abrar ul Haq held a meeting with NDMA Chairman Lt Gen Akhtar Nawaz Satti at the NDMA wherein the two discussed areas of mutual cooperation and collaboration. In the meeting, both organizations agreed to boost mutual cooperation and efforts regarding preparedness, mitigation, risk reduction and relief and rehabilitation in the wake of any calamity or disasters. Speaking on the occasion, PRCS Chairman Abrar ul Haq appreciated the role being played by the NDMA in disaster management in the country. He stressed the need to create synergies for efficient and swift response during emergencies by avoiding duplication of work. He said the PRCS has a huge volunteer base and its presence in every nook and corner of the country puts it in a unique



place vis-a-vis effective handling of any disasters or emergency situations. He said collaboration between PRCS and NDMA on community-based disaster risk reduction (CBDRR) will not only help communities

in an organized way during any disasters but also make the service delivery quicker and efficient. NDMA Chairman Lt Gen Akhtar Nawaz Satti hailed the role played by PRCS during disasters in the country,

especially the recent outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic. He said volunteers are the backbone of any humanitarian organization, adding that the PRCS volunteers are devotedly working to help out people during dis-

asters and are always ready to respond in the time of need. He hoped that collaboration with PRCS on CBDRR will help develop a sustainable mechanism for quick and effective response following any dis-

asters in the country. PRCS Acting Secretary General Dr. Adeel Nawaz, IFRC Head of Delegation Peter (Pivi) Ophoff and other senior officials were also present on the occasion.

No vehicular traffic to be allowed to enter twin cities

DNA

RAWALPINDI: City Traffic Police (CTP) have finalized all the arrangements to facilitate the motorists of twin cities on March 25, Thursday, during Pakistan Day Parade while vehicular traffic would not be allowed to enter Rawalpindi and Islamabad from Faizabad. According to Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Rawalpindi Rai Mazhar Iqbal, the entry of heavy vehicles would be banned in Rawalpindi city on March 25 particularly after 12 am, midnight. The CTP have formulated a

comprehensive traffic plan to facilitate the motorists of twin cities during March 25 Parade. As many as 375 officers and Traffic Wardens including nine DSPs, 25 Inspectors, 272 Traffic Wardens and 69 Traffic Assistants would be deployed on various city roads to regulate traffic, he said adding, Faizabad Interchange would remain closed for all kinds of traffic either going towards Islamabad or entering Rawalpindi from 5 am to conclusion of the parade. He said the diversions would also be placed on different places, adding,

the motorists who want to go to Islamabad from Murree Road would reach their destinations via 9th Avenue while those traveling on the 9th Avenue would enter Rawalpindi by taking U-turn from Double Road. Similarly, the vehicles coming from Koral Chowk would enter the federal capital using routes of Khana Pull Service Road, Chungi Number-8, Bandh Khana Road, Sadiqabad, Rawal Road, C-Block, Murree Road and Stadium Road. The entry of buses, trucks, trailers and other heavy vehicles would also be banned, he said.

The CTO urged the citizens to cooperate with traffic police so that traffic problems could be addressed properly. He said to make security foolproof for Pakistan Day Parade, heavy traffic would not be allowed to enter Rawalpindi city. He advised the motorists and road users to contact Helpline 051-9272616, 051-9272839 and Murree Traffic Police Helpline 051-9269200 in case of any inconvenience or problem during travel. CTP's radio station 88.6 would also broadcast programs for awareness of the citizens, he added.

Dadocha Dam, 15% work completed in two and half months

RAWALPINDI: Commissioner Rawalpindi Capt.(Retd) Muhammad Mehmood on Wednesday said that 15 percent construction work of Dadocha Dam has been completed in only two and half months. Chairing a meeting held here to review progress on Dadocha dam the commissioner said, the construction work on the project was launched in January 2021 and was being completed on fast track. He said, the dam would be completed in two and half year period at a cost of Rs 6492 million. The administration had acquired 16,194 kanal and 14 marlas land for the project. He said that excavation work of the spillway and perennial pipe flow was underway. The Commissioner said, Dadocha dam is a project of public interest and its construction was inevitable in view of the increasing water shortage situation in Rawalpindi city. The Commissioner was informed that heavy missionary was being used for the construction work. Muhammad Mehmood said, the Dadocha dam project was conceived in 2002 but its construction work could not be started till December 2020. — DNA

Encroachers create mess on road

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The encroachments are creating hurdles in smooth flow of traffic and encroachers set up their kiosks on footpath in the city. The encroachers can be seen in the Chungi no 22, Bara Market, Namak Mandi, Narnkari Bazaar, Fawara Chowk, Trunk Bazaar, Jamia Masjid Road, Sadiqabad, Muslim Town, Commercial Market, Saidpur Road, Khayaban-e-Sir Syed, Asghar Mall Road, Ganjmandi Road, Dhoke Mangtal Road and Bagh Sardaran in the city. Talking to media, Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Rai Mazhar Iqbal said encroachments were a major cause in the smooth flow of traffic, adding that traffic police were making all out efforts to avoid traffic snarls on roads. He urged the traders to cooperate with traffic police in eradicating encroachment. Tehsil Municipal Officer said that raids are being conducted in city markets to remove all kinds of encroachments. Now staff concerned has also been directed to expedite the ongoing efforts being made to remove encroachments from city areas. Special teams have been constituted to wipe out encroachments, he added. The vendors who were found selling their products while displaying on footpaths and different city roads are imposed fines with warnings.

13 outlaws including 3 POs held

SHAHEEN HANIF

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad police have arrested 13 outlaws including three proclaimed offenders and recovered hashish and weapons from their possession. A massive crackdown has been launched against anti-social elements and drug peddlers to make Islamabad crime free city, the SSP (Operations) said in a statement on Wednesday. According to details, Nilore police arrested two accused Khawar and Intazar and recovered one SMG and one pistol along with ammunition from their possession. Sihala police arrested accused Adil and recovered 40 liter alcohol from him. Aabpara police arrested accused Imran Messih and recovered 15 liters alcohol from him. Tarnol police arrested accused Khayal Gulab and recovered 530 gram hashish from him. Lohibher police arrested accused Naveed and recovered one 30 bore pistol from him. Noon police arrested two accused Ameen and Dolat Shah involved in rash driving. Kohsar police arrested two accused Bader Kareem and Muhammad Kaleem and recovered two pistols from their possession. Cases had been registered against these nabbed persons and further investigation was underway. During special crackdown against absconders police teams arrested three proclaimed offenders from various areas of the city.

Bike lifter gang busted

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Police have busted a dacoit and bike lifter gang and arrested its three members besides recovering 16 stolen motorcycles, cash Rs 29,000 and other items from their possession. According to a police spokesman, police team under the supervision of SHO Airport Police Station was constituted which after hectic efforts managed to net three accused namely Bilal alias Bali, ring leader, Hamza and Faizan who were dacoit, bike lifter gang members of Bali gang and allegedly involved in a number cases registered in different police stations. Police recovered 16 stolen motorcycles, cash Rs 29,000, spare parts of motorcycles and other items from their possession. They confessed to have committed bike lifting and other crimes in different areas. A case has been registered against all the accused while further investigation is underway, he added.

ICT admin re-issues SOPs

RAJA PERVAIZ

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration on Wednesday issued anti-coronavirus guidelines with amendment amid 3rd wave of COVID-19 pandemic. According to a notification, all types of indoor dining would remain banned however, outdoor dining has been permitted till 10:00 pm on weekdays only. Both indoor/outdoor dining would be banned on the weekends (safe days) Friday & Saturday. Takeaways / home delivery would be allowed with strict implementation of COVID-19 protocols.

Similarly, large indoor gatherings would also remain ban while only 300 persons will be allowed for outdoor gathering with strict adherence of COVID-19 SOPs. There would be a blanket ban on sports, festivals, cultural and other events. Likewise, amusement parks would remain closed however, walking / jogging tracks are exempted. All types of marriage / event Halls, community centres and Marriages would remain closed and only outdoor marriage functions in open areas allowed till 10:00 pm subject to upper limit of 300 guests, maximum event duration of 02 hours and strict implementation of COVID-19 SOPs.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for privatization Mohammed Mian Soomro chairing a meeting of Privatization Commission Board. — DNA

Growing Pak-Uzbek ties vital for region

This resolve was expressed at a webinar jointly organized by the Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad, and the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies

MEHMOOD ABDULLAH

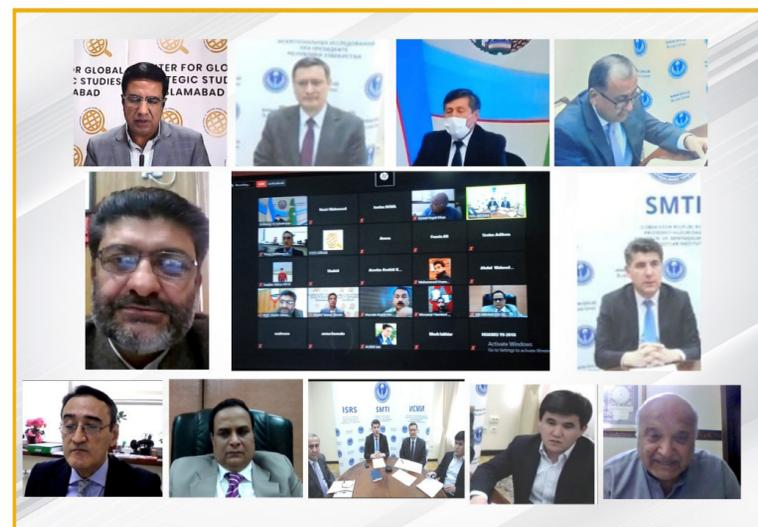
ISLAMABAD: An Online International Conference on "Regional Connectivity Strategy: Pakistan & Uzbekistan-A New Regional Commitment" was jointly organized by the Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad, and the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The online conference was commenced with the welcome remarks by Mr. Aybek Arif Usmanov, Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan to Pakistan. He appreciated the initiative of organizing the conference & expressed his gratitude to the institutions for their participation in enhancing bilateral ties between Uzbekistan & Pakistan. His Excellency also mentioned that this conference will identify new areas of cooperation between Pakistan and Uzbekistan and also suggest the role of both countries in the Afghanistan peace process. In his opening remarks, Mr. Khalid Taimur Akram, Executive Director, Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad stated that Regional connectivity is the key catchword in today's political and economic discourse. Pakistan

has a cultural and religious affinity with the Central Asian Region and in this aspect, Pakistan-Uzbekistan bilateral relations have significantly improved in recent times. He emphasized that it is the need of the hour to effectively implement

and execute the practical aspects of joint projects that interconnect all regional partners. Mr. Akramjon Nematov, First Deputy Director of the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of the Republic

of Uzbekistan also shared his point of view. He highlighted that Pakistan and Uzbekistan must support bilateral dialogue for the Afghan peace process. This support should also be extended and highlighted on all international

platforms as well. This will initiate a new paradigm of international trade, regional connectivity, and economic cooperation in the region. Furthermore, it will become a pathway for sustainable development and progressive economic growth in Afghanistan. He appreciated Pakistan's vision for building and developing bilateral ties between Pakistan and Uzbekistan to maximize benefits and to capitalize on the geographical importance of this region. Prof. Dr. Shabir Ahmad Khan, Director of Area Study Centre, University of Peshawar highlighted that For Pakistan connectivity with Uzbekistan means connectivity with all other CARs. Pakistan is naturally facing Central Asia and considers itself part of the process of regionalism reinvigorated by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev in Central Asia. He also mentioned that it is also important to harmonize and coordinate cross-border policies for smooth border crossing between Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. It will result in Pakistan and Uzbekistan maximally benefit from the regional integration plans like CAREC, BRI, Eurasian Union, and ECO due to their significant geographies in respective regions.



Opposition infighting

POLITICS makes for some unlikely allies. When there exists an opposition which is constantly at odds with each other and has failed to win any prominent positions because of its inability to agree on a candidate, it is not surprising when mismatched groups within the opposition form.

This is the case with the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), one of the major political forces of the opposition, which, instead of pushing the joint opposition effort, is finding an ally in Jamat-e-Islami, which at one time used to be an ally of the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI).

This is an unpredictable alliance—the PPP and JI may disagree on every single issue except for their contentions with the government. Yet still, JI is backing the PPP by deciding to support the candidature of Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani for the opposition leader in the Senate. This agreement on the issue of the Senate opposition leader is bringing out more common interests between the two parties, including agreements to work together on electoral reforms, accountability, independence of the Election Commission of Pakistan and the Kashmir cause.

While these new bonds of friendship are being formed, the older ones, between PPP and the PML-N—the ones which account for actual meaningful opposition—are being weakened. Veiled verbal attacks are becoming more acceptable between recent allies.

How wise is this inner conflict? It is clear that the Senate opposition leader issue is a make or break one for the PPP. Enlisting the help of the JI strengthens its case for the PDM, but there is little chance that JI can contribute as a substitute to the larger opposition movement.

Leveraging for power is standard for a giant opposition but all factors need to not let this get in the way of unity. A fractured and weak opposition cannot even perform government oversight, let alone realising its grand plans of overthrowing the ruling party. This infighting is a gift to the government.

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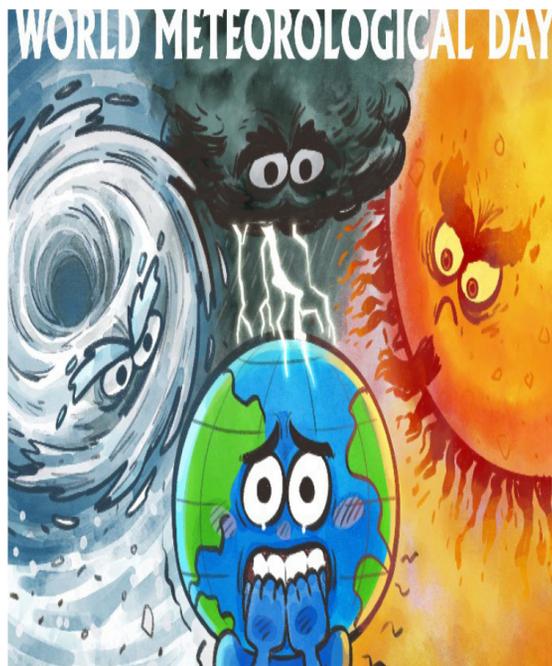
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Heart of Asia

WHILE the United States (US) is facing a dilemma over the current situation in Afghanistan, the 9th ministerial meeting of Heart of Asia—Istanbul Process (HOA-IP) will kickstart from March 29. Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi will lead Pakistan in the regional initiative of Afghanistan and Turkey.

The main theme of the conference will be finding a way out for a secure and stable Afghanistan so that regional security, economic and political cooperation centred on Afghanistan can be promoted. Thus, the FM will visit with regional cooperation and the Afghan peace process in mind, as Pakistan's role is very crucial on the two subjects.

However, the key question relates to engagement with India on the sidelines of the conference. Some experts fear that New Delhi might try to turn the meeting into yet another event of Pakistan-bashing as it did in 2016. But others are optimistic that the two sides might use the forum to bury the acrimonious past and look forward to a more cooperative future.

This optimism stems from the recent message of Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Qamar Bajwa and sporadic reports of a "secret India-Pakistan Peace Roadmap" brokered by the United Arab Emirates (UAE). According to the COAS, stabilised Indo-Pak relations can unlock the potential of South and Central Asia.

Given that both the civilian government and the military want to cultivate friendly ties with India, the ball is in New Delhi's court. Pakistan has once again shown to the world that it has always an appetite for peace.

The latest telephonic conversation between the US defence secretary Lloyd Austin and COAS Bajwa where the former lauded Pakistan's commendable efforts for Afghan peace is a fresh piece of evidence showing Pakistan's desire for regional peace and stability. If New Delhi reciprocates Pakistan's warm gesture, the two countries can emerge as the leading drivers of regional cooperation and progress.

Kazakh govt to enhance civil society engagement

Usen Suleimen

The relevance of this platform increased considerably with the announcement by Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev of the concept of a "listening state", implying stronger focus on the government's engagement with the civil society, and implementation since 2019 of three packages of reforms in the field of human rights and further democratisation of political processes in the country. Through open and transparent discussion, the activities of the platform have been vital to identifying systemic problems, as well as working together with Kazakh and int'l NGOs to find joint solutions

THIS year Kazakhstan is marking its 30th anniversary as an independent state. We have come a long way over the last three decades. Our economy has greatly expanded and our political processes are unrecognisable compared to when we just gained our independence from the Soviet Union. A critical element of Kazakhstan's development has been the growth of our civil society, especially the increase in the number of non-governmental organisations (NGOs). It is hard to believe that in the early 1990s there were only approximately 400 NGOs in Kazakhstan. The story is much different today. By now, the number of active registered NGOs in Kazakhstan has increased 40-fold to around 16,000. Many operate in the sphere of support for socially vulnerable segments of the population or issues related to the protection of the rights and legal interests of citizens and organisations. This dynamic is of course most welcome. A developed civil society is the foundation of any modern and thriving state. It provides an effective dialogue platform, as well as a communication bridge between representatives of the government and the public.

Therefore, the government of Kazakhstan has continued to support actively NGOs, including financially. In 2020, grants were provided worth 1.8 billion tenge (over 4.3 million US dollars). Most of the funding went towards supporting the projects related to the welfare and development of children and young people. Approximately 305.4 million tenge (\$740,000) was allocated to promote directly the development of civil society, including increasing the efficiency of the activities of non-governmental organisations. While substantial progress has been made, we are of course aware of the need to continue to develop the space for NGOs to thrive.

For this reason, the government takes active interest in this endeavour. Since 2003, a Civil Forum, which serves as a platform for ensuring a dialogue between the state and NGOs, is regularly organised in our capital. The ninth Civil Forum held last November offered 12 virtual meetings between heads of ministries and representatives of NGOs. The participants discussed

the main directions of the new concept for the development of civil society, citizen participation in decision-making, and mechanisms and opportunities for public scrutiny of government work, as well as other topics.

Another important tool for effective engagement between government and civil society is the Consultative and Advisory Body "Dialogue Platform for the Human Dimension", which was set up at the initiative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan in 2013 to further consolidate opportunities for the NGOs to engage in direct dialogue with representatives of the Government and Parliament on the issues of human rights and democratic reforms. Meetings are held once a quarter under my chairmanship, with the participation of representatives of NGOs, members of parliament, representatives of the Human Rights Commission under the President of Kazakhstan, the Supreme Court, the Constitutional Council and relevant ministries, as well as representatives of our international partners, including the UN Development Programme, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, OSCE, the European Union, foreign diplomatic missions, US-AID, Penal Reform International, etc.

The relevance of this platform increased considerably with the announcement by Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev of the concept of a "listening state", implying stronger focus on the government's engagement with the civil society, and implementation since 2019 of three packages of reforms in the field of human rights and further democratisation of political processes in the country. Through open and transparent discussion, the activities of the platform have been vital to identifying systemic problems, as well as working together with Kazakh and international NGOs to find joint solutions. Our meetings provide a useful arrangement to discuss recommendations of the UN convention committees on Kazakhstan's implementation of international obligations to protect human rights.

Let me also give you two examples of issues, which had been closely reviewed by the Dialogue Platform and resulted in adoption of new legislative acts. One is the updated law on peaceful

assemblies in Kazakhstan. The key change is that since last year NGOs or other groups that want to hold such a meeting need only to notify the local authorities about it five days before the actual event instead of applying for a permit. Another example is that last year the Article 130 of the country's Criminal Code, namely on libel, was, at last, decriminalised. Both these topics had been regularly and vigorously discussed at the Dialogue Platform's meetings.

The necessity for such a platform became especially clear earlier this year, when members of the Kazakh civil society raised the issue of the suspension of a few NGOs following inspections by the tax authorities. It was recommended at the meeting held on 26th January 2021 that the suspended organisations should apply to the higher tax authorities and appeal the decision. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan, Mukhtar Tileuberdi, assured that he would take this issue under his control.

Following a thorough review with the tax authorities, only a week later, on 3 February, all charges against the affected NGOs were dropped and the decision to suspend their activities was annulled. This situation has demonstrated why it is so important for the government and the civil society to have clear lines of communication. Without the Dialogue Platform for the Human Dimension and the open conversations between civil society and Kazakh government, the issue of the suspension of NGOs may not have been resolved so efficiently. Undoubtedly, lessons need to be learned following this case, but I believe I can say with some confidence that the engagement between civil society and our government is currently tangible and practical. Of course, we will not stop here. Last year, the President approved the Concept for the Development of Civil Society in Kazakhstan until 2025 last year. Its aim is to strengthen the system of partnership between the state, business, and civil society, as well as to facilitate further political transformation and modernisation in Kazakhstan. I believe we have a solid foundation to move steadily in this direction.

— Usen Suleimen is the Ambassador at Large of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan

One Nation one destiny-Pakistan paidabaad

Hassam Ahmed Siddiqi

Though Pakistan was created on the basis of La Ilaha Illallah, yet people from diverse ethnicities, religious affiliations and backgrounds accepted the idea of Pakistan and accepted it keeping in view the traditionalist narrow approach of Hindu leadership in the subcontinent. Today Pakistan is home to diverse ethnicities, religious and cultural backgrounds and linguistic affiliations. Kartarpur Corridor is one such example where Sikhs from across the globe visit Pakistan

AFTER EIGHT decades of Pakistan Resolution, this country has established itself as one of the most important players in the global system. Being a developing state, we continue to progress with an unstable, yet progressive and evolving politico-economic journey after more than 70 years of independence. Despite losing East Pakistan, fighting an unending war with India on Kashmir and spending more than two decades in war on terror, this country is still sovereign enough to strive for peace, economic prosperity and a dignified global repute in the international system. Over the course of history, Pakistan has produced the greatest sons of the soil across diverse sectors.

From the founder of Pakistan Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah to the current Premier Imran Khan, the greatness of Pakistan lies in the enthusiasm and passion of its citizens to strive for the honor, dignity and esteem of Pakistan.

While keeping in view our strengths as a nation, we need to be well aware of our weaknesses and drawbacks that has over the time halted our capacity to progress as a nation. Individual achievements become the pride of the nation, yet it is the collective efforts and accomplishments that makes a state significant in the international system. Founder of the Nation Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah had categorically set forward the direction of the nation.

He highlighted that, "You are free; you are free to go to your temples. You are free to go to your mosques or to any other places of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion, caste or creed—that has nothing

to do with the business of the state". Words of Quaid-e-Azam established the identity of people of this state at the time of creation of Pakistan, yet unfortunately over the course of history, we as a nation lost the will, courage and direction to work for the prosperity of Pakistan. Social, Religious and cultural fundamentalism has sown the seed of identity clashes amongst the people of this state that has impacted the progress of Pakistan.

It is time for Pakistani political parties, its institutions and its people to reprioritize their goals. Economic prosperity, culture of tolerance and acceptability is the only forward for the state of Pakistan. Geographically located at a highly securitized region, we as a nation have to remain vigilant and cautious. Economic interdependence and peace is the only way forward, yet it cannot be at the cost of national sovereignty. Peace is desired yet defense of the state is a priority and every Pakistani stands behind our security forces, if the existence of Pakistan is challenged.

What needs to be highlighted and acknowledged is that every year 23rd March is celebrated with great zeal and enthusiasm, yet the actual message is overlooked, particularly by the youth of Pakistan which accounts for more than 60% of the population. Living in the times of Information warfare, efforts are required to strengthen our ideological basis. 23rd March reminds us of the commitment and dedication of the Muslims of subcontinent to create a separate homeland.

Though Pakistan was created on the basis of La Ilaha Illallah, yet people from diverse ethnicities, religious affiliations and backgrounds accepted the idea of Pakistan and accepted

it keeping in view the traditionalist narrow approach of Hindu leadership in the subcontinent. Today Pakistan is home to diverse ethnicities, religious and cultural backgrounds and linguistic affiliations. Kartarpur Corridor is one such example where Sikhs from across the globe visit Pakistan.

Religious, cultural and sectarian harmony needs to be promoted as diversion will only create conflict amongst ourselves, that will not only impact the progress and development of state but will also passively impact the global repute of the country.

While highlighting the actual meanings of Pakistan Day, let's not forget our Kashmiri brothers and sisters who have been fighting for decades against the Indian brutalities. Leaders like Syed Ali Gillani, Mir Wayez Umar Farooq, Dr. Qasim Faktu and Asiya Andrabi are the pride of this state and their sacrifices and affection for Pakistan will always be highlighted at all national and international forums. This nation is indebted to such heroes who despite being under the worst oppression have always chanted the slogan "Hum Pakistani Hain-Pakistan Hamara hai".

Pakistan is in dire need of economic prosperity yet we as a nation need to be united, focused and committed to our cause of making Pakistan one of the greatest nations of the world. Our destiny is clear and now it is responsibility of our leadership to negate any ideas of diversions and intolerance and unite this nation for the achievement of a common purpose. An economically developed and ideologically strengthened Pakistan should be our resolution as a nation on this 23rd March.

Briefs

Inzamam-ul-Haq recovers from COVID-19

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: Former Pakistan captain and legendary batsman Inzamam-ul-Haq has recovered from COVID-19, ARY Sports reported. Former men's team chief selector returned negative in two COVID-19 tests. He fell victim to the virus a few days ago and he isolated himself in his home. Note, Inzamam is currently running a YouTube channel named as 'Inzamam ul Haq - The Match Winner' where he expresses his views on the latest happenings from the cricketing world.

Yates climbs to victory and takes lead in Catalonia

VALLTER: Adam Yates surged away from a powerful lead group on the final climb to win the third stage of the Tour of Catalonia and take the overall race lead. With five kilometres to go, the Englishman joined a small group that broke from the remnants of the peloton. He then accelerated away with two kilometres to go. "I just felt good," Yates said. "I had enough momentum and enough speed to go straight past." Esteban Chaves gave chase, but Yates built a decisive lead on the snow-flanked final hairpins to the finish at the ski station of Valter 2000. Yates completed the 203.5km stage in 5 hours and 58 seconds, with Chaves, a Colombian who rides for ColEchange, 13 seconds back.

Govt issues guidelines...

From Page 01

The national expert committee on the coronavirus vaccine has advised that people suffering from fever and currently Covid positive should not be administered the AstraZeneca vaccine. According to guidelines, a gap of 12 weeks should be given after first dose of the vaccine. Healthcare workers and citizens will receive the Covid-19 vaccine. Pakistan has secured 17 million doses of the Oxford-AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine under the COVAX arrangement. The first consignment of seven million doses of AstraZeneca Covid vaccine will reach Pakistan before April. The next 10 million doses of the vaccine will be dispatched to Pakistan before June. Pakistan will receive an overall 45 million COVID-19 vaccine doses under the COVAX scheme this year. The WHO has declared that AstraZeneca vaccine has been safe for people with 18 years of age to 65 years and above.

It is pertinent to mention here that the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) had granted approval to the Russian vaccine for Covid-19, for emergency use in February. Sputnik V could be administered to a person of 18 and above it. The vaccine requires to store at minus-18 Celsius temperature, according to the sources at DRAP.

Ministry seeks...

From Page 01

(e) Details of ongoing treatment (if any)
(f) Details of payments made for medical treatment in the UK
(g) Dates of visits and consultations made with doctors in the UK
The ministry's move comes in pursuance of the Lahore High Court's November 16, 2019 verdict and the undertakings provided by Nawaz and Shahbaz Sharif before the court. The letter called upon Nawaz Sharif to sign an attached consent form for release of medical information to the Pakistan High Commission in London. "The [high commission] who will then contact the medical team for collection of medical information," read the letter, reminding all parties concerned that the former premier had agreed to provide medical information to the government according to the Lahore High Court's judgement cited above.



KONYA: Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan Asad Qaiser and Pakistani parliamentary delegation visited Mausoleum of Mevlana Jaluddin Rumi in Konya and paid respects at the grave of great Sufi Saint of the Muslim world. - DNA

Thai protesters rally in Bangkok for royal reforms

DNA

BANGKOK: More than a thousand Thai pro-democracy protesters took over a major Bangkok intersection on Wednesday, defying authorities in the first major rally since police used rubber bullets against demonstrators over the weekend. Thailand's protest movement kicked off in July, calling for the resignation of Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha's government and a rewrite of a military-scripted constitution. But the most controversial

demand is to reform the untouchable monarchy, including the abolition of the kingdom's draconian royal defamation laws. So far more than 70 protesters and student leaders have been charged for allegedly insulting the monarchy and about a dozen are remanded in prison. If convicted, they face up to 15 years in jail per charge. On Wednesday, protesters gathered in Bangkok's main shopping district, chanting "release our friends" and "abolish 112" - a reference to the lese majeste law in Thailand's criminal code

that shields the monarchy from criticism. A stage in the middle of the road had a huge banner that read "Monarchy reform" while scores of demonstrators held pictures of detainees and glued them onto street signs. "It does not matter how many of our friends are arrested - 10 or a hundred - we will not stop coming out," Benja Apan, one of the protest leaders facing several royal defamation charges, told the crowd. "It cannot stop our spirit. We will fight together. It will be good if our friends can be

out fighting together with us." A heavy police presence, including riot squads, was building in the vicinity in the early evening. Ahead of the rally, National Police deputy spokesman Kissana Phathanachareon warned the protest was illegal because of coronavirus restrictions and officers would "enforce the law step-by-step". On Saturday, Thai police used water cannon and rubber bullets outside Bangkok's Grand Palace after demonstrators broke through a barricade of shipping containers. Twenty protesters and 13

police officers were injured in the clash, according to a local emergency centre, while authorities said 20 people were arrested and seven have been charged with lese majeste. Bangkok artist Chanaradee, 26 - who came out Wednesday to the Ratchaprasong intersection - said she wasn't put off by the police tactics. Instead, she is angry about the "brutal" escalating use of force because her 70-year-old father was injured while running from rubber bullets. "I'm very disappointed and sad. My dad went to the

mob alone (on Saturday)... he hurt himself. He fell over," she media. added that her father had been taking part in pro-democracy demonstrations since 1973, the year of a massive student uprising against a military dictator. The fact "he still needs to do it (today) shows Thailand is not going anywhere," Chanaradee said, though she added that those in the pro-democracy movement today are able to talk about royal reforms. "We are making progress. It's important we stay hopeful."



KUWAIT: Pakistan ambassador to Kuwait Syed Sajjad Haider met with Kuwaiti Asst. Foreign minister for Dev. & Int. Cooperation Nasser Subaih. Both sides discussed strengthening of bilateral and multilateral engagements in various different fields. - DNA

Myanmar: 7-year-old girl 'killed by junta'

YANGON: A seven-year-old girl was shot dead by junta forces in Myanmar's second-largest city of Mandalay on Tuesday, becoming the youngest victim in the crackdown against the Feb. 1 military coup, her family said. Khin Myo Chit was sitting on her father's lap when soldiers entered their home and tried to shoot him, her sister told the Myanmar Now news website. Protests have continued in Myanmar since Tatmadaw - the official name of the Burmese military - seized control. According to the rights group Save the Children, at least 20 children have been killed since the takeover. Aye Chan San, the victim's sister, said junta forces raided the Chan Mya Thazi Township around 4 p.m. local time (0930GMT). "They asked if everyone in the house was there. My father responded that that was everyone. Khin Myo Chit was sitting on our father's lap. One of them said my father was lying and shot at him," she said. But the bullet hit her sister instead. She was rushed to a hospital but succumbed to the wounds. She said that later her 19-year-old brother was also detained. - Foreign Desk

FIFA extends ban on former president Blatter until 2028

SPORTS DESK

LAUSANNE: FIFA banned its former president Sepp Blatter until 2028 on Wednesday after handing him a new suspension of six years and eight months for receiving huge bonuses. Former FIFA secretary-general Jerome Valcke also had his existing suspension extended by the same amount. The new bans will only come into force when the current bans on Blatter and Valcke for corruption, which last till October this year and October 2025, end. FIFA's Ethics Committee said it had also fined each man one million Swiss francs. Blatter, who is 85, received 23 million Swiss francs (\$24.6 million, 20.7 million euros) in "extraordinary bonuses" linked to the 2010 World Cup in South Africa



and the 2014 World Cup in Brazil as well as the Confederations Cup tournament in Brazil that preceded it, the Ethics Committee said in a summary of its decision. Valcke, the 60-year-old Frenchman who was Blatter's right-hand man during his 17-year reign at the head of football's world governing body, received 30 million Swiss francs over the same period,

the committee said. FIFA said Blatter and Valcke had violated the Code of Ethics by "offering and accepting gifts or other benefits" and through "abuse of position". It said in a statement: "The investigations into Messrs Blatter and Valcke covered various charges, in particular concerning bonus payments in relation to FIFA competitions that were paid to top FIFA management officials, various amendments and extensions of employment contracts, as well as reimbursement by FIFA of private legal costs in the case of Mr Valcke." Blatter was forced to stand down as FIFA president in 2015 and was originally banned by FIFA for eight years, later reduced to six, over ethics breaches when he was found to have authorised a two-million-euro "disloyal payment" to former UEFA president Michel Platini.

Iran says UNRC resolution lack's legitimacy

FOREIGN DESK

TEHRAN: Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said in remarks on Wednesday that certain European countries had been behind the resolution, which was passed owing to "ill-founded, non-consensual, and internationally illegitimate votes." On March 23, the final day of the 46th regular session of the Human Rights Council, the Council adopted the resolution by a vote of 21 in favor, 12 against and 14 abstentions, and extended the mandate of the special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran, Javād Rehmān, for a year. The countries that voted 'yes' mainly included the European states and governments considered as vassal states for Western powers such as Fiji, the Marshal

Iran slams IAEA chief's comments

VIENNA: Iran's permanent representative to Vienna-based international organizations has criticized Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Rafael Grossi for his latest remarks about the 2015 landmark nuclear pact, terming the comments as unconstructive. Kazem Gharibabadi made the remarks on Wednesday in reaction to Grossi's interview with American weekly news magazine Newsweek in which he said "detailed and technical discussions" are needed to ascertain the location of Iran's undeclared uranium and that the issue is "totally connected" to the revival of the nuclear agreement, officially known as Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Islands, and Bahrain. Khatibzadeh criticized the resolution for extending the mandate of a rapporteur whose reports fail to make any mention of the deaths of dozens of Iranian children and

hundreds of patients lacking access to medicine due to the American sanctions. He said all anti-Iran resolutions adopted since March 2011 have been anchored in unsubstantiated allegations, and that Tehran has

frequently termed the appointment of a special human rights rapporteur for the country as an inexcusable and unconstructive move. "Countries that abuse other nations' rights can neither portray them-

selves as advocates of human rights, nor can they judge other states on the situation of human rights. They must, instead, be held accountable for their own crimes regarding blatant violations of human rights," the official said. He underlined that Iran has always lived up to its commitments towards its own citizens and the international community despite being subject to US economic terrorism. Khatibzadeh said Iran is a religious democracy and strives for the promotion of human rights at national, regional and international levels within the framework of its religious obligations and Constitution. The Iranian official criticized the sponsors of the resolution for their instrumental and political use of human rights, and for refusing to acknowledge the beliefs and cultural values particular to each nation.

Nur-Sultan airport resumes operations

DNA

NUR SULTAN: The Nursultan Nazarbayev Airport has resumed operations, state media reports. Press secretary of the airport Anvar Shalekenov said in a statement the Nur-Sultan-based airport is back up and running. He also reminded that the airport does its best to ensure safety of the passengers and wished them soft landing. Shalekenov kindly asked the passengers to check the flight schedule as there may be some delays. Earlier it was reported that due to bad weather conditions the airport airfield had been temporarily closed. It was shut down to let the clearing crews remove the snow. Heavy snowfall hit the Kazakh capital early Tuesday morning covering the city with white blanket and paralyzing it.

No differences with Bilawal...

From Page 01

trouble and the anti-graft body will not be allowed to save his sinking ship. Maryam said there were no differences with the PPP and such ups and downs were a part of politics. The PML-N vice-president she has good relationship with PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. I am Nawaz Sharif's daughter, I am aware of the politics of tolerance and know how to follow it, she commented. "PML-N and PPP have separate strategies and some common goals under Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), she added. The PML-N vice-president said she has a good relationship with PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. "I am Nawaz Sharif's daughter, I am aware of the politics of tolerance and know how to follow it," she commented. Earlier, the LHC approved Maryam Nawaz's interim bail till April 12 and barred the NAB from arresting her. A two-member bench heard Maryam Nawaz's plea as the PML-N leader moved the court today requesting an interim bail ahead of her NAB hearing on March 26. The LHC directed Maryam Nawaz to appear before the NAB investigation officer. The court issued notice to the NAB chairman and summoned reply in the next hearing.

Educational institutions...

From Page 01

Punjab's Lahore district, few areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. The prevalence of disease in the Balochistan, Sindh and Gilgit-Baltistan provinces had relatively low as compared to the ICT, Punjab, and KP, he said adding all those matters were being considered in detail during the NCOC meeting. "We are cognizant of the fact that the closure of educational institutions time and again were causing students loss but their health was top priority and the government would not make any compromise on it," he said. Announcing the government's decision regarding annual examinations of Matric and Intermediate, he said during the NCOC meeting the consensus was built on the final examinations that they would be held as per prescribed schedule. He said O and A levels Cambridge examinations were scheduled from April 26 and "we are going to hold a meeting with Cambridge authorities for postponing the examinations due to upward trend in the pandemic and the decision in that regard will be made afterward." He said provinces were permitted to operate staggered classes in low-risk districts.

Rouhani...

From Page 01

numerous social and economic challenges. "I hope that in the New Year and through further engagement and cooperation between our countries as also containing the COVID-19 virus, Nowruz ushers in a new era for our people while happiness, bounties and calm are restored to the entire world," he said. President Rouhani prayed to Allah Almighty to bestow ever-growing success and good health to President Alvi and the happy times upon the noble people of Pakistan.

Briefs

Hong Kong halts use of Pfizer vaccine

FOREIGN DESK

HONG KONG: Hong Kong has stopped its rollout of the Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 shot after being alerted to a packaging issue. Authorities say they are acting out of caution and do not think there is a safety risk.

The government said on Wednesday that it had been informed by a local distributor of the vaccine that there was a problem with how the vials in one batch were sealed. Officials responded by ordering vaccination sites to temporarily suspend injections of the batch, numbered 210102, as well as a second batch being administered in the semi-autonomous region.

"For the sake of precaution, the current vaccination must be suspended during the period of investigation," Hong Kong's government said in a statement.

It's not clear how many shots were affected by the decision, but the suspension means that the only vaccine currently being offered to residents is China's Sinovac vaccine. Some people took to social media to complain that their vaccination appointments had been canceled.

Three dead in earthquake in Xinjiang

DNA

BEIJING: A 5.4-magnitude earthquake that struck in China's western Xinjiang region before dawn Wednesday left three people dead, damaged roofs and forced the evacuation of hundreds, state media reported.

The earthquake hit Baicheng county in the northwestern Aksu prefecture at 5.14 am, according to the China Earthquake Networks Center.

Footage showed buildings swaying in the dark, leaving some houses with their roofs caved in afterward. "The earthquake caused three deaths and 65 houses were damaged," state broadcaster CCTV reported, adding that there were 10 aftershocks of which the largest magnitude was 3.4.

After houses and livestock sheds collapsed, leaders of an affected village set up a temporary resettlement site.

China is regularly hit by earthquakes, especially in its mountainous western and southwestern regions.

In February 2003, a powerful 6.8-magnitude quake killed 268 people in Xinjiang and caused significant damage.

Following Wednesday's earthquake, train services between regional capital Urumqi and areas such as Hotan and Aksu were delayed, the official Xinhua news agency reported.

A powerful 7.9-magnitude quake in southwest China's Sichuan province in 2008 left 87,000 people dead or missing.

Turkey, US plan for broader ties

DNA

BRUSSELS: After brief talks, Turkey's Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on Wednesday that he and his US counterpart plan to hold a more comprehensive meeting in either the US or Turkey.

"We agreed with the US secretary of state to hold a broader meeting in either the US or Turkey," Cavusoglu told reporters in Brussels.

Cavusoglu's remarks came after he met with Anthony Blinken on the sidelines of a NATO foreign ministers' meeting. He said today's meeting lasted less than an hour.

Stressing that they had a constructive meeting with Blinken, Cavusoglu said there are differences of opinion between the two sides on certain issues.

The presence in the US of members of the Fetullah Terrorist Organization (FETO), which plotted a coup attempt in Turkey, and the US support for the YPG/PKK terror group have negatively affected the bilateral relations, he said.



KABUL: Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, Chairman of the Council for National Reconciliation met with Stefano Pontecorvo, NATO's Senior Civilian Representative to Afghanistan. Both sides discussed and analyzed the peace efforts, Moscow Peace Conference and Turkey's upcoming peace conference. - DNA

HRW's Armenian POW report biased: Azerbaijani ombudsman

DNA

BAKU: Azerbaijani Human Rights Commissioner Sabina Aliyeva has said that the recent Human Rights Watch (HRW) on the mistreatment of Armenian POWs held in Azerbaijan reflects a biased approach and misleads the international community.

Aliyeva made the remarks, while commenting on the allegations of mistreatment of the Armenian POWs in HRW's report dated March 19, 2021.

"We regret to note that the recent report of the Human Rights Watch (HRW) alleging the ill-treatment towards Armenian POWs detained in Azerbaijan reflects a biased approach and confuses the international community," Aliyeva said.

She noted that any report on such sensitive topics as conflicts, their consequences, POWs, alleged violations of International Humanitarian

Law, etc., should be based only on verified facts and substantiated arguments to follow the objectivity principle and avoid a one-sided stance.

"The materials and facts provided by reliable sources such as independent international and domestic human rights organizations should be referred to as well. Unfortunately, we do not see these principles in the HRW report. On the contrary, we again witness double standards in this respect and distortion of the truth and undeniable facts," the rights commissioner added.

Aliyeva added that Azerbaijan expected HRW to examine and interview the former Azerbaijani POWs who may provide eye-witnessed detailed information about the ill-treatment towards them as well as the other POWs with whom they were captured or shared cells in the Armenian custody.

"At least, HRW could get ac-



quainted with the report of the Azerbaijani Ombudsman on treatment towards the Azerbaijani POWs and hostages in the Armenian custody before issuing their own report. The Azerbaijani Ombudsman's report reflects former Azerbaijani POWs' and hostages' testimonies on how they were treated during their captivity. For example during their interviewing personally by the Ombudsman, one said that

he was prodded with a sharp metal rod, and the other one stated he was subjected to electric shocks, and one was repeatedly burned with a cigarette lighter," the commissioner stressed.

Aliyeva noted that during a face-to-face meeting with the Ombudsman, "one of those released captives, a military servant, said that he was severely wounded in his left leg and right eye (a bullet entered a lower part

of his eye and exit the oral cavity) as a result of a fire from a large-calibre weapon during the hostilities. That night, due to bleeding in the vein, the Armenian doctor put stitches on the palate for about 3 hours without using painkillers and anesthetics. In addition, in hospital, nurses injected him with an alcohol syringe and demanded that he repeat what they had said, but when he refused to do so, he continued to be subjected to further torture and other ill-treatment".

During the captivity, they were not given any opportunity to communicate with their family members and relatives, she added.

She noted that the report of the Ombudsman on ill-treatment of the Azerbaijani POWs also reflected the case of three Azerbaijani civilians who were taken hostage by Armenia.

"One of them - Hasan Hasanov was subjected to torture

and brutally killed. The other two, Dilgam Asgarov and Shahbaz Guliyev, were subjected to different physical abuses during 6 years period about which many times the Ombudsman raised issues before relevant international organizations. After their release, the Ombudsman interviewed them one by one and the detailed information about their testimonies was placed in the report," Aliyeva added.

The rights commissioner said that the aforesaid are just some of the cases brought to HRW attention. "More detailed information can be found in the last report of the Azerbaijani Ombudsman on ill-treatment towards the Azerbaijani POWs in captivity of Armenia. The links of videos, which show undeniable facts of torture and ill-treatment towards the Azerbaijani POWs by the Armenian soldiers, are also reflected in the report," Aliyeva said.

Israel military hits 'Hamis positions' in Gaza

GAZA: The Israeli military says it carried out night-time raids against Hamas positions in the Gaza Strip in response to rocket fire from the besieged Palestinian enclave. A witness in Gaza told the media that the Israeli military hit Hamas positions in the southern parts of the Strip just after 2:30am (00:30 GMT) on Wednesday.

The Associated Press also reported an explosion over Gaza in the early hours of Wednesday.

The Israeli military said its fighter jets and attack helicopters struck a Hamas rocket manufacturing site and a military post "in response to the rocket fired from Gaza into Israel tonight". According to local Palestinian news agency Maan, the site southwest of Gaza City was struck by five missiles. Another site east of Deir al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip was also targeted.

An Israeli military spokesperson told AFP a rocket from Gaza had hit an open field in southern Israel. There were no immediate reports of damage or casualties caused by the rocket, the first fired from the Palestinian enclave since January, and there was no immediate claim of responsibility. - Foreign Desk

France to reopen embassy in Libya after seven years

FOREIGN DESK

PARIS: France will reopen its embassy in the Libyan capital Tripoli next Monday to show its support for the North African country's new unity government, President Emmanuel Macron said on Tuesday after meeting the head of the interim presidency council.

Libya's unity government led by Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah took office on March 16 from two rival administrations that ruled its eastern and western regions, completing a smooth transi-

tion of power after 10 years of violence and chaos.

"We will do everything that is in our power to defend this sovereignty and stability agenda," Macron said alongside Mohammed al-Menfi, the head of the Libyan presidency council in Paris. "Monday our embassy in Tripoli will reopen and our ambassador will be back on your territory," he said.

Paris closed its embassy after evacuating some 50 French and British nationals as fighting broke out in Tripoli in July 2014. It based its ambassador in neighbouring Tunisia, the capital of Tunisia.

Menfi was making his first overseas visit since taking his post, which was created following a UN-brokered process.

Prime Minister Dbeibah and an interim three-member presidency council were selected at UN-sponsored talks in February.

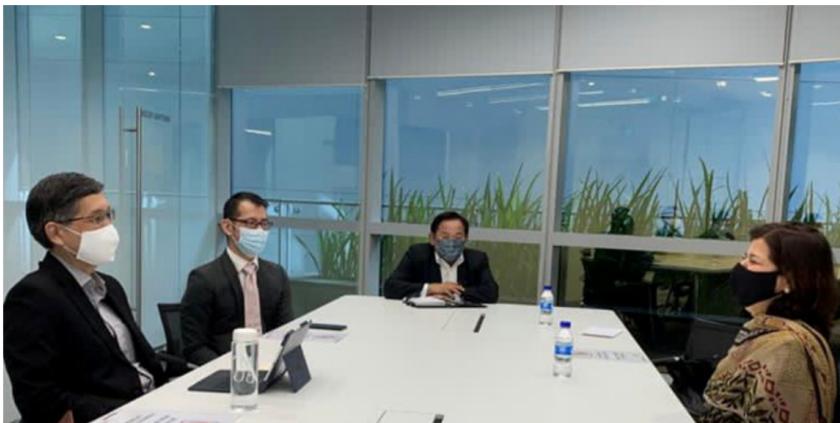
The new transitional executive emerged from the UN peace process that was launched in November in Tunisia, then voted on in Geneva. It was ratified by Libya's parliament on March 10.

Oil-rich Libya has been torn by war since a NATO-backed uprising led to the toppling

and killing of longtime ruler Muammar Gaddafi in 2011. Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy was the chief advocate of the NATO-led military campaign that resulted in Gaddafi's overthrow.

"I want here to show you all my support and that of France for the new Libyan unified authorities that emerged from the transition process," said Macron.

"We have a debt towards Libya and the Libyans for a decade of disorder," said Macron, adding that regional stability would be impossible without peace in Libya.



SINGAPORE: Pakistani High Commissioner to Singapore, Ruksana Afzaal called on Lam Yi Young, CEO, Singapore Business Federation. Opportunities to promote bilateral trade between Pakistan and Singapore were discussed during the meeting. - DNA

Germany pulls Easter virus shutdown

DNA

BERLIN: German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Wednesday reversed a planned strict Easter shutdown, the chief of her CDU party said, amid massive criticism of the government's pandemic management.

Merkel and the leaders of Germany's 16 states had agreed at marathon talks on Monday that almost all shops were to be closed on April 1-5, with only grocers allowed to open on Saturday April 3.

But they have now scrapped that measure, instead appealing to the public to stay home

over the Easter weekend. CDU chief Armin Laschet told a regional parliament meeting in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia. The leaders had agreed the measure was "a mistake and not enforceable in this form", he said.

Merkel had called an unexpected crisis meeting on Wednesday morning as a backlash over the pandemic measures sent her CDU party's ratings plummeting. Ahead of a Merkel press conference at 11:30 GMT, Der Spiegel news magazine said the chancellor had also admitted the Easter shutdown was a "mistake".

'Greed', 'capitalism' behind vaccine successes

FOREIGN DESK

LONDON: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has told legislators from his governing Conservative Party that "capitalism" and "greed" were behind the United Kingdom's rapid COVID-19 vaccination programme.

Johnson's comments on Tuesday, reported by The Sun newspaper, were made during a closed Zoom meeting with Conservative MPs in which he also praised pharmaceutical companies for developing vaccines at speed.

"The reason we have the vaccine success is because of capitalism, because of greed my friends,"

Johnson was quoted as saying. Johnson later attempted to backtrack on the comments, reportedly telling his fellow Conservatives to "forget" what he said and adding that he regretted his initial remarks.

The UK on Tuesday observed a national day of reflection, a year after it first went into a COVID-19 lockdown.

The pandemic has killed more than 125,000 people in the UK and plunged the economy into recession.

At the time of publication, the prime minister's office had not responded to Al Jazeera's request for comment.

Home Secretary Priti Patel told

UK broadcaster Sky News on Wednesday that she had not been in the meeting. The UK is gradually easing lockdown restrictions under a plan underpinned by the success of the national vaccination campaign, which has seen more than 28 million people receive a first dose to date - one of the quickest rollouts in the world.

But tensions are running high with the European Union over supply as the bloc is considering imposing a vaccine exports ban on the UK.

It is understood that the move is aimed at ensuring the EU does not export more vaccines than it imports.

On Tuesday, an EU official said the European Commission will extend the bloc's powers to potentially block vaccine exports to the UK - and other areas with much higher vaccination rates. The measures will also block companies from backloading contracted supplies. The EU's own vaccination campaign, plagued by shortages and delays, lags behind the UK and other nations including the United States and Israel.

Johnson's comments, which an unidentified source told The Sun were not connected to the EU future, could inflame the row. His remarks also drew criticism online, as politicians and public figures took to Twitter to con-

demn the prime minister's reported sentiments.

Andy Burnham, member of the opposition Labour Party and mayor of Greater Manchester, tweeted: "Celebrating 'greed' in a pandemic? Same old Tories."

Labour MP Peter Kyle said vaccines had been delivered by "scientific brilliance and astonishingly hard work".

"Two traits that elude [Boris Johnson]," he tweeted. Francis O' Grady, general secretary of the Trades Union Congress (TUC), which represents unions in the UK, said: "What an insulting way to thank our brilliant scientists, researchers, NHS staff and volunteers."

Bill passed allowing Putin 2 more terms

FOREIGN DESK

MOSCOW: Russia's lower chamber of the parliament - the State Duma - adopted on Wednesday the third reading of a bill, allowing acting President Vladimir Putin to run for two more terms.

Apart from resetting previous terms of acting presidency, the bill sets requirements for presidential nominees - such as Russian citizenship and a minimum age of 35. The nominees must have permanently resided in Russia for at least 25 years, and never had citizenship or a residence permit of another state.

This provision does not apply to Russians who "previously had the citizenship of a state that was adopted or part of which was adopted in the Russian Federation under the federal constitutional law." Also, the bill introduces an age limit of 30 for a person who holds the chair position of the Central Election Commission, as well as the condition of being a Russian citizen.

Last year, Russia held a vote on constitutional amendments, and following the vote, Russian lawmakers started making the existing legislation in line with the new version of the constitution.

Armenia lifts state of war post-Karabakh

WEB DESK

YEREVAN: The Armenian parliament on Wednesday lifted the state of war declared in the aftermath of soaring tensions with neighbor Azerbaijan in the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

The development comes as Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan called snap elections in the country after months of anti-government protests sparked by his handling of last year's Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. On Sept. 27, 2020, Pashinyan declared war with Azerbaijan.

Relations between the former Soviet republics have been tense since 1991 when the Armenian military occupied Nagorno-Karabakh, a territory recognized as part of Azerbaijan, and seven adjacent regions.

When new clashes erupted in September last year, the Armenian army launched attacks on civilians and Azerbaijani forces and violated several humanitarian ceasefire agreements.

During the 44-day conflict, Azerbaijan liberated several cities and nearly 300 settlements and villages from the Armenian occupation.

The two countries signed a Russian-brokered agreement last November to end fighting and work toward a comprehensive resolution.

The truce is seen as a victory for Azerbaijan and a defeat for Armenia, whose armed forces have been withdrawing in line with the agreement.

Uzbekistan: Vaccination to start on April

DNA

TASHKENT: Mass vaccination against coronavirus will begin on April 1 in Uzbekistan, the Deputy Head of the Sanitary-Epidemiological Welfare and Public Health Authority Nurmat Atabekov told media.

According to him, at the first stage, it is planned to vaccinate 330 thousand people using the AstraZeneca (Covishield) vaccine. On March 17, Uzbekistan received 660,000 doses (two doses per person) of this drug as part of the global COVAX program. The next batch of AstraZeneca vaccine is due in early April (WHO and UNICEF representatives said that this will happen in May).

Nurmat Atabekov said that the date of April 1 was chosen taking into account the preparation of the primary health care system for vaccination. In total, in Uzbekistan, at the first stage, it is planned to vaccinate over 4.1 million people. Vaccination will be voluntary in an approved manner, for those aged 65-74 years, 75-84 years old, 85 years old and older, health workers, citizens with chronic diseases (18-65 years old), school teachers, preschool education personnel, military personnel and employees law enforcement.

Briefs

US, Pak drug authority digitize records

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The United States Mission to Pakistan, in cooperation with the Government of Pakistan, presented a new records management system to digitize more than four million records for the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP). The system, developed by the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Global Health Supply Chain program, will create digital archives and barcode paper files, which are critical to accountable tracking of DRAP's files. DRAP sought USAID's support to digitize the records, and USAID provided training to the DRAP staff on records management best practices. "This digitized system that USAID and the Government of Pakistan have created modernizes, streamlines, and harmonizes data archives, which directly supports data accessibility and visibility," said USAID Deputy Mission Director Michael Nehrbass. "It will also ensure transparency of information and records management, which ultimately will help ensure access to quality-assured medicines and commodities in Pakistan."

Fawad Ch. reiterates offer for dialogue

RAJA PERVAIZ

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Science and Technology Chaudhry Fawad Hussain Wednesday again invited the opposition parties for holding a meaningful dialogue on the much-needed electoral reforms. Talking to media persons after signing ceremony of a Memorandum of Understanding between Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) and Chinese Shenzhen University, he said "I once again invite the two parties, Pakistan Peoples Party and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, to sit with the government on electoral reforms, so no one can cast doubt on the fairness of the elections in future." On directions of Prime Minister Imran Khan, he said, National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser had constituted a parliamentary committee on electoral reforms. He said the government wanted to move seriously for the electoral reforms in the best interest of the country. Fawad Chaudhry said the opposition should avoid undermining the parliament. He was of the view that if the political parties had not taken the offer of the government seriously it would be harmful to the country. "Our interests are linked with the interest of the country," he added.

Cotton farmers could benefit from Chinese experience

DNA

BEIJING: Chinese experts in an online seminar elaborated how Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region excel in cotton production in the world and how Pakistani cotton farmers could benefit from their experience. According to China Economic Net (CEN), Dong Hezhong, principal researcher at Shandong Academy of Agricultural Sciences, said that seed research to pick the right seed for right atmosphere, cotton-peanut intercropping and plant architecture to allow for mechanical harvest enabled Xinjiang to enhance its share in China's cotton production from less than 4% in 1949 to 76% as of today. The seminar was aimed at bolstering China-Pakistan cooperation in seed industry. The experts discussed how Pakistan could learn from China to increase production of rice, maize, soybean and cotton, especially by adopting the Chinese techniques of intercropping and double cropping.

"Greece today, after a course of 200 years"

The future is decided today - shaped by the actions of all of us in the present. We all need to be present tomorrow. Only words are not enough for that. Progress requires both effort and manner. He wants the body and the mind to work. The challenges of the future are already here

DNA

ATHENS: The object of the axis is to highlight the dynamic elements of today's Greek society through the creativity and actions of groups, individuals, organizations, local government organizations, universities, research centers, cultural organizations, etc. At the same time, the maximum promotion of modern Greece will be sought, abroad, with presence in international exhibitions and international organizations, under the general umbrella: "1821-2021: This is modern Greece".

"Erasing a piece from the past is like erasing a corresponding piece from the future." George Seferis Many times we hear the phrase around us: "this country is not saved". Fortunately for all of us, our past denies this fatalistic and simplistic approach to the present. Many may end up in this aphorism under the pressure of the evils of the Greek state. But the bottom line is that we are here to move on. This is probably how the dissatisfaction of the Greek soul is expressed. Because the people of this country have learned to look for open horizons. And when they do not find them on land, they look for them at sea. When reality does not offer them, they look for them in the imagination. In intellectual and scientific creation. What is certain is that when a stranger hears this phrase he is surprised. Because Greece has progressed. And many find it difficult to understand how.

Now we can all take the next step together. Studying our course today, let us chart new paths.

The chronology you see is absolutely indicative. Every citizen can add his own event and his own Greek. To create his own station in history. To make his own assessment of facts and persons. To propose his own action for the future...

2021 AS A WINDOW FOR THE GREECE OF THE FUTURE

This will include actions that will focus on the country's prospects for the future and will highlight how we imagine and want Greece in the coming years. The various actions will be reported either inside the country or abroad, and their form will vary: scientific conferences, cultural events, professional and trade

Greece celebrating two hundred years of existence

Andreas Papastavrou Ambassador of Greece Issues a special message on the occasion

ISLAMABAD: Andreas Papastavrou Ambassador of Greece to the Islamic republic of Pakistan has issued a special message on the occasion of National Day of Greece. Here is the text of his message. 'It is a privilege to serve as Ambassador of Greece to Pakistan. In this context, it is also a unique honour to address this message of celebration to the people of this friendly country, marking the Bicentenary of the start of the National Struggle for the Independence of Greece. The history of Greece spans millennia and has known countless moments of glory. The National Struggle for Independence is one of those moments, which we are profoundly proud of.



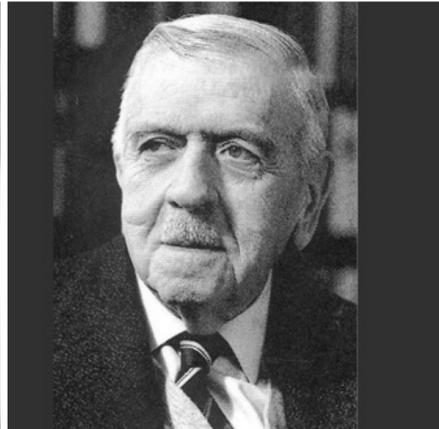
Andreas Papastavrou Ambassador of Greece

The enormous sacrifices of our forefathers have paved the way for the creation of a democratic state, inspired by the noblest ideals of humanity, in dignity and respect for all. Having sailed in the stormy seas of the 19th and 20th centuries and having contributed more than her share to the creation of a free world, Greece is now celebrating two hundred years of her existence, as a vibrant, modern State. She is facing courageously the challenges of our times and endeavouring for a bright future. Let us all rejoice with the people of Greece on this day of celebration and let us work side by side, for a bright future is our common quest'.

GREEKS LEAVING THEIR IMPRESSION IN THE WORLD



MARIA CALLAS



ORLANDOS: THE GUARDIAN ANGELS OF ANCIENT MONUMENTS

exhibitions, but also actions that will leave a legacy for the future, such as environmental interventions, development infrastructure etc. The future is decided today - shaped by the actions of all of us in the present. We all need to be present tomorrow. Only words are not enough for that. Progress requires both effort and manner. He wants the body and the mind to work. The challenges of the future are already here...

"Greeks who have left their mark on the world for the last 200 years". The object of the axis is to promote the life and work of Greeks who left their mark both in Greece and abroad.

We Greeks may be few, the ancient spirit may dominate the image of the country abroad, but the truth is that there have been hundreds of Greeks who have left their mark on the world since the founding of the modern Greek state. Greek men and women excelled in the arts and letters, won Nobel and Oscars, solved puzzles, saved countless lives with their discoveries, won worldwide recognition and respect...

The chronology you see is absolutely indicative. Every citizen can add his own event and his own Greek. To create his own station in History. To make his own assessment of facts and persons. To suggest his own action for the future. We will address the protagonists themselves. For the history of the labor movement, the development of cities and infrastructure, the industrialization of the country and so on.

In 1821 IN GREECE AND THE WORLD

"The Revolution of 1821 as a statutory element of Greek History, but also as a piece of world history."

The object of the axis is the better understanding of the Revolution of 1821, the emergence of its world importance, its relation with the other revolutions that took place in the same period, how it affected the rest of the world but also how it was influenced by it.

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

The Association of Greek Sign Language Teachers participates in the celebrations for the 200th anniversary of the Revolution with a substantial action.

After many months of work, in which besides the teachers of sign language, linguists, philologists, theologians, etc. contributed, our National Anthem was performed in the Greek sign language.

Influence of Shanghai Spirit continues to grow

DNA

BEIJING: Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has firmly established itself as an influential and responsible participant in the modern system of international relations, said Secretary-general of the SCO, Vladimir Norov. In recent years, through the joint efforts of all parties, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has successfully created a solid legal framework and effective mechanisms for multilateral cooperation in the fight against international terrorism, separatism and extremism, drug trafficking, organized crime, and ensuring information security, as well as strengthening trade, economic, cultural and humanitarian cooperation, he said in an article contributed to China Watch, a think tank powered by China Daily.

A fundamentally important feature of the organization is that, while fully preserving and respecting the autonomy of



its members in their internal affairs and foreign policy, partnership within the SCO is based on active and cooperative interaction, joint determination of areas of overlapping interests and equal importance of opinions. Mutual understanding, equality and coordination are the key elements defining the SCO. The organization does not pursue the goal of forming a military-political alliance, is not targeted against any third countries, and does not

support ideological and confrontational positions in addressing international and regional development problems.

The SCO members consistently adhere to the principle of openness in cooperation with all interested countries and international organizations, and adhere to the goals and principles of the United Nations. The interaction between the UN and the SCO has already become a successful example of effective cooperation between a global and regional organization. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has stressed the SCO is a strong partner of the UN, a leader in regional diplomacy and a promoter of cooperation in addressing the most pressing peace and security challenges facing Eurasia. The SCO Development Strategy 2025, adopted in 2015, aims to ensure the successful implementation of its programmes and plans for the development of multilateral cooperation in the economy, finance, investment, trade and transport project activities are being implemented.

'China-Pakistan friendship grown into towering tree'

DNA

NEW YORK: The friendship between China and Pakistan over the past 70 years has grown into a "towering tree, deep rooted in the hearts of the two peoples," Chinese Ambassador Zhang Jun said at a virtual meeting held on Tuesday to celebrate Pakistan Day. "China and Pakistan are iron brothers, and have forged the time-tested friendship," he told the ceremony in which several Ambassadors accredited to United Nations, UN officials and Pakistani-Americans took part. The meeting, organized by the Pakistan Mission to the UN, was presided over by Ambassador Munir Akram, who profusely thanked his counterparts for joining the

event and for their friendly sentiments for Pakistan. China, Ambassador Jun said, was happy to see Pakistan's achievements since its establishment and, more importantly, to be able to share that journey with Pakistan. Speaking next, Azerbaijan's Yashar Aliyev said, congratulating the people of Pakistan, said, "Today we honour the heroic efforts of Pakistan's founding father Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and all other great leaders that led to the creation of strong and independent Pakistan." "Relations between Azerbaijan and Pakistan have been forged over time to the level of enduring strategic partnership," Ambassador Aliyev said, pointing out that Azerbaijan, and Pakistan were bond by ties across the entire spectrum of relations - political, cultural, economic.

China's top legislator greets Sanjrani

DNA

BEIJING: Chairman of China National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee, Li Zhanshu has congratulated Sadiq Sanjrani on his re-election as Chairman of the Senate of Pakistan. In a congratulatory message, Li Zhanshu said that China and Pakistan are the all weather strategic cooperative partners and the relations between the two countries have always maintained a favorable development trend. In recent years, under the joint leadership of Chinese President Xi Jinping and Pakistani leaders, the cooperation between the two countries based on mutual interests in various fields has been steadily expanding, he added. Li Zhanshu said, in particular, the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has yielded significant results, which have brought benefits to both the countries.

Indonesian ambassador calls on Rector IIUI

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Indonesia to Pakistan, Adam Mulawarman Tugio Wednesday called on Rector of International Islamic University (IIU) Dr. Masoom Yasinzai at his office. During the meeting, issues pertaining to expand mutual cooperation for people to people contact, boosting ties among the academia of both sides and joint ventures for promotion of peace through dialogue were discussed. In the meeting, the Indonesian envoy proposed establishment of an Indonesian corner at IIUI upon which both the dignitaries discussed various aspects such as its scope, utilization, feasibility, objectives and its role in promoting cultural similarities as well as interaction between common people and academia of both countries. They also agreed for future deliberations to hold a conference on the role of religious seminaries in Muslim societies and importance of Dawah as per contemporary requirements. They also agreed that there is a dire need of exchange of experiences among the universities of sides as well as conferences and dialogues to discuss leading issues of Muslim world. On the occasion, the Indonesian Ambassador said that there is a large number of students of IIUI Alumni in Indonesia who were contributing in development and progress of the country being on the important positions. He said Indonesia was keen to enhance collaboration with Pakistani universities in the fields of science, technology and dialogue. He added that both sides have common values that can be promoted through mutual cooperation in the form of proposed Indonesian corner at the university. He also took keen interest in the scope and work of the constituent units



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador Adam M. Tugio met the Rector of International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI) Prof. Dr. Masoom Yasinzai. - DNA

of IIUI, and appreciated the proposal of Rector IIUI regarding collaboration with Iqbal Institute of Research and Dialogue of IIUI. Speaking on the occasion, IIUI Rector said that Muslim Societies must focus on bridging the gap between academia and industry. He

said there are the high times for universities to pay back to the societies by finding the solutions to the contemporary problems as per needs of the societies. He also briefed the Ambassador on the activities, profile, services and vision of the university adding that IIU

expects that the number of over 200 Indonesian students would double in coming future. He said that university would be eager to share its experiences with Indonesian universities in various fields including science and technology. - DNA

'RSEZ to change fate of the area'

IBRAR KHAN

ISLAMABAD: As the inauguration of Rashakai Special Economic Zone (RSEZ) is just around the corner, locals are optimistic that this flagship project of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would change the fate and face of the area. According to a report published by Gwadar Pro, RSEZ would attract local and foreign investors, generate development, create thousands of jobs and will provide economic and social services. Farmanullah, 31, is an unemployed young man living in a small town adjacent to RSEZ. "Lots of unemployed youth would get jobs on their doorstep, Our village would also prosper," he told Gwadar Pro. According to him, many people from the surrounding villages would get jobs in factories at RSEZ.