

# Islamabad POST

Tuesday, August 31, 2021

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

**Declining consumer confidence hurts Canadian PM Trudeau**

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**Pak, Kazakh cooperation discussed**

Detailed News On Page-04



**Azerbaijan envoy presents his credentials**

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**Briefs**

**Turkey to maintain presence in Afghanistan**

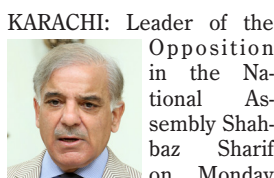
NEWS DESK



ANKARA: The Turkish embassy in Kabul has returned to its building in the city and Ankara will maintain its diplomatic presence in Afghanistan, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has said. NATO countries have been pulling out their diplomatic missions in Afghanistan following the Taliban's victory two weeks ago. Turkey holds first talks with the Taliban in Kabul. Tony Blair should go to Afghanistan. Taliban takeover a 'body blow' to Indian interests in Afghanistan.

**Shehbaz vows to oppose PMDA**

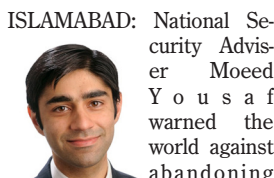
BUREAU REPORT



KARACHI: Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Shahbaz Sharif on Monday vowed to go against any government efforts to pass legislation related to the Pakistan Media Development Authority (PMDA). The Opposition leader, speaking to representatives of media organisations, said the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) and the PML-N have already rejected the PMDA. "We will join forces with all political parties [...] and take Opposition into confidence against this black law," Shahbaz said, adding: "This is a matter of life and death for independent journalism, democracy, and constitutional freedom."

**Pak urges world to support Afghanistan**

DNA



ISLAMABAD: National Security Adviser Moeed Yusuf warned the world against abandoning Afghanistan again on Monday, and urged the global community to engage with the new setup for the sake of ordinary Afghans. "We are saying to the world engage with Afghanistan for the sake of the average Afghan in your selfish national interest."

## Borders are safe despite challenges

**Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa briefs parliamentarians; says struggle against violent extremism to continue**



SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa on Monday said due to the timely steps for western zone border management, the country's borders were secured despite challenges. "Alhamdulillah (Thanks to Almighty Allah) today despite challenges Pakistan's borders are secure and we are prepared to meet any situation," the Army Chief said while interacting with a delegation, comprising members of Parliamentary Kashmir Committee,

Standing Committees of the Senate and National Assembly on Defence who visited GHQ here, said a news release. The delegation was given detailed briefing on security environment including situation on the borders and Pakistan Army's efforts for peace and stability. The delegation had an exhaustive interactive session with Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa. Speaking on the occasion, the COAS said Pakistan Armed Forces, with support of the nation, have achieved unprecedented successes in fight against terrorism and bringing normalcy in the country. Alluding to the benefits of regional connectivity, the COAS highlighted the importance of restoration of peace in Afghanistan for sustainable development of the region. The COAS reiterated Pakistan Army's support and commitment to Kashmir cause and people of Kashmir. "The world must know that without peaceful resolution of Kashmir issue, peace and stability will remain illusive," he reiterated. The session concluded with resolve to continue struggle against violent extremism through a synergetic, whole-of-the-nation approach.

## First PIA cargo flight lands in Mazar-i-Sharif

**As PIA is providing air transport for the operation, the WHO will be arranging logistics on the ground**

NEWS DESK /DNA

MAZAR-I-SHARIF: The first cargo flight of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) carrying medical supplies of World Health Organization (WHO), as part of the humanitarian air bridge, landed here on Monday. The Boeing 777 AP-BHV arriving from Dubai, landed at the Mazar-i-Sharif Airport - the first international flight to the country's fourth largest city after the takeover of the Taliban. As PIA is providing air transport for the operation, the WHO will be arranging logistics on the ground. Pakistan's ambassador to Afghanistan Mansoor Ahmed Khan confirmed that the PIA cargo flight took essential supplies of WHO to Mazar-i-Sharif in line with the Pakistan's role of making a 'humanitarian air bridge' in coordination with international agencies. "First PIA Cargo flight with WHO medical supplies from Islamabad to Mazar Sharif today," the envoy tweeted. He thanked PIA for its efforts in ensuring the supplies to Afghanistan. "A humanitarian air bridge

## CAA extends curbs on inbound flights

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has extended the restrictions imposed on inbound flights till September 30, as it continues the ban placed on countries in Category C, a notification said Monday. All Pakistanis whose return to Pakistan from Category C countries is scheduled till September 30 may travel to the country without grant of a special exemption, the notification said. The notification issued by the CAA for the extension in restrictions. The notification issued by the CAA for the extension in restrictions. They should also possess a negative PCR test result conducted within 72 hours prior to commencement of travel to Pakistan, the notification said. The CAA, in the travel advisory issued earlier, had said all inbound passengers of age six years and above will be required to possess a valid negative PCR test result conducted within 72 hours prior to commencement of travel to Pakistan.

for essential supplies to Afghanistan in coordination with international agencies. Thanks PIA," he wrote. In view of the medical supplies running out within days in Afghanistan, the World Health Organization (WHO) had announced last week to establish an air bridge into the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif with the help of Pakistani authorities. Trauma kits and emergency supplies for hospitals, as well as medicines for treating chronic malnutrition in children are among priority items for Afghanistan, where 18 million people depended on aid, the WHO's regional emergency director said. "What remains certain is that humanitarian needs are enormous and growing", Rick Brennan told a

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ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Iran Ali Hosseini in a meeting with Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Amjad Khan Niazi, at the Naval Headquarters. - DNA

## Pakistan concerned at theft of Indian radioactive material

**This is the third such occurrence in India in the last four months**

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Monday noted with serious concern yet another report of theft and illicit sale of radioactive material in India. In the latest incident, as per media reports, two persons were arrested for illegal possession of Californium which is a highly radioactive and toxic substance. It is a matter of grave concern for the international community that an extremely rare Sealed Radioactive Source (SRS) material like Californium could be stolen. As in the previous cases, the arrested individuals apparently got hold of the radioactive material by purchasing it from inside India. This is the third such occurrence in India in the last four months. Earlier media reports had highlighted separate seizures in May and June 2021 of over 7 kg and more than 6 kg of Uranium from unauthorized persons in India. These repeated incidents raise serious concerns about the safety and security of nuclear and other radioactive materials in India, and the possible existence of a black market for such materials inside the country.

## Announcement

ISLAMABAD: Renowned academician, journalist and author Ishtiaq Ahmed's pens down an exclusive piece for Islamabad POST in which he elaborates as to what led to the hasty withdrawal of allied forces. The article appears on the opinion pages today. - Editor

## Drone strikes to continue: Kirby Rockets fired at Kabul airport

**Taliban says Dae'sh will not resort to any attacks once US forces leave as they will have no justification**

NEWS DESK /AGENCIES

KABUL: Rockets were fired at Kabul's airport on Monday where US troops were racing to complete their withdrawal from Afghanistan and evacuate allies under the threat of Islamic State group attacks. The return of the Taliban movement, which was toppled in 2001 but took back power a fortnight ago, triggered an exodus of terrified people aboard US-led evacuation flights. Those flights, which have taken more than 120,000 people out of Kabul airport, will officially end on Tuesday when the last of the thousands of American troops pull out. But US forces are now focused chiefly on flying themselves and American diplomats out safely. The Islamic State group, rivals of the Taliban, pose the biggest threat to Biden had warned more attacks were highly likely and

**'EU should support Afghanistan's neighbours'**

BRUSSELS: The European Union should provide financial support to countries neighbouring Afghanistan to help them manage refugees fleeing the Taliban, the bloc's foreign policy chief says in an interview. "We will have to increase cooperation with the neighbouring countries to resolve issues related to Afghanistan. We must help them with the first refugee wave," Josep Borrell told Italy's Corriere Della Sera newspaper. "Afghans fleeing the country are not going to reach Rome in the first place, but maybe Tashkent (in Uzbekistan). We need to help those countries that will be on the front line." - DNA

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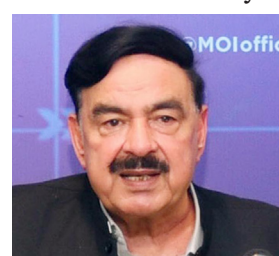
## Mahmoud Abbas, Israel minister hold rare talks

MONITORING REPORT

TEL AVV: Israel's defence minister met Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas for a rare high-level meeting, but a source close to Prime Minister Naftali Bennett insisted on Monday his government had no plans to reboot peace talks. Defence Minister Benny Gantz met Abbas in Ramallah for what were reportedly the first direct talks between an Israeli cabinet member and the 86-year-old Palestinian leader in several years. The meeting, which Gantz's office said focused on "security policy, civilian and economic issues", came just hours after Bennett returned from Washington where he met US President Joe Biden. Biden said he would urge Bennett to find ways "to advance peace and security and prosperity for Israelis and Palestinians". According to a defence ministry statement, Gantz told Abbas that Israel "seeks to take measures that will strengthen the PA's (Palestinian Authority) economy". "They also discussed shaping the security and economic situations in the West Bank and in Gaza," and agreed to "continue communicating further," it added.

## So far no refugees from Afghanistan

Federal Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed says people from Afghanistan arrive in Pakistan via the Chaman border on a daily basis and then go back to their country, adding that this was "a normal activity"



ZUBAIR AHMED

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed said Monday that Pakistan has so far not given the status of refugee to a single person from Afghanistan. "I can confirm as your [the] interior minister that we have not given the status of a refugee to even a single person," he shared during a news conference, a day before the US and other foreign troops complete their pullout from the war-ravaged country. The interior minister's comments came as thousands of Afghans have sought to leave the country since the Taliban took control of the country last month. The US had also requested Pakistan to provide transit facilities after which Islamabad made arrangements at the city's hotels. Rasheed clarified that people from Afghanistan arrive in Pakistan via the Chaman border on a daily basis and then go back to their country, adding that this was "a normal activity."

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Qatar lauded for its role in Afghanistan evacuations - Page 06

US to complete pullout from Afghanistan after two decades - Page 07

August 30 critical turning point in our history: Erdogan - Page 08

## All inclusive govt in Afghanistan only option

**Fawad Chaudhry says efforts of the int'l community were necessary to solve the Afghan problem**

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain on Monday said an inclusive government was imperative for Afghanistan urging the world and regional powers to support the process. Talking to Turkish news channel TRT World, he said if mistakes of the past would be repeated in Afghanistan, the situation would get worse. The government in Afghanistan has to be formed by Afghans, he said adding, the regional and the world powers have a heavy responsibility in facilitating this process. Pakistan was trying for installation of an all-inclusive broad based government in Afghanistan, he said adding, the country had been left alone in the past, and now the world was repeating the same mistakes. "If the same mistakes are repeated again, that means we will create a hub of extremists organizations right at the border of Pakistan which is



obviously hugely worrisome for us." He said when erstwhile Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan in 1988, Pakistan had to deal with the situation and now the United States and NATO forces have withdrawn rapidly from Afghanistan, and Pakistan again was at the quagmire of the situation and dealing with the issue. Now Pakistan was keeping a close eye on this issue, said the minister adding that if the Afghanistan situation did

not stabilize, millions of people would start moving towards Pakistan. He said that Pakistan has already been hosting 3.5 million Afghan refugees for decades and Pakistan's economy could no longer bear the burden of more refugees. The efforts of the international community were necessary to solve the Afghan problem, said Chaudhry Fawad Hussain. He said Pakistan was playing the role of a responsible country and striving for a stable Afghanistan was working with regional and international powers. Unrest in Afghanistan, he said, was detrimental not only to Pakistan but to the entire world. To a question, he said as the change was bloodless, there was no crisis for refugees at the moment and borders were normal right now. "We have evacuated foreigners and those working in foreign companies from Kabul", he said

Continued on Page 06

## 'Shahbaz should ask Nawaz to return home'

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain said on Monday that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz President Shahbaz Sharif instead of bringing millions of people to Islamabad, should ask his brother Nawaz Sharif to return from London and face court cases. Reacting to a press conference of Shahbaz Sharif, he said that Sharif brothers should face cases against them in courts of law. Terming the tirade of Shahbaz Sharif as ridiculous, Chaudhry Fawad said that he should not make such frivolous statements at Mazar of Quaid-e-Azam. He said that on the one hand, millions of rupees had been spent on grandson's wedding in London while on the other hand, they were crying that people of Pakistan were facing problems due to inflation. He said that the crocodile tears shed by the PML-N leadership over inflation and price hike were manifestation of their duplicity. Chaudhry Fawad asked Shahbaz Sharif to quit politics and hold consultations with his lawyers.

## Briefs

## Huge quantity of narcotics seized

## BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) on Monday arrested two drug smugglers and recovered 120 kg charrs and 50 kg opium from their possession. ANF spokesman said that on a tip-off, the ANF team conducted raid in chak 275-GB Jaranwala and nabbed two drug smugglers - Mansab Ali Pehalwan and Anees red handed while trafficking narcotics. Further investigation was under way.

## FSA discarded 4100 litres adulterated milk

## DNA

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Safety Authority (FSA) in its drive against sale of adulteration of milk and substandard food items discarded on Monday. According to spokesman of Food Safety Authority, it discarded a total of 4100 liters of adulterated milk in different areas of the province on Monday. The FSA team during inspection of milk quality in Machikhel area of Bannu district around 2600 litres milk was discarded from a tanker supplying milk to local market. The Authority, during inspection of milk quality, in Haripur areas and in Dera Ismail Khan recovered 500 and 1000 liters of substandard milk from tankers supplying milk to local market was also discarded. Meanwhile Food Safety Authority in a action in Nowshera recovered 2000 litres of substandard beverages from various shops and later discarded the same. During the action a go-down was also sealed for storing inferior drinks.

## Two dacoits held after police encounter

HYDERABAD: Police claimed to have arrested two dacoits after an encounter on Monday. According to the Police spokesman, a patrolling team of B-Section police headed by SHO Zulfiqar Arain, signalled four suspected bike riders but outlaws opened fire at the police team. Police retaliated and arrested two suspected dacoits while two others had managed to escape. Police also recovered one pistol, two rounds and two motorcycles from the possession of the arrested accused identified as Zohaib Chandio and Aamir Chandio. Police spokesman said two notorious dacoits Nangar alias doctor and Salman had managed to escape. The B-Section police also registered two cases under sections 353, 324, 34 PPC and 23 - A of Sindh Arms Act against the accused. According to Police, during initial interrogation, both the accused admitted that they were part of a notorious dacoit gang and involved in several criminal activities. In a separate action, SHO B-Section also arrested a drug peddler Bilal Qazi and seized 5 liter liquor from his possession and registered a case under sections 3/4 PEHO against the accused. - APP

## Balochistan reports 29 more positive for corona

QUETTA: About 29 new coronavirus patients were tested positive in Balochistan while number of total confirmed patients surged to 31281 in the province on Monday. According to media coordinator provincial Health Directorate Cell Balochistan Dr. Muhammad Wasim Baig, at least 1026882 people were screened for the virus till August 30 out of which 29 more were reported positive. As many as 30481 affected patients have been recovered from the coronavirus so far while 338 deaths were recorded due to the deadly virus in Balochistan. - APP

## SC summons DG FIA, PEMRA in journalists' complaint case

Qazi Amin said, "As judges, we cannot do politics and the job of journalists is to do journalism, not to do politics." He said journalism and freedom of expression must be within the realm of civilization

ISLAMABAD: Supreme Court (SC) Monday summoned the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) director general, Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) chairman, inspector general of police (IGP) Islamabad and attorney general for Pakistan (AGP) in a case pertaining to the complaints of journalists. The bench also summoned all four advocate generals and sought a report from the Islamabad High Court (IHC) registrar regarding the status of pending cases of media persons on the next date of hearing scheduled to be held on September 15. A three-member SC bench comprising Justice Ijaz Ul Ahsan, Justice Munib Akhtar and Justice Qazi Muhammad Amin Ahmed heard the suo moto notice case regarding highhandedness by the FIA action pursuant to first information reports lodged at FIA

Cyber Crime Wing Lahore. During the course of proceedings, Justice Ijaz said the court would intervene for protection of journalists' rights. Journalists Abdul Qayyum Siddiqui, Asad Toor and Amir Mir withdrew their applications. Justice Munib Akhtar said the Constitution guaranteed freedom to media. The freedom of the press was also protected in the Indian, American and German constitutions, he added. He said any law that contradicted to Article 19 would be declared null and void. Justice Ijaz said the court would support journalists on the issue of salaries and terminations. Qazi Amin said, "As judges, we cannot do politics and the job of journalists is to do journalism, not to do politics." He said journalism and freedom of expression

must be within the realm of civilization. Judges were in the hands of history, not a few people, he added. Justice Ijaz said the court had to convince itself that the fundamental rights were not being violated. Media was the conscience and voice of the nation, he added. Later, the court summoned Federal Investigation Agency director general, Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) chairman, attorney general for Pakistan (AGP), inspector general of police (IGP) Islamabad and advocate generals and adjourned hearing of the case till September 15. It may be noted that the case was originally taken up by a division bench led by Justice Qazi Faez Isa. The bench on August 20, directly entertained the Press Association of Supreme Court (PAS) ap-

plication against alleged harassment of media persons. The division bench had also summoned several government functionaries on August 26 before it. However, on August 23, a five-judge larger bench of the apex court, headed by Acting Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial and comprising Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Qazi Muhammad Amin Ahmed and Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, "held in abeyance" the two-member bench order. The bench said the order deviated from the established practice of entertaining the suo moto notices. The SC also said the chief justice of Pakistan was the "sole authority by and through whom the suo moto jurisdiction can be, and is to be, invoked/assumed" under Article 184 (3) of the Constitution. - APP

## 12588 public, health workers vaccinated

## BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: As many as more 12588 general public and Health Care Workers have administered corona vaccination yesterday and till now 1900473 general public and HCW vaccinated. District Health Officer Dr. Bilal Ahmad informed that 12544 general public and 44 HCW vaccinated. He further informed that 9043 & 3501 general Public and 13 and 31 HCWs administered first and second dose.

## District admin holds open court in Budhni

## DNA

PESHAWAR: District administration Peshawar Monday held an open court (Khuli Kachehri) in Budhni locality of Tehsil Sha Alam. Besides, Additional Deputy Commissioner (Relief), Mohammad Imran Khan, Additional Assistant Commissioner (AAC), Anwar Akbar Khan and officers of subsidiary departments, revenue staff, public representatives, local notables and general public attended the event at large. Highlighting problems of the locality, the people complained of excessive power load shedding and called for minimizing duration of load shedding and provision of Sui gas to the province. The locals also complained of the shortage of police personnel and other facilities in Police Station Shah Pur and called for increase in the strength of police personnel and patrolling in the area. The residents also called for the establishment of Ehsas Programme Centre in Budhni and provision of NADRA van facility to the area at least once in a month. The people also demanded immediate computerization of the land record of Budhni and laying of water pipes and construction of new school building. Speaking on the occasion, ADC (Relief), Mohammad Imran Khan said that the purpose of holding open court is to bridge distance among government, administration and public to resolve of the people at their door steps.

Two-day free medical camp held at Darkut valley

GILGIT: A two-day free medical camp was organized by Adil Foundation in Darkot Valley of Yasin Tehsil of Gilgit-Baltistan. The camp's medical specialists examined more than 200 patients for free, including the elderly, children, men and women, and distributed free medicine. Most of the diseases diagnosed during the camp include gastrointestinal diseases, respiratory diseases, body and joint pains, etc. Darkut valley is situated in the west of Gilgit-Baltistan on the Pak-Afghan border, with strong tourism potential and natural resources which have not yet been exploited fully. The valley is still deprived of basic human needs such as roads, healthcare, and education. Jamshed Ahmed, head of the foundation, thanked all the donor agencies, medical experts, local community and participants on the occasion and said that the camp would open the door to more opportunities to help the people of the area in the future. Solutions to health problems can be found. He said that similar medical camps would be set up in remote valleys like Nazbar and Qarqalti in future. Taking about the sorry state of government, he said that the staff of all government health centers was suffering. They also lack medicines and health professionals who can diagnose diseases. Referring to the future planning of the foundation, he said that he wanted to set up an incubation center in Gilgit-Baltistan in collaboration with the government and various agencies which would help in putting into practice the different thinking of the students here. Apart from this, work will also be done in the ICT sector which will create employment opportunities. He said a Darkut-style medical camp would also be held in Rawalpindi for Afghan refugees. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan chairs meeting on prices of essential commodities held. - APP

## ADB to setup waste water treatment plant



## BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has decided to set up a waste water treatment plant in the Eastern part of Faisalabad at a cost of Rs. 20 billion, which would solve the environmental problems of Faisalabad. This was informed by Divisional Commissioner Saqib Manan while talking to reporters after a meeting with bank representatives and officials of various departments. Managing Director WASA Jabbar Anwar and other officials were also present. Divisional Commissioner further informed that planning for setting up of treatment plant was formulated for its progress a

meeting was held today after which a decision has been taken. He said that ADB would provide a grant of Rs. 20 billion for this mega project and program would consist of four parts including setting up of plant beautification of city and horticulture Improves capacity building of officers and staff and improvement of environment protection. Managing Director WASA said that under this mega project of Asian Development Bank, waste water treatment plant will be set up which will be the responsibility of WASA to run as well as agricultural research farms will be set up. He further said that with the completion of this mega project, environmental problems in Faisalabad would be solved.

## IGP for policing plan to tackle changing security scenario

The IGP issued directives for further tightening noose around the anti-state elements and conducting intelligence-based raids to ensure the arrest of the criminals and their facilitators

## DNA

PESHAWAR: Inspector-General of Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Muazzam Jah Ansari has directed the police to work out a comprehensive plan in the wake of changes taking place in security scenario of the region and keep close liaison with intelligence and other security agencies so that result-oriented steps could be taken for ensuring protection to the life and property of people. He was presiding over a high-level meeting through video link at the Central Police Office here on Monday that was attended by regional police officers and district police officers from across the province. At the meeting, the police officers briefed the IGP on the overall security situation, operations against terrorists and proclaimed offenders involved in high-profile cases, drug dealers, and land mafia in their respective jurisdictions. The IGP issued directives for further tight-



ening noose around the anti-state elements and conducting intelligence-based raids to ensure the arrest of the criminals and their facilitators. He also sought a daily basis report on actions taken against terrorists, facilitators, and proclaimed offenders. The participants of the meeting were given special directives for ensuring foolproof security to the foreigners, especially those working on CPEC projects.

The IGP made it clear that no compromise would be made on the security of people working on projects of our country's development and prosperity. State-of-the-art security gadgets and drone cameras should be used to provide security to Chinese and other foreigners, he directed. The IGP Ansari maintained that Narcotics Eradication Teams (NETs) be made more vibrant and empowered to ensure eradication of the curse of narcotics from society. He said saving our people especially the youth from the menace of narcotics was our prime duty. He said the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was successfully continuing its journey from terrorism to tourism that was quite evident from the influx of the people towards scenic destinations during the Eid ul Adha. He directed the police high-ups of Malakand and Hazara divisions to adopt proactive policing in their areas to ensure protection to the tourists.

## 2 Assistant Commissioners won first and second prize in PTPR

## BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Two Tehsil Assistant Commissioner of Faisalabad district have won the First and second position in Punjab Tehsil Performance ranking (PTPR). According to the detail Punjab Govt up loaded the ranking of Assistant Commissioners on Karkardgi App till 1st to 27th August and Assistant Commissioner Sammundri Faisal Sultan and Assis-

tant Commissioner Sadder Muhammad Umar Maqbool got first and second position respectively. AC Sammundri scored 14.395 & AC Sadder got 14.225 score out of 17. AC Sammundri has scored 4 in land retrieved and solution of public complaints on Pakistan Citizen Portal he got 3.579 and Inspection of Land Record Center and Auction process in Fruits & Vegetables he got 3 and 2 score while during price check-

ing his score was 1.815. AC Sammundri was also got first position in last June also, likewise AC Sadder got 4 score in land retrieval 4.025 in solution of public complaints on Pakistan Citizen Portal and 3 & 2 score achieved in inspection of Land Record and Auction process while during checking of essential items he scored 1.200 score. Reiterating their commitment, the Assistant Commissioners said that the

efforts for achieving the targets set by the government would not be slowed down. Meanwhile Divisional Commissioner Saqib Manan also lauded the exemplary performance of Assistant Commissioners Faisal Sultan and Umar Maqbool regarding getting the top two positions in the Tehsil rankings and hoped that they would continue to maintain the position by showing similar performances in future also.

## Dictators of Sindh victimizing opponents

## DNA

KARACHI: The Central Vice President PTI and the Leader of the Opposition in Sindh Assembly Haleem Adil Sheikh, Monday said that there was dictatorship in Sindh and opponents were being politically victimized. Haleem Adil sheikh, while addressing the media person outside Central prison Karachi after hearing of a case in ATC, said that leader of the opposition in Sindh Assembly was made a political terrorist and he had to attend hearings

in different courts of the province. "We believe in justice and have confidence in judicial system and judiciary," he said adding that they would face all the bogus cases and would be acquitted as innocent. In reality, Bilawal Zardari, Murad Ali Shah and company were financial terrorists who have plundered the resources and destroyed the province, he alleged noting that due to their financial terrorism situation has worsened to the extent that people had left no other option but attempting suicides in dismay.

## Awareness session held for road safety

Muhammad Rizwan Bhatti said that the observance of traffic rules and Road signs help in reducing accidents and make highway safer for travelers

## ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: The ignorance about traffic rules is not an excuse to ignore the traffic laws. SSP Punjab highway patrolling, Region Faisalabad Mirza Anjum Kamal expresses his thoughts about irregular behavior of commuters. He further emphasized that Awareness about road safety rules is a continuous process to save precious lives of commuters. Road safety is all about creating awareness about the safety of road users either they are pedestrians, two wheelers or four wheelers. Impatience and recklessness cause accidents on highways. The workshops and seminars are im-

portant tool of inculcating road sense and education about traffic signs, right of way, maintaining of safe distance, and hazards of over speeding and use of mobile phone during driving. Further, while talking about causes of accidents, he said that 92 % fatalities occur due to human error, 4 % road conditions and road engineering, 3% vehicular fault and 01 % environmental factors are involved. On the directions of SSP Patrolling, Mobile education unit organized an awareness session in educational situations to sensitize students about the perils of Road traffic accidents and adoption of precautionary measures to combat against Covid-19. In charge Mobile Education unit, Muham-

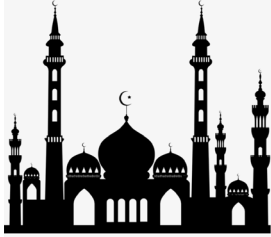


mad Rizwan Bhatti said that the observance of traffic rules and Road signs help in reducing accidents and make highway safer for travelers. He said that wearing face masks, observing social distance of minimum of 6 feet,

avoiding in going public gathering, frequent washing and sanitizing of hands are the basic preventive and palliative measures to avoid contract of deadly pandemic corona virus. While providing information about the PHP help line 1124, he added that commuters can call on helpline to get the assistance of PHP in the event of any emergency and mishap. However, he also highlights the hazards of traffic violation. He said that usage of mobile phone while driving is really dangerous. The one wheeling is tantamount to contract with death angel. And wheeling is really dangerous for not only rider but also other road users. Helpline of PHP: Before travelling, it is essential to take cognizance about weather

condition, road condition and facilities on the road taken. Further, the commuters are advised to check the Patrol, oil, water, electrical equipment and tire. The information about help line in case of distress is indispensable to avoid any embarrassment, wastage of time and any untoward incident. Moreover, in case of emergency, happening of incident/accident, the road commuters can call on help line 1124 of Punjab Highway Patrol police. If the road user faces any kind of harassment on the road or he notices any unlawful activity on the road, he can call on PHP Helpline 1124. Polite, helpful and compassionate is the sole motto of Punjab highway patrol.

## SERVICES



### Namaz Timings

Fajr.....	04:13 am
Zohr.....	12:09 pm
Asr.....	04:45 pm
Maghrib.....	06:36 pm
Isha.....	08:03 pm



### Hotels & Restaurants

Serena Hotel.....	111 133 133
Marriott.....	051-2826121
Monal.....	0334-5421812



### Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....	8494949
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### Emergency

Rescue (Police).....	15
Bomb Disposal.....	15
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Railway Exchange.....	9270831-5
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# Former diplomats for peace and stability in Afghanistan

Former foreign secretary Ambassador Tariq Fatemi was of the view that the prospects of peace and stability in Afghanistan offered tremendous opportunities to Pakistan

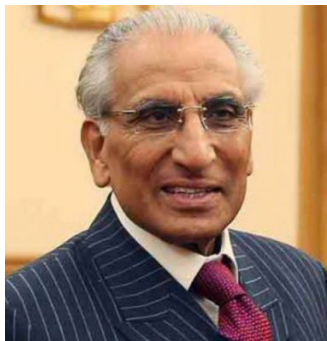
ZUBAIR AHMAD

ISLAMABAD: Senior former diplomats urged the international community to support peace and stability in the war-torn Afghanistan. They were speaking at a seminar on the post-Taliban takeover situation in Afghanistan organized by the Institute of Regional Studies. Former foreign secretary Ambassador Tariq Fatemi was of the view that the prospects of peace and stability in Afghanistan offered tremendous opportunities to Pakistan. He cautioned, however, that the opportunities were accompanied by dangers of instability as well, as

the situation in Afghanistan could go either way.

He was of the view that the Soviet Union had left Afghanistan in a more dignified manner than the Americans. He added that while the government installed by the Soviets had survived three years after their departure, the government installed by the Americans vanished while they hadn't even finished their departure from the country. He said that the responsibility for the failure in Afghanistan rested entirely on the shoulders of the Americans.

Former foreign secretary Ambassador Tehmina Janjua stated that the last Afghan president Ashraf Ghani was against negotiation with



the Taliban until then end but was the first to leave the country as soon as they entered the capital. This, she argued, showed the level of his concern for the best interests of the people of his country.

She further stated that the Taliban had shown a considerable maturity and sense of responsibility since taking over Kabul. She said that they were fully cooperating with the international community and it was too early to judge them on their policies towards women and other human rights-related concerns. She was of the view that since the international focus was on Afghanistan, it was essential to guard against misleading media narratives of vested interests.

Former diplomat Ambassador Ayaz Wazir added that the international community needed to realize that Afghan culture was different from Western culture and that women's rights had to be in

accordance with the local cultural norms. He further stated that while the Americans were blaming the Afghans for corruption, the Americans serving in Afghanistan were more corrupt than the Afghans because most of the US funds went to American contractors instead of Afghans.

He was of the view that the Taliban were taking time in announcing a government because they were trying their level best to have an inclusive government more readily acceptable to the people of Afghanistan. Ambassador Wazir was of the view that former Afghan president Hamid Karzai was a better politician and statesman than Ashraf Ghani.



ISLAMABAD: Zafar Bakhtawari Secretary General United Business Group is presenting his book Jahan Dost to Indonesian Ambassador Mr. Adam Mulawarman Tugio at his embassy in Islamabad. Mr. Waqar Bakhtawari is also present on the occasion. – DNA

## PPSA calls on Deputy Chairman Senate Mirza Muhammad Afridi



KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: A 43-member delegation of the Pakistan Provincial Services Academy (PPSA) called on the Deputy Chairman Senate Mirza Muhammad Afridi here at Parliament House on Monday. The Deputy Chairman Senate warmly welcomed the delegation of the 86th batch of the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Provincial Management Services (PMS). He highlighted the importance of youth and their role and responsibilities for the country's progress. Deputy Chairman Senate said that the percentage of educated youth in the country has increased and that our youth is a great asset for Pakistan. Mirza Afridi expressed his pleasure that our youth is motivated to bring advancement in the country in different fields, which is the need of the day. Deputy Chairman Senate, while addressing the Delegation, underscored the need to utilize the existing natural resources of the country to develop the Agricultural system, which will change the future of Pakistan. "Climate change and water scarcity are challenges that should be addressed", added Deputy Chairman Senate. Deputy Chairman Senate also advised the newly inducted officers to participate in PM Imran Khan Billion Tree Tsunami initiative. The Deputy Chairman Senate emphasized working for the betterment of the health and education sector. He said that water conservation is also an important issue that needs to be addressed. The Deputy Chairman Senate, Mirza Afridi, in his message to the officers, said that status and power do not matter.

## Kazakhstan embassy organizes tree plantation in F-9 Park

DNA

ISLAMABAD: As part of the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Constitution Day of our country, the Embassy of Kazakhstan to Pakistan organized the planting of trees on the Alley of Friendship located in the Central Park named after Fatima Jinnah in Islamabad. It is well known that, one of the priorities of the Government of Pakistan is to address the challenges of the climate change and improve the environment. In particular, Prime Minister Mr. Imran Khan initiated the "Tsunami of 10 billion Trees" program, according to which 10 billion trees will be planted across the country by 2023. Thus, the diplomatic mission of Kazakhstan intends to make its humble contribution to improvement of the environment, supporting the initiative of the leadership of Pakistan.



## Ehsaas inks MoUs with ministry for education stipends

"Federal Ministry for Education and Professional Training will fully collaborate with Ehsaas to bring back out of school children to schools and reduce the dropouts

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Today, Senator Dr. Sania Nishtar, SAPM on Social Protection and Poverty Alleviation and Shafiqat Mehmood, Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training co-chaired the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Ehsaas and Federal Ministry for Education and Professional Training. The MoU aimed to tap additional human resources for the roll out of Ehsaas Education Stipends programme. On the occasion, a second MoU was also signed between Ehsaas and National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) to mobilize eligible families to enroll their children under Ehsaas Education Stipends. "Under the umbrella of Ehsaas, the launching of Education Stipends programme is just on the anvil and preparations are in full swing to roll it out nationwide. In this regard, Ehsaas is also signing MoUs with

provinces to expand education stipends programme", said Dr. Sania. "Federal Ministry for Education and Professional Training will fully collaborate with Ehsaas to bring back out of school children to schools and reduce the dropouts. Children of the eligible families can benefit from Ehsaas stipends to continue their studies till higher secondary education", said Shafiqat Mehmood. There are 18.7 million out-of-school children in the country. Ehsaas Education Stipends programme has been designed in coordination with

provinces, and Federal Ministry of Education and Professional Training to avoid duplications; reduce disparities in primary to higher secondary education opportunities by raising attendance, school enrolment, and the school progression among out of school children particularly girls. Children of the deserving families registered with Ehsaas can get education stipends in schools and colleges registered with the concerned Education Departments to continue their secondary and higher secondary studies. National Ehsaas survey is on its last leg, based on which, 10 million families are being identified and

enrolled this year under Ehsaas Kafaalet programme. Children in all classes, in every district, of all Ehsaas eligible families are eligible for Ehsaas Education Stipends. Ehsaas is also signing MoUs with the Secondary Education and Higher Education/Colleges' Departments of provinces for identifying and providing education stipends to the eligible families. MoUs are aimed to forge collaboration between Ehsaas and provinces for effective implementation of education conditional cash transfers (CCT). The two MoUs were signed today at the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training in Islamabad. Federal Secretaries from the Education Ministry and Ehsaas programme also joined the ceremony along with senior officials from both the Ministries. Naveed Akbar, Director General CCT, Ehsaas and Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, Additional Secretary, Federal Ministry for Education and Professional Training signed the MoU. From NCHD, Hassan Baig from NCHD signed the MoU.

## Govt to launch emergency helpline 911

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan Monday said the government would launch the Universal Pakistan Emergency Helpline 911 to control crimes. The Prime Minister was given an update about the Universal Pakistan Emergency Helpline during a meeting with the officers of ministries of interior, information technology and telecommunication. Minister for Interior Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, Special Assistant to Prime Minister Dr. Shehbaz Gill, Secretary Interior, Chairman Pakistan Telecommunication Authority, Chairman NADRA, Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Director General National Telecommunication Corporation, Director General National Information Technology Board and others attended the meeting. The prime minister was told that all the formalities including coordination among provinces was completed and the helpline would be ready for formal inauguration by the first week of October 2021. The prime minister instructed the relevant officials that all hurdles for launching the service should be removed. He stressed that protection of life and property of people was basic responsibility of the government.

## ZTBL launches kisan khushhal scheme

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Zarai Taraqati Bank Ltd (ZTBL) has launched Kisan Khushhal Scheme (KKS) aimed at enabling farmers to get maximum loan benefits with minimum mark-up. The KKS will help farmers get timely provision of agriculture credit to meet real needs of the farming community for crop input besides getting easy access towards credit with facility of one-time documentation for three years. The salient feature of the KKS is that it provides multiple operations of withdrawal and repayment facility to farmers or borrowers thus enabling them to withdraw money according to their needs and repay loan as and when finances are available with them. In a press statement, Arshad Hassan Awan, Head Credit ZTB said that it is a marvelous scheme that provides loan and guidance simultaneously to farmers. It enables the farmers to withdraw need-based amount out of the total sanctioned loan limit and the mark-up will be charged on the amount withdrawn by the farmer," he added. Under the KKS, it is the discretion of a farmer to use the entire limit or in partial amounts as required to them and similarly repay the liability loan account as per the cash flow, he added.

## 10,919 fine tickets issued over major violations

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) has issued 10,919 fine tickets to road users over major violations of traffic rules during the last week, a police spokesman said. He said that special campaign is underway to check violations while various squads headed by Senior Superintendent of Police (Traffic) Syed Karar Hussain were performing duties at main roads of the city and taking action against the violators. During the last week, a police spokesman said that action was taken against 2,679 motorists over lane-violation, 1,337 motorists for not fastening seat belt during drive, 493 motorists for using mobile during drive and 3,792 motorcyclists for not using helmets. Likewise, 154 road users were fined over violations of speed limit, 191 over wrong parking, 900 for having vehicles with tinted glasses, 1076 for having fancy number plates on vehicles and 153 for not having driving licenses. – APP

## Briefs

## Winder Dam to be completed in 4 years

ISLAMABAD: Winder Dam project would be completed in 4 years costing Rs.13 billion in Lasbela district of Balochistan. Completion of the dam would be increased ground level water and reduce shortage of the water in the area, said an official of the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) while talking to APP on Monday.

He said that the Winder Dam would have 54,000 acre feet water storage and 10,000 acres of land would be irrigated in the area adding that agriculture and livestock would be progressed in the area after completion of the dam.

He said with the positive efforts of the present Federal and provincial government's project was approved on March 16, 2020 which was previously pending since 2009 due to lack of funds.

"About 54,000 acre feet of water storage capacity will be created and more than 10,000 acres of land will be irrigated from the conclusion of the Winder Dam", he said.

He said water supply to the lands from the dam through canal could also be ensured. Replying to a question, he said that Rs.1 billion would be saved in the construction of the project keeping in view the austerity measures of the central government. - APP

## IRSA releases 251330 cusecs of water

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) Monday released 251330 Cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 243530 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in the Indus River at Tarbela Dam was 1547.68 feet, which was 155.58 feet higher than its dead level 1392 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 179300 and 143900 cusecs respectively.

The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1199.40 feet, which was 150.06 feet higher than its dead level of 149.04 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 17290 and 29390 Cusecs respectively.

## AIOU announces second phase admission

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University has announced the schedule of admissions for the autumn semester 2021. Admission for the second phase will start from September 1. The educational programs offered in this phase will include University Teacher Training Programs, BA (Associate Degree), and BS (ODL Mode) programs.

Matriculation, FA and I.Com admissions offered in the first phase will continue till September 6. It is pertinent to mention here that the university has shifted its overall affairs from manual to automation. Under the digitalization policy, all the admissions will take place online. Admission forms and prospectuses will be available on the university's website www.aiou.edu.pk from September 1.

AIOU has introduced 34 educational programs for international students, in which admissions for Matric and FA programs will continue till September 6, while admissions for BS, B.Ed, Post Graduate Diploma, and BBA programs will start from September 1.

Overseas Pakistanis residing in any country of the world can take admission in these programs. Apart from Pakistanis, citizens of other countries are also eligible for admission to these educational programs. Admission forms and prospectuses for all the programs will be available on the University's website from September 1. - APP

## Call to stop irrigation water supplies from Khanpur dam

The water level of Khanpur Reservoir is nearly 1938 feet which is much less than its maximum conservation level of 1982 feet

ZUBAIR AHMAD

RAWALPINDI: Authorities concerned of Khanpur dam have been requested to stop irrigation water supplies from Khanpur dam and the water supply for twin cities (Rawalpindi and Islamabad) should be given priority. According to a Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) spokesman, it has been noticed that the monsoon season has almost ended however, the water level of Khanpur Reservoir is nearly 1938 feet which is much less than its maximum conservation

level of 1982 feet.

A similar, sort of situation also persists at the Simly Dam Reservoir wherein the presently available storage is expected to last within the next 48 days even with a 50 percent curtailed supply.

The current situation warrants that the supplies from Khanpur Dam Reservoir for the Municipal Water Supply for Islamabad and Rawalpindi should be given priority and supplies for irrigation purposes should be stopped forthwith in the light of relevant provisions of the Water at Apportionment Accord-1991 and National Water Policy-2018.

He informed that Capital Development Authority (CDA) had written a letter to the Executive Engineer/In-charge Khanpur Dam project, Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA), District Haripur, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to take immediate action in this regard otherwise; there would be no water from Khanpur Dam Reservoir for all beneficiaries especially for Municipal Water Supplies of Islamabad and Rawalpindi after about two months.

Meanwhile, Managing Director (MD) Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) Raja Shoukat Mehmood urged the citizens to use

water judiciously as the agency may face water shortage due to short supply of water from dams. He directed the officers concerned to make all possible arrangements to ensure water supply in affected areas utilizing all available resources. He said, most affected areas of the city would be Pirwadhai, Dhoke Hassu, Dhoke Matkal, Shamsabad, Sadiqabad, Muslim Town, and some areas of Khayaban-e-Sir Syed.

He informed that the underground water table in most of these areas had also dropped due to which, normal water supply from the tube wells could not be ensured.

He appealed to the citizens to conserve water and avoid injudicious use of water. The toll-free number of WASA 1334 could be used to give information about damaged water supply pipelines, he added. "Minor things like fixing a leaking toilet flush, a tap, or a pipeline could save millions of gallons of clean water daily," he said.

On a larger scale, car wash and horticulture nurseries should use recycled water, the MD added.

While water utility services were making efforts to provide clean drinking water, it was also the duty of consumers to use water carefully, he said.

## PAL to organize Jashn-e-Azadi seminar

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL) would organize an online Jashn-e-Azadi National seminar titled "Expression of Pakistanian in Balochi Language" on September 2. Eminent scholar Dr. Mujahid Qasim Baloch and Prof. Dr. Zinat Sana will preside over the seminar whereas Dr. Wahid Bakhsh Buzdar will be chief guest on the occasion. Renowned writers and scholars Dr. Hamid Baloch, Karim Bakhsh Zawraj Buzdar will be guest of honour, said a news release issued here. Chairman PAL Dr. Yousaf Khushk, eminent scholar Dr. Tahir Hakeem, Rakshanda Taj, Tariq Rahim, Shakoor Zahid, Nasreen Hussain Baloch and Tanveer Wadar will shed light on various aspects of the topic. - APP

## Pakistan, Kazakhstan discuss academic cooperation

Ambassador Yerzhan visit Foreign Service Academy

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan Yerzhan Kistafin visited the Foreign Service Academy, Islamabad, where he met with the Director General of Academy, Mr. Zahid Nasrullah Khan.

Mr. Khan briefed about the activities and rich history of the Academy, including co-operation with Kazakhstan. He expressed his intention to further strengthening partnership relations with the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

During the meeting, the sides discussed the current state and prospects for further development of co-operation between Kazakh-



Following the meeting, the interlocutors agreed to organize a number of events on the eve of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between two countries.

## Envoy calls for promoting Pak trade with OIC countries

DNA

ISLAMABAD: OIC region is the largest bloc in the world with a membership of 57 countries having a collective population of over 1.5 billion people and GDP of over US\$ 4.5 trillion, therefore, the Pakistani business community should focus on OIC countries to promote its trade and exports. This was stated by Ambassador Rizwan Saeed Sheikh, Pakistan's Perma-

nent Representative to the OIC Jeddah while interacting with entrepreneurs during his visit to the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI). Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan President, Fatma Azim Senior Vice President, Abdul Rehman Khan Vice President ICCI, Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi, Aslam Khokhar, Saeed Khan, Abdul Rehman Siddiqui, Mehboob Ahmed Khan, Khalid Chaudhry and others were present at the occasion.

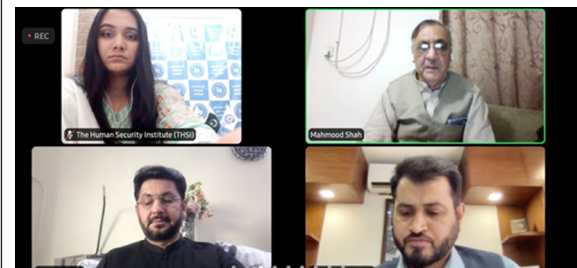
Rizwan Saeed Sheikh said there is huge potential for Pakistan to export its many products to OIC countries including rice, mangoes, dairy products, fresh vegetable & fruits, sports goods, surgical instruments, pharmaceutical products, carpets, leather products and textile items by removing trade barriers and promoting trade facilitation. He also discussed the OIC Trade Fair to be held in Pakistan in 2022 and other matters pertaining to trade,

commerce and investment in OIC Region.

Speaking at the occasion, Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, President ICCI said that Pakistan has strong political relations with all Muslim relations that should be transformed into growing trade and investment relations. He said that lack of information sharing and low level of interaction among the private sectors of Pakistan and OIC countries is the main reason behind the low level of trade that needs to be addressed. He stressed that the Pakistani government should cooperate with the private sector in increasing the level of commercial activities like holding of trade fairs and exhibitions and exchange of trade delegations between Pakistan and OIC region that would help in improving trade and exports.

Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan said that the lack of banking channels with many OIC countries also creates hurdles in payment mechanisms and increases the trade cost as the Pakistani business community has to use banking channels of third countries for trade.

## Experts warn of crisis in Afghanistan



ARJU GHAZVNI

ISLAMABAD: The human Security Institute organized a webinar on prospects of Human Security in Afghanistan on Monday. A wide array of stakeholders had joined as speakers especially Amb. Asif Durrani, Dr Salma Malik, Dr Husnul Amin, Brig Mehmood Shah and the Chief Guest Mr Saleem Safi.

Ambassador Durrani emphasized upon the importance of Afghanistan being a neighboring country that there will be a spillover effect in terms of hostility, honor and revenge. Dr Salma mostly focused on the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan by explaining that how children, women and especially refugees are affected by this political vacuum created in Afghanistan. Dr Husnul Amin

also shed light on humanity being compromised by freedom of social life or political freedom. Brig Mehmood Shah highlighted that there must be no external interference in the politics of the Afghan Taliban to peacefully settle the issue. Saleem Safi pointed out some ignored areas by sharing his views on the celebrations of Taliban control in Afghanistan.

He explained that there are two possibilities one is the recognition and the other is non-recognition of the Taliban internationally. The latter case would result in two ways first, it would be suicide for Pakistan and second, the Taliban might reverse in their socio-political affairs. The director-general THSI Mr Rafique Ahmed Qureshi concluded the event by saying that a great debate of political settlement is going on.

## Lok Virsa uploads musical night's videos

ISLAMABAD: National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage -Lok Virsa has uploaded the musical night's videos of 'ten-day Lok Mela 2020' on its official websites for its audience.

Executive Director Lok Virsa Talha Ali told APP that the previous old videos were not in a proper form so they have uploaded it again in full form without any interruption for amusement of the audience.

He said people would visit the official website of Lok Virsa to entertain from the melodious performances of the musical nights during the Lok Mela.

He said that in view of a holistic role of cultural heritage, Lok Virsa was currently planning to devise an integrated strategy to strengthen and reform the organisational capacity for coping up with the 21st century challenges in line with its mandate and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Talha Ali said it was mandate of Lok Virsa mandate to promote cultural heritage.

He said a reformed Lok Virsa would be helpful for transforming and introducing culture of social inclusion, promoting performing arts, strengthening peace and nurturing soft image of country domestically as well as internationally. - APP

## Govt notifies transfer, posting of officers

ISLAMABAD: The Federal government on Monday notified the transfer and posting of high-ranking officers.

According to a notification issued by the Establishment Division, Momin Agha, a BS-21 officer of Pakistan Administrative Service, presently awaiting posting in Establishment Division, is transferred and posted as Officer on Special Duty (OSD) in Establishment Division, with immediate effect, and until further orders.

He has hereby entrusted the task of Director General, National Crisis Information Management Cell (NCIMC), reporting to Secretary Interior Division, with immediate effect, and until further orders, the notification said.

While, Zia-ur-Rehman (OMG/BS-18), Section Officer, Establishment Division, Malik Ishaq Khan (OMG/BS-18), Section Officer, Economic Affairs Division is transferred and posted as Officer on Special Duty, Establishment Division with effect from 30th August 2021 to 13th May 2023 to study Master in Public Administration at Columbia University; USA, under Joint Japan World Bank Scholarship. The government of Pakistan has no objection to his proceeding abroad for the scholarship and not bear any financial responsibility in this regard said the notification, the notification added. - APP



## NHMP committed to serve commuters

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General, National Highway and Motorway (NHMP) Police Dr. Syed Kaleem Imam on Monday said NHMP was taking steps to give every possible assistance to the commuters. While addressing an online Open Court (Khuli Kachery), he said NHMP was rendering services round the clock to ensure safe and comfortable journey to commuters. He said NHMP believed in equal and fair application of law, strict enforcement on highways and motorways to regulate the flow of traffic, said a news release.

He said it was their mission to promote safety on Motorways and Highways through effective enforcement and provision of assistance to road users by applying highest standards of courtesy, integrity and professionalism. He said officers of motor-

way police visited different offices, factories, institutions to create awareness on road/traffic discipline and road safety.

The IG National Highway and Motorway said due to tiring efforts of the force, accidents on national highways and motorways has reduced by 44 percent as compared to last year.

He requested the commuters to maintain safe distance between vehicles to avoid accidents and to refrain from overtaking where prohibited.

He asked the commuter to always use helmets while riding motorcycle, while advising domestic and commercial drivers of light as well as heavy transport vehicles he said, "make sure you have a first aid box and fire extinguishers in your vehicle, fasten your seat belt before driving, avoid use of mobile phone while driving".

He further said over speeding and over loading were the main causes of accidents.

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## Strict SOPs for Covid-19

**G**IVEN the spike in Covid-19 cases across the country and the resulting strain on the healthcare system, the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) on Sunday decided to expand the scope of SOPs. Earlier on August 2, the NCOC had revised SOP guidelines for 13 cities, but considering how positivity rates are in double digits in several cities, the decision to extend stricter regulations to 14 more cities is the right one. Among other regulations, the government has announced that commercial activities—barring essential services—will be allowed till 8pm. Though markers will remain closed twice a week, the centre has given the option to the provinces to decide their own days. This approach of factoring in local preferences and needs must be applauded.

The situation needs to be taken seriously by all stakeholders as during the last 24 hours, 120 people lost their lives and 4,191 people tested positive around the country. The NCOC's latest figures reveal that the tally of confirmed cases has ascended to level of 11,48,572 with the positivity rate standing at 6.83 percent. Hospitals all over are buckling under the pressure of catering to thousands of critical patients with the oxygen supply being stressed and staff being required to work overtime. To ease the pressure on the health sector, the government must make arrangements at the earliest to increase their capacity.

The issue is further compounded by the fact that SOP compliance is at an all time low. The trend among the public is to remain vigilant for a handful of days at most upon the request of authorities, only to return to the previous patterns once the situation improves marginally. It is imperative to drive home the realization that some base level of SOPs will now have to be a permanent fixture in our lives for the foreseeable future. Authorities should consider imposing penalties or pursuing disciplinary action to deter the public from neglecting SOPs. Just recently the government reached the milestone of administering over 50 million vaccine doses. In the absence of urgent measures, the gains of Pakistan's inoculation campaign could be compromised and the government will be compelled to impose a complete lockdown.

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## HEC testing unnecessary

**U**NIVERSITIES in Punjab have rejected the Higher Education Commission's (HEC) abrupt decision to incorporate the Undergraduate Studies Aptitude Test (USAT) in the admission process, and rightfully so. Adding a generic test that is only going to lengthen the already tedious process of admissions is supremely unnecessary. This belief is further supported by the fact that the HEC made these tests optional, instead of mandatory, after facing immense backlash from the public and universities themselves.

The USAT was introduced suddenly without any prior consultation with universities. They remained in the dark until the Education Testing Council (ETC) confirmed it through their social media accounts. Even if they were to accept the decision, it would have simply been too late as undergrad admissions had already been opened and there was little time to organise provincial-level testing. For a government body to introduce such policies on a whim and without factoring in the views of the major stakeholders—i.e., the universities and the students—is deplorable. Surely, a more responsible approach is expected and desired.

Additionally, the admission process is already comprehensive and most universities already conduct preliminary testing before an admission is awarded. In fact, the tests taken are specific to the subjects that students want to pursue and are a true reflection of the aptitude in the field they are going to pursue their professional careers in. In the face of this, a general aptitude test seems rather useless because it is not bringing any new insight to the table. Furthermore, it defeats the purpose of giving official board or Cambridge exams which are already meant to test their general aptitude across a diverse range of subjects. All stakeholders have rightly questioned the need for the USAT.

Even if we were to accept that the USAT is important, the disparity in the quality of education offered across the province would ensure that the test advantages those who can afford better education over others. It is simply not as effective of a metric to judge aptitude as individualised university entry tests are.

# Why America lost the war in Afghanistan

Ishtiaq Ahmad



Exclusive for Islamabad POST

The hasty US withdrawal from Afghanistan and the Taliban's swift victory in Kabul has damaged American credibility as a global power; according to the UN, the combat has produced 2.7 million more Afghan refugees this year alone, and at least 1,000 Afghan civilians have died in the past month

**T**UESDAY, August 31, marks the D-Day for the end of 20-year American intervention in Afghanistan. The hasty US withdrawal from Afghanistan and the Taliban's swift victory in Kabul has damaged American credibility as a global power. It has particularly exposed two bitter facts: first, the fragility of the Afghan regime that the US and NATO had propped up in the past two decades; and, second, even more so, a strategic miscalculation of epic proportions, for which the blame rests entirely upon

the Americans and their Western allies. The 300,000 or so strong Afghan National Army failed to resist the advancing Taliban combatants, despite the fact that it was trained by the US and NATO militaries at a staggering cost of \$83 billion. Incompetence and corruption may have plagued its ranks, but why the Afghan army lost the morale to fight is the real question to ask.

All fingers point to the US decision to withdraw all foreign forces from Afghanistan under the agreement it unilaterally concluded with the Taliban in February last year, thereby delegitimizing the Afghan government, demoralizing the Afghan army and emboldening the Taliban. The UN twice warned about the continuing Taliban nexus with Al Qaeda, which they had pledged to renounce under the accord. Yet, the Biden administration went ahead with the withdrawal decision, setting August 31 as a deadline, while denying the US air support to the Afghan army in the process. Now, with the US suffering a humiliating defeat, the war-ravaged nation faces acute uncertainty about its future fate under the Taliban. This puts in jeopardy all the proclaimed social, economic and political gains Afghanistan has made in the past 20 years. The neighbouring countries like Pakistan are particularly worried, as it shares the longest border with Afghanistan straddled with Pashtun population and has paid a great price, both human and economic, due to the successive rounds of Afghan warfare since 1979. Since October 2011, when the War on Terror in Afghanistan began, the United States has spent close to \$1 trillion in Afghanistan. The Brown University's 'Cost of Wars Project' also estimates that 2,300 US troops have died and 20,000 of them wounded in this war. The scale of Afghan deaths is far larger: well over quarter of a million, including government security forces, Afghan civilians and Taliban combatants. According to the UN, the combat has produced 2.7 million more Afghan refugees this year alone, and at least 1,000 Afghan civilians have died in the past month. So, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan, was spot on when he told the PBS New Hour while the Afghan debacle was still unfolding that "the United States has really messed it up in Afghanistan," pin-pointing what is perhaps the greatest irony of the longest war in American history. In his opinion, the US had entered the war without a clear plan, then failed to talk when it had maximum troops and thereafter negotiated peace from a position of weakness. However, the reasons for the American failure in Afghanistan go much deeper in history, including several missed opportunities and strategic miscal-

culations since the time the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan in 1989.

The first strategic mistake was to abandon Afghanistan after the Soviet withdrawal, which led to infighting among the warring Afghan factions and allowed the Arab Mujahideen to coalesce around the Al Qaeda leader, Osama bin Laden. Eventually, as former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton subsequently confessed, this mistake paved the way for 9/11. The US regional disengagement also prevented progress on several opportunities for Afghan reconciliation during this time.

Once the Taliban rose to power, the United States made the second mistake of misperceiving the Taliban and the Al Qaeda as similar entities with a shared agenda of committing international terrorism. Yes, this was indeed the declared goal of the Al Qaeda. But the Taliban were a local militant movement that wanted to rule Afghanistan, and there were serious divisions in their leadership ranks about whether to host Osama bin Laden or not.

The United States would not abandon this presumed Taliban-Al Qaeda nexus for years after the fall of the Taliban regime. Hence, not only the opportunity for resolving the bin Laden issue with the Taliban was missed before 9/11, the 2001 US-sponsored Geneva talks also produced an interim administration that was not genuinely representative of Afghanistan's complex ethno-religious makeup. A weakness that would ultimately contribute to the Taliban's resurgence in 2006.

Thirdly, for half a decade after the Geneva accord, when the writ of the new Afghan government was sufficiently established and the Taliban were at their weakest moment, no effort was made to reconcile with their pliable leaders. Eventually, some Taliban leaders, including the ex-foreign minister and ex-ambassador to Islamabad, would reside in Kabul, who could have facilitated the reconciliation process before 2006. Instead, the US opened a new battle front by attacking Iraq in 2003. This was a major military distraction from the theatre of Afghanistan.

Frustrated with the Taliban insurgency thereafter, the Obama administration opted for the surge of US troops up to 150,000 as part of the AFGPAK strategy in 2009. Prime Minister Khan, in his interview, considers this to be the most appropriate time when the US could have negotiated from a position of strength. In fact, the 2010 London conference on Afghanistan did propose reconciliation with the Taliban, but without any tangible outcome. The real mistake that the US then made, the fourth

in a row, was when the AFGPAK strategy paradoxically linked the option of US troops surge with their withdrawal by the end of 2014.

The 2012 Strategic Partnership Agreement, and the NATO summits at Lisbon and Chicago as well as international donors' summit in Tokyo held in the same year, provided further indication of the growing American weariness and impatience with the Afghan war. Even if strong commitments were made for Afghan security and development in the decade beyond 2014 till 2024, the stress on the Afghan security forces' ownership of the war strengthened the Taliban's resolve to fight.

Henceforth, the Taliban would not come on board and fail the Karzai regime's peace efforts through the Afghanistan Peace and Integration Program and the Afghan High Peace Council. A Joint Peace Commission with Pakistan could not produce any result. The Americans also held direct talks with Mullah Omar's envoy in Germany, but they also quickly floundered on the issue of prisoners' swap. With a nod from the US, the Taliban set up an office in Doha to sort out differences, first with the Karzai regime and subsequently with the Ghani government – but only as a means to buy time and expand military clout ahead of the end of international security commitment in Afghanistan.

This brings us to the final phase of the Afghan debacle in August 2021, wherein the US has essentially reaped the whirlwind of its final strategic blunder waging the Afghan war. Clearly, in the rush to save face from the lost war, the US failed to make its military drawdown conditional to the declaration of ceasefire by the Taliban. Instead, it chose to legitimize this militia of religious zealots, thereby paving the way for their reconquest of Afghanistan.

What happens next, we do not need to wonder: the mayhem inside Afghanistan, its horrific implications for Pakistan and the region, extremism and terrorism once again reaching the world afar, forcing it to act again from the start. So, in this sordid tale of Afghanistan, we may see the history repeating itself for worse, simply because its global stakeholder hastily walked away in denial of the impending disaster.

Or, we can wish that all of the above does not happen. There are so many preconditions, or ifs and buts, in the way. There are things that the Taliban are expected to do, and there are things the international community is obliged to commit. Can something good come out of the current Afghan mess? But that's a different story.

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# Afghanistan; trade and development

Arooj Fatima Kazmi

"It is inevitable that struggles which involve the very existence of peoples have had and will continue to have, as long and as often as they are repeated, a profound effect upon the nature of men, their attitudes and institutions," noted Robert Park, a famous American sociologist, in his 1941 article 'The Social Function of War.' The present-day situation in Afghanistan echoes the observation

**T**HE withdrawal of the US-led forces without establishing a sustainable governance system in Afghanistan has created an uncertain situation. The Taliban takeover has so far been peaceful and well-administered. They will need international recognition and support. The uncertain situation can either become chaotic or lead to an unprecedented sovereign era of development. Taliban face the challenge of rehabilitating institutions, building infrastructure and human resources and establish

good governance. Effective mechanisms shall have to be emplaced to circumvent the country's relapse into conflict. Taliban cannot afford to pursue peace through another war, believably an unending one. Amidst sound and fury around the Afghan issue, the cost of turmoil borne by the Afghan people is often ignored. Social, psychological and economic ramifications of a downturn in Afghanistan may spill over to the neighbourhood. Common citizens just seek a decent life and care less about either an inclusive or other government. Simple and timely interventions by the Taliban can obviate another wave of social catastrophe.

The promotion of trade would fit well into any strategy to build a better Afghanistan. Trade is contingent on the internal peace and cooperation of bordering States. External stakeholders must remain focused on empowering Afghan people in reaching an intra-Afghan settlement and trade promotion. Pakistan, China, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan have their roles clearly cut out in this regard. History is replete with empirical evidence to suggest that better cross-border economic flows reduce conflict. Trade promoting ventures inter alia fully operational border, easy procedures and the flow of goods, services, labour, technology and capital ensure improved communication and understanding among societies. Regional forums like ASEAN that are built around such ventures, proportionally increase the appetite for maintaining cooperation and ensuring stable relations.

Unfortunately, South Asia has not been able to build ASEAN-type economic connectivity. Interestingly, Asia Pacific thrives within an approachable and cooperative economic environment. South Asia constitutes nearly 24 per cent of the world's population and is resource-rich. However, the largest South Asian country has created a climate that is inimical for regional trade. India's hegemonic aspirations have only drawn a deeper disconnect between member States. To alleviate their security dilemmas, India's neighbours divert limited resources—needed for development—to invest in defence. Conversely, India uses China as a bogey to justify its military build-up and yet Beijing remains New Delhi's largest trading partner. India can only become worthy of the so-called 'net security provider' title if it becomes conscious of domestic development and regional stability. Such an unstable situation in land-locked Afghanistan's Eastern neighbourhood is an overload on its predicament of a stability lift-off. Its untapped natural resources and its strategic location in Central Asia remain its bane rather

than a boon.

It was easier for the Taliban to return to power in twenty years but the real struggle has just begun. Let's grant them a victory over the US. But can they win over themselves and drag Afghanistan out of its quagmire? They have shown pragmatism so far but governance is an animal difficult to tame. For the economy and trade to prosper, Pak-Afghan synergy is one of the vital first steps. With a 2,000-kilometers-long contiguous border, Pakistan's sits centrally for transregional trade. According to the World Bank's country snapshot, Pakistan is Afghanistan's second-largest import (US\$299 million) and third-largest export (US\$1,103 million) market.

Afghan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA) was bilaterally signed in 2010 and came into effect in 2011 for ten years. According to the FBR, around eight million Afghan transit trade containers passed through Pakistan carrying goods. Following its expiry in February this year, the formal revision of APTTA remained stuck in the political dynamics of the Pak-Afghan relationship of that stage. There is a need to revive it. Business representatives in both countries mutually established Pakistan Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), networking Chambers of Commerce of Karachi, Chaman, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Afghanistan. This private initiative jointly recognised and licensed trade entity focused on bringing their business communities together.

According to the evaluation of PAJCCI, trade remains hostage to negligence and trade deficit. If there is a conducive environment, trade can potentially jump between US\$5 to 10 billion. During PM Imran Khan's visit to Kabul in November 2020, both sides issued a shared vision to support peace and stability amongst them and the wider region. India's revocation of the special status of IIOJ&K in August 2019 and Pakistan's decision to halt trade with India therefore, closed the eastern market routes for Afghanistan. In 2020, Advisor to the PM on commerce and investment expressed interest in signing a preferential trade agreement with Afghanistan. He also expressed interest in facilitating Afghan transit trade through Gwadar and Bin Qasim ports. The establishment of economic zones and tech-based initiatives was also on the agenda. These can be explored again with the new government in Kabul.

Likewise, Pakistan and Uzbekistan exchanged goods through Afghanistan in May 2021 for the first time under technical and financial support from USAID. If the US

doesn't sanction Afghanistan, USAID can continue to support this initiative. During their first trilateral meeting in February this year, officials from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Uzbekistan agreed on the construction of a trans-Afghan railroad. They signed a roadmap aiming at linking Mazar-e-Sharif in Afghanistan. Construction of the Mazar-e-Sharif section was planned to start in September. Similarly, Tashkent had shown interest in Pakistan's ports. Pakistani goods, such as construction materials, food articles, pharmaceuticals, and fertilizers, will also find good markets in these countries. Border management is one issue and trade facilitation is another. While staying focused on both, Pakistan is working on new initiatives and strengthening the old ones. The creation of economic zones and industrial states like Raskhaki and investment incentives is intended to improve business. Sporadic inter-governmental and border issues must not upset the flow of people and trade goods across the Pak-Afghan border.

Regional geopolitics has been affecting trade. In past, the India factor worked to its detriment. India had been side-stepping Pakistan while promoting trade with Afghanistan. Several initiatives included the New Delhi-Kabul air freight corridor launched in 2016 and efforts for enhanced bilateral trade through Iran's Chabahar port until India was dropped in July 2020 from the 628-kilometres-long Chabahar-Zahedan rail project. It was to be extended to Zaranj across the border in Afghanistan.

Trade is central to ensuring win-win international relations because it improves productivity and integration into larger value chains. The contemporary dynamics of intra- and inter-State conflict and violence lie partly in the power struggles of conflicting parties. However, gaps within systems based on weak governance lapsed development, and socio-cultural inequalities also fuel conflict and violence. International peace means peace within nations and their peoples. A country's trade statistics work to foretell its economic strength and eventually lead to political stability within and outside its borders.

In sum, the Taliban must take a fresh and sustainable approach to map out the mainstreaming of Afghanistan regionally. This calls for robust for sustainable development in Afghanistan and cooperative mechanisms with other States. The peace in Afghanistan and the region shall continue to depend on it.

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## Briefs

## Rockets fired at Kabul airport

FROM PAGE 01  
The United States said it carried out an air strike on Sunday night in Kabul on a car bomb. That was followed on Monday morning by rockets being fired at the airport. Meanwhile, on Monday Taliban spokesman said that Daesh will not resort to any attacks once US forces leave as they will have no justification to do so. He said they were fully ready to take over airport control after August 31. The Taliban leader added that, "They have their own agendas and [they] try to implement them by any possible means." He said he played his due role for the people and focused on peace talks. "The head of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan declared general amnesty. We must put the past behind," Haqqani observed. "The prejudice injected into people's mind during all these years needs to be removed," he added. The Pentagon spokesman Kirby in a briefing on Monday made it clear that the US will continue targeting its enemies even after the withdrawal.

## All inclusive govt in Afghanistan only option

FROM PAGE 01  
adding that over 2000 people have been evacuated from Kabul through Pakistan International Airlines. He said arrangements have been made for refugees at the border. The minister said a comprehensive strategy has been formulated with regard to Afghan refugees as the government did not want to repeat the 1979 situation. It would not allow the refugees to move inside Pakistan. The world, he said, should come forward to help Pakistan for meeting the challenge. He said the world did not pay heed to Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's advice, adding, the former Afghan President Ashraf Ghani did not hold general elections in the country which resulted in present crisis due to lack of the consensus government.

He said that two tracks including the troika plus including Russia, China, US and Pakistan and the other track comprising regional countries Turkey, Pakistan, Central Asia and Iran should take the leadership. The minister said Pakistan and Turkey were in close cooperation on the issue as they were partners in peace in Afghanistan.

## First PIA cargo flight lands in...

FROM PAGE 01  
United Nations briefing, as reported by Reuters. "Right now because of security concerns and several other operational considerations, Kabul airport is not going to be an option for the next week at least," he said, speaking from Cairo. "One of the problems we have in Afghanistan right now is there is no civil aviation authority functioning, but we are working with Pakistan particularly in the context of Mazar-Sharif airport. Because they can work with contacts on the ground so that all the necessary steps to land an aircraft, to land a cargo aircraft, can be put in place," Brennan said. Insurance rates for flying into Afghanistan had "skyrocketed at prices we have never seen before" in the 12 hours since the blast, Brennan said.

## No Salah as WC group phase kicks off

AGENCIES  
JOHANNESBURG: Liverpool star Mohamed Salah will be a notable absentee due to coronavirus travel restrictions when the group phase of qualifying in Africa for the 2022 World Cup final kicks off on Wednesday. Salah plays for Egypt, who are on the UK travel 'red list', and he would have to quarantine for 10 days when he returns from his homeland, sidelining him for four fixtures. Both world body FIFA and African confederation CAF have pleaded, without success, for British PM Johnson to exempt African footballers on WC duty.



PESHAWAR: Pakistan Army hockey team posing for a picture after winning the Inter Services Hockey Championship. – DNA

## Qatar lauded for its role in Afghanistan evacuations

Qatar has also reportedly been asked by the Taliban to provide civilian technical assistance at Kabul's international airport once the US military withdrawal is complete on Tuesday. Authorities in Qatar have not commented on the reports

## FOREIGN DESK

DOHA: Qatar has played an outsized role in US efforts to evacuate tens of thousands of people from Afghanistan. Now it is being asked to help shape what comes next for Afghanistan because of its ties with both Washington and the Taliban, which is in charge in Kabul. Qatar will attend a virtual meeting on Monday hosted by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken to discuss a coordinated approach for the days ahead, as the US completes its withdrawal from Afghanistan following the Taliban takeover. The meeting will also include Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Turkey,

the United Kingdom, the European Union and NATO. Qatar has also reportedly been asked by the Taliban to provide civilian technical assistance at Kabul's international airport once the US military withdrawal is complete on Tuesday. Authorities in Qatar have not commented on the reports. Meanwhile, international UN agencies are asking Qatar for help and support in delivering aid to Afghanistan. This role was somewhat unexpected. The nation, which shares a land border with Saudi Arabia and a vast gas field under the Gulf with Iran, was supposed to be a transit point for a few thousand people airlifted from Afghanistan over a timeline of several months.

After the swift Taliban takeover of Kabul on August 15, the US looked to Qatar to help with the evacuation of tens of thousands in a chaotic and hurried airlift. In the end, nearly 40 percent of all evacuees were moved out via Qatar. International media outlets also asked Qatar for help with their staff evacuations. The US said on Saturday that 113,500 people had been evacuated from Afghanistan since August 14. Qatar says a little more than 43,000 transited through the country. Qatar's role in the evacuations reflects its position as host of the Middle East's biggest US military base, but also its decision years ago to host the Taliban's political leadership in exile – the Taliban office in Doha

was opened in 2013 "by request of the US government" – giving it some sway with the armed group. Assistant Qatari Foreign Minister Lolwa al-Khater acknowledged the political gains scored by Qatar in the past weeks but rejected the idea that Qatar's efforts were purely strategic. "If anyone assumes that it's only about political gains, believe me, there are ways to do PR that are way easier than risking our people there on the ground, way easier than us having sleepless nights literally for the past two weeks, way less complicated than spending our time looking after every kid and every pregnant woman," she told The Associated Press. For some of the most sensitive rescue

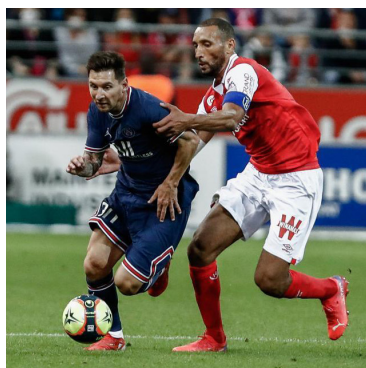
efforts in Afghanistan, Qatar conducted the operation with just a few hundred troops and its own military aircraft. Qatar evacuated a girls' boarding school, an all-girls robotics team and journalists working for international media, among others. Qatar's ambassador accompanied convoys of buses through a gauntlet of Taliban checkpoints in Kabul and past various Western military checkpoints at the airport, where massive crowds had gathered, desperate to flee. In all, al-Khater said Qatar secured passage to the airport for some 3,000 people and airlifted as many as 1,500 after receiving requests from international organisations and vetting their names. She said Qatar was unique-

ly positioned because of its ability to speak to various parties on the ground and its willingness to escort people through Taliban-controlled Kabul. "What many people don't realise is that this trip is not a phone call to Taliban," she said. "You have checkpoints by the US side, by the British side, by the NATO side, by the Turkish side ... and we have to juggle with all of these variables and factors." The Taliban has promised amnesty to all those who remain in Afghanistan. Still, many of those desperate to get out – including civil society activists, those who had worked for Western armies and women afraid to lose hard-won rights – say they do not trust the armed group.

## Messi makes PSG debut as Mbappe steals the show

## SPORTS DESK

PARIS:Lionel Messi came on as a substitute to make his Paris Saint-Germain debut on Sunday but Kylian Mbappe stole the show by scoring both goals in a 2-0 win against Reims in Ligue 1. Messi, wearing the number 30 jersey, came off the bench in the 66th minute to replace Neymar at the Stade-Auguste-Delaune, where fans in the sell-out 21,000 crowd had earlier chanted his name as he emerged to warm up. The Argentine had not played since arriving in Paris from Barcelona almost three weeks ago, his last appearance in any game dating back to the Copa America final on July 11, when he led his country to victory against Brazil. The six-time Ballon d'Or winner will have to wait for his first goal with his new club, and his first start, which



could come when PSG host Clermont in their next match on September 11. "I'm very happy that he made his debut. It was very important for him," PSG coach Mauricio Pochettino told broadcaster Amazon Prime after Messi's low-key first appearance in a PSG shirt. "He is still far away from

his best form but he has been training well and he will be fit in the next two weeks, after the international break and, yes, we are waiting for the best from him." The week leading up to this game had been dominated not by Messi but by talk of Mbappe's future, with Real Madrid reportedly having two offers for the France World Cup-winning striker rejected. The latest of these offers was understood to be worth 180 million euros (\$212m), an astronomical amount for a player whose contract expires at the end of the season and who will be free to negotiate a deal with a new club in January without PSG being able to get a transfer fee. That amount is also equal to what PSG paid Monaco in 2017 to sign Mbappe, who was clearly eager to go out on a high if this was to be his final appearance for the club.

## US, allies won't accept an inclusive govt in Afghanistan

KABUL: Even if an inclusive government is formed in Afghanistan, the United States and its allies would never accept it, says former Afghan prime minister and Hezb-e-Islami leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. Speaking to Pakistani journalists in Kabul, Hekmatyar said that consultation sessions for the formation of the government will be held after August 31 – the deadline for the US exit. "The council formed earlier will now discuss the issue of the formation of a new government with the Taliban," he revealed, adding that the idea of setting up an interim government was suggested earlier, and according to the suggestions, interim heads of institutions are now being appointed.

"We want the Taliban government to work effectively, and therefore we suggest that the Afghan people should work together to help the new government," Hekmatyar said. Answering questions regarding India, Hekmatyar mentioned a video that went viral of a former Indian soldier in which he was asking India to give money to Ahmad Shah Masood and support him. He said: "Peace in Afghanistan is in the interest of all other countries including India. India, like Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan, should acknowledge the mistakes done in the past and declare non-interference." "It is their [Indian government's] responsibility to assure the Afghan people that India will not interfere in the matters of Kabul." Gulbuddin Hekmatyar added that a French Jew named Bernard has come to Panjshir. Hekmatyar said he has accompanied Ahmad Shah Masood in the past as well, and along with him, a 600-member intelligence team is also there. Shedding light on the rights of women in the Taliban government, the former premier said that dressing in line with the principles of Islamic law is permissible for women, and the Taliban should allow women to work in offices if they follow a dress code. – DNA



## So far no refugees from Afghanistan

FROM PAGE 01

Regarding any possible influx of people from Afghanistan, he said that Pakistan has "made arrangements to accommodate 3,000 people in Islamabad only," adding that "any person from any nationality, who comes to Pakistan from Afghanistan, will be granted a transit visa of 21 days." He added that as of now, 1,627 people have entered Pakistan via the air route, while over 2,100 people arrived through the land route at Torkham. "We had been expecting a huge refugee influx from Afghanistan, but not a single person came to Pakistan as a refugee." He said Pakistan Army is "the world's greatest army", adding that they had fenced the border and were keeping a close watch over the movement of people. Speaking further about developments in Afghanistan, the minister said that Pakistan had evacuated all but 30-40 citizens from the country. "Those 30-40 people want to remain in Afghanistan. They got married there and now have families. They told us they are happy in Afghanistan," he added.

The minister lashed out at India, saying that New Delhi can use militant groups to carry out subversive activities in Pakistan. He said Islamabad hoped Afghanistan would not allow its territory to be used against Pakistan. Rasheed said Pakistan was the only country in the world that had sacrificed 80,000-plus lives to establish peace in Afghanistan and the region. He censured India, saying that the "country's news channels are attempting to malign Pakistan through propaganda." While speaking about the presence of Daesh in Afghanistan, he said that Pakistan is hopeful that the Taliban would not let their soil be used against its neighbouring country. "Daesh fighters are present in Nuristan and in the mountains of Kunar," he admitted. During the press conference, the interior minister took shots at the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), saying that the Opposition's "timing and tuning" were both messed up. "Opposition should prepare for the next elections," he advised. "Their narrative will not get acceptance among the masses." Rasheed said that the Opposition was not aware of Pakistani politics, adding that they were focused on petty issues while Pakistan's politics was headed towards international matters.

## Barca win but fail to impress at home

## SPORTS DESK

MADRID: FC Barcelona beat Getafe 2-1 on Sunday in a less convincing performance from Ronald Koeman's men. Things looked to be going to plan for Barca in the second minute when Sergi Roberto opened the scoring from close range from Jordi Alba's pass. Barca's joy didn't last for long before former Barca player Sandro Ramirez leveled with a low shot from outside of the penalty area. Memphis scored what turned out to be the winning goal in the 31st minute with an impressive individual goal, working space with a step-over before firing home. Koeman's side held on for the win but failed to impress against a rival that has lost the first three games this season. Meanwhile, Atletico Madrid's home match against Villarreal was a 10pm kick-off. RayoVallecano celebrated the return of top-flight football to their Vallecas Stadium with a 4-0 thrashing of Granada. Alvaro Garcia opened the scoring in the second minute and Oscar Trejo's penalty doubled the lead 20 minutes later before Randy Nteka assured the points before the break and SantiComesana added a fourth in the 57th minute. Osasuna rallied to beat Cadiz 3-2 with two injury-time goals in a game of three penalties - all for handball. Alex Fernandez put Cadiz in front before Kike Garcia leveled for Osasuna from the spot, only for Alex to re-establish Cadiz's lead after another handball with 25 minutes remaining. The third penalty came at the start of injury time and this time Roberto Torres netted from the spot before David Garcia's far post finish in the 94th minute gave Osasuna a win that had looked unlikely moments earlier.

## NCOC allows limited crowd

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Cricket Board has announced that the National Command and Operation Centre has approved 25% crowd attendance for the upcoming Pakistan versus New Zealand series. The series, featuring three ODI and five T20Is, will be played at two venues Pindi Cricket Stadium and Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium. As many as 4,500 spectators will be able to attend the ODIs scheduled to be played on September 17, 19 and 21, the board said. Approximately 5,500 spectators will be allowed in Lahore for T20Is. The T20I series will be played between September 25 to October 3. Only spectators who are fully vaccinated and have an Immunisation Certificate for Covid-19 will be allowed entry inside the venues. "Spectators are the essence of any sport event as they create an ambience and atmosphere for the players to excel, perform and enjoy," PCB Chief Executive Wasim Khan said. "In this background, we are grateful to the NCOC for allowing the PCB to invite 25 per cent crowds for the eight matches." Following the NCOC decision, the PCB will shortly announce ticket prices and other details for the Kiwis' first tour to Pakistan in 18 years. – DNA

## Will declining consumer confidence hurt Trudeau?

The good news for Trudeau is that consumer sentiment is still at high levels. The confidence index is about 10% above its historical average. But it's trending in the wrong direction, potentially reflecting growing worries about the highly transmissible delta variant and a fourth wave of the Covid-19 pandemic

## ERIK HERTZBERG

CANADIANS reported the sharpest one-week decline in confidence since the depth of the pandemic last year, another worry for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's struggling campaign for re-election. The Bloomberg Nanos Canadian Confidence Index, a measure of the sentiment based on household polling, fell 1.6 points to 62.6 last week. That's the biggest weekly decline since April 2020. The index is down almost four points since hitting a record high in July. The weakening sentiment among households could under-

mine what has been a big advantage for Trudeau heading into the Sept. 20 election. For much of this year until now, Canadians have been feeling good about the economy and their finances. Already, Trudeau and his incumbent team have lost their lead in the polls to the main opposition Conservatives under Leader Erin O'Toole, who is running low-key campaign focused on the complete platform his party released out of the gates. Trudeau, meanwhile, got off to a rocky start after seeking the dissolution of parliament on the day Kabul fell to the Taliban ahead of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. His campaign was



also sideswiped by an inflation report that showed consumer prices increasing at the fastest pace in a decade. The Liberals have the support of 32% of voters compared to 33%

for the Conservatives and 20% for the left-leaning New Democratic Party, according to national polling averages compiled by the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. The good news for Trudeau is that consumer sentiment is still at high levels. The confidence index is about 10% above its historical average. But it's trending in the wrong direction, potentially reflecting growing worries about the highly transmissible delta variant and a fourth wave of the Covid-19 pandemic. Over the past seven days, new daily cases averaged almost 3,000, the highest level since May. Every week, Nanos Research surveys 250 Canadians for their

views on personal finances, job security and their outlook for the economy. The confidence index represents a rolling four-week average of about 1,000 responses. The share of Canadians who see the economy strengthening over the next six months fell to 37% last week, down from 54% at the beginning of July. Just over 20% of Canadians say their personal finances have improved over the past year, down from 26% last month. Canadians are also less optimistic about the housing market. About 51% say they expect home prices to increase over the next six months, which is the lowest score for that question since February.

## Briefs

## Uzbek, German FMs discuss bilateral ties

## FOREIGN DESK

TASHKENT: Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan Abdulaziz Kamilov met with Federal Foreign Minister of Germany Heiko Maas. According to the Uzbek Foreign Ministry, the sides discussed current issues of Uzbek - German cooperation during the conversation. The agenda and schedule of the upcoming joint events were considered. The main attention was paid to the issues related to the current situation in Afghanistan. Heiko Maas once again expressed gratitude to the Uzbek side for its assistance in organizing the evacuation of German and other foreign citizens from Afghanistan. The parties expressed their readiness to continue close cooperation in the Afghan direction. Views were exchanged on cooperation between the two countries within the framework of international and regional organizations. As previously reported, on 17-18 August, President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev held a telephone conversation with President of Germany Frank-Walter Steinmeier and Chancellor Angela Merkel.

## China's co-op to relieve fodder shortage

## AGENCIES

BEIJING: Silage corn, reckoned as the "King of Fodder", is made by whole fermented corn plants. "Silage corn fodder is of high yield, low cost, rich nutrition, small production space, and can be preserved for a long time, and supplied throughout the year, is the most effective way to solve the needs of green crude feed. Pak-China cooperation in this domain will efficiently relieve the fodder shortage and development bottleneck of husbandry in Pakistan," Dr. Cheng Guanglei, president of China Seed Association Silage Branch, says a report published by Gwadar Pro. Compared with grain corn and hay, silage corn has great advantages as feed for dairy cattle, beef cattle and sheep. Its first characteristic is high yield, "The harvest index of silage corn was 0.9, while that of grain corn was only 0.45. This means that under the same area, the yield of silage corn can be more than twice as much as that of grain corn," Dr Cheng introduced.

## Azerbaijani civilian wounded in mine blast

## DNA

BAKU: Another Azerbaijani civilian has been injured in a mine blast. The Prosecutor-General's Office has said that the mine blast which wounded a civilian in the western Dashkasan region is being investigated by the regional law enforcers. In a statement posted on its website on August 30, the press service of the Prosecutor-General's Office said that the Dashkasan region prosecutor's office received information on August 29, 2021, that Shukur Taghiyev being engaged in agricultural work, was blown up by a mine in Takgaya area of Dashkasan region's Alakhanchalli village bordering on Kelbajar region. He was injured, receiving injuries of various degrees of severity. "At present, an investigation into the case is underway," the report added. Over 140 Azerbaijanis have been killed or injured in the explosion of mines planted by Armenians in Azerbaijan's formerly occupied regions since the end of the war in autumn 2020 that saw Azerbaijan liberate most of its territories in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region. Azerbaijan has warned its citizens against traveling to formerly occupied territories without permission, citing land mine threats. On June 12, Armenia submitted to Azerbaijan mine maps for Aghdam, and on July 3 mine maps for Fuzuli and Zangilan.

## US to complete pullout from Afghanistan after two decades

Joe Biden's administration pledged to fulfill the complete troops' withdrawal under Doha agreement reached between the US and Taliban in February 29, 2020 which set deadline for complete drawdown, despite calls from the allies to prolong its stay

ISLAMABAD: The last US army troops manning Kabul international airport to oversee evacuation process will wind up their military operation on Tuesday, bringing down a curtain on its decades long war in Afghanistan. Joe Biden's administration pledged to fulfill the complete troops' withdrawal under Doha agreement reached between the US and Taliban in February 29, 2020 which set deadline for complete drawdown, despite calls from the allies to prolong its stay. The Taliban's blitz certainly surprised the US and NATO allies as they made their advancement towards Capital city of Kabul in rapid pace, leading to fall of former president Ashraf Ghani's government on August 15. The US invaded Afghanistan after twin attacks on World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001 and the beginning of its war on terrorism to hunt down Al-Qaeda leadership resulting in toppling of Taliban government. The twenty years long conflict had left behind trails of destruction, carnage and displacement of large number of Afghan people in the war weary country. According to a report of the US Defense Department, during this period, the US had spent over a whopping amount of about \$ 2.26 trillion to meet different ex-

## Western troops opened fire on civilians after suicide attack in Kabul

## DNA

KABUL: The brother of a British Afghan, who died when an IS-K suicide bomber hit Kabul's airport, said that his brother was shot dead by western troops. Muhammad Niazi, a taxi driver from London who had travelled back to Afghanistan to try and help get his family evacuated out of Kabul. His wife was killed in the blast, and his youngest child and eldest daughter are still believed to be missing. His brother Abdul Hamid, who survived the blast, made the claims about bullets from western guard posts killing people and told a reporter: 'The fire came from the bridges... the towers... from the soldiers'. He added: I saw some small children in the river, it was so bad. It was doomsday for us.' The second British victim, Musa Popal, 60, was pushing through the crowd trying to attract the attention of soldiers by waving his UK passport when he was killed by the suicide bomber. Other witnesses to the suicide bomb attack also say that their relatives weren't killed in the blast but by fire in the confusion afterwards. Abdul says he saw American and Turkish soldiers amid the chaotic scenes as gunfire reined over the crowds of people. Another man claimed his friend who had helped US forces during the war had been killed by gunfire from Western troops. 'This guy served the US Army for years,' he told media. 'And the reason he lost his life wasn't because of Taliban, he wasn't killed by ISIS..'

penses of machinery, logistic support and other infrastructure projects. The US troops also suffered about 2,500 casualties whereas over 20,000 others had been

wounded during the military operations. As per reports, the Afghan conflict also took lives of 1,144 personnel of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) coalition. Under the part-one of the Doha Agreement, the US had expressed its commitment to withdraw from Afghanistan all its military forces, its allies, and coalition partners, including all non-diplomatic civilian personnel, private security contractors, trainers, advisers, and supporting services personnel within fourteen (14) months following announcement of the agreement. However, the newly incumbent Biden's administration resolved to complete the troops' withdrawal earlier than the set deadline. Pakistan played a pivotal role in facilitating the all inclusive Afghan-led and Afghan-owned negotiation process and in the Doha Agreement. Taliban now controlled Afghanistan, paving way for the formation of a new government as its leadership has hinted once the foreign troops complete its withdrawal. The last days of evacuation also witnessed a pandemonium at Kabul airport as the US and its coalition partners scammed to airlift its troops and people last week. Twin blast at the airport left over 170 people dead and thousand others wounded. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi chairing a meeting regarding economic diplomacy, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. - DNA

## Hurricane Ida pummels Louisiana, knocks out power in New Orleans

NEW ORLEANS: Powerful Hurricane Ida battered the southern US state of Louisiana and plunged New Orleans into darkness Sunday, leaving at least one person dead 16 years to the day after Hurricane Katrina devastated the city. Ida slammed into the Louisiana coast as a Category 4 storm but had weakened to a Category 1 by early Monday. The storm knocked out power for all of New Orleans, with more than a million customers across Louisiana without power, according to outage tracker PowerOutage.US. "We have now lost power, citywide! This is the time to continue to remain in your safe places. It isn't a time to venture out!," New Orleans mayor LaToya Cantrell said on Twitter. Electricity provider Entergy

said it was providing back up power to New Orleans Sewage and Water Board, which operates the pumping stations used to control flooding. The National Weather Service issued warnings of storm surges and flash floods for several areas, including the town of Jean Lafitte, just south of New Orleans, where the levees had been breached by rapidly rising waters. "Total devastation, catastrophic, our town levees have been overtopped," Kerner told ABC-affiliate WGNO. "We have anywhere between 75 to 200 people stranded in Barataria," after a barge took out the swing bridge to the island. "The winds are still too strong, we can't put boats in the water to get to them," he told WGNO.

"We have a small group trying to take out the people in the most imminent danger," Kerner said. "This is a very dangerous situation. I've never seen so much water in my life." President Joe Biden, who described Ida as "a life-threatening storm," declared a major disaster for Louisiana, which gives it access to federal aid. One person was killed by a falling tree in Prairieville, 60 miles northwest of New Orleans, the Ascension Parish Sheriff's Office said. Throughout the morning showers and strong wind swept the city's deserted streets, buffeting boarded-up windows at businesses and homes surrounded by sandbags. Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards said Ida could be the most powerful storm to hit the state since 1850. - APP

## Chaos in cradle of Tunisian revolution

SIDI BOUZID: Many people in Sidi Bouzid, the cradle of Tunisia's 2011 revolution that launched the Arab Spring, see President Kais Saied's power grab as a necessary evil. But there are also fears that last month's dismissal of parliament, sacking of the prime minister and Saied's assumption of sweeping powers may bring Tunisia one step closer to another dictatorship. It was in this large town of central Tunisia on December 17, 2010 that Mohamed Bouazizi, a fruit and vegetable salesman angered by police harassment, set himself ablaze. His suicide sparked an unprecedented uprising that left some 300 people dead and toppled long-time dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. But more than a decade later, hopes for a better future have given way to anger and disappointment over the North African country's politicians' failure to improve living standards. - APP

## Cultural facilities opened in Shusha

## NEWS DESK

SHUSHA: Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev and First Vice-President Mehriban Aliyeva inaugurated several cultural facilities after restoration in Shusha, the country's cultural capital. As part of the visit, they opened the museum and mausoleum complex of Azerbaijan's great poet and public figure Molla Panah Vagif after being renovated and familiarized themselves with the work done. As a result of the Armenian occupation of Shusha in 1992, the building of the complex and all the exhibits on display were destroyed. The repair and

reconstruction began on orders from President Ilham Aliyev, who visited the mausoleum on January 14, on the day of its opening 39 years ago. The mausoleum was repaired and reconstructed by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation. Starting from March 2021, the tomb was initially constructively inspected, reinforcement measures were studied on the required parts, and working projects were prepared within this framework. On the basis of working projects, constructive restoration of elements with special chemical materials appointed by foreign experts was carried out, additional measures were taken against corrosion.



SHUSHA: President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva attended inauguration of Qarabagh hotel in Shusha, the cultural capital of Azerbaijan. -DNA

## Aliyev hails Vagif Poetry Days opening in Shusha

"It is a very significant day in the life of our country today. We are celebrating the opening of the Vagif Poetry Days in front of the mausoleum of the great Azerbaijani poet, statesman and vizier of the Karabakh khan Molla Panah Vagif. I heartily congratulate you and all the people of Azerbaijan on this occasion"

## DNA

BAKU: President Ilham Aliyev has hailed as very significant the opening of the Vagif Poetry Days in liberated Shusha, Azertag reported on August 30. He made the remarks at the official opening ceremony of the Vagif Poetry Days in Shusha also attended by First Vice-President Mehriban Aliyeva. "It is a very significant day in the life of our country today. We are celebrating the opening of the Vagif Poetry Days in front of the mausoleum of the great Azerbaijani poet, statesman and vizier of the Karabakh khan Molla Panah Vagif. I heartily congratulate you and all the people of Azerbaijan on this occasion," he said. The president stressed that Vagif's mausoleum, like all other historical sites on the occupied territories, was vandalized by the Armenians. The mausoleum has been fully restored and was opened for the second time on August 29. He noted that even in a ruined state, even during the occupation when it



was vandalized, Shusha was able to preserve its spirit, its stature. "It did not bend, did not break, it waited for us. We had to come, and we did. We have come here as a victorious people. We did not come through negotiations, not as a result of any concessions

made by Armenia, but by shedding blood, by giving martyrs, by showing self-sacrifice on the battlefield, by restoring our territorial integrity and by restoring our national dignity," the president added. Aliyev spoke about tangible steps that are being taken to revive Shu-

sha. He recalled his first visit to Shusha on January 14, 2021. The president added that one of the first instructions during the first visit to Shusha was to restore Vagif's mausoleum because the vandals had destroyed it. Aliyev noted that during the first

visit, he gave all necessary instructions to restore the country's cultural capital and that a lot has been done since then over the past seven months. He stressed that all Armenian efforts to present Shusha as an Armenian city failed. "Yes, the city is still in ruins. No matter how hard the Armenians tried, they could not present Shusha as an Armenian city. If it were an Armenian city, then why is it in such a state, why was it destroyed, why wasn't a single building constructed here? Except for the new villas of three or four Armenian officials, no new buildings have been constructed here. All the old buildings have been destroyed, all historic sites have been destroyed," he added. Aliyev noted that the comprehensive measures show that the revival of Shusha is progressing rapidly and the people of Shusha are returning to Shusha. "Groups of people are coming to visit their hometown. At the same time, natives of Shusha are provided with jobs at the facilities that have already been opened here. So we will revive Shusha," he said.

## Malaysia's July exports rise 5 pct on year

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's exports rose 5 percent to 97.32 billion ringgit from a year earlier in July, government data showed Monday. The export growth was backed by higher shipments of petroleum products, palm oil and palm oil-based agriculture products as well as chemicals and chemical products driven by robust external demand, the International Trade and Industry Ministry (MITI) said in a statement. Data showed imports for the month rose 24 percent year on year to 83.64 billion ringgit while total trade increased by 13 percent to 180.96 billion ringgit. Trade surplus contracted 45.8 percent to 13.68 billion ringgit. For the first seven months of 2021, Malaysia's trade expanded by 23.9 percent to 1.24 trillion ringgit from a year ago, with exports grew by 25.9 percent to 682.9 billion ringgit, imports rose by 21.6 percent to 554.17 billion ringgit. In July, Malaysia's trade with China recorded double-digit growth of 15 percent year-on-year to 33.89 billion ringgit, accounting for 18.7 percent of Malaysia's total trade. "This was the eighth consecutive month of double-digit expansion," said MITI. Meanwhile, Malaysia's trade with China during the first seven months of 2021 increased by 29.8 percent to 233.4 billion ringgit from a year earlier. - APP

## Ukraine pins hopes on Gulf visitors

## WEB DESK

LVIV: Saudi tourists ride horse-drawn carriages, pose for portraits by street artists and play chess on benches with locals in Lviv, a city in Ukraine more accustomed to hosting European guests. But with strict Covid-19 travel restrictions still in place across Europe, travellers from the Middle East - especially Saudi Arabia - now rank among the top visitors to the ex-Soviet state. The trend has given hope to the country's pandemic-hit tourism industry. "We need to seize the moment," says Bogdan Gets, a tour guide on a sightseeing train that ferries tourists along cobbled streets in central Lviv, a city in western Ukraine known for its Renaissance architecture. For Gets and his colleagues at "Chudo Tour" (Wonder Tour), the unexpected influx of tourists from the Middle East is a chance to recover after a string of lockdowns that put pressure on Ukraine's struggling economy. In the first half of 2021, the number of Saudi tourists alone visiting Ukraine skyrocketed to 14,000 compared to just 350 in the same period last year, according to the country's state tourism agency.

## Illegal mining farm discovered in Syrdarya

TASHKENT: Employees of the Uzbek special services found a large underground crypto farm in Khavast district of Syrdarya region, which was equipped in a private house by three suspects - citizens of Uzbekistan and South Korea. During the investigation it was established that the citizen of Uzbekistan Kh.I. in collusion with a native of South Korea S.Y. donated a large amount of computer equipment to a resident of Khavast district, E.D., who assembled a large underground mining farm from the equipment he received in his private house. For its operation, electricity was illegally consumed for 265.2 million soums (US\$24,100). As part of the investigation, the operatives inspected the premises where the crypto farm was located, and seized 3529 computer devices (video cards, power supplies, memory cards, motherboards) and other types of inventory valuables totaling 9.2 billion soums as material evidence (US\$868,000). It is noted that the actions of the intruders contradict the requirements of the presidential resolution "On measures to develop the digital economy in the Republic of Uzbekistan" from 3 July 2018. On this fact, customs officials are conducting inspections, an inquiry is underway. - APP

## Briefs

### EU removes US from Covid-19 safe list

BRUSSELS: The European Union on Monday recommended that its member states reimpose travel restrictions on US tourists over rising covid infections in the country. The European Council, which represents the bloc's 27 governments, said it was taking six territories off its list of locations exempted from restrictions on non-essential travel during the coronavirus pandemic. "Israel, Kosovo, Lebanon, Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia and the United States of America were removed from the list," a statement said. The move is not binding on national capitals, which may yet choose to allow fully vaccinated US travellers to visit despite concerns about rising numbers of Covid cases in the country. But most EU members have followed Brussels' travel advice during the crisis so far. "This is without prejudice to the possibility for member states to lift the temporary restriction on non-essential travel to the EU for fully vaccinated travellers," the statement said. Non-essential travel into the bloc from outside the EU and eight associated countries - Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway, Switzerland, Andorra, Monaco, San Marino and the Vatican - has been restricted. Some countries and territories, however, have been exempted from this list, but their number has been shrinking in recent months and now includes only 17 members, plus China if Beijing reciprocates. - APP

### Another 66 die of Covid

ISLAMABAD: Another 66 people have died of COVID-19 in Pakistan and 3,800 new cases have been reported over the last 24 hours, official figures showed Monday morning. According to the National Command and Operation Centre's website, 56,279 coronavirus tests were conducted across the country in the last 24 hours, of which 3,800 returned positive. According to the official portal, the rate of positive cases during the last 24 hours was 6.75%. The number of deaths from COVID-19 in the country have risen to 25,670 and the total number of cases has reached 1,156,281. In addition to this, 3,548 patients have recovered from COVID-19 in the last 24 hours across the country, bringing the total number of recoveries to 1,036,921, while the number of active cases is 93,690. Pakistan is reporting 4,095 new infections on average each day, 70% of the peak - the highest daily average reported on June 17. Pakistan has administered at least 50,985,184 doses of COVID vaccines so far. Assuming every person needs 2 doses, that's enough to have vaccinated about 11.8% of the country's population. During the last week reported, Pakistan averaged about 600,802 doses administered each day. At that rate, it will take a further 73 days to administer enough doses for another 10% of the population.

### WHO fears more Covid deaths in Europe

COPENHAGEN: The World Health Organization (WHO) said Monday it feared another 236,000 Covid-19 deaths in Europe by December 1, expressing concern about stagnating vaccination rates and low uptake in poorer countries. "Last week, there was an 11 percent increase in the number of deaths in the region - one reliable projection is expecting 236,000 deaths in Europe, by December 1," WHO Europe director Hans Kluge told reporters, adding that "the stagnation in vaccine uptake in our region is of serious concern." - APP

# August 30 critical turning point in our history: Erdogan

Turkish embassy organizes event to mark the anniversary



ISLAMABAD: Staff of the Turkish embassy attending a ceremony held to mark 99th anniversary of Great Victory, at the Turkish Embassy. - DNA



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Turkey Ihsan Mustafa Yurdakul delivering message of President of Turkey. - DNA

**DNA**  
ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Turkey Ihsan Mustafa Yurdakul on the occasion of 99th anniversary of Great Victory read out the message of the President of Turkey RECEP TAYYIP ERDOGAN. In the message the Turkish president said, "We rejoice the 99th anniversary of the Great Victory, one of the cornerstones of our glorious history extending over centuries. I congratulate the August 30 Victory Day of our nation, the Turkish Cypriots and of our citizens living in different countries of the world. On behalf of myself and my nation, I would like to thank all my friends and brothers who did not leave us alone on this day of pride. He further said, on this occasion, I commemorate the Commander in Chief of our

War of Independence, the founder of our Republic, Ghazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, and the esteemed members of our Grand National Assembly and the heroic soldiers of our army. The Great Offensive, launched under the commandship of Ghazi Mustafa Kemal, resulted in a decisive victory in Dumlupinar, after 4 days of hand-to-hand combat. With this glorious victory enshrined in world war history, the Turkish Nation demonstrated that they would never accept a yoke on their homeland soaked with martyrs' blood. August 30 is one of the most critical turning points in our history, as it paved the way for the foundation of our Republic, and as our nation wrecked imperialistic intentions which forecast it a life span. Our nation, with this victory achieved despite all kinds of shortages and impossibility, once again demonstrat-

ed that these lands, which were made our home in Malazgirt in 1071, are our eternal homeland. The spirit, belief and will which inspired the Great Victory are setting the path for our nation today, as they did 99 years ago. The most important indications of this are the successes we have achieved in every field, from defence industry to economy, from foreign policy to energy, to the fight against subcontracted terrorist organizations which aim at the unity and integrity of our country. Today, our country has become not only the hope for its 84 million citizens living within its borders, but also for its hundreds of millions of friends and brothers living in lands in our hearts, from the Balkans to Asia, from Africa to Europe. With the help of Allah, the support of our friends whose hearts beat with us, and the sincere prayers of our noble nation, we will

live up to these hopes. Despite some ill intentioned people among us, we will continue to defend the rights of the oppressed against the oppressors, and to strive for peace, justice and freedom to prevail all over the world. Under the guidance of the faith which surged in Dumlupinar 99 years ago, 84 million of us will walk together towards our bright future with unity, peace and brotherhood. With these thoughts, I commemorate all the heroes of our War of Independence, especially Ghazi Mustafa Kemal, with gratitude. I wish Allah's mercy upon our veterans and martyrs who died for our country, our azan, our flag and our independence. Happy August 30 Victory Day to our nation and to all my brothers in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, the message concluded.

### KSA to receive pilgrims as per quota

ISLAMABAD: The Saudi Arabia Ministry of Hajj and Umrah affirmed its readiness to receive as many Umrah pilgrims as per the quota that had been agreed upon with various Islamic countries before the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. Dr. Amr Al-Maddah, Saudi deputy minister of Hajj and Umrah said that all preparations to receive pilgrims have been completed and that the ministry has not faced any difficulties in receiving pilgrims from outside the country in recent days since the beginning of the new Umrah season. "The ministry has the ability to cope with the influx of Umrah pilgrims in line with the quota granted to each Muslim country and the ministry is ready to deal with the number of pilgrims as in a normal situation," he said. Al-Maddah said the Ministry of Hajj is working to pair its applications Shaaer and Eatmarna to include all the services provided by the ministry in order for Hajj and Umrah pilgrims to benefit from them in addition to expanding the scope of these services in the two applications, Saudi Gazette reported. The Shaaer app was a great success in the last Hajj season as it contains all the information about the pilgrims' ID, health and other services. - APP

### China has 872m online payment users

ISLAMABAD: The number of online payment service users in China had reached 872 million by the end of June, according to the latest statistical report on China's internet development. The report, released by the China Internet Network Information Center, said online payment users accounted for 86.3 percent of the country's total netizens. The number of online shoppers in China hit 812 million, or 80.3 percent of the total internet users, China news service reported. According to the report, China has seen steady progress in improving rural access to the internet, as the internet penetration rate in rural areas had increased to 59.2 percent by the end of June. Livestreaming e-commerce has played a vital role in propelling the sale of farm produce in rural areas, the report added. - APP

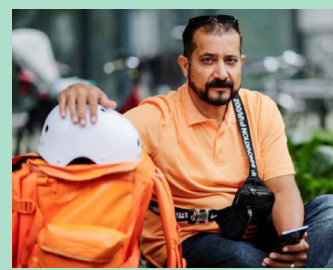
## Azerbaijan envoy-designate presents credentials to Chief of Protocol

**DNA**  
ISLAMABAD: Ambassador-designate of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Khazar Farhadov met with the Chief of the Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan Ali Haider Altaf to hand copies of his Credentials. The Azerbaijan ambassador-designate has recently arrived in Pakistan. He has stepped into the shoes of Ali Alizada who has been posted as Azerbaijan ambassador to Iran.



## 'Work is work': Afghan ex-minister now delivers food in Germany

LEIPZIG: He was once a minister in Afghanistan but quit, fed up with the corruption. Now in Germany, Sayed Sadaat is making a living delivering meals as a bicycle courier. For six hours on weekdays and from noon to 10pm on Saturdays and Sundays, Sadaat dons his distinctive orange coat and big square backpack, shuttling pizzas and other orders to customers. "There is no shame in the job at all. Work is work," he told AFP. "If there is a job, it means there is public demand... someone has to do it," he said. Sadaat is one of thousands of Afghans who have found a home in Germany over the last years. Since 2015, when Europe saw a huge influx of people fleeing war mostly from Syria and Iraq, around 210,000 Afghans have sought asylum in Germany. This makes them the second biggest group of people seeking protection in Europe's most populous country after Syrians. With the Taliban's return to power earlier this month, Germany has also evacuated around 4,000 Afghans, including those who worked with NATO forces and others who need protection. - APP



## PDM not willing to oust PM Imran Khan: Bilawal

**NAZIR SIYAL**  
SUKKUR: Opposition leader from the PPP is thrown in jail, but a person holding the same position who hails from Lahore roams freely, PPP Chairperson Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari said while taking a jibe at the Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Shahbaz Sharif. Bilawal was referring to veteran PPP leader Khurshid Shah, who was arrested by the National Accountability Bureau's Sukkur chapter on September 18, 2019, in an accumulation of assets beyond means case. Back in July, the Sindh High Court had dismissed a petition seeking Shah's post-arrest bail.



"We warn the government to oppress others only as much as it can bear oppression itself," said Bilawal while addressing party workers in Sukkur. "How long could you stay imprisoned if it were you?" Bilawal asked PM Imran Khan. He also invited the Opposition to support the PPP, stressing that the party is capable of "not only giving a tough time to the government but also overthrowing it". "PPP is going to form a government soon, therefore, PPP workers should brace themselves to employ efforts," said Bilawal. He said that the PPP is up to save Pakistan as well as people's jobs. "They [Centre] are trying to hurt PPP supporters but they should know that it is their first and last rule," said Bilawal. Later on, while holding a press conference in Sukkur, the PPP chairman said that he cannot comment on whether the Pakistan Democratic Movement's rally was a "successful" event. However, he said that the rally would have been "more fruitful if the women were allowed to attend it."

"How can a country work without women," questioned Bilawal, adding that it is Karachi, not Afghanistan, where women cannot attend rallies. He said that PDM's politics is benefiting the government than harming it, adding that PM Imran Khan had promised Pakistanis 10 million jobs but he abandoned them. "Instead of providing jobs, the PTT-led government deprived 16,000 people of their sources of income," he said. "While Bani Gala has been regularised, the poor are left homeless." Bilawal went on to add that the PPP has "always been a target for PM Imran Khan since it is the biggest obstacle in PTT's way."

## Chevening scholarship awarded to 42 Pakistanis

**SHUJAAT HAMZA**  
ISLAMABAD: The British High Commission organised a virtual pre-departure event for Pakistani scholars who have been awarded the Chevening scholarship 2021-22. This year, 42 Pakistani scholars have been selected through a rigorous recruitment process and will soon proceed to the UK to study a one year master's programme, funded by the UK Government's prestigious Chevening programme. The Chevening scholarships support study at UK universities for individuals with demonstrable potential to become future leaders, decision-makers, and opinion formers. Over 3,000 mid-career professionals had applied for the programme and over 200 were interviewed, including applicants from all provinces of Pakistan. The British Deputy High Commissioner Alison Blackburne congratulated the scholars and wished them success in the coming year. The online event was attended by Chevening scholars, British

High Commission officials and Chevening alumni who were invited to share their experience of studying in the UK. The selected scholars have chosen courses in the top universities of the UK including University of Oxford, University of Cambridge, London School of Economics and Political Science, University of Edinburgh, Imperial College London and University of Sussex. One scholar from Pakistan has also been selected for the Oxford Centre of Islamic Studies (OCIS) Fellowship to undertake an annual six-month period of independent study and research, focusing on the culture and civilisation of Islam and all aspects of contemporary Muslim societies in the global context. The British Deputy High Commissioner Alison Blackburne said: "Many congratulations to the selected scholars. I am delighted to announce that almost 60 percent of selected scholars from Pakistan this year were female - an increase of 20 points in the past three years. This contributes to our aim of achieving gender equality and opportunity for all."



## NOW IN PAKISTAN

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