

Afridi vows support to Kashmir cause on Pakistan Day

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Kashmir Committee Chairman Shehryar Khan Afridi on Tuesday felicitated the entire nation on Pakistan Day and vowed to extend his diplomatic, moral and political support to Kashmiri brothers in their inalienable right to self determination.

Kashmir was an unfinished agenda of 1947 partition, he said while expressing his commitment to mobilize all resources for the independence of Kashmir.

In his message on the occasion of Pakistan Day, he said the Day reminded us the sacrifices made by our elders in making this country.

He paid tribute to the Kashmiri brothers and sisters for showing continued resistance against Indian oppression and barbarism for the last several decades.

The ideology of Pakistan was the basis for the establishment of Pakistan, under which the Muslim leadership refused to be dominated by the Hindutva mentality and strug-



gled for the establishment of a separate state, said Afridi. The sacrifices of freedom fighters of occupied Kashmir will not go in vain, he remarked. He said people of Indian-occupied Kashmir were also celebrating Pakistan Day by hoisting Pakistani flags at their homes as Pakistanis' hearts beat with Kashmiri brothers'.

Prominent sports personalities given Pakistan Day Sports Awards: Pakistan Day Sports Awards were presented to prominent sports personalities in a cere-

mony organized in collaboration with Sindh Sports Board (SSB), at the Commissioner Office here. Additional Commissioner Karachi Syed Jawad Muzaffar distributed the awards among the personalities who rendered out-standing services for promotion of sports. Sports Coordinator to the Commissioner Karachi Ghulam Muhammad Khan told APP. Syed Jawad Muzaffar distributed Pakistan Day Sports Awards among the eminent sports personalities and said all out efforts will be made to remove encroachments from the playgrounds and promote sports activities in the metropolis. Imtiaz Ahmed Sheikh, Javed Iqbal, Mohammad Taqi, Kaleem Awan, Kashif Feroqi, Saleem Khamisani, Sher Khan, Zahid Malik Zaeema Khatun, Asad Ibad Ali, Azmatullah Khan, Haider Hussain, Asif Azeem, Asghar Baloch, Mutahir Hussain Malik, Mohammad Akhlaq, Ahmad Ali Rajput, Tehmina Asif, Nowshad Ahmad Khan and Sarwar Hussain were among.



KARACHI: People take part in a cycle rally held to mark Pakistan's Day near the mausoleum of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

Flag hoisted at embassy in Paris to mark Pakistan Day

The Business Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan embassy in Paris, France held the ceremony on Tuesday to celebrate Pakistan Day and pay homage to Quaid-e-Azam for his struggle for a separate homeland.

Speaking on the occasion, Charge d'Affaires M. Amjad Aziz Qazi said the day changed the course of history as Muslims of the Indian subcontinent adopted a resolution at the annual session of All-India Muslim League on 23 March 1940. He said, "On this day, we pay homage to the Quaid and other leaders of Pakistan movement who made Pakistan a reality in just seven years after passing of the resolution."

He said the path showed by Quaid continues now under the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan to make Pakistan an Islamic democratic welfare state on the model of Riasat-e-Madina. He said the day Pakistan reaffirmed its support to the brothers and sisters of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir who continue to face Indian military siege.

He emphasized that Pakistan would continue to provide political, diplomatic and moral support to the Kashmiri people until they get their right of self determination as per UNSC resolutions. Qazi told the Pakistani community in France that he would hold a virtual open house in the evening and would interact with members and children of the Pakistani community via video link. The messages of the President and Prime Minister of Pakistan were read out on the occasion.

A virtual exhibition of the photographs of the natural beauty and culture of Pakistan was held at the embassy's website. The participation at the event was restricted due to the recent lockdown imposed by the French government given the ongoing third wave of COVID-19.

Pakistan Day celebrated in Shaheed Benazirabad: Like other parts of the country, Pakistan Day was celebrated with national zeal and fervour in District Shaheed Benazirabad with joint cooperation of District Administration and Department of Education under strict observation of SOPs. The main program was organized at H.M. Khoja Auditorium with Deputy Commissioner Abrar Ahmed Jaffar as chief guest on the occasion. The program was inaugurated by hoisting the National Flag by Deputy Commissioner and other officials while scouts presented salute to the National Flag.

Officials of departments of health, education, private institutions, elites, citizens, school teachers, girl and boy students, representatives of non-government organizations and others attended the program. Students delivered speeches in connection with the Pakistan Day, presented tablos and PT shows.

Addressing the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner said that all of us shall promise on the day that we would play a full-fledged role in the development of the country. He said that Pakistan Day reminds us about the start of practical struggle for Pakistan and history is evident that Pakistan achieved through great struggle and precious sacrifice and we shall pledge for the national strength and solidarity of the country.

Tourism to flourish in KPK under Saidu Sharif Airport: Bangash

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: The Spokesperson of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Kamran Bangash on Tuesday said that the upcoming Swat's Saidu Sharif Airport after its resumption of flight operations from March 26 will flourish domestic tourism and would increase business activities.

Talking to a private news channel, he said under the vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan KPK government has taken various initiatives for promoting tourism which was playing a crucial role for the development of rural areas.

He explained the Saidu Sharif Airport had been non-operational since 2004, adding, the people, tour operators and civil society members would be fully facilitate and they would be provide opportunities to explore the tourism sector in the valley. He said Pak-

istan International Airlines (PIA) has decided to operate ATR flights to Saidu Sharif Airport from Islamabad and Lahore, starting from March 26.

Replying to a question, he said it was a historic achievement of PTI-led government in KPK that during winter season over 0.7 million tourists visited Galiyat. He said that international tourism would also be promoted with the resumption of flights to Swat.

He said Swat would now ready to compete Switzerland as Prime Minister was taking multiple practical steps for the promotion of tourism in Swat and rest parts of the province.

He said that government would welcome every investor to invest in tourism sector. He said Swat Phase I and phase II projects are completing on fast tracks and extension of routes will further boost economic activities and create employment opportunities for local population by introducing new tourist sites.

West sanction China over Xinjiang 'abuses', Beijing hits back at EU

WASHINGTON: The United States, the European Union, Britain and Canada imposed sanctions on Chinese officials on Monday (Mar 21) for human rights abuses in Xinjiang, the first such coordinated Western action against Beijing under new US President Joe Biden.

Beijing hit back immediately with punitive measures against the EU that appeared broader, including European lawmakers, diplomats, institutes and families, and banning their businesses from trading with China.

Western governments are seeking to hold Beijing accountable for mass detentions of Muslim Uighurs in northwestern China, where the United States says China is committing genocide. China denies all accusations of abuse.

The coordinated effort appeared to be early fruit in a concerted US diplomatic push to confront China in league with allies, a core element of Biden's still evolving China policy. Senior US administration officials have said they are in daily contact with governments in Europe on China-related issues, some-

thing they call the "Europe roadshow". "Amid growing international condemnation, (China) continues to commit genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang," US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a statement ahead of meetings with EU and NATO ministers in Brussels this week.

Canada's foreign ministry said: "Mounting evidence points to systemic, state-led human rights violations by Chinese authorities." Activists and UN rights experts say at least 1 million Muslims have been detained in camps in Xinjiang. The activists and some Western politicians accuse China of using torture, forced labour and sterilisations. China says its camps provide vocational training and are needed to fight extremism.

The European Union was the first to impose sanctions on Monday on four Chinese officials, including a top security director, and one entity, a decision later mirrored by Britain and Canada. Those also targeted by the United States were Chen Mingguo, director of the Xin-

jiang Public Security Bureau and another senior official in the region, Wang Junzheng. The United States had already last year designated for sanctions the top official in Xinjiang, Chen Quanguo, who was not targeted by the other Western allies on Monday, to avoid a larger diplomatic dispute, experts and diplomats said. The foreign ministers of Canada and Britain issued a joint statement with Blinken, saying the three were united in demanding that Beijing end its "repressive practices" in Xinjiang.

Evidence of abuses was "overwhelming", including satellite imagery, eyewitness testimony, and the Chinese government's own documents, they said. Separately, the foreign ministers of Australia and New Zealand issued a statement expressing "grave concerns about the growing number of credible reports of severe human rights abuses against ethnic Uighurs and other Muslim minorities in Xinjiang" and welcoming the measures announced by Canada, the European Union, Britain and the United States. —Reuters

White House considering \$3tr for US economy: Reports

WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden's administration is considering spending US\$3 trillion on infrastructure in the United States, split into two Bills that face narrow paths to approval in Congress, US media reported. The infrastructure plan would follow the US\$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Biden signed earlier month, which was aimed at helping the world's largest economy recover from the damage done by the COVID-19 pandemic. Biden, who took office in January, vowed to pass a second Bill aimed at improving infrastructure in the United States and creating jobs, and US media reported that would likely be divided up into two proposals costing a total of US\$3 trillion. According to Reuters, a source said Biden advisers have a package of proposals totalling up to US\$3 trillion for infrastructure and other priorities they are discussing with the president this week. The New York Times reported earlier on Monday that Biden advisers were preparing to recommend he spend as much as US\$3 trillion on boosting the economy, reducing carbon emissions and narrowing economic inequality, beginning with a giant infrastructure plan. Meanwhile, The Wash-



ington Post and CNN reported that a US\$3 trillion effort was expected to be broken into two parts, one focused on infrastructure, and the other devoted to other domestic priorities, such as universal pre-kindergarten, national childcare and free community college tuition. "We'll use taxpayers' dollars to rebuild America. We'll buy American products, supporting millions of American manufacturing jobs, enhancing our competitive strength in an increasingly competitive world," Biden said in the January speech announcing the two plans. —

Singapore, Malaysia to work towards recognising vaccine certificates

SINGAPORE: Singapore and Malaysia have reaffirmed their commitment to work towards recognising each other's COVID-19 vaccine certificates, with a view towards facilitating cross-border travel in the future. "The operational details of the Reciprocal Recognition of Vaccine Certificate between Malaysia and Singapore, including the detailed requirements, health protocols, and application process involved for entry and exit into Malaysia and Singapore will be further deliberated and finalised by both parties," said both countries' foreign affairs ministries in a joint statement on Tuesday.

Singapore Foreign Affairs Minister Vivian Balakrishnan met his Malaysian counterpart Hishammuddin Hussein in Putrajaya on Tuesday. "The two ministers had a constructive discussion on their respective national vaccination roll-out plans which are underway in Malaysia and Singapore, and how this could facilitate cross-border travel between both countries in the near future," said the joint statement. The countries reaffirmed their commitment to continue with their COVID-19 vaccination programmes

to inoculate long-term residents, including Malaysians residing in Singapore and Singaporeans residing in Malaysia. The neighbours also remain committed to "progressively restore" cross-border travel for other groups of travellers, in addition to the Reciprocal Green Lane (RGL) and Periodic Commuting Arrangement (PCA), said the statement. Singapore and Malaysia will take into account the COVID-19 situation on both sides and ensure the "public health and safety of the residents of both countries". Both ministers also discussed convening the 10th Leaders' Retreat, which will be hosted by Singapore this year, and agreed to work towards restarting face-to-face bilateral engagements. The joint statement said the ministers looked forward to "strengthening cooperation to stimulate recovery from the effects of the global pandemic". Dr Balakrishnan visited Brunei on Monday, and returned to Singapore before he travelled to Malaysia on Tuesday.

VACCINE CERTIFICATES: In a joint press conference after both foreign ministers met on Tuesday, Dr Balakrishnan said operational details on the proposed mutual certifi-

cation of vaccine certificates will be finalised soon, before the next leaders' retreat. "Currently, we are looking specifically for mutual recognition of the certification as well as the tests, so that we can rely on each other's certifications with the view to facilitate cross-border flows, especially people who have been tested and vaccinated and can travel safely."

"We hope by the time our prime ministers meet, we can make a significant announcement which will allow those of us with families on both sides of the Causeway to meet again, to allow businesses to resume, which will allow safe tourism and we can hopefully look forward to a more busy Causeway," he said.

Dr Balakrishnan also called on Malaysian Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin and conveyed Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's invitation to Mr Muhyiddin to visit Singapore for the 10th Malaysia-Singapore Leaders' Retreat. "Minister Balakrishnan said that the Retreat will be a valuable opportunity for both sides to enhance bilateral cooperation in the immediate aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic," said MFA. —CNA

Riz Ahmed's family had the most 'desi' reaction to his historic Oscar nod

LONDON: British actor Riz Ahmed's family reacted to his historic Oscar nod in the most desi fashion ever. Turning to his Twitter, The Reluctant Fundamentalist star revealed that his cousin was unaware of what the Oscars were and was unable to understand why his nomination was such a big deal. —AFP

CORRECTION OF FATHER'S NAME



My name is Mohammad Ahmad, I passed my Secondary School Exam Annual 2020 under Roll No 138193 from BISE, Sahiwal, my father's correct name is Mohammad Yar, whereas it was mistakenly printed as Mohammad Ali, which is incorrect. Kindly correct it on my certificate. If any person, agency or department has any objection, he should inform in writing to Under Secretary BISE, Sahiwal within 15 days.



US backs Philippines in stand-off over South China Sea reef

MANILA: The United States said on Tuesday it is backing the Philippines in a new stand-off with Beijing in the disputed South China Sea, where Manila has asked a Chinese fishing flotilla to leave a reef. China ignored the call, insisting it owns the offshore territory.

The US Embassy said it shared the concerns of the Philippines and accused China of using "maritime militia to intimidate, provoke, and threaten other nations, which undermines peace and security in the region". "We stand with the Philippines, our oldest treaty ally in Asia," the US Embassy in Manila said in a statement.

Philippine Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana on Sunday demanded about 200 Chinese vessels he said were militia boats leave the Whitsun Reef, a shallow coral region about 175 nautical miles (324km) west of Bataraza town in the western Philippine province of Palawan. Philippine officials said the reef, which they call Julian Felipe, is well within the country's internationally recognised exclusive economic zone, over which the Philippines "enjoys the exclusive right to exploit or conserve any resources". The Philippine coast guard spotted about 220 Chinese vessels moored at the reef, which Beijing and Vietnam also claim, on Mar 7. On Monday, a surveillance aircraft spotted 183 Chinese vessels still at the reef, said Philippine military chief lieutenant general Cirilito Sobejano, who released aerial pictures of the Chinese vessels in one of the most hotly contested regions in the strategic waterway. The Philippines has filed a diplomatic protest over the Chinese presence, Foreign Secretary Teodoro Loesin Jr said. —AFP

CORRECTION OF FATHER'S NAME



I Azka Imran have been passed the Secondary School Certificate Annual Examination 2017 Under Roll No 115055 and Intermediate Roll No 351043 Annual Examination 2020 From Board Of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Sahiwal. My Father's Name is Muhammad Imran whereas on my certified my father's name has been mentioned as M .Imran Yousaf which is incorrect. I want to get change my father's name M.Imran Yousaf to Muhammad Imran .If any person/organisation/agency has any objection the same may be intimated in writing to Secretary Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education Sahiwal within 15 days. AZKA IMRAN D/O M U H A M M A D IMRAN R/O 37/Y FARID TOWN SAHI-