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December 22, 2020: National / International [Current Affairs](#)

1. \$1.7bn debt rescheduling deal signed

- Pakistan has secured \$1.7 billion debt relief agreements to help offset the financial headwinds sparked by the novel coronavirus pandemic, officials said on December 21, 2020.
 - The deal, following months of negotiations with creditors, will provide a moratorium on debt payments for large swathes of the current fiscal year and help ease the cash-strapped country`s massive financial obligations.
 - `The Government of Pakistan has successfully negotiated and concluded rescheduling agreements with 19 bilateral creditors, including members of the Paris Club,` the ministry of economic affairs said in a statement
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2. NLPD head appointed

- Prof Dr Rauf Parekh has taken charge of the National Language Promotion Department (NLPD) as director general (DG) to promote Urdu.
- He has directed members of the staff to devote themselves towards progress of the department.
- Dr Parekh, a well-known historian, linguist and columnist, remained associated with the Urdu department of Karachi University and the Urdu Dictionary Board from 2003 till 2007. A number of books, written by him, have been launched in the past

3. PM launches Billion Tree Honey initiative

- Prime Minister Imran Khan on December 22, 2020 formally launched the Billion Tree Honey Initiative in order to promote tree plantation and honey production in the country under the Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Programme (TBTP).
 - Addressing the launching ceremony here, the Prime Minister said the TBTP will help control environmental degradation, including enhancing forest cover, cleaning rivers and protecting ground water from pollution, and checking air pollution
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4. Senator Kalsoom Parveen dies of coronavirus

- Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) Senator Kalsoom Parveen has died while battling against the novel coronavirus -19 on early December 21, 2020 morning.
 - According to the Senate Secretariat, the lawmaker breathed her last at a private hospital in Islamabad due to coronavirus-related infections. Kalsoom Parveen had been put on a ventilator after her condition deteriorated earlier this month.
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5. PA extends five Ordinances for 90 days

- The Punjab Assembly (PA) on December 21, 2020 extended five Ordinances for 90 days, amid rumpus from the Opposition lawmakers.
 - During the proceedings that lasted for one and half an hour, Law Minister Raja Basharat also laid seven Ordinances besides introducing four Bills which were referred to the relevant standing committees.
 - The session started two hours and 17 minutes behind the scheduled time with Speaker Ch Parvez Elahi in the chair. Answers related to the Labour Department were given by Minister Ansar Majeed Niazi during the question-hour
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6. China`s CanSino recruits over 20,000 people for Covid vaccine trials

- China`s CanSino Biologics Inc has recruited over 20,000 participants for late-stage human

trials overseas for its coronavirus vaccine, a health official said on December 21, 2020.

- The candidate, known as Ad5-nCoV or Convidecia, which CanSinoBIO is jointly developing with a research institute backed by the Chinese military, is among the five vaccines China has moved into Phase 3 clinical trials to test their efficacy
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7. Russia, Rwanda send troops to Central African Republic after alleged coup bid

- The Central African Republic said on Monday that Russia and Rwanda had sent in hundreds of troops after an alleged attempted coup ahead of upcoming elections.
 - The government in CAR, one of the world's poorest and most unstable countries, accused former president Francois Bozize on Saturday of fomenting a would-be putsch by three militias
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8. Jupiter, Saturn merging in night sky, closest in centuries

- Jupiter and Saturn will merge in the night sky on December 21, 2020, appearing closer to one another than they have since Galileo's time in the 17th century.
 - Astronomers say so called conjunctions between the two largest planets in our solar system aren't particularly rare.
 - Jupiter passes its neighbour Saturn in their respective laps around the sun every 20 years.
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9. Veteran journalist Hasan Musanna passes away

- Veteran journalist, Muhammad Hasan Musanna died of a protracted illness here on Monday. He was 94.
 - He is survived by three sons and a daughter. His wife passed away in March.
 - Funeral prayers will be offered on Tuesday (today) after Zuhar at 1:30pm at Gilania Mosque, Sector G-8/1, near his house No-525 in street 18
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10. Pakistan remain at fourth spot in T20 rankings

- The Pakistan cricket team, who were ranked as the world No.1 in the T20 rankings in 2018, will end the year 2020 at 4th position regardless of the result of the last match T20 game against New Zealand to be held in Napier on December 22, 2020 (today).
 - Pakistan have already lost the ongoing three T20 matches series 0-2, having lost in Auckland by five wickets and at Hamilton by nine wickets
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