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November 21, 2020: National / International [Current Affairs](#)

1. China backs Pakistan after Modi`s tirade

- China on November 20, 2020 rushed to shield Pakistan from Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi`s fresh allegations by recalling `positive contributions` made by Islamabad against global terrorism.
 - `China appreciates the positive contribution by Pakistan to the international counter-terrorism cause, firmly supports Pakistan in cracking down terrorist forces. Attempts that aim to sabotage #CPEC are doomed to fail,` Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lijian Zhao said hours after Mr Modi claimed a Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) plot in occupied Kashmir had been thwarted.
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2. Rs19.7 billion set aside for PSM staff retrenchment

- The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) on November 20, 2020 approved technical supplementary grant for `Initiating the Process of Retrenchment of Pakistan Steel Mills Employees (PSM)` for an amount of Rs19.656 billion.
- The package for the retrenchment of about 9,000 employees was given a go ahead in August, for which the grant was approved.
- The meeting also approved another technical supplementary grant amounting to Rs500 million for `Prime Minister`s Special Package to Implement Skills For All Strategy as Catalyst for TVET Sector Development in Pakistan` while Rs689.3m was set aside as budget re-appropriation for the National Information Technology Board to fulfil its requirements

3. CM launches special support initiative for the elderly

- Chief Minister Usman Buzdar on November 20, 2020 inaugurated Ba-himmat Bazurg Programme and distributed cards among the elderly women.
 - Speaking at the ceremony, the chief minister said a special fund had been set up with an initial amount of Rs2 billion to assist the deserving senior citizens of 65 years and above. Under this programme, he said, needy senior citizens would be given a monthly stipend to lessen their financial difficulties.
 - He said elderly women had been particularly included in the programme to make them self-reliant
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4. Monuments turn blue as Pakistan marks Children`s Day

- Pakistan celebrated World Children`s Day on Friday with 30 iconic monuments and landmarks across the country turning blue from Khyber Pass to Mazar-i-Quaid in Karachi, from Lahore Fort to Quaid-i-Azam Residency in Ziarat and through Pakistan Monument in Islamabad.
 - Releasing a new report on the occasion, UNICEF warned of significant and growing consequences for children as the Covid-19 pandemic lurches towards a second year, jeopardising their rights.
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5. Low-cost housing finance rules relaxed

- The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on November 20, 2020 announced five regulatory relaxations to incentivise banks for financing low-cost and affordable housing.
 - The central bank, which has already taken a series of measures to promote housing, has made it possible for the people having no formal income data to borrow for low-cost housing
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6. ECC approves \$150m to purchase Covid vaccine

- The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet on November 20, 2020

approved, in principle, a \$150 million supplementary grant to procure anti-Covid vaccine.

- The committee also allowed the Ministry of Economic Affairs to formally request G20 countries for extension in Covid-19-related debt relief involving about \$900m for January-June 2021 period, in addition to an existing facility of about \$1.8 billion relief for a period up to Dec 2020
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7. Pakistan improves rank on border trading index

- Pakistan's rank on trading across border index jumped by 28 places in 2020 mainly due to considerably improved implementation of several measures under the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) contributing to Ease of Doing Business.
 - The Geneva-based World Trade Organisation's TFA implementation level reached to 79 per cent in November 2020 from 34pc in June, 2018, which has tangibly contributed to rise of Pakistan from 136th position to 108th position in the Global Fund's Annual Ease of Doing Business 2020 Report
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8. Azerbaijan's troops enter first district handed over by Armenia

- Azerbaijan said on November 20, 2020 its troops entered a district bordering Nagorno-Karabakh handed back by Armenian separatists as part of a Russian-brokered peace deal to end weeks of fighting in the region.
 - Troops moved into the district of Aghdam, one of three to be ceded, the Azerbaijan defence ministry said, a day after columns of Armenian soldiers and tanks rolled out of the territory.
 - Armenia will also hand over the Kalbajar district wedged between Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia on November 25 and the Lachin district by December 1.
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9. US to launch regional funds for Pakistan, Afghanistan and Uzbekistan

- US special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad said on November 20, 2020 that Washington will soon announce a high level meeting of representatives from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Uzbekistan to encourage trade and development in that region.

- The United States, which will also participate in the meeting, is also launching a fund to encourage investments in the South and Central Asian region. Ambassador Khalilzad is the Trump administration`s Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation and has played a key role in negotiating a peace deal with the Taliban with Pakistan`s support
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10. Afghan govt, Taliban resolve issues stalling peace talks

- The Afghan government and the Taliban have resolved key sticking points that had stalled peace talks for weeks, several sources said on November 20, 2020, clearing the way for negotiations to move forward.
 - Talks started on Sept12 in the Qatari capital Doha but almost immediately faltered over disagreements about the agenda, the basic framework of discussions and religious interpretations.
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- [Daily DAWN News Vocabulary with Urdu Meaning \(28 November 2020\)](#)
- [Daily Top-10 Current Affairs MCQs / News \(November 28, 2020\) for CSS, PMS](#)
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