



# Islamabad POST

Saturday, May 28, 2022

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**Pakistan, Indonesia agree to promote bilateral relations**

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**China rejects US Secy of State's speech**

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**Ali Raza Sadpara dies aged 56**

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**SC seeks details of names removed from ECL**

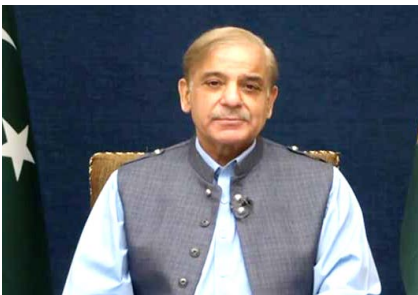
KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Friday directed the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to submit details of names removed from the Exit Control List (ECL). A five-member larger bench of the apex court headed by Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial and comprising Justice Ijaz Ul Ahsan, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Sayeed Mazahar Ali Akbar Naqvi and Justice Mohammad Ali Mazhar heard the suo moto notice case regarding perceived apprehension of persons in authority undermining the criminal justice system. During the course of proceedings, the court sought a report on the method of amendments in the ECL rules and summoned the Director General FIA and Law Director Usman Gondal in a personal capacity with records. The court expressed concern over the removal of names from the ECL and questioned the

**No word about govt tenure**

## PM unfurls hefty relief incentives

**Blames Imran Khan for all woes; promises bright future; announces to mend fences with friends**



SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has announced a hefty package of 80 billion rupees for the needy people. He said this amount shall be distributed thru BISP. He also announced a reduction

in flour prices. Surprisingly the Prime Minister did not mention anything about the tenure of the government. There were reports that he will announce that his government will complete its tenure, however he did not mention this in his speech. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said he is thankful to Allah Almighty and the people of Pakistan for the position he is in today. He said he is privileged by having trust and support of all the coalition partners. The Prime Minister said that we found Pakistan on the verge of bankruptcy and disaster, yet we have vowed to turn the tides. He said all the coalition partners are working hard to put Pakistan back on the road to success. Turning guns at former Prime Minister Imran Khan, he said that former government

Continued on Page 06

## PM to visit Turkey next week, says FO

**Spokesperson strongly condemned the mala fide conviction of Hurriyat leader Yasin Malik**

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will be visiting Turkey next week, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed Friday, embarking on his first visit to Ankara after assuming office last month.



"The prime minister would be visiting Turkey next week, and we would be sharing with you more details containing elements, specific elements and engagements envisaged during this visit," FO spokesperson Asim Iftikhar said in response to a question during his weekly press briefing. On other foreign engagements, the spokesperson said Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari visited Davos, Switzerland, to attend World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting from May 23-26, with Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar accompanying him. He said on the sidelines of the event, the foreign minister - accompanied by Minister for Climate Change Sherry Rehman and Khar held bilateral meetings with - Queen Máxima of The Netherlands, Foreign Minister of Finland Pekka Haavisto, Romanian Foreign

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**AZERBAIJAN NATIONAL DAY**



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi, Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov and others cutting cake to celebrate the National Day and Republic Day of Azerbaijan. - DNA

**'Imran Khan has accepted his defeat'**



SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Information Minister Murriz Aurangzeb on Friday criticised former prime minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan and said that by revealing that he and his party were not prepared for the so-called "Azadi March", he has accepted his defeat. Speaking during a press conference in Islamabad, Aurangzeb said that Imran Khan and his supporters were not prepared for the march because the only preparation they had carried out was to assemble arms and sticks. "They were preparing for a khooni (violent) march," she maintained, adding that PTI supporters were led astray because of Khan's false narrative. "The only reason he returned to Bani Gala was that he had accepted his defeat and as against the

Continued on Page 06

## No deal with establishment, clarifies Imran

**Says ended long march to avoid bloodshed**

BUREAU REPORT



the "Azadi March" to avoid bloodshed. In a surprise move on Thursday morning

PESHAWAR: PTI Chairman Imran Khan Friday rebutted rumours of his party striking a deal with the establishment and said that he ended

Continued on Page 06

**'Imran must stay away from media'**

STAFF REPORT

LAHORE: PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Friday advised "half-mad" former prime minister Imran Khan to stay away from media for a while as his "miserable mental health" did not allow him to be in front of the camera in the aftermath of his

Continued on Page 06

**Bilawal for 'reset' in Pak-US ties**

DNA

WASHINGTON: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has called for a reset in ties between Pakistan and the United States and said easing tensions between the two nations was in the best interest of both. In an exclusive interview with an American columnist published in the Washington Post, Bilawal stated that the two countries "agree on far more than we disagree on," adding that it will not be wise to allow relations between the two to deteriorate further. The two nations, once close allies, have had frosty relations in recent years. The US-Pakistan relationship soared during the PTI government's tenure because

**Holiday Notice**

The offices of daily Islamabad POST shall remain closed on Saturday on account of weekly off therefore there will be no newspaper on Sunday. - Editor

**Inside...**

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## Pakistan, Indonesia agree to promote bilateral ties

NEWS DESK

BALI: PAJCCI and business community on both sides of border greatly appreciate the announcement made by Muhammad Sadiq, Special Envoy for Afghanistan to operationalize additional border crossings for trade and people to people movement between Pakistan & Afghanistan.

He announced that Government of Pakistan has decided to open several additional border crossings with Afghanistan to facilitate economic activity and people movement. Arandu between Chitral & Kunar and Beshahi between Lower Dir & Kunar are the first two crossings of the series to be made operational. These crossings are in addition to five fully operational border crossings of Torkham, Ghu-

lam Khan, Kharlachi, Angoor Adda & Chaman-Spin Buldok and one partially opened Dalbadeen crossing. He said that several new border crossings will be opened after agreement of the Afghan Government and making necessary arrangements. Zubair Motiwala; Chairman PAJCCI welcomed this announcement and hoped that government will facilitate business activities especially with neighboring Afghanistan as it is cost effective and efficient trading partner. We are one on both sides of border sharing cultural, social and economic values and well being of the masses in border areas who are employed in border trade areas instead of coming to big cities with already stressed infrastructure. This is the right step in uplifting socio-economic status of both coun-

tries. He recommended that before operationalizing new border crossings, governments of both countries must take all measures to first developing supportive infrastructure and operational set ups including trained human resources, security, service areas for transporters and general public, functional booths for quick clearance, provision of electricity, roads, bank counters, drinking water and internet. These measures will ensure facilitation of trade and also revenue for governments. He also asked governments to consider opening more border crossings in Baluchistan; at present only one border crossing Chaman is functional and bearing the load whereas the opportunity is great where CPEC is based and Gawadar port is available with capacity for transit trade with rest of the world. He reiterated PAJCCI demand made in March that Swat has been a traditional trade partner of Afghanistan and was using Bajur border for bilateral trade which was closed after August 2021 due to regime change in Afghanistan. There are four border points connecting Swat and Afghanistan however "Nawapass" border crossing has infrastructure on both sides and both governments must take measures to open it at the earliest possible instance. The trade in Swat is suffering due to long route via Torkham and local furniture industry has hugely suffered as it was easy and cost effective to bring raw material from Afghanistan via Bajur.



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## PIC, GNMI organize two-days training session

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Pakistan Information Center (PIC) in collaboration with Global Neighborhood for Media Innovation (GNMI) organized Two-days training session here on Friday. Chief Guest Director General Press Informa-

tion Department (PID) Iram Tanveer alongwith Journalists community of different parts of province attended Pakistan Information Center (PIC) 2-days training session here at Avari Towers. On the occasion, Senior lady Journalist Aafia Salam and Anchor Najia was the key trainers of training in the first day session. They spoke high about the Me-

dia ethics and code of conduct during media job specially in print media. They emphasized media persons to play their part according to the objective perform their duties as per standard SOPs with the objectives of Media ethics and code of conduct. The facilitators and young team was invited the students and new practitioners in learning session also.



KARACHI: Director General Press Information Department (PID) Iram Tanveer along with Bureau Chief Daily Islamabad POST Nazir Siyal, Mujahid Shah and others, while attended Pakistan Information Center (PIC) in collaboration with Global Neighborhood of Media Innovation (GNMI) 2-days training session here at Avari Towers. – DNA

## Peace is the hallmark of Islam: DC Sohail

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: The introductory meeting of District Peace Committee was held at dc office under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Lt. (R) Sohail Ashraf. Additional Deputy Commissioner General Qaiser Abbas Rind, District Manager Auqaf Shahbaz Ahmad and other officers were also present. Maulana Muhammad Yusuf Anwar, Sahibzada Zahid Mehmood Qasmi,

Pir Faiz Rasool Rizwi, Muhammad Riaz Kharral, Mufti Zia Madni, Syed Jafar Naqvi, Dr. Iftikhar Hussain Naqvi, Yaseen Zafar, Syed Tajmal Hussain, Malik Baksh Elahi, Dr. Mumtaz Hussain, Khawaja Shahid Razaq Sika, Aslam Bhalli, Mian Tanvir Riaz and Father Abid Tanvir representative of Bishop of Faisalabad were present on the occasion. Deputy Commissioner welcomed the members of district peace committee and said that the scholars of all schools

of thought in Faisalabad district are united. He said that tolerance, love and observance of law should be taught to the people and especially in the gatherings of Jumuah prayer, the message of sincere adherence to Aswae-Hasana (PBUH) and unity should be conveyed. He said that district administration would always welcome the suggestions of Ulmas for the establishment of peace. He said that peace and security is the

hallmark of religion Islam which makes the world and the hereafter better therefore will not spare a single minute to keep Faisalabad as the cradle of peace, the credit of which goes to the scholars of all sects. Members of Peace Committee welcomed the newly appointed DC and assured their full cooperation and said that peace belongs to all of us. Finally, prayer was offered for the development and prosperity of the country and the nation.

## KP rules notifies breeding facility rules

Unregistered wildlife breeding facilities across the province will be treated as illegal and liable to legal action

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has notified Breeding Facility Rules for breeding wildlife species. These rules are passed by the provincial cabinet under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Wildlife and Biodiversity (Protection, Preservation, Conservation and Management) Act, 2015. Under these rules, any person or institution can build breeding facility for any wildlife animal or bird. In this regard, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Wildlife Department has issued press release for knowledge of general public. According to the press statement, if there is any wildlife breeding facility in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, its owners should immediately register their business under these rules with the nearest office of the Wildlife Department across the province, otherwise their business or facility will be considered as illegal and will be prosecuted as per law. The press statement further elaborates those owners or entities dealing in illegal breeding facility may also face immediate closure with heavy fines and imprisonment.

## MOU ceremony of upgradation of GMHS ground held

SAQIB MUSHTAQ

LODHARAN: MOU signing ceremony after renovation and upgradation of GMHS cricket ground under Public Private Partnership & handing over to Southern Punjab Cricket Association for 10 years. The renovated cricket ground at Government Model High School (GMHS), Multan with a worth

of 5 million is a wonderful initiative of the School Education Department, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), Southern Punjab Cricket Association (SPCA) & White House Avenue under Public-Private Partnership. It will not only help to nurture the young talent of cricket in South Punjab but will ensure that the facility will be run on a sustainable basis said Dr. Ehtasham Anwar, Secretary of School

Education-South Punjab while inaugurating the facility. In order to full fill the vision of Chairman PCB, Ramiz Raja, the Southern Punjab Cricket Association has developed 8 new hybrid pitches with the support of PCB, developed three grounds and intended to develop 20 more grounds in South Punjab. We will further make this GMHS ground of the first-class standard said Anees Khawaja Chairman SPCA.



LAHORE: Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi awarding degree to a participant of 51st PN Staff course at PN War College. – DNA

## 'Yum-e-Akhuwat-e-Rawadari' observed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In Friday sermons all over Pakistan, Ulemas-Mashaykh, Imams, Zakirs and religious scholars spoke about the promotion of peace and harmony and for the elimination of violent attitudes and any action that could lead to riots in the country. The religious scholars said that it is very clear and it should be kept in mind that only internal stability and unity of Pakistan can take the country forward. People of different views and believers of different faith and religious sects live in Pakistan. Tolerating one another and creating a spirit of tolerance for one another is the message of the religion of Islam and all the heavenly religions. In Friday sermons, the religious Scholars and Ulemas-Mashaykh said that that Libya, Iraq, Syria, Yemen and other countries where the army and the nation were divided, those countries could not maintain their stability.

## Pakistan, Iran share great cultural affinity

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Minister for Culture and Islamic Guidance Dr Hossein Roozbeh on Friday said the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan, as two brotherly neighbouring countries, shared great cultural and religious affinity that should be enhanced for mutual benefits. In a meet the press, the Iranian Deputy Minister flanked by his delegation member and also the Cultural Counvilor Attache of the Iranian Embassy Dr Asadi briefed the media over his visit and shared updates of his bilateral meetings. Dr Roozbeh said, "Whenever any Iranian enters Pakistan he never feels strange as there is huge similarity between the cultures of the two nations. Islamic Republic of Pakistan is the only neighbouring country that has great religious and cultural affinity with Iran." – APP

## Business community rejects whopping hike in POL prices

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: Business community here on Friday categorically rejected the historic increase in prices of petroleum products, asking the government to revise its decision while keeping in view the fragile businesses, industries and ailing economy of the country, and take back it immediately. The Government's decision would prove detrimental for the already feeble national economy, warns Hasnain Khurshid Ahmad, President Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, according to a statement issued here, quoting him as he is saying. The SCCI chief maintained the cost of industrial production would escalate after the whopping increase in prices of petroleum commodities that would bring a fresh wave of inflation in the country. He noted the purchasing power of the common man has already weakened owing to increasing 'price-hike', saying that the poverty-stricken people would further hit hard after the

government's move. Terming the historic hike of Rs30 per litre petrol as venomous for the country's economy and anti-businesses and industry, Mr Khurshid observed the country is confronted with severe economic crunch and turmoil situations. He added the business community has faced countless difficulties owing to the prevailing scenario, saying that running of business and industries was not only made difficult but impossible because of the present economic policies. The chamber's president stressed it is essential to take relief measures to support the ailing country's economy, businesses and industry. However, he noticed the frequent increase in prices of electricity, gas and petroleum products was tantamount to further push the fragile economy toward a complete collapse. Mr Khurshid viewed that factory owners are compelled to shut their units in the prevalent scenario that has triggered massive unemployment in the country.

He observed every segment of the society has adversely affected owing to increasing 'price-hike' on a daily basis. The SCCI chief severely criticized the government for taking decisions on dictation of IMF, which couldn't be suitable for the country's economy, businesses and industries. He said it is crucial to formulate independent policies to put the ailing economy on the right track. Furthermore, he asserted Pakistan should pull out the mire of foreign debts and make it an economically 'self-reliance' nation. Owing to inconsistency in economic policies, Mr Khurshid noted the country's export has dropped at an optimal level while declining foreign exchange reserves, trade deficit, coupled with energy and gas crisis further pushing the country's feeble economy to a complete destruction. The SCCI president asked the government to take decisions with full wisdom and due consultation with relevant stakeholders in order to stabilize the country's ailing economy.

## Secy visits Faisalabad, inspects schools, hospitals

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: On the special directions of CM Punjab Hamza Shahbaz, Secretary Specialized Primary and Secondary Health Ali Jan Khan visited Faisalabad and went to different hospitals to check the implementation of govt initiatives to the patients regarding health sector. He went to Govt General Hospital Samanabad, Govt General Hospital Haseeb Shaheed 224 R. B, Govt General Hospital Ghulam Muhammad Abad, Allied Hospital, Drug Testing Lab, Faisalabad Medi-Cal University. Deputy Commissioner Lt. (R) Sohail Ashraf, CEO DHA Dr. Bilal Ahmad, ACs Muhammad

Umar Maqbool, Sahibzada Muhammad Yousaf and Medical Superintendents of concerned hospitals were present. Secretary Health visited Medi-Cal emergency, Medical unit, radiology, OPD and other sections and observed the performance of hospitals. He met with patients and their attendants and asked them about the performance of hospitals besides getting treatment and free medicine from here. He took a detailed round of hospitals and checked the functional fans, available of drinking water, situation of cleanliness in main and in toilets and asked the Medical Superintendents to set a high level standard of cleanliness so the neat and clean

environment looked. He also went to the city scan room and Medical wards and checked the medicines at stores and stock register. Medical Superintendents gave detail briefing on administrative and medical arrangements. Talking to the reports Secretary Health said that during the next financial year the Govt General Hospital Samanabad would completely functional and govt would provided Cuty Scan machine also. He said that the planning was underway to provide additional funds to hospitals and to provide best treatment to the patients in govt hospitals was the top priority and all available resources are utilized in this regard.

## Experts stress need of qualified students

The training workshop, organized by Quality Assurance Agency, Higher Education Commission, Islamabad, in collaboration with Quality Enhancement Cell, University of Swat was held at main Campus of the University of Swat at Charbagh. More than 35 educationists from 20 different universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa participated in six different training sessions

SHAMIM SHAHID

MINGORA: Participants and organizers of the three-day workshop on "Strengthening Internal Quality Assurance" urged for collective efforts to produce highly qualified and well-mannered students, who would be ca-

pable to contribute their due role in country's development. The training workshop, organized by Quality Assurance Agency, Higher Education Commission, Islamabad, in collaboration with Quality Enhancement Cell, University of Swat was held at main Campus of the University of Swat

at Charbagh. More than 35 educationists from 20 different universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa participated in six different training sessions. Addressing the concluding ceremony, the Vice Chancellor, University of Swat, Prof. Dr. Hassan Sher said that it was a matter of honor for University of Swat to

host this important event, where academicians from different universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were given opportunity to share their knowledge and skills with each other. He said that University of Swat has been passing through a rapid development these days, adding that a time is near when this university

will be equipped with all necessary facilities. "No university can achieve the task of imparting quality education to its students individually, hence, collective efforts are needed to bring innovations at universities' level". He said and added that collective wisdom would not only be helpful for the uplift of

universities but also necessary for a better training and education of students. Speaking at the occasion, Director General of Quality Assurance Agency, Higher Education Commission, Islamabad, Dr. Nasir Shah said that HEC is taking all possible steps to bring innovation and improvement in higher education sector. He said that "students are the major stake holders who would not be given knowledge through traditional means but would also be equipped with professional ethics, relating to different disciplines of their study". He added that teachers should utilize their talent and skills for the betterment of their students, and this approach will be helpful in producing high qualified students for the development of nation. Later on, shields and certificates were distributed among the participants and organizers.



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## National Days and Armed Forces Days

### MAY

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May 06 / Bulgaria	Armed Forces Day
May 06 / UAE	Armed Forces Day
May 07 / Kazakhstan	Armed Forces Day
May 08 / Czech Republic	National Day
May 09 / European Union	National Day
May 17 / Norway	Constitution Day
May 21 / Hungary	Armed Forces Day
May 22 / Yemen Republic	Re-unification Day (National Day)
May 24 / Eritrea	National Day
May 25 / Lebanon	Liberation and Resistance Day
May 25 / Argentina	National Day
May 25 / Jordan	Independence Day
May 28 / Azerbaijan	Republic Day
May 28 / Ethiopia	National Day
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Bomb Disposal.....	15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....	1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance.....	1122
& Rescue Services.....	4451122
Motorway Police.....	9266044
Motorway Police.....	9270601-20
Women Police Stations Islamabad.....	9222596
Rawalpindi.....	9270601-20



## Hospitals

CMH.....	5611111
MH.....	5611116
Cantt Hospital.....	9270907-11
DHQ.....	5556311-4
RGH.....	9290301-7
Holy Family.....	9290322-7
PIMS.....	9261170-79
Polyclinic.....	9218300-09
Shifa International.....	4603666



## Departments

CDA.....	9221334-43
CDA.....	9208301-04
Met Office.....	9250360-6
RDA.....	5555864
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Cantonment Board.....	9270151-3

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# Experts call for peaceful use of nuclear technology

SHUJAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The Arms Control and Disarmament Center (ACDC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad (ISSI) organised an in-house meeting to mark the 24th anniversary of Youm-e-Takbeer on May 27, 2022, with a theme of achieving "Comprehensive National Security and the Role of Peaceful Nuclear Technology."

In his opening remarks, Malik Qasim Mustafa, Director ACDC, highlighted that nuclear technology has the potential to deal with traditional and non-traditional security challenges. Pakistan is not only ensuring the security of its nation with utmost restraints and responsibility but it is also utilising peaceful nuclear technology in almost every field. He reiterates that peaceful nuclear technology has the potential to ensure comprehensive national security. Pakistan must make use of peaceful nuclear technology in almost all sectors including energy, agriculture, industry, medical, environment and other related areas to bring prosperity and growth.

In her briefing, Ms Ghazala Yasmin Jalil, Research Fellow ACDC, said that Paki-



stan's nuclear weapon capability is intended to primarily offset the conventional superiority of India. Pakistan's basic guiding principle is Minimum Credible Deterrence, which has evolved into Full Spectrum Deterrence. It is working on a tirade of Land, Air and Sea-based nuclear forces. Pakistan is progressing steadily towards self-reliance in many aspects of peaceful applications of nuclear technology. Peaceful uses of nuclear technology extend to the fields of energy, health sector, agriculture and industry. Presently, Pakistan has six operational nuclear power reactors with a total energy generation capacity of 3440 MW. Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) is utilising nuclear technology to improve the productivity of the agriculture sector through the introduction of new crop varieties, pest control technologies, plant nutrition and water management, animal health and productivity and food decontamination and preservation.

Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Director General ISSI, in his remarks said that Pakistan acquired the nuclear capability as a response to security threats from India. Pakistan developed its nuclear programme for defensive purposes only. This capability balanced Pakistan's position vis-vis the conventional superiority of India. Despite many lucrative financial offers and political pressures, the then government of Pakistan decided to conduct nuclear tests in 1998 as the only way to deter the security threats posed by India. He also emphasised utilising nuclear technology for socio-economic security.

While recalling his memories from 1998, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BoG ISSI, said that Pakistan was a reluctant nuclear power. During the 1980 and 90s, Pakistan tabled various resolutions at the UN to declare South Asia as a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (NWFZ). However, India never accepted these proposals. After the Indian nuclear tests, Pakistan was forced to conduct the nuclear tests to ensure its national security. He also recalled and appreciated the unwavering support of the friendly states during those difficult times.

## Experts call for a strong policy framework to promote electric vehicles

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan needs to strengthen its policy framework to promote electric vehicles, which are not only environment-friendly but also it will reduce the country's dependency on fossil fuels. In the webinar on 'Market preparedness and Policy Support for Electric Vehicles (EVs) in Pakistan' during keynote address, Prof. Dr Naveed Arshad, Lahore University of Management Sciences said Electric Vehicle Policy lack ownership in Pakistan. Besides, he said, the involvement of a single ministry for policy formulation and implementation tracking is not enough. He suggested forming a high-level body on top under Planning Commission, Board of Investment, or parliament itself for the key decision-making.

He further suggested that the government must provide a least resistant path to critical mass of EVs, convert public vehicles to Electric ones, invest in indigenous research, provide new financial models, and ensure minimum quality and safety of the vehicles. Secretary, Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), Mr Sabir Jamil, said that the government is offering several taxation and incentive schemes for electric vehicles. - APP

## ANF seizes over 2629 kg drugs in 49 operations; arrests 39

RAWALPINDI: Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) Pakistan has seized 2629.706 kg drugs, 400 Liters Acetic Anhydride Chemical & 180.006 kg suspected material worth US\$ 423.798 million internationally, arrested 39 persons including a foreigner and impounded 13 vehicles while conducting 49 counter narcotics operations throughout the country. According to an ANF Headquarters spokesman, the seized drugs comprised 388.478 kg Heroin, 1748.379 kg Hashish, 161.700 kg Opium, 262 kg Morphine, 62.490 kg Methamphetamine (Ice). - APP

## Santoo Meets Alright Mela Music residency and live performances in Lahore, Islamabad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: 27th May 2022 With the support of the Embassy of France in Pakistan, the Alliance Française -Lahore, the Institute for Art and Culture, and the Rafi Peer Theatre Workshop, French and Pakistani musicians will participate in a residency in Lahore to produce fusion music bringing together qawwal melodies and electronic music with a French touch. They will give three live performances in Lahore and Islamabad on 27th, 28th and 29th May 2022.

After two years of pandemic, artists can finally be back on the stage all around the world. French oud

player Markus and electronic musician Xavier Pourcher met Pakistani singer and musician Shahzad Santoo Khan based in Lahore by chance on social media around 6 years ago. A few trips between France and Pakistan sealed their fruitful collaboration under the name "Markus & Shahzad", which led to the release of their two albums Janna Aana and Tumbal. Santoo Meets Alright Mela is a new musical collaboration bringing together the three musicians and Shahzad Santoo's qawwali ensemble. This will be the musicians' third tour in Pakistan.

Qawwali melodies have nothing to envy to the greatest electronic hits. The powerful rhythms created by the tablas and the claps

of the choristers transcend the listeners. Santoo meets Alright Melawill give a platform for the artists from the cities of Lahore and Angers to blend their talents in a bewitching fusion, where uplifting electronic music with a French touch and qawwali music intertwine ingeniously, and embark with the listeners on a journey filled with mutual discoveries and surprises. The audience will get the chance to witness this authentic encounter between Pakistani, Oriental and Western musical cultures within the tracks but also throughout the whole concert. Santoo Meets Alright Mela will create a space where each culture is celebrated

in its own singularity. Santoo Meets Alright Mela will start their collaboration with a creation residency at the Institute for Art and Culture in Lahore from May 23rd to 27th, followed by three live performances in Lahore and Islamabad. Practical Details: Friday 27th May, 7:30pm: Live Performance at Rafi Peer Theatre Workshop, Lahore. Saturday 28th May: Live performance at the Heritage Live concert at Lok Virsa Heritage Museum, a concert jointly organised by the European Network of Institutes of Culture and Face Foundation, Islamabad. Sunday 29/05, 6:30pm: Live performance at Heritage Live's second concert at Institute for Art and Culture, Lahore.

## Traders demand to replace old electric transformers

RAWALPINDI: City traders have urged the Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) to replace the old electric transformers installed in the commercial areas. President Traders Welfare Association (TWA) Rawalpindi Sharif Mir told APP that he apprised Chief Executive Officer (CEO) IESCO Dr Engineer Amjad Khan during a meeting with him that electric transformers installed in city areas were outdated and often meltdown due to heat during the summer season.

"I also informed the CEO that traders suffer huge losses due to fire incidents and unannounced and unscheduled load-shedding the city experiences for hours in the name of maintenance," he added. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Federal minister for law and justice, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar addressing a press conference. - DNA

## Increased taxation on Tobacco Products can support Govt's economic relief plans

ISLAMABAD: The Society for the Protection of the Child (SPARC) demanded of the government on Friday to raise taxes on tobacco products to provide economic relief to Pakistani citizens.

This press release was issued in the wake of government's decision from previous night where petroleum prices were increased in what is the largest ever jump in the prices in one go. Mr. Khalil Ahmed Dogar, Program Manager, SPARC said the 30 rupees increase in Petroleum prices could have been avoided if Pakistan had increase 30 rupees

per packet of cigarettes. He stated that tobacco products are non-essential and hazardous items which are responsible for approximately 170,000 deaths every year. A struggling economy such as Pakistan should heavily tax such items to keep them out of reach of lower income groups and children, however in Pakistan, tobacco products are being sold at lower rates compared to other South Asian countries. Malik Imran Country lead for Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, said that there has been no 'real change' in the taxes on cigarettes

in the last 4 years. He mentioned that the use of tobacco causes annual an economic burden of 615 billion which is 1.6% of Pakistan's GDP. On the other hand, the revenue generated from the tobacco industry is 120 billion. Mr. Imran mentioned that the new government has stated that it won't shy from taking unpopular decisions to strengthen Pakistan's economy. Any decision in current scenario must be pro-people and raising tobacco taxes is one such decision which can help people and economy at same time. Mr. Shariq Mahmood

Khan, CEO, Chromatic Trust, quoted Finance Minister Mr. Miftah Ismail that the decision to increase petroleum prices has been implemented in accordance to international commitments. Mr. Shariq stated that Pakistan is a signatory of WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control which has repeatedly recommended Pakistan to increase taxation on tobacco products. The government needs to implement this recommendation which will not only generated much needed revenue but also reduce tobacco consumption. - APP

## ITP fines several vehicles over wrong parking

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) on Friday fined several vehicles over wrong parking to ensure smooth flow of traffic in the Federal Capital. The SSP (Traffic) directed all Zonal DSPs to ensure implementation on traffic laws through courteous attitude with citizens.

He said that people should be treated politely and briefed them about traffic laws, according to a news release. The SSP (Traffic) said that it was the right of pedestrian to use footpath and no parking would be allowed there. He said that vehicles should be parked at specified locations of the shopping centers while awareness campaign was underway to educate citizens coming for shopping activities there. - APP



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## Threat of recession over global economy

**T**hreat of another wave of global recession is looming barely a few months after world's leading economies started limping back from the pandemic induced economic slowdown since the beginning of 2020. With the world's major economies across the EU, China and the US seen slowing, the fear of a global recession appears more real than ever.

While multilateral agencies such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have been cautioning of a synchronised economic slowdown across world's leading economies, the latest to join the ominous warning is the World Economic Forum. At the annual summit of the world's financial elite in Davos, the central theme of discussions has been the flagging global growth and its impact on businesses. A recession is seen inevitable in Europe as the impact of war in Ukraine bites many leading economies amid a looming energy crisis. In the US, it is the rapidly rising inflation and the Fed's attempt to fight it using higher interest rates are almost certain to slow down consumption in the US and across the world, eventually leading to a decline in overall global demand. In China, the latest COVID-related lockdowns could cause new bottlenecks in global supply chains. Faced with flagging export demand growth, China is already finding it hard to keep up with its 5.5 per cent GDP growth target.

While in the growth versus price stability trade-off, growth is clearly seen becoming a casualty in most leading economies, it is ironic that the same set of policies that were used to reflate economies a few months ago are being tightened to tame inflation, reversing growth. From a long-term economic stability standpoint, monetary tightening in the US is justified, as inflation, which remains stubbornly at 40-year highs, has lifted prices 8.3 per cent in the past year and wiped out wage gains for almost all Americans. By virtue of currencies' peg to the dollar, GCC central banks track the monetary policy. Despite monetary squeeze this brings in terms of rising interest rates, growth in credit to the private sector is expected to remain robust given the high liquidity in the banking systems and robust government finances supported by high oil prices.

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## Better safe than sorry

**T**he UAE's effective handling of the Covid-19 pandemic for over two years has given health authorities the confidence to tackle the monkeypox virus which has raised some concerns across the world. More than 200 cases have been reported globally, mostly in Europe, and near-normal air travel since 2019 could make the virus, first detected in Africa more than 50 years ago, spread to other regions and continents.

The World Health Organization (WHO) held an emergency meeting that was inconclusive about the exact mode of transmission, but countries have been asked to raise surveillance levels though it is unclear if the pathogen is indeed spreading within communities. Experts, however, believe the virus, a relative of the smallpox-causing pathogen, is transmitted through close contact through the skin and could be far less dangerous than Covid. That's some comfort which does not mean countries shouldn't raise alert levels. According to the WHO, the smallpox vaccine is 85 per cent effective against monkeypox. This is based on observational research in Africa where it lay dormant for decades. Fortunately for the UAE, its advanced epidemiological surveillance system is among the best in the world. All emirates are taking no chances, and health care professionals and laboratories are prepared to track cases and treat the disease in individuals.

On Tuesday, the country reported its first case. What needs to be noted here is that monkeypox is not fatal in most cases and patients recover in one or two weeks. The UAE's Covid protocol was to trace, test and treat, which later shifted to prevention with the advent of vaccines from late 2020. The smart monitoring mechanism has already kicked into top gear to get ahead of monkeypox. The health ministry's technical advisory team for pandemic control has prepared a comprehensive guide for surveillance, early detection of the disease, management of clinically infected patients and precautionary measures, we reported on Monday. With Covid still around, the emergence of the monkeypox virus is bound to put a strain on health systems globally. What's vital is to ramp up vaccine production if the virus does get out of control. Here the WHO is already in talks with vaccine-makers to ensure there are enough stocks to roll out if countries need them.



## China-Iran military relations

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



“Turkey is a member of NATO, but under Mr. Erdogan, it no longer subscribes to the values that underpin this great alliance. Article 13 of the NATO charter provides a mechanism for members to withdraw. Perhaps it is time to amend Article 13 to establish a procedure for the expulsion of a member nation,” Messrs. Lieberman and Wallace wrote

**C**hinese minister of national defense Wei Fenghe visited Tehran in April and met with high profile personalities of Iran. During their visit, the Chinese envoys met with senior Iranian officials, including President Ibrahim Raisi, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces General Staff (AFGS) Mohammad Baqeri and Defense Minister Mohammad Reza Ishtiani. Officers from the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)

which are used to make solid propellants for missiles.

Chinese companies have also supplied aluminum products used in the manufacture of centrifuges to Iran's Centrifuge Technology Company, despite the need for permission under UN Security Council Resolution 2231. Missile and nuclear transitions could be further expanded following Resolution 2231 restrictions on Iranian exports and imports of missile-related equipment and materials

were also present at the meetings.

In recent years, the United States has imposed sanctions on Chinese companies exporting missile technology to Iran. In 2017, the US Treasury Department approved the sale of millions of dollars' worth of Chinese Rowan Running Network “technology applied to navigation and guidance systems, as well as other dual-use technologies” to an Iranian Defense Ministry-affiliated entity. Washington has also fined Chinese companies who had sold Tehran jet mills

under the Procurement Channel of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and the Joint Comprehensive Plan (JCPOA).

Military cooperation is measured in ways other than solid weapons. For one thing, cyber warfare is an integral part of Iran's arsenal, and Beijing promised to increase cyber cooperation during Foreign Minister Hussein Amir Abdullah's visit to Wuxi in January. China is a force to be reckoned with in terms of cyber-attacks and military and industrial espionage. Countries across the region have documented high-profile cases of Chinese hackers, including widespread cyber-espionage campaigns against Israel, ongoing attacks on its defense industry, and unintentional sabotage of the medical center's computer system.

Evidence suggests that there has been intelligence cooperation between the Chinese Foreign Ministry and its Iranian counterpart, especially between 2010 and 2012, when US intelligence networks were compromised. The maximum sharing of data and tools between the two countries, using the Comprehensive Cooperation Agreement and its cyber and intelligence sharing components as a vehicle, is something to keep in mind.

Evidence suggests that there has been intelligence cooperation between the Chinese Foreign Ministry and its Iranian counterpart, especially between 2010 and 2012, when US intelligence networks were compromised. Increased sharing of data and tools between the two countries, using the Comprehensive Cooperation Agreement and its cyber and intelligence sharing components as a vehicle, espe-

cially as relations between Beijing and Washington become more strained. Chinese Shenhua News Agency reported that Raisi thanked Wei Fenghe for China's long-term support and assistance in “Iran's difficult times.” Needless to say, every dollar that flows into the Iranian treasury from Chinese banks is now secretly, but openly after the lifting of sanctions, a dollar to finance IRGC sabotage operations throughout the country.

In fact, Beijing seems to be doubling down, as a CCP spokesman points out in a recent edition of the People's Daily, who criticized Washington for refusing to remove the IRGC from the list of foreign terrorist organizations. He claims that if the Biden administration “doesn't pick up its list, how it can prove that the United States is ready to change its misleading maximum pressure policy on Iran?”

Clarifying how the IRGC threatens Chinese equities, Houthi rebels in Yemen are launching Iranian missiles and drones, wreaking havoc on China's most important integrated strategic partners: Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Iraq, China's biggest target for the Belt and Road Initiative in 2021, with funding of 10.5 billion, has also been targeted. The latest attack took place at Saudi Aramco's Jeddah oil depot in late March. This is the same company that was attacked in 2019, forcing China to pay an additional 97.97 million a day when Brent crude prices hit record highs. Some scholars and experts have linked the “pro-Russian neutrality” of China and Iran to Vladimir Putin's unilateral invasion of Ukraine, a joint insult by the three countries

to the US-led Western international system, a new “axis of evil”. Other recent events, such as Wei Feng's visit, Iran's entry into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) after 15 years of waiting, and the multilateral naval exercise in January 2022 also serve to reinforce this idea.

However, as Nicole Grejowski pointed out, the trilateral cooperation between China, Iran and Russia has been ad hoc and fruitful. Bilateral interactions represent the backbone of the dynamics between the three countries, and these include various economic and security interests, the (bitter) history shared between the parties, and their volatile relations with the West and others and also other factors.

One academic described the visit as “not particularly strategic or significant” and said it was not a sign of a change in military commitments prior to the 25-year deal. Another leading Chinese academic highlighted the counter-terrorism aspect of their military cooperation, saying that China and Iran share “common goals” in fighting terrorism and religious extremism.

However, the perception of what is strategic and important on the side of the Atlantic is very different, and the Islamic Republic of Iran does not share “common goals” with China and the region in terms of terrorism, but rather to weaken them. For regional actors, especially the United States and its allies, who have been victims of self-described “revolutionary” state terrorism for more than 40 years, the visit was far from “business as usual.” The dangers are heightened by Beijing's increase in Tehran's resources.

## Sham conviction of Malik gave a new spirit to freedom fight

Faridullah Farid



In this hour of need, when the Indian government and judiciary are adamant on convicting and sentencing a true leader and genuine representative of the Kashmiri people, Pakistan stood firm and not only condemned Yasin Malik's conviction in the “strongest possible terms,” but also issued a demarche to the Indian charge d'affaires conveying Pakistan's grave concern over the framing of fabricated charges against Malik and other Kashmiri leaders to suppress their voices

**I**f seeking azadi (liberation) is a crime, then I am willing to accept this crime and its

Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Yasin Malik's inhumane

consequences,” Yasin Malik, the brave Kashmiri leader, said before an Indian court judge while rejecting terrorism, illegal fund raising, criminal conspiracy and sedition charges brought against him by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and stressing that all these charges are concocted, fabricated and politically motivated. Though Yasin Malik protested all charges against him by stating that he was a “freedom fighter,” his conviction by an Indian court in a one-sided case following a “sham trial” in a clearly dubious and motivated case carrying a maximum sentence of death or life imprisonment is in violation of the Universal Declaration of

detention in the infamous Tihar jail, his sham trial in fabricated crimes, erroneous conviction and malfeasance also represent attempts by the Indian government to defile the legitimate fight of Kashmiris for their right to self-determination as “terrorism.” All of this demonstrated India's record of human rights violations and usurpation of Kashmiris' fundamental rights. The renewed zeal with which prosecutions against Kashmiri leaders are being pursued exposes India's malicious plans to erode IIOJK's unique political and cultural identity (Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir). The conviction of Yasin Malik, as well as the “motivated cases” brought against other Kashmiri leaders, demonstrated the wicked Indian drive to deprive Kashmiris of legitimate leadership. In 1989, an armed revolt in IIOJK erupted, with combatants demanding independence for Kashmir or a union with Pakistan. In 1994, the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, commanded by Yasin Malik, ended its military insurgency in the disputed region. In 2019, the Indian government arrested Yasin Malik and banned the JKLF, the same year that New Delhi invalidated Articles 370 and 35A, depriving the IIOJK of its special status and enforcing the valley's long-standing curfew. Despite his chronic illnesses and deteriorating health, the Indian government imprisoned Yasin Malik in the infamous ‘Tihar Jail’ and subjected him to severe punishment. India has used such techniques against Kashmiri leadership in the past, but the desire for freedom has never been

crushed because the valiant Kashmiris have always taken pride in standing up for their intrinsic right to freedom and self-determination. The Indian court's ruling against Yasin Malik has sparked massive outrage and protests by Kashmiris around the world, which are expected to spread to all major capitals. The Kashmiri diaspora in the United Kingdom opposed Yasin Malik's conviction, stating that the struggle for liberation against Indian occupation is morally correct, lawful, and authentic, as backed by international law and UN resolutions. Fahim Kiyani, President of ‘Tehreek-e-Kashmir UK,’ while addressing a protest demonstration in Birmingham to express solidarity with Yasin Malik and all political prisoners said that “The court ruling against Yasin Malik is a vindication of our stand that the Indian judiciary is part of India's immoral military regime that illegally occupies Jammu and Kashmir. IIOJK was never a part of India and never will be, therefore these trials are a slap in the face of India's judiciary, military, and civil apparatus, as well as its civil society.” In this hour of need, when the Indian government and judiciary are adamant on convicting and sentencing a true leader and genuine representative of the Kashmiri people, Pakistan stood firm and not only condemned Yasin Malik's conviction in the “strongest possible terms,” but also issued a demarche to the Indian charge d'affaires conveying Pakistan's grave concern over the framing of fabricated charges against Malik and other Kashmiri lead-

ers to suppress their voices.

Though India accuses Pakistan of equipping and training Kashmiri freedom fighters to combat Indian forces, this claim is unfounded because Pakistan only offers Kashmiri people with political, moral, and diplomatic support. After the internationalisation of the Kashmir conflict, it is now common knowledge around the world that the struggle for self-determination in IIOJK is indigenous and unaffected by the Indian government's draconian strong-arm methods. The statements and determinations of Kashmiri leaders urging the international community to intervene immediately in India to save the international system, which is being flagrantly violated by India, show Kashmiris' firm resolve that nothing and no power can change their minds, and they are determined to stand up and push India out of their homeland (IIOJK). It is high time for the world community to convince India to remove all false charges against Yasin Malik, assure his safety and well-being, and give him with full legal protection and the right to a fair trial. Furthermore, the international community must press India to release all political prisoners held on spurious charges, end human rights violations in IIOJK, lift the brutal military siege, and allow Kashmiris to exercise their right to self-determination in accordance with their wishes and relevant UN resolutions.

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## Briefs

### Hamas warns Israel against any miscalculations

WEB DESK

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM: The Hamas Movement called on Palestinian masses to head to al-Aqsa Mosque at dawn Sunday "to thwart the occupation's plans." "We warn the leaders of the (Israeli) occupation against any miscalculations in Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa. We reiterate that we are proceeding with all strength, determination and certainty in defending our Jerusalem," Hamas said in a statement issued Thursday. The group further hailed the sacrifices made by the Palestinian people in defense of al-Aqsa and Jerusalem. Last week, the Israeli security minister Omer Barlev said that the police would approve the flag march based on recommendations from security agencies. In this regard, the US administration asked Israeli officials on Thursday to reconsider the decision to allow the right-wing settler march of flags to take place in the Old City of Occupied Jerusalem. Palestinian resistance groups have also threatened that they will not allow Israeli "provocations" to go by unanswered.

### Armed clashes erupt in Jenin

DNA

JENIN: Armed clashes broke out at dawn Friday in Jenin refugee camp after Israeli occupation forces (IOF) stormed the camp amid heavy firing of live bullets. Local sources said that IOF soldiers stormed Jenin camp in large numbers, which led to the outbreak of armed clashes. Palestinian resistance fighters forced the IOF troops to withdraw from the refugee camp without carrying out any arrest campaign. Late Thursday, clashes broke out in Hawara town in Nablus amid heavy firing of teargas bombs. The clashes erupted when a group of Jewish settlers tried to force their way into the town under IOF protection. Several local residents were earlier injured when a group of Jewish settlers stormed the Hawara town and raised the Israeli flags in total provocation to local residents. A Palestinian young man was shot by Israeli gunfire, and 51 teargas injuries were also reported during the clashes.

### QA, Airbus want paintwork battle settled out of court

DNA

DOHA: Qatar Airways and Airbus both said they wanted to settle a bitter billion dollar dispute out of court after the latest hearing Thursday in which each side claimed victory. The airline and leading plane maker have been fighting in the British courts for months over peeling paint on 23 A350 jets which have been grounded. A London high court judge agreed Thursday to the airline's demand for a speeded up trial schedule but refused to order Airbus to stop trying to resell jets intended for Qatar Airways to other airlines whilst they wait for a final ruling. Qatar Airways chief executive Akbar Al Baker, in a rare public comment on the case, told reporters in Doha: "Every partnership has disputes and I just hope that this dispute could be resolved outside the courts of law." The airline, which is demanding about \$1 billion in damages, said in a statement that it was "pleased" that the latest judgement called for an "expedited trial" and more details on the peeling paintwork that it has said is a threat to the A350's lightning conductor. "We will finally be able to assess the cause of the damage to our aircraft and the expedited trial will provide a swift resolution of this unprecedented dispute." Airbus, which is counter-claiming for damages and has retaliated by suspending a \$6 billion deal with Qatar Airways for 50 A321 planes, welcomed the judge's refusal of the airline's demand for the case to be split in two.

# 100 observers accredited so far for Kazakh referendum

Deputy Foreign Minister Roman Vassilenko, Meszerics said the key task of the mission is to evaluate the preparation for and the conduct of the referendum

DNA

NUR-SULTAN: The Central Referendum Commission (CRC) has accredited 105 observers from various international organizations as of May 25, said CRC Chairman Nurlan Abdirov during a briefing with foreign diplomats. They include 10 observers from the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) Referendum Assessment Mission, 43 observers from the Commonwealth of Inde-

pendent States (CIS) Observer Mission, and 13 independent observers from Armenia, France, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Palestine, Russia, Tajikistan, Thailand, and Turkey.

The accreditation of international observers will end on May 30. Head of the OSCE/ODIHR Referendum Assessment Mission Tamas Meszerics arrived in Nur-Sultan on May 25 to meet with Kazakh officials to discuss the results and plans in preparation for the June 5 national referendum on constitutional amendments.



Abdirov met with Meszerics to brief the members of the mission on the main stages of preparation for the referendum. Both sides agreed to maintain cooperation throughout the referendum observation period. During the meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister Roman Vassilenko, Meszerics said the key task of the mission is to evaluate the preparation for and the conduct of the referendum. The format for monitoring the referendum was determined by the ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission, which arrived in Kazakh-

stan earlier this month. Vassilenko said that the state agencies are well-prepared to hold the referendum and will continue providing support for the mission. The OSCE/ODIHR is an organization that provides support, assistance and expertise to participating states and civil society to promote democracy, rule of law, human rights and tolerance, and non-discrimination. The functions of the organization include observing elections, review of legislation and advising governments on how to develop and sustain democratic institutions.

## Azerbaijan refutes rumors on referendum

FOREIGN DESK

BAKU: The information having been spread in recent days by some media about the allegedly planned referendum in Azerbaijan isn't true, sources in the country's government told Trend. "No amendments to the Constitution of the country are envisioned. Currently, there are no such plans in the government, and this issue isn't discussed. Therefore, this information is unfounded. In this regard, during such a sensitive period, we urge the media not to mislead the public and not replicate unverified information," the sources said. Besides, according to the sources, the clarification of voter lists in Azerbaijan, which formed the basis for the spread of such rumors, is a process envisaged by law and carried out regularly. Refinement of voter lists this year will allow studying the impact of migration processes in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as against the backdrop of events in Ukraine, internal migration processes during and after the 2020 Second Karabakh War, added the sources.



BAKU: Pakistan ambassador to Azerbaijan Bilal Hayee alongwith Eldar Azizov, Mayor of Baku, planted a "Pakistan-Azerbaijan Friendship Tree" in Ataturk Park to mark the 30th anniversary of diplomatic ties. - DNA

# PM woos Japanese investors to benefit from Pak opportunities

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Friday while underscoring his government's efforts for creating business-friendly opportunities, invited new Japanese companies to avail themselves of such opportunities and invest in Pakistan. The prime minister, in a meeting with Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan Mitsuhiro Wada here, assured that the government would extend all possible facilitation to Japanese investors. Conveying Pakistan's firm resolve to elevate this relationship to new heights, the prime minister emphasized the importance of deepening bilateral cooperation, especially in the areas of trade, development, education, IT, climate change, and infrastructure. During the course of their conversation, views were exchanged on further strengthening the existing Pakistan-Japan bilateral relationship. The prime minister recalled that the year 2022 was being observed as the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplo-



matic ties between the two nations. He also appreciated that the to commemorate this landmark occasion were a reflection of the special relationship that Pakistan enjoyed with Japan. The prime minister was deeply appreciative of JICA's ongoing programmes and meaningful contribution for supporting socio-economic and development sectors in Pakistan. Ambassador Wada recalled Japan's long-standing bilateral cooperation with Pakistan in diverse fields and expressed his government's commitment to working together for the achievement of shared goals and objectives. The ambassador also conveyed Japan's appreciation for Pakistan's facilitation in the post-15 August 2021 evacuation of Japanese nationals from Afghanistan, following the takeover of the Taliban. While underlining the need to maintain the momentum of high-level exchanges, the prime minister extended a cordial invitation to Prime Minister Fumio Kishida to undertake a visit to Pakistan, at an early date.

## Russia expels five Croatian diplomats

MOSCOW: The Russian Foreign Ministry on Friday declared five Croatian diplomats persona non grata. The relevant note was handed to Croatian Ambassador to Russia Tomislav Car, the ministry said in a statement on its website. "Tomislav Car was expressed a decisive protest in connection with groundless attempts of Croatia's authorities to put responsibility on Russia for military crimes in Ukraine and the Croatian side's military assistance to the neo-Nazi regime in Kyiv," the ministry said. On April 11, Croatia expelled 18 Russian diplomats to show protest against the Russia-Ukraine war solidarity with Ukraine. At least 3,998 civilians have been killed and 4,693 injured since the war began on Feb. 24, according to UN estimates. The true toll is believed to be much higher. Nearly 6.6 million people have fled to other countries, while more than 7.7 million have been internally displaced, according to the UN refugee agency. - DNA

## Mourners demand action after US school shooting

UVALDE: A distraught Texas grandmother of a girl killed in the massacre in Uvalde pleaded Thursday for urgent action by US authorities to prevent future school shootings, as the country plunges again into the roiling debate over guns. Ten-year-old Amerie Garza - a fourth-grader who loved her classes, drawing, and playing with clay - was one of 19 children murdered by a teen gunman at Robb Elementary School in an act of evil that has forever changed this small Texas town. "My granddaughter was in there. She was an innocent little girl, loving school and looking forward to summer," Dora Mendoza told reporters after paying respects at a

makeshift memorial outside the school. But the 63-year-old, who lived with Amerie and saw her at an end-of-year ceremony Tuesday just hours before she was killed, quickly made clear she wanted US officials such as President Joe Biden and Texas Governor Greg Abbott not to shy away from working together on reforms. Biden, who is due to visit Uvalde on Sunday, and Abbott are polar opposites regarding restrictions on gun sales. Like many in the Democrat versus Republican divide, the two also differ on the path to take to curb the nation's surging gun violence. "They shouldn't just wait for... tragedy to start," she said. "They need to do something about it. - APP

# COMSTECH holds "Al-Farabi - Iqbal" int'l forum in Almaty

DNA

ALMATY: Almaty hosted the International "Al-Farabi - Iqbal" forum organized jointly by the International Turkic Academy, Chairman-Rector of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Deputy Minister of Education and Science along with representatives of international organizations. The forum was held in offline and online formats, attended by scholars from the Turkic countries and the OIC member states, repre-

sentatives of the intelligentsia, members of the diplomatic and parliamentary corps, experts. Several books such as proceedings of the "Al-Farabi Global Forum" held in Islamabad in 2020, in English, Kazakh and Russian languages, Al-lama Muhammad Iqbal's book "Reconstruction of Islamic Thought", in Azerbaijani language, Al-Farabi's book "El-Farabi Kitab'u'l Musika'l-Kebir" in Turkish language, and "Encyclopedia of Iqbal" in Urdu

have been presented in the forum. The forum conducted plenary sessions on "Iqbal's Philosophy: Past, Present, and Future", "The Global Impact of Iqbal's Philosophy and Poetry", and "The Challenges of the 21st Century and Technology". The sessions were attended by prominent scientists and experts from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Türkiye, Pakistan, Great Britain, Russia, Tajikistan and the OIC member states, and made

presentations on research topics. It should be noted that in 2020, COMSTECH organized a large-scale event dedicated to Al-Farabi in Islamabad. In accordance with the agreement made during that forum and in line with the instructions of the President of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Zhomart Tokayev on strengthening science and technology given at the VIII Summit of the Organization of Turkic States, the "Al-Farabi-Iqbal" forum has been organized.



## Russia praises Erdogan's efforts for peace

DNA

MOSCOW: Russia sees that Türkiye's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan stands for achieving peace in Ukraine and is ready to contribute to it in every possible way, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Thursday. Speaking in an interview with the RT Arabic TV channel, Lavrov noted that Türkiye does not have a plan for solving the crisis but is ready to provide a platform for peace talks between Russia and Ukraine as was done in March in Istanbul. The minister also noted that the negotiations in Istanbul were constructive and marked the first time Ukraine had presented its vision of a peace treaty in written form. Currently, the peace talks have stalled, and Russia passed the latest version of the draft peace treaty to Ukraine and it has been on the Ukrainian side without any movement since then, Lavrov said. He called remarks by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy "an unserious approach" after Zelenskyy said that any peace talks could only take place between himself and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin, pointing out that the conclusion of any treaty requires thorough preparatory work, which is being done at levels other than the presidential level.

## Monkeypox does not spread easily: EU health agency

BRUSSELS: The monkeypox disease does not spread easily between people, the EU health agency said on Monday. "Human-to-human transmission occurs through close contact with infectious material from skin lesions of an infected person, through respiratory droplets in prolonged face-to-face contact, and through fomites," the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) stated in a risk assessment after an outbreak of the illness in non-endemic countries. The report pointed out that most patients diagnosed with monkeypox in Europe were gay men and "the nature of the presenting lesions in some cases, suggest transmission occurred during sexual intercourse." The EU health agency warned that people who have multiple sexual partners are at higher risk of infection. According to the risk assessment, patients have so far only presented mild symptoms during the current outbreak. But, it warned that monkeypox, in general, could cause severe disease. The ECDC recommended EU member states require monkeypox patients to remain isolated and avoid close physical contact until their rash heals completely. Patients can recover at home with supportive care, the document adds.

## Early voting for local polls in South Korea begins

DNA

SEOUL: Early voting for next week's local government elections in South Korea began on Friday to elect the metropolitan mayors and provincial governors, according to local media. The election commission has established 3,551 polling stations across the country for early voting where people can cast their vote from 6 am to 6 pm local time, Yonhap News Agency reported. In the election, scheduled for June 1, over 44.3 million eligible voters will elect 17 metropolitan mayors and provincial governors, 226 lower-level council heads, 779 members for provincial and metropolitan councils, and 2,602 members for the lower-level local councils. The voters will also elect seven members for the vacant seats of the National Assembly. A tough contest is expected between the ruling People Power Party and the main opposition Democratic Party (DP) as this is the first election in the country after President Yoon Suk-yeol took office on May 10.

**Briefs**

**Texas police response during shooting in focus**

WEB DESK

UVALDE: The police response to Tuesday's Texas school massacre came under increasing scrutiny on Friday, a day after authorities acknowledged more than an hour passed after the gunman entered the building and killed 19 children and two teachers inside their classroom while barricading himself inside. Even as the shooting - the deadliest U.S. school attack in nearly a decade - intensified the long-standing national debate over gun laws, the National Rifle Association, the country's leading gun rights advocacy group, opened its annual meeting on Friday in Houston. Prominent Republicans, including former President Donald Trump and U.S. Senator Ted Cruz of Texas, were expected to address the convention. Republican Texas Governor Greg Abbott, who had also been scheduled to speak, will instead provide recorded remarks and head to Uvalde, the site of the shooting, for an afternoon news conference with other officials, according to news outlets. President Joe Biden, a Democrat who has urged Congress to approve new gun restrictions, will visit Uvalde on Sunday.

**Akhtar Munir appointed as MD APP**



ISLAMABAD: The Press Secretary and Adviser to the President on Information Akhtar Munir has been appointed as Managing Director of the Associated Press of Pakistan in lieu of Mubashir Hasan on standard terms and conditions of deputation till his date of superannuation that is 09-06-24. - APP

**US buys more Stingers after missiles' success**

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: The U.S. Army has signed a deal to buy \$687 million worth of anti-aircraft Stinger missiles to replenish stocks sent to Ukraine, sources said on Friday. The shoulder-fired anti-aircraft Stinger missiles made by Raytheon Technologies (RTX.N) were in hot demand in Ukraine, where they have successfully stopped Russian assaults from the air, and in neighboring European countries which fear they may also need to beat back Russian forces. The contract for a total of 1,468 Stingers was awarded Wednesday, according to a document reviewed by Reuters. There was no timeline for completion of the work, but it was estimated delivery could take up to 30 months. The Pentagon and Raytheon did not immediately respond to requests for comment. U.S. troops have limited use for the current supply of Stingers - a lightweight, self-contained weapon that can be deployed quickly to defend against helicopters, airplanes, drones and even cruise missiles - but the United States needs to maintain its supply on hand while it develops the next generation of a "man-portable air defense system." On May 6 the Pentagon's chief weapons buyer, Bill LaPlante, said that he had aimed to sign a contract by the end of May and that the intent is to replace the Stinger missiles sent to Ukraine one-for-one.

**Musical event at the Polish Embassy**



ISLAMABAD: Polish Embassy organized #StandWithUkraine event, in which artists showcased their performances. Czech Ambassador Tomas Smetanka and Ambassador of Ukraine Markian Chuchuk also attended the event organized at the Polish embassy by Ambassador of Poland Maciej Pisarski. A large number of guests hailing from various walks of life attended the event and appreciated performances. - DNA

**Imran visits deceased worker's house**

DNA

MARDAN: Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan on Friday visited the deceased PTI worker Syed Ahmed's house who lost his life in long march towards Islamabad. On his visit, Imran Khan condoled with his family and prayed for the deceased. Former premier said that Syed Ahmed is a martyr of Azadi March and with the sacrifice of people, real freedom is achieved. "We will not let Ahmed's martyrdom go in vain and we will not leave his family and children alone," he said.

**Miftah for maintaining strategic sugar reserves**

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Miftah Ismail on Friday stressed for maintaining strategic reserves of sugar and regulation of its prices for avoiding price-hike and providing maximum relief to the masses. The minister was talking to Chairman Pakistan Sugar Mills Association (PSMA), Chaudhry Zaka Ashraf during a meeting at Finance Division. The Secretaries Finance, Commerce, National Food Security and Research, and other senior officers also attended the meeting, according to statement issued by finance ministry. Miftah He assured Chairman PSMA that the government was aware of the issues being faced by the sugar industry in Pakistan and was keen to resolve these problems at exigency. He expressed government's resolve to promote business activities and facilitate the business community to attain sustainable growth in the country. - APP

**Gold rate drops drastically, rupee gains against US Dollar**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The price for 24kt Gold in the local market has dropped drastically by Rs2200, while the PKR has gained Rs3.61 against the USD. According to all Pakistan Jewellers Manufacturers Association after a drop of Rs2200 in the 24kt Gold prices, it has settled at Rs1,41,200. The price for 10 grams 24kt Gold has decreased by Rs1867 and is selling at Rs1,21,056. However, the price of Gold internationally gained by \$16 to sell at \$1859. The price of the local currency in the interbank market gained by Rs3.61 against the US Dollar on Friday. Following the gain, the price of one dollar against the PKR settled at Rs199.76 in the interbank. While the price of the USD against the PKR in the open market is Rs202.01. It is to be noted that in the last week dollar had crossed Rs200, taking it to the highest against the PKR.

**Army lodges FIR against Shireen Mazari's daughter**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Police registered a case against Imaan Mazari, daughter of PTI leader Shireen Mazari, on Friday for allegedly making derogatory statements against Pakistan Army and Chief of Army Staff Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa. The FIR was registered at Ramna police station under Section 505 (hate speech) and Section 138 of the Pakistan Penal Code. Section 138 reads: "Whoever abets what he knows to be an act of insubordination by an officer, soldier, sailor or airman, in the Army, Navy or Air Force of Pakistan, shall, if such act of insubordination be committed in consequence of that abetment, be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to six months, or with fine, or with both."

**2 more crossing points open at Afghan Border**

But tribesmen as well as office holders of trade bodies making complaints of lacking facilities and staffers in government departments which badly affecting the bilateral trade

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR- Pakistan has announced opening of two more corridors on Pak Afghan borders, thus raising strength of operated crossing points with Afghanistan to eight. According to Pakistan's Special Envoy Sadiq Khan tweet message, the new crossing points are Arandu in Chitral and Bin Shahi in Lower Dir. Both the crossing points are linking Khyber Pakhtunkhwa directly with Kunar province of Afghanistan. At once, despite Pak Afghan border, came into being in the light of previous British Colonial rulers demarcated Durand Line, there were over 18 crossing points be-

tween the two neighbouring countries. However, after initiating one-sided border restrictions in 2016-2017 almost of these crossing points closed and only two included Torkham and Chaman made operative. Later on Kharlachi at Kurram, Ghulam Khan at North Waziristan, Angor Ada at North Waziristan and Dalbande at Baluchistan also opened and made operative for bilateral trade and pedestrians. But tribesmen as well as office holders of trade bodies making complaints of lacking facilities and staffers in government departments which badly affecting the bilateral trade. Likewise, common people not only Afghans but also Pakistani nationals are making

complaints of staffers, even doctors and paramedics "indifferent and inhuman attitude." Sartaj Ahmad Khan Executive Committee member of Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FPCCI) who hailing from Chitral has confirmed Sadiq Khan's messages but said, "so far only pedestrians with specific purposes of medical, social weddings and funerals are allowed to walk but there is no any formal trade and business activities at Arandu." He, however, said there still exists problems and hardships on all crossing points, which badly affecting bilateral trade between the two neighbouring countries." Pakistan Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industries

Vice Chairman, Zia Ul Haq Sarhadi who is considered an authority while talking to this scribe said, "opening new crossing points are meaningless as there are no any facilities and infrastructures in the already operative crossing points like Torkham and Chaman." Elaborating his point of view, he said due to lacking of staffers in government departments and other infrastructures loaded goods trucks are waiting for clearance for couple of days, thus rotting the perishable items like fruits, vegetable and packed-foods. Similarly he said that instead bridging the gaps, relations still between the two countries are in disorder, which causing bad impacts on bilateral trade. He said that unless

putting in order bilateral trade policies with Afghanistan, it could be hard for Pakistan to get the goals. In response to a question , Sarhadi said, "there exists wide range opportunities for Pakistan regarding addressing its maximum economic problems by improving trade relations with Afghanistan. But for the purpose, government needs to re-visit its negative and one-sided imposed restrictions against Afghanistan. Pakistan Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industries through a press release also welcomed opening of two new crossing points between the two countries but demanded relaxation of procedure and giving more relief in bilateral trade and transportation between the two countries.

**Seven Indian troops killed in road accident**

Officials said the vehicle they were travelling in skidded off the road and fell in the Shyok river

NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI: Seven Indian Army soldiers were killed and 19 others were injured in the Tuktuk sector of Ladakh on Friday when the vehicle they were travelling skidded off the road and fell into the Shyok river, Army officials said. The accident took place at around 9 am at a place that is around 25 km from Thoise, they said. Officials said the vehicle they were travelling in skidded off the road and fell in the Shyok river. As many as 26 soldiers were on their way from the transit camp in Partapur to a forward location in sub-sector Hanif. "Seven individuals have been declared fatal so far. There are grievous injuries to others as well. Dedicated efforts are underway to ensure that the best medical care is provided to the injured," said an official. The officials said the vehicle fell into the Shyok river to a depth of approximately 50 to 60 feet from the road. "A party of 26 soldiers was moving from the transit camp in Partapur to a forward location in sub-sector Hanif. At around 9 am, 25 km from Thoise, the vehicle skidded off the road and fell in Shyok river," the official cited above said. All the injured were initially taken to the 403 Field Hospital at Partapur. Hours later, all 19 injured personnel have been shifted to Chandimandir in the Panchkula district of Haryana.

**China firmly opposes US Secretary of State's speech**

WEB DESK

BEIJING: China firmly opposes US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's speech on China policy, which spread false information, hyped the China threat and interfered in China's internal affairs, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said on Friday, adding that Blinken's purpose was to suppress China's development and safeguard US hegemony. Blinken delivered a speech on the US' China strategy on Thursday, describing China as the "most serious long-term challenge to the international order." Blinken's claim is false and a smear on China's domestic and foreign policies, Wang said on Friday. The claim completely confused right and wrong, Wang said. China has always and will be a defender of the international order. We uphold the international system with the United Nations at its core, the international order underpinned by international law and the basic norms of international relations based on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, Wang said. Wang urged the US to join China in upholding the international system, rather than spreading rhetoric and smearing others. However, the so-called rules-based international order only upholds the order dominated by the US, Wang said, noting that the US has always put its national law above interna-

tional laws, and this is the biggest source of chaos for the international order. The US maintains an attitude of using international rules when they suit its interests and abandoning them otherwise. Blinken said that the US doesn't want a new Cold War and doesn't seek to block China from its role as a major power, and nor does it want to stop China from growing its economy. Wang stressed that China noticed that and will wait and see. Mankind has entered a new era of connectivity that closely links countries in their interests and destinies. The pursuit of peace, development and win-win development is an irresistible trend of the times, Wang

said. All countries should stand together and cooperate in solidarity to maintain world peace and stability, to deal with the pandemic and to revitalize the world economy. The US hypes the China threat, which can't solve its own problems, but will lead the world to a dangerous position, according to Wang. Peace, development, democracy, freedom, fairness and justice are the common values of mankind, and democratic and human rights are historical, concrete and realistic. Countries can only proceed from the realities of their own conditions and the needs of their people to explore a development path that suits them, according to Wang.

