



Islamabad POST

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Grigore Lese: Iconic Romanian musician in Pakistan

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Briefs

'Fall of Imran at D-Chowk'

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb on Tuesday ridiculed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) by terming its "Fall of Imran at D-Chowk" as a "farce" and a "fugitive from D-Chowk".

In a tweet, she said what were those elements demanding from the Supreme Court who had violated the constitution and committed contempt of judiciary. The minister said that nefarious conspiracy of Imran to use the judicial shoulder will also fail like botched riot march.

Rana warns PTI against long march

STAFF REPORT

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah Tuesday warned of "strict action" against the PTI if they start another long march as announced by former prime minister Imran Khan.

Addressing a press conference flanked by members of federal cabinet, the interior minister termed the incidents that took place on May 25 an "attack on the Centre". "The lawmakers deviated from their oath, law and Constitution in order to fulfil the criminal agenda of their political leader Imran Khan," he claimed, terming May 25's "Azadi March" an "anti-state conspiracy" instead of a political activity in which resources of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's government were used. Sanaullah alleged that contrary to the claims of PTI leaders regarding the number of people present, there were only a few thousand people at D-Chowk.

Qamar President's Press Secy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Mr Qamar Bashir, a BS 21 Officer of the Information Group, has joined President's Secretariat as Press Secretary to the President. According to a notification from President House, Qamar Bashir will assume his duties as the Press Secretary to the President of Pakistan.

Regional, International issues

PM lauds Pak-Turkish cooperation

Shehbaz terms the Pak-Turkey relations as 'exemplary'

DNA/APP

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said that Pakistan and Turkey support each other on all issues of core national interest – whether it is Jammu and Kashmir or Northern Cyprus. The prime minister in an interview with Turkish news agency Anadolu thanked the leadership of Turkey for its principled support on Jammu and Kashmir dispute. "Both Pakistan and Turkey have a similarity of views on regional and international issues and enjoy close collaboration on bilateral, regional, and multilateral forums," Sharif said ahead of his three-day official visit to Turkey. Terming the Pak-Turkey relations as "exemplary", the prime minister said historical relations were grounded

PM arrives in Turkey

NEWS DESK

ANKARA: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, accompanied by a high-level government delegation, has arrived in Turkey on a three-day official visit. Upon arrival, the Prime Minister was presented a guard of honor by a smartly turned out contingent of the Turkish Army at Ankara Esenboga International Airport. Turkish Defense Minister Hulusi Akar and other high officials warmly welcomed the Prime Minister

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Govt, banned TTP talks in final stage

Ceasefire extended till indefinite period

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR—Talks between government and banned Tehrik Taliban Pakistan (TTP) through Taliban regime of Afghanistan at Kabul is entered into a conclusive stage and in the light of its possible success, Taliban announced further extension to ceasefire till indefinite period. Reports from Kabul reveal that besides Interior Minister and chief of Haqqani Network Maulvi Siraj Ud Din Haqqani, acting President of Emirate Islami Afghanistan Maulvi Abdul Salam Hanfi is also playing a major role in negotiation. Afghan journalist Said Rahman Rahmani said, "Pakistani militants are under tremendous pressure for a peace truce and they were assured of free-zones along with Pak Afghan border in Mohmand, Bajaur, Waziristan and Khyber. So far banned TTP informed "negotiations are still in progress and we have handed over our demands to government." But the tribal sources /Tribal elders are claiming, "talks are in a conclusive stage and a high level delegation including a 50-member Jirga is going to proceed to Kabul for inking the final draft." In this respect, high ranking authorities have held a detail Jirga with tribesmen along with a few-picked persons from Swat and Dir at Bara

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IS-Afghan Taliban clash, at least 4 killed

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: The militants associated with the Islamic States (IS) also called Daaesh have repulsed an attack of Afghan government's Taliban soldiers in Sheringal area of Sheigil district border Kunar province of Afghanistan on Monday. The encounter between the two sides was continued for couple of hours, causing lives to four and injuries to several others from both sides. Reports pouring in Peshawar reveals that Taliban government while initiating crackdown against the IS militants in Eastern zone of Kunar, dispatched squads of Taliban soldiers into Sheringal village of Sheigil district. However, the IS militants instead of surrendering embarked in resistance. The two sides utilized modern and sophisticated weapons against each others. The

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ANKARA: Minister of National Defence Turkey Hulusi Akar, receives Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on his arrival at Esenboga Airport, Ankara. – DNA

Govt provides relief to masses

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: In consideration of the economic hardship, Prime Minister has announced massive relief program for the poor segments of the society. The price of atta has been slashed from 950Rs/20 kg to 800Rs/20kg while the market price is above 1250Rs/kg and price of sugar has also been reduced from 85Rs/kg to 70Rs/kg. Government is also subsidizing ghee by 100Rs/kg! Rice and pulses are also selling at a discount of 20.30%/kg from the market. Earlier, Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Shazia Marri said the Federal Cabinet has approved the provision of 28 billion rupees of subsidy for deserving families announced by the Prime Minister in view of hike in petroleum prices. Addressing the news conference in Islamabad on Tuesday, she said the govt will disburse this amount through targeted subsidy among 14 million families. She said increase in prices of petroleum products was a difficult decision, but the government took this step in the larger interest of national economy.

'Imran dangerous than terrorists'

'Our goal is not to spread fitnah and fasad'

KHAYAM ABBASI

MURREE: PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz claimed Tuesday former prime minister Imran Khan is "more dangerous than terrorists", as she slammed the party's recent riots in Islamabad. Khan had called off the long march last week, fearing more bloodshed, as protest rallies across the country



PTI to send 'torture' videos to UN, others

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: PTI Senior Vice President Fawad Chaudhry said Tuesday that his party is gathering videos of "torture" against party workers –

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'Faced pressure to recognize Israel'

BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan on Tuesday while accusing the lobbies under the influence of the US for pressurizing the Muslim world to recognize Israel said that the PTI government was also pressurized to recognize Israel. In a meeting with digital media represent-

atives, Imran Khan revealed that a message was conveyed urging his government to accept the proposed stance considering Pakistan's betterment. While the PTI Chairman was reluctant to name the senders saying that he cannot reveal at the time that who was behind it. He completely rejected the audio leak conversation between Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari and business tycoon Malik Riaz and further made it clear that there were no such efforts from his side amid the

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Grigore Lese: Iconic Romanian musician in Pakistan

Talks to daily Islamabad POST; says Pakistani artists possess immense talent; talks about popular and traditional music

Inside...

Pakistan's education system must develop critical thinking – Page 02

New approaches needed to control traffic congestion – Page 03

75 % work of Pakistan's first AI lab under CPEC completed – Page 04

Climate crisis is eminently solvable – Page 05

Turkey cannot say 'yes' to countries supporting terrorism – Page 06

SCO heads of ministries and depts meet in Tashkent – Page 07

Azerbaijan embassy hosts grand National Day reception – Page 08

Exclusive

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Renowned and iconic Romania musician, artist singer and performer Grigore Lese has said Pakistan has a rich musical and cultural heritage that needs to be preserved and projected in its true spirit. He added, Pakistani music should not be mixed with the Western or any other music in order to retain its originality. Grigore Lese expressed these views while giving an exclusive interview to Daily Islamabad and Centreline magazine. The full text of the interview shall be published in the July edition of Centreline. Ambassador of Romania Nicole Goia facilitated the interview. Grigore Lese talked in length about the kind of music he was composing. During his recent visit to Pakistan he participated in number concerts in Islamabad and Lahore. During the visit, he found many similar-



ities between the Romanian and Pakistani music. Lese was born in 1954 in Stoiceni village, Marameus County in northern Romania. He graduated from the Music College in Baia Mare, followed by the Music Academy in Cluj.



ISLAMABAD: Grigore Lese, Ambassador of Romania Nicolae Goia, Editor Daily Islamabad POST and others posing for a picture. – DNA

In 2003 he received a Ph.D. in music, with the thesis Honore in grumaz. Considerasii teoretice si practice ale interperării genului dintr-o per-

spectivă stilistică. From 2005 he was an associated teacher of ethnomusicology at the University of Bucharest. One year later, in 2006, he started

doing shows for the public national radio and the public national television, for which he was awarded with national and international prizes in jour-

nalism. When asked whether the modern day popular music posed any threat to the traditional music, he said, the relevance and importance of the traditional music shall always be there. He said, the artists need to be genuine and original in their performances. Music, he said was a powerful tool to convey feelings and message across. In 2007 Grigore Lese received the great prize of the Romanian Association of Television Professionals (APTR), in 2009 the prize for cultural journalism awarded by Radio Romania, and in 2009 he was nominated at the International Shanghai Film and Television Festival. Lese is the first Romanian musician that brought with him on the stage traditional artists from other cultures and countries such as Iran, Syria, and Pakistan, with the purpose of demonstrating the relationship between old music in Romania and the East.

Continued on Page 06

Business leaders, diplomats call for active role of women

President ICCI Shakeel Munir said that women constitute 50% of the country's population and economic development of the country was not possible without their active role

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Business leaders and diplomats Tuesday laid stress on the role of women for the social, economic, and political development and called on the authorities concerned to take necessary measures for empowering women, especially those residing in the rural areas of the country. They were speaking at a conference organized by Faisalabad Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FWCCI) under the theme, "Women Economy - Empowering World." The event was attended by

various foreign diplomats including Italian Ambassador Andreas Ferrarese, Ambassador Portugal Paula Neves Pocinho, Acting Ambassador of Malaysia Dedy Faisal Ahmed Salleh, Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan Ul-anbek Totuaiev, Ambassador of Thailand Chakkrid Krachaiwong, Ambassador of Vietnam Nguyen Tien Phong, diplomat from Jordan Dr. Maen Khareesat, and Representative of Indonesian Embassy Wa-seem Chaudhry. Speaking on the occasion, President FWCCI Nighat Shahid said that in order to drive economic growth, the chamber had been striving

to promote entrepreneurship in the country by supporting start-ups initiated by young women entrepreneurs. She said FWCCI had simultaneously been focused on capacity building of women businesses by starting skill development programs to achieve best productivity and competitiveness in the emerging business scenario. "For the first time in the history of the country, we have organized the All Women Chambers Presidents Conference on 15th Nov, 2021." She also demanded easy and soft loans from State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) for women entrepreneurs and

called for setting up facilitation desks at banks exclusively for women. President Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industries (RCCI) Nadeem Chaudhry said that it was impossible to realize the dream of achieving modern economic development without the active participation of women in economic activity. President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ICCI) Shakeel Munir said that women constitute 50% of the country's population and economic development of the country was not possible without their active role.



PDA approves master plan of "New Peshawar Valley"

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: The Board of Peshawar Development Authority (PDA) has formally approved the final master plan of "New Peshawar Valley" the mega housing project of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government. 8th Board meeting of Peshawar Development Authority was held here on Tuesday with Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan in the chair. Provincial Minister TaimurSaemJhagra, MPA PirFida, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Amjad Ali Khan and other board members attended the meeting. The meeting was given a detailed briefing on the final master plan of the project and it was told that

the housing scheme will be established on 1,86,400 Kanal of land out of which 41% area i.e 43.5 Kanal of land has been allocated for residential plots and apartments while 28% area has been allocated for the construction of roads. Similarly, 16% of area for Parks and open spaces, 7% for public buildings and 5% would be utilized for commercial activities and parking. Besides 2% area has been proposed for graveyard purpose. Under the project, all those facilities have been planned which are indispensable for any modern housing society. According to the detailed master plan initially 62,056 residential plots of different categories have been proposed which include 16,312 plots of 3 Marla, 17,201 plots of 5 Marla, 3402 plots

of 7 Marla, 9526 plots of 10 Marla, 13415 plots of 1 Kanal, 1494 plots of 2 Kanal and 706 plots of 4 Kanal. Some 8,000 Kanal of land has been reserved which would also be utilized for the provision of residential plots on the need basis. Other key features of the project also include Civil Secretariat, Media Enclave, Sports City, Education and Health City which will be equipped with state-of-the-art facilities of international standard. It was further informed that a mega park with the nomenclature of "Khyber Park" would also be established under the project which would have Cultural Villages, Gandhara Museum, Theme Park, Forest, Adventure Area and all other state of the art recreational facilities.

Briefing about the Access Road alignment, it was told that Main Expressway along with service roads would be constructed whereas other approach roads already available in the different sides of the project would also be rehabilitated. The Chief Minister has termed this project as need of the hour in order to control the burden of increasing population in the provincial capital and directed the quarters concerned to ensure implementation of the project as per stipulated timelines. He also directed the quarters concerned to ensure issuance of intimation letters of plots to the owners of verified lands as per laid down formula within a week and made it clear that no delay would be tolerated to this effect.

Policeman suspended over corruption

FAISALABAD: City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi suspended in charge police post Ali Town over corruption. A police spokesman on Tuesday said a citizen put up a complaint in the open court of CPO Faisalabad, contending that in charge police post Ali Town Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) Farhan Sindhu had received a bribe from him for a legal work. - APP

Court Notice

In The court of Abbas Sherazi Civil Judge Gujrat Title Mirza Bashir Baig etc. versus: Mirza Khalid Javed Baig etc.

Suit for Declaration with consequential Relief

Notice to: 4-Nazir Baig S/o. Ahmad Hassan Cast Mughal R/o. Chak Buzarag Tehsil & District Gujrat. Whereas in the above mentioned case it has been proved to the satisfaction of the court that the above mentioned defendant is not served in ordinary way. It is therefore proclaimed under order 5 rule 20 CPC that if the said defendant will not appear personally or through a duly authorized agent or pleader in court at 8 AM on 14-06-2022. Otherwise case will be decided ex parte.

Given under my hand seal of the court this 31st May 2022. Court Reporter Gujrat.

Enhancing legislative drafting capacity for youth imperative

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf has said that input of intelligentsia and academia is imperative for enacting quality legislation. He said that legislation being the prime function of Parliament needs research and technical support especially at drafting stage. He said, "Imparting training to Youth regarding legislative drafting would enhance legislative quality." He expressed these views while presiding over the meeting of newly appointed Interns and Research Associates in Tadveen-A Legislative Drafting and Research

Clinic established at Parliament House, Islamabad. Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf appreciated the launch of the Legislative drafting program and said that cooperation between intellectuals, jurists and parliament could play an important role in enacting effective legislation for the welfare of the people. He said that the participation of educated youth in the legislative process would help in bridging the gap between the people and the legislature. He said that for the first time in the history of Parliament, in order to ensure the participation of youth in the

democratic process, they were being introduced to the process of legislation and legislation. He said that the draft laws should be in simple and understandable language so that the people could understand the legislation passed by the parliament and give their views on it. The representative of MAN-TAQ spoke on the lack of experts for the preparation of comprehensive drafts for effective legislation. She also appreciated the special co-operation of the Speaker for establishment of Tadveen Center in the Parliament House. - DNA

Open war between Forest Department AJK and DFO Murree

Timber smuggling is ongoing, but sometimes there are differences between all the partners because of the share increase. Even now, tensions between DFO Murree and the Forest Department AJK and the Timber Association have escalated

MUMTAZ AHMED BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: News of timber smuggling from Azad Kashmir through Murree, Kahuta, Gujrat and Mirpur is constantly coming in the media. Timber smuggling would not be possible without the help of Forest Department officials, government officials and powerful politicians. Timber smuggling is ongoing, but sometimes there are differences between all the partners because of the share

increase. Even now, tensions between DFO Murree and the Forest Department AJK and the Timber Association have escalated. The Timber Association is alleging that DFO Murree is demanding a bribe of Rs 10 to Rs 30 per foot of timber but we cannot afford such a bribe. According to DFO Junaid Mumtaz, the timber documents brought from Azad Kashmir are not complete and I will not issue a permit to them unless they show complete documents. The DFO, which was removed

from Murree a few months ago, also seized a timber truck coming from AJK. Even then, there was a lot of tension between AJK Forest and DFO Murree. At the time, the DFO had said that single trucks coming from AJK pass more than one truck through a single timber truck document. The number of timber pieces in the documents was less while the number of timber pieces in the truck was more. A few days ago, forest officials came to Islamabad and said that Forest Minister AJK Muham-

mad Akmal Sargala had violated the rules by promoting Imtiaz Awan, a junior DFO, as a conservator while senior DFOs were also present. This may be one of the reasons for the increase in timber smuggling. Who is lying and who is telling the truth A comprehensive and investigative report on this issue will be published soon. In this regard DFO Murree, Forest Department AJK and Timber Association can give us their point of view or give details or provide any record they can give us at any time.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister and Chairperson BISP Shazia Marri addressing a press conference along with Faisal Karim Kundi. - DNA

ANF raid yield 6 kilos of drugs, 4 smugglers in Attock

DNA

ATTOCK: The joint operation carried out by intelligence wing and Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) at Hazro town of Attock, 6.67 kilogram of ice was recovered besides arrest of four drugs smugglers. Acting on a tip off, the operation was carried out near a hotel on Tabela Road Ghazi road in Hazro town in Attock district. In this joint operation, ANF team recovered 6.67 kg of ice impregnated with clothing being carried in two different cars. Four drugs smugglers identified as Tahir Mehmood, Aabid Hussain, Yasir and Shahzad Khan- all natives of Attock were arrested during the successful raid. The spokesman has said that a case has been registered against all the four suspects under the Anti-Narcotics Act.

Breeding Facility Rules notified for wildlife species

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has notified Breeding Facility Rules for breeding of wildlife species and directed all the agencies and individual stakeholders to immediately get registered under these rules. After notification of rules, unregistered wildlife breeding facilities across the province will be treated as illegal and liable to legal action. - APP

Electoral lists on display for citizens: DEC

PESHAWAR: District Election Commissioner (DEC), Sayyed Zahoor Shah on Tuesday said that tentative electoral lists were on display since May 21 at the display centers for CNIC holders to check and correct their votes. He said that the lists would remain on display till June 19 for people to check, register themselves, correct their names, and submit objections if any. "Any citizen having CNIC whose name is not included in the list, can fill Form-15 and submit the same to the in-charge of the display center", he said. For correction in name or other particulars, he said, Form-17 was to be used. Similarly, the district election commissioner said, in case of any objection on the electoral list, the complainant could submit Form-16. All the forms mentioned above would be available at the display centers free of charge. A total of 3,082 display centers have been established across the province, he mentioned, adding that in Peshawar, a total of 220 display centers had been established. Zahoor said that all the required equipment and other material had already been provided to the display centers, including those in erstwhile FATA. The Election Commission had appointed 136 reviewing officers in the province to serve the citizens, he said. For Peshawar district, he added, seven reviewing officers had been appointed to run the operations at the display centers. - APP

Relief package to minimize effects of fuel prices

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Shazia Marri Tuesday said the federal cabinet has approved relief package of worth Rs. 28 billion to counter the effects of increased petroleum prices on the poor citizens. "The relief package has been introduced to reduce the impact of inflation on the vulnerable segments amid increase in the price of petroleum products, which was inevitable to save the country's economy", Marri said during a presser along with Pakistan People's Party leader, Faisal

Karim Kundi. The package covering 14 million families (overall 90 million people) which is around 30 percent of the total population will be executed from June through giving Rs. 2000 per family while the mechanism will be revealed soon. Out of 14 million families, eight million families will be identified from the Benazir Income Support Program while the other six million, having the monthly income of less than Rs. 40,000, will be identified through the National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER), she said. The federal minister said that the coalition government is pursuing concrete efforts to provide

much-needed targeted subsidies to the poorest of the poor. "The increase in petrol prices was a difficult decision to save the country's economy from bankruptcy owing to the ineffective policies of the former Minister, Imran Khan", she observed. She said that Imran Ahmad Niazi is finding it difficult to digest his removal from the seat of Prime Minister and spreading anarchy and chaos in the country. The former Prime Minister himself accepted that those accompanied him to the march towards Islamabad were having weapons which is dangerous for a country which is already fighting on different fronts including economy, terrorism etc.

Beautification of Canal Road started

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: On the initiative of Deputy Commissioner Lieutenant (ret'd) Sohail Ashraf, beautification of Canal Road has been started in this regard patch work, cleanliness, plantation and lane marking has started. Deputy Commissioner visited Canal Road and checked the implementation. He appreciated the team work by the district officers and urged to continue the public welfare measures in the same spirit. He said that after canal road others roads of city would also be made beautiful.

Grand crackdown against profiteers The grand crackdown was launched by AC City and AC Sadar against illegal profiteering/extortion of parking fees at FIC, Allied Hospital and DHQ upon receipt of numerous public complaints and 6 persons were



arrested on spot. Istighasas have been issued against them and submitted to the concerned Police Station. Deputy Commissioner Lt(r) Sohail Ashraf informed that the complaints from public received that parking Mafia at different govt hospital were overcharging so the team had been constituted to check the matter and both AC took action against the Mafia.

Pakistan Navy holds safety seminar

KARACHI: Pakistan Navy Annual Safety Review 2021 was held at here participated by Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi as Chief Guest. The Safety Review is organized annually with an aim to create safety awareness and inculcate safety culture amongst personnel which provides a road map to further enhance safe working environment in Pakistan Navy, said a Pakistan Navy media release. While addressing the ceremony, the Admiral reiterated that Pakistan Navy observed robust safety culture in order to ensure safety of its assets. The Naval Chief expressed his satisfaction over adherence to safety norms in Pakistan Navy and professional competence of its personnel. Chief of the Naval Staff appreciated the efforts of all Field Commands for maintaining high standards of work and personal safety. - APP

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

MAY

May 03 / Poland	National Day
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
May 31 / Brunei	Armed Forces Day



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Monal.....0334-5421812



Airlines

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Bomb Disposal.....15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance.....1122
& Rescue Services.4451122
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TMA.....5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation.....9209224
Potohar Town.....9209224
Rawal Town.....5773343

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Experts raise questions on Indian missile technology

A panel discussion was organized on 'India's 'Accidental' Missile Launch: Implications and Challenges'

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Arms Control and Disarmament Centre (ACDC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad (ISSI) organised a panel discussion on "India's 'Accidental' Missile Launch: Implications and Challenges" on May 31, 2022, at its premises. The panellists were Ambassador Tariq Osman Hyder; Dr Adil Sultan, Dean/Head of Department, Faculty of Aerospace and Strategic Studies (FASSS), Air University; Ambassador Zamir Akram, Advisor to SPD and Ms Ghazala Yasmin Jalil, Research Fellow, ACDC-ISSI. The audience included prominent defence analysts, researchers, academics and young students from Islamabad-based universities.

While opening the panel discussion as a moderator, Malik Qasim Mustafa, Director ACDC-ISSI, said that on the evening of March 9, 2022, an Indian missile flying at supersonic speed landed near Mian Chan-

nu, in the Pakistani province of Punjab. It was a BrahMos cruise missile. It took India almost two days to acknowledge that a missile had been fired due to a technical malfunction while the international community did not show any reaction to the incident. The incident is of great significance since this is the first ever accidental launch between two nuclear-armed adversaries. It raises several questions regarding India's intentions, its technical expertise and its nuclear command and control. Pakistan also needs to take a deeper look into what it means.

While discussing the possibility of a deliberate launch, the majority of panellists termed this as a deliberate launch. India is not a naive state especially when there are many prerequisites for a missile launch. All missile launches in India must be authorised by the political leadership. Moreover, India is aspiring for first-strike capability, counterforce strategy and escalation dominance. Therefore, under the cover of an ac-

cidental launch, India may be gauging Pakistan's command and control configuration, operational readiness and political will to respond. However, the probability of failure of Indian command & control should not be excluded. Panellists said that internal bureaucratic dynamics keep the Indian army outside the loop regarding missile protocols resulting in a lack of coordination.

On the issue of response from Pakistan, panellists said that there is a difference between war and peacetime protocols that determine the timings of response. Few panellists were of the view that the absence of a kinetic response has reflected seriously on Pakistan. Pakistan should have at least shown a strong response at the political and diplomatic levels. However, other panellists cautioned against the use of kinetic force. The conventional response is part of Pakistan's full spectrum deterrence posture. Furthermore, not every event merits a strategic response, especially the attack and the response time in the case of India

and Pakistan is very short. Pakistan should carefully analyse Indian doctrinal shifts and inclination towards pre-emptive first strike and explore the spectrum of kinetic response in case any such event occurs in future. There should be more clarity and transparency through joint investigations. Pakistan should push the fact that it was a deliberate launch and that India is an irresponsible nuclear state on different international forums like Conference on disarmament, First Committee and MTCR.

Talking about the impact of the incident on deterrence, panellists said that the purpose of deterrence is to minimise the probability of crisis and conflict between nuclear states. In the environment of nuclear entanglement in South Asia, the main objective should be to avoid a war that could escalate up to the nuclear level. At the low level of the escalation ladder, such incidents would challenge deterrence. The panel discussion ended with the vote of thanks by Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BoG ISSI.

PIDE conference on policy issues on June 2, 3

ISLAMABAD: The Second PIDE-RASTA conference is scheduled to be held here on June 2 and 3 to deliberate on the current and emerging policy-related issues. According to press statement issued by Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) here Tuesday, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, AhsanIqbal is scheduled to address the conference. The moot, organized under Research for Social Transformation and Advancement (RASTA), is aimed at connecting different researchers and experts by providing them a platform, it added.

As many as twelve research papers completed under the second round of the RASTA CPG and five DDR projects will be presented at the conference. Among others, the conference is scheduled to be attended by representatives of ministries, departments and sector specialists from international and national organizations. - APP

PWD asked to complete new colleges' building

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Works Department (PWD) has been instructed to complete the buildings of the new model colleges in a month, so that the new session would start from August in these educational institutions.

During his visit to the newly established Model Colleges G-13-1, Model College for Students G-13-2, Model College G-14-4 and Model College G-15, DG FDE yesterday, Director General, Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) Dr. Ikram Ali Malik said that he would personally inspect the works every week in order to complete the construction work in new colleges timely.

Director Colleges Muhammad Aftab Tariq, Director Monitoring Dr. Sohail, Director Coordination Irfanullah and Director P&D Inam Jahangir were also present on the emergency visit. On the occasion, Director General Federal Directorate of Education Ikram Ali Malik directed PWD's XEN Murad Ali Khan to complete the construction work in all the colleges on an emergency basis. The building should be completed within a month so that the new academic year can be formally started in August and the students in the new colleges can benefit from the educational facilities, Dr Malik directed. Heads of Model Colleges Saba Faisal, ShaziaRizvi, YaseenAfaqi and others were also present on the occasion. - APP



ISLAMABAD: A beautiful view of Faisal Mosque. - APP

Pakistan releases aid to Ukraine

ISLAMABAD: The government of Pakistan has released the second humanitarian assistance on the request of Ukraine to support war-hit people there.

These humanitarian assistance include emergency medicines, electro-medical equipment, winter bedding and food items, said an official source on Tuesday.

A special C130 flown to deliver more than 7.5 tons of humanitarian assistance items for the Ukrainian people.

The 2nd C-130 will be dispatched on 3rd June carrying another 7.5 tons of assistance.

Pakistan has always acted promptly alongside international community for responding to international calls for assistance during conflicts / calamities, as a responsible and peace loving nation. It's pertinent to mention that first consignment of more than 15 ton was sent through 2 special C-130 from Noor Khan Base. - APP

Ministry vacates over 2,758 properties from illegal occupants

ISLAMABAD: Estate Office, Ministry of Housing and Works have so far vacated over 2,758 government properties from illegal occupants and handed over to the entitled persons across the country.

Capital Development Authority and other relevant departments of the provincial governments have helped the Estate Office to vacate government properties," sources in the Ministry of Housing and Works told APP.

They said that the Ministry had also launched comprehensive operation against the encroachments and illegally constructed structures in government residences in the federal capital. A punitive action would be taken against the construction of extra rooms by the employees and their kith and kin, which lived in the government allotted houses, they added.

At present, the sources said over 17,000 government houses in Islamabad were

under the management of the Estate Office and additional rooms had illegally been constructed by the allottees in over 2,400 residences.

The basic purpose of the operation was to clear the government residences of encroachments, they added.

They further informed that over 25,000 government employees were currently on the general waiting list to get accommodation, but they could not be provided with the same as retired employees, their relatives and relatives of even late government employees continued to live in the government quarters.

About the criteria of allotments, they said that Estate Office was strictly allocated to the government employees on the basis of merit and as per apex court directions relaxation of rules under Rule 29A of the Accommodation Allocation Rules, 2002 except in the case of hardship. - APP

32 tube-wells operational in Islamabad: CDA

DNA

ISLAMABAD: There were 32 tube-wells operational to ensure uninterrupted water supply to the federal capital residents, said Capital Development Authority (CDA) on Tuesday.

"Only 18 machines were operational in past to meet the demands of locals dependent on tube wells supply, but the new CDA management added 12 more tube-wells, resulted in a significant improvement in water

supply" its spokesman told a state run news agency. With increase in number of tube-wells the long-standing problem of water supply in sectors I-10 and I-9 has also been overcome. The pumping time in sector I-10 was also increased from 2 hours to 6 to 7 hours, he added.

The CDA management, he said had taken multiple initiatives to improve water situation in the federal capital. He said more water will be added to the supply system through Poona Pageeran water treatment plant which received water

after the reservoirs are filled from Simli Dam and Rawal Dam.

The installation of tube-wells will reduce ground water pumping, that eventually maintain ground water level so it may be used in emergency water situation. It may be noted that the authority was utilizing unused tanks to store the water, while water supplies in sector I-11 will be arranged soon in the next few months.

The spokesman appealed the citizens to avoid wastage of water so it may be used by others.

PM Shehbaz Turkey visit significant to cement ties

ISLAMABAD: President SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry Iftikhar Ali Malik on Tuesday highlighting significance of prime minister's upcoming visit to Turkey said it would help further cement bilateral ties between the two brotherly countries.

Iftikhar said the existing mark of \$1.1 billion Pak-Turk bilateral trade could be taken up to \$5 billion annually by exploiting the true potential areas from both sides. Talking to a delegation of young women entrepreneurs led by RameenKashif, the recipient of 'Best CEO award', he said during the last 25 years, the annual export of Pakistan to Turkey had increased only 4.01% from \$148m in 1995 to \$394m in 2020.

He said that Turkey had much stronger industrial base as compared to Pakistan and the interests of the Pakistani manufacturing sector especially in auto assembly and auto parts industry needed

to be protected.

Iftikhar Ali said Turkey and Pakistan with mutual understanding could increase bilateral commercial and economic ties. He said during the last visit of Turkish President RecepTayyipErdogan to Pakistan, Ankara and Islamabad agreed to formulate a declaration of an economic framework to increase bilateral trade volume to \$5 billion. Pakistani exporters, he said, must encash the sincere offers available for them in the Turkish markets.

The delegation head RameenKashif hoped that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, for his known commitment, would bring more Turkish investors to Pakistan to invest in special economic zones.

She said there are 158 companies with Pakistani capital in Turkey. The total investment of these firms had reached over \$100 million, while 17 Turkish companies were operating in Pakistan, she concluded.

Rupee gains 60 paisas against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: Exchange rate of Pak Rupee strengthened by 60 paisas against the US Dollar in the inter-bank trading on Tuesday and closed at Rs198.46 against the previous day's closing of Rs 199.06. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs 197.7 and Rs 199.6 respectively. Moreover, the price of Euro depreciated by Rs 1.07 and closed at Rs 212.90 against the previous day's closing of Rs 213.97.

Meanwhile, Japanese Yen lost one paisa to close at Rs 1.55, whereas a decrease of Rs 1.112 was witnessed in the exchange rate of British Pound, which was being traded at Rs 250.23 as compared to its last closing of Rs 251.35. - APP

Anti-state long march to be dealt with iron hand, cabinet told

ISLAMABAD: The federal cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday was assured that any anti-State long march in the future would be dealt with an iron hand. Interior Minister RanaSanullah informed the meeting that the May 25 long march of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was "not a political activity, but a planned anti-State conspiracy". He also apprised the cabinet that the long march in fact was an "armed attack on the State" in the garb of political activity, however, he categorically stated that no law enforcement personnel at the venue was carrying any weapon. - APP

Painting exhibition on Iqbal's poetry held at Almaty

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The first ever exhibition of painting and calligraphy on Allama Muhammad Iqbal's poetry titled "Sitara-e-Sharq" was held in Almaty to portray his poetry.

The exhibition was arranged by COMSTECH in collaboration with International Turkic Academy, University of the Punjab Lahore and Al-Farabi Kazakh National University. Graphic prints, calligraphies, and visual metaphors manifested in paintings were exhibited in an exhibition named "Sitara-e-Sharq" to portray Iqbal's poetry.

Dr. Aqsa and Dr. Naela curated the exhibition of painting and calligraphy by 15 artists from College of Art and Design, University of the Punjab, said a message received here. Acknowledging and appreciating the philosophy, some artists have explored modern and non-traditional metaphors and symbols to interpret these ideas into a visual presentation, while others have explored the physical properties of the verses of Iqbal to create images which eloquently expressed the divine love and appreciation of nature.

These artworks were brought to Almaty from Pakistan. Participating artists were Rahat Naveed Masud, Ali Azmat, Naela Aamir,

Sumera Jawad, Muneeb Ali, Anila Zulfiqar, Aqsa Malik, Atif Amir, Habib Alam, Javed Mughal, Humera Omer, Habib Alam, Samina Nasim and Qurat ul Ain Dar.

Coordinator General COMSTECH, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, the grandson of Allama Mohammad Iqbal, Senator Walid Iqbal, the President of the International Turkic Academy, Darkhan Kydyrali, Rector of the Kazakh National University, Zhanseit Tuymebayev, Deputy Minister of Education and Science of Kazakhstan, Kuanys Yergaliev, Secretary General of TURKSOY Sultan Raev, Deputy Executive Director of the Secretariat of the Conference on In-

teraction and Confidence Building in Asia (CICA), Chi Fan, Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Yerzhan Kystafin, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the Republic of Kazakhstan, Sajjad Ahmed Seehar, Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to Kazakhstan, Ufuk Ekici, inaugurated the "Sitara-e-Sharq" exhibition. The exhibition was organized on the sidelines of "Al-Farabi and Iqbal Forum", held in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The visitors took keen interest in the exhibition and appreciated the art work of Pakistani artists who conveyed the message of Allama Iqbal in a very effective way.

Briefs

Women and children, most vulnerable to climate change

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is one of the top ten countries badly affected by the adverse impacts of climate change. Talking to APP, Muhammad Saleem, spokesperson for Ministry of Climate Change said that being highly vulnerable population groups of the society, women and children were particularly affected by the impacts of climate change. Women and children disproportionately and with a greater frequency and intensity affected through heat waves, droughts, floods, air pollution, food scarcity, disease and disasters. He said that climate change was a planetary phenomenon that would impact all countries, but its effects were being shaped by pervasive and entrenched gender inequality. "It is because of these impacts that women and children are more likely to live in poverty than men, have less access to basic human rights like the ability to freely move and acquire land, and face systematic violence that escalates during periods of instability," he added. Muhammad Saleem highlighted that the future environment was extremely challenging, though not entirely grim, because, women and children are demonstrating extraordinary resilience to the adverse impacts of climate change all over the world. - APP

NEPRA concludes hearing into FCA for April

ISLAMABAD: National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) on Tuesday concluded public hearing into monthly fuel cost adjustment (FCA) for April 2022. The hearing was presided over by NEPRA Chairman Tauseef H Farooqi. Vice Chairman and Member Sindh Rafique Ahmed Sheikh was also present. Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA-G) has sought Rs 4.05 per unit increase in power tariff for April under FCA. However, as per the authority calculation of data, the increase stood at Rs 3.99 per unit for the said period. The FCA for March was calculated as Rs 2.86 per unit which was only for one month. The FCA for April is Rs 1.13 per unit more than March. The FCA would be applicable for only one month and its impact would be pass on all consumers except life line and K-Electric. The possible impact has been calculated over Rs 15 billion. The Authority would announce its detailed decision after reviewing the data. The CPPA-G maintained that actual cost remained Rs 10.6641 per unit against the reference fuel charges of Rs 6.6087 per unit during April. A total of 12,960.41 GWh electricity was generated worth Rs 132.746 billion during the said period while 12,556.37 GWh net electricity was supplied to the power distribution companies (DISCOs). - APP

Agha, Sehar drop first look of 'Zakham'

ISLAMABAD: Celebrated Pakistani actor Agha Ali and emerging star Sehar Khan have just unveiled the first look of their major collaboration 'Zakham' and netizens can't get enough of it. The 'Band Khirkiyan' star, Agha took it to Instagram and treated fans with the first poster of the much-awaited drama serial along with the caption 'Coming Soon', and shortly the poster grabbed the audience's attention. Fans showered love for the masterpiece and bombarded the comment section with comments showing appreciation and excitement for the drama serial. After the tremendous audience response, Agha expressed gratitude for the admiration in a video message "Thank you all, I can't wait to share the trailer" he stated. Produced under the banner of 7th Sky Entertainment 'Zakham' features all the prominent actors who are known for their impressive acting skills. The star-studded cast includes Agha Ali and Sehar Khan and Azfar Rehman. That explains why fans are super excited about its release. - APP

FPCCI advocates hiring woman workforce in every industry

Vice President FPCCI, said that ignoring half of any country's population is counterintuitive in promoting economic growth of any economy

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Ms. Riffat Malik, Vice President FPCCI, has said that he is committed to promote women entrepreneurs and workforce neglecting women empowerment, emancipation and participation makes no economic or business sense to him - who account for 52 percent of Pakistan's population. Vice President FPCCI, said that ignoring half of any country's population is counterintuitive in promoting economic growth of any economy. She was talk with Mirza Abdul Rehman, Chairman Coordination FPCCI Capital Office & Sajjad Sarwar former Vice President at the occasion of a visit of Capital Office of FPCCI at Islamabad. She further said that the various technological innovations were being used in trade at that time, the understanding of which was necessary for women's growth in businesses. She said that professional training of women in the e-commerce and IT sector including online business was very



important to excel in modern businesses. Vice President FPCCI said that with the resumption of the global supply chain after Covid-19 Pandemic, new businesses had started and it was important to make women aware of this. She said that at present women in Pakistan were working in small and cottage industries who had skills but the middle man paid them less by keeping high value of their skills. She said it was important for women to be aware of e-commerce and online business so

that they could register their own businesses. In that regard, she said, "We need government support so that we can train women in this regard and connect them to the international market. The meeting was also attended by Dr. Shehla Javed Akhtar Former Vice President FPCCI, Qaisara Sheikh Coordinator FPCCI Women Entrepreneur, Sam Ali Dada President Lahore Women Chamber. Mirza Abdul Rehman, Chairman Co-ordination FPCCI, Capital Office, maintained that FPCCI advocates hiring woman workforce in

every industry and every sector as no economy can flourish without the active participation of women. He also noted that, despite all hurdles and impediments, women have performed exceedingly well in Pakistan historically. He said that women are 52% of Pakistan's population and that's why he wants women to play an active role in FPCCI. He added that women should come forward and utilize the apex chamber's platform to promote women entrepreneurs, women empowerment and promotion of women-led businesses.

Mirza Abdul Rehman said that currently the volume of e-commerce and online business markets in the world was \$7 trillion, where there were vast job opportunities for women. He said that more money could be earned from less investment in that sector, besides it was also the cause of growth in domestic foreign exchange. He said that the government would provide internet and IT facilities to women in remote areas, which would lead to growth in the field of freelancing in the country and boost the economy of the country. He said that women in this sector could introduce domestic products through trade in the global market and increase the volume of domestic trade to take Pakistan out of the trade deficit. He said that at present women had a vital role in every sector of the country including business, and women formed 51pc of the country's population. And the advancement of women in economic activities and business was essential for the strengthening of the national economy, he said.



ISLAMABAD: Renowned Romanian musicians Grigore Lese reading daily Islamabad POST. Interview on the front page. - DNA

ICCI calls for end of sales tax registration notices

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said that the FBR is issuing notices to the traders for registration in sales tax and POS system, which has created great concerns in the business community. He urged that FBR should refrain from forcibly registering traders in the sales tax, withdraw all such notices issued to them and intensify efforts to bring those in the tax system, who are currently out of the tax net. He expressed these views while addressing a reception hosted by former ICCI Senior Vice President Muhammad Naveed Malik. Senior Vice President ICCI Jamshed Akhtar Sheikh, Vice President Muhammad Faheem Khan, Baser Daud, Azharul Islam, Malik Najeem, Nasira Ali Naina, Shazia Rizwan, Saeed Khokhar, Major (Retd) Raiz, Saima Huma and others were present on the occasion. Muhammad Shakeel Munir said that the sales tax registration campaign of trad-

ers in the local markets of Islamabad is going on at present due to which small traders in particular are worried and trade unions have indicated to launch strong protest against forced registration. This will not only affect business activities but also the overall economy. He, therefore, urged the FBR to immediately withdraw the sales tax registration notices issued to the traders and resolve the issue amicably in consultation with the trade associations.

Jamshed Akhtar Sheikh, Senior Vice President and Muhammad Faheem Khan, Vice President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that FBR was also issuing letters to traders to install point of sales system in shops which has created lot of concerns in them. They said that there was no justification for forcing small traders to install POS in shops. They demanded that FBR should focus on identifying new taxpayers to improve tax revenue and avoid issuing notices to traders who are already paying taxes.

NA Speaker invites PTI MNAs for verification

ISLAMABAD: NA Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf has invited all the Members of National Assembly (MNAs) of PTI, who had tendered resignation from assembly on April 11, 2022, to verify the genuineness of their resignation letters. The National Assembly Secretariat on Monday sent letters to the PTI MNAs in this regard in pursuance of Paragraph (b) of Sub Rule (2) of rule 43 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the National Assembly, 2007. According to the NA Secretariat, 131 PTI members, who had tendered resignations, were invited individually for verification of their resignations. The verification process would start on June 6 and continue till June 10. Every MNA would get five minutes to confirm that their resignations were voluntary and genuine. - APP

Imran failed to bring people out for long march: Khawaja Asif

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Defense Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Monday said that Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan had failed to bring people out for a long march. The leaders of the PTI including Usman Buzdar and general public had not participated in the long march towards the federal capital, he said while talking to a private television channel. "We could not see the central PTI leaders standing behind Imran Khan," he added. Talking over that en masse resignation of the PTI members, the minister apprised that most of their members were still enjoying benefits while staying in the Parliament lodges. He also took exception against the PTI leaders for occupying federal lodges for personal gains. KhawajaAsif asked the PTI leaders to come forward and inform the Speaker National Assembly about the authenticity related to their resignation letters. According to the minister, the NA speaker had summoned PTI MNAs to adopt a proper procedure so any decision regarding their resignation letters could be taken in a transparent manner. In reply to a question, the minister said that judiciary should play its role in resolving the political matters. He said, it was the responsibility of every head of the national institutions to play an active role for the country's sake. To another question about weapons carried by the PTI workers, he said PTI supporters had brought weapons on the directives of Imran Khan. - APP

BJP using judiciary for its colonial agenda

Life imprisonment of JKLF Chairman Muhammad Yasin Malik in a sham trial, he said, was one such example that shows how the BJP government was using its judicial apparatus to punish and penalize Kashmiri leaders

ISLAMABAD: All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) senior leader Nayeem Ahmed Khan has said that the India's racist regime-the BJP was using repressive state apparatus in particular the judiciary as a weapon against Kashmiris to further its settler colonialism agenda in Kashmir. In his message received here from Tihar jail, the incarcerated APHC leader while referring to continued bloodshed, violence and ruthless suppression of political dissent in the region said, "On one hand the apartheid regime has let loose its forces to kill innocent Kashmiris while on the other hand it has been remorselessly using draconian laws like PSA, UAPA and other black laws to silence legitimate political voices who have refused to toe the government line. Life imprisonment of JKLF Chairman Muhammad Yasin Malik in a sham trial, he

said, was one such example that shows how the BJP government was using its judicial apparatus to punish and penalize Kashmiri leaders. Terming it as a shocking example of political vendetta and vengeance, Khan, recalled that the Indian judiciary has a long history of crucifying justice. "It is quite alarming that instead of dispensing justice on merit the Indian courts have been acting on whims and fantasy of the ruling party that seems hell bent on choking every dissenting voice in Kashmir", the APHC leader said. He, however, maintained that India cannot silence Kashmiris by resorting to such meant tactics. Voicing his serious concern over the rising



incidents of state terrorism in the Indian Illegal Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, he said the systematic killing of innocent civilians, particularly the youth belie the so-called normally narrative the Indian government has been peddling to hoodwink the international community. Citing the recent killings at the hands of Indian occupation forces, the incarcerated leader said, "Innocent and educated youth are deliberately targeted and killed mercilessly by the occupation force during cordon and search operation". "On one hand the endless killing spree has unleashed reign of terror while on the other relentless persecution of civil society, rights defenders and political activist con-

tinue unabated", Khan said adding that it was shocking to see that civil society activists, journalists and rights defenders were being detained under seditious laws and subjected to worst treatment in jails and interrogation centers. He said that the Indian army had a long history of killing human rights activists in fake encounters. Naeem Khan also expressed his grave concern over the illegal detention of Kashmiri politicians who have been arrested before and after August 5, 2019. Urging world community to take effective notice of the stepped-up human rights' violations in the troubled region, he said that it was high time that the global community must shun its policy of indifference and play its much-needed role to settle the lingering dispute that happens to be main cause and consequence of bloodshed in the region. - APP

UNWTO launches Digital Futures Programme

ISLAMABAD: United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has announced the launch of the Digital Futures Programme, designed to accelerate the adoption of new technology among tourism enterprises. Developed in collaboration with some of the world's leading technology, finance, and business companies as Mastercard the initiative is focused on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which make up 80% of all tourism businesses, said a press release. UNWTO aims to reach at least 1 million tourism SMEs over the lifetime of the Programme, providing them with the foundational skills and knowledge needed to harness the power of new and emerging technologies. UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili says: "Small businesses are the backbone of tourism. The Digital Futures Programme will help them to recover from the impacts of the pandemic and drive the sector forward, powered by innovation and new technology." In order to provide SMEs with tailored guidance and tools, the Programme is built on a Digital Readiness Diagnostic Tool that benchmarks SMEs across five key digital dimensions - Connectivity, Business Growth, E-Commerce, Big Data, and Analytics and Payments and Security. - APP

Saad felicitates Punjab Cabinet

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Railways Khawaja Saad Rafique on Tuesday felicitated the newly appointed cabinet members of Chief Minister Punjab. Punjab Governor Muhammad Baligh Ur Rehman administered the oath to the provincial ministers late at night on Monday. In a tweet, he expressed the hope that the new members will move ahead with new hope and spirit to solve the issues of masses. He extended well wishes to the cabinet members including Rana Muhammad Iqbal Khan, Sardar Owais Khan Leghari, Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan, Khawaja Salman Rafique, Syed Hassan Murtaza, Atallah Tarar, Chaudhry Bilal Asghar and Ali Hider Gillani. - APP

National youth conference concludes

ISLAMABAD: A three-day National Youth Development Conference organized in collaboration with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority (KPCTA) and the Directorate of Youth Affairs in Galiyat concluded on Tuesday. The participants also took part in the health activities, including delivering speeches on raising awareness about the campaigns for pollution-free tourism and a clean environment in the tourist spots, said a press release. The KPCTA official said that cleaning tourist resorts would also be ensured to make the environment neat and clean. The official said that youth were playing a pivotal role to make such cleanliness campaigns and activities a success.

Over 55 members of the National Youth Assembly and youths from across the province, including merged districts, represented their respective areas at the conference. During the three-day conference, the participants took part in various training programs and sessions. The speakers also highlighted how to find out ways and means to make cleanliness drive a regular practice and boost tourism. The organizers of KPCTA said that it was a great opportunity for the male and female youths from merged districts to participate in training programs and workshops besides visiting the scenic places in Galiyat valley. A group of youth participants also took part in the cleanliness drive in Galiyat and lifted the garbage, plastics, and trash of snacks from the area. - APP

Civil society for combating smoking

ISLAMABAD: More than 50 civil society organizations throughout the country will commemorate "World No Tobacco Day (WNTD)" on May 31 (today) Tuesday to create awareness among smokers on the hazardous effects of smoking and to pursue them to quit the bad habit. The governmental, non-governmental, and community-based organizations, will arrange meetings, seminars or webinars, rallies and display posters and banners as part of their awareness campaign in different cities and towns. The theme for this year by the WHO is "Protect the environment". Civil society organizations are going to highlight this theme as the tobacco industry's production life cycle is affecting the environment of the planet, highlighting that, throughout its life cycle, tobacco pollutes the planet and damages the health of all people and calling upon the government to raise tax on cigarettes pack as cigarettes are still much cheaper. Anti-tobacco activists will emphasize protecting earth from pollution of tobacco through different activities. - APP

West weaponizing food shortages

With the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine and the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, now in its third year, global grain prices are rising dramatically, which is a harbinger of a possible food crisis worldwide.

At this juncture, some Western media are claiming that China is hoarding grains by increasing its procurement of corn and wheat on the international market. This is obviously meant to smear China and portray the country as a saboteur of global food security. This is nothing but a conspiracy theory.

China does import some grains from the global market, but it exports grains as well. It is unfair and unreasonable to accuse China of hoarding grains simply because of its routine trade deals.

China has witnessed famines time and again in its history, and its huge population of more than 1.4 billion and its scarce arable land, just 9 percent of the world's total, serve as an alarm bell for the country's leadership to always place enough emphasis on the protection of arable land and grain production.

As a result of the country's longstanding emphasis on food self-sufficiency, China's grain production has been stabilized at over 650 billion kilograms for seven consecutive years, making the country the world's largest grain producer and the third-largest grain exporter across the globe.

Rather than making itself a burden on global food security, China has made an extraordinary contribution to international food security by achieving one-fourth of the world's total grain output with which it feeds one-fifth of the global population. Ensuring the country's food security has been a priority for the country for decades. This is verified by the fact that the first policy document issued by the central government every year is about agriculture. China also does what it can to help enhance the food security of other countries.

As a responsible country, China is an important strategic partner of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's South-South Cooperation. The country has donated \$130 million in recent years to the fund under this framework. It has also provided emergency food aid to a number of countries since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Globally, around 14 percent of food produced is lost between harvest and retail, according to the United Nations, while an estimated 17 percent of total global food production is wasted. In the United States for example, some 30 to 40 percent of food is wasted each year, data from the US Department of Agriculture show. Despite the disrupted grain supplies, there is clearly enough food to feed the world if the international community works together to address the global food security challenge.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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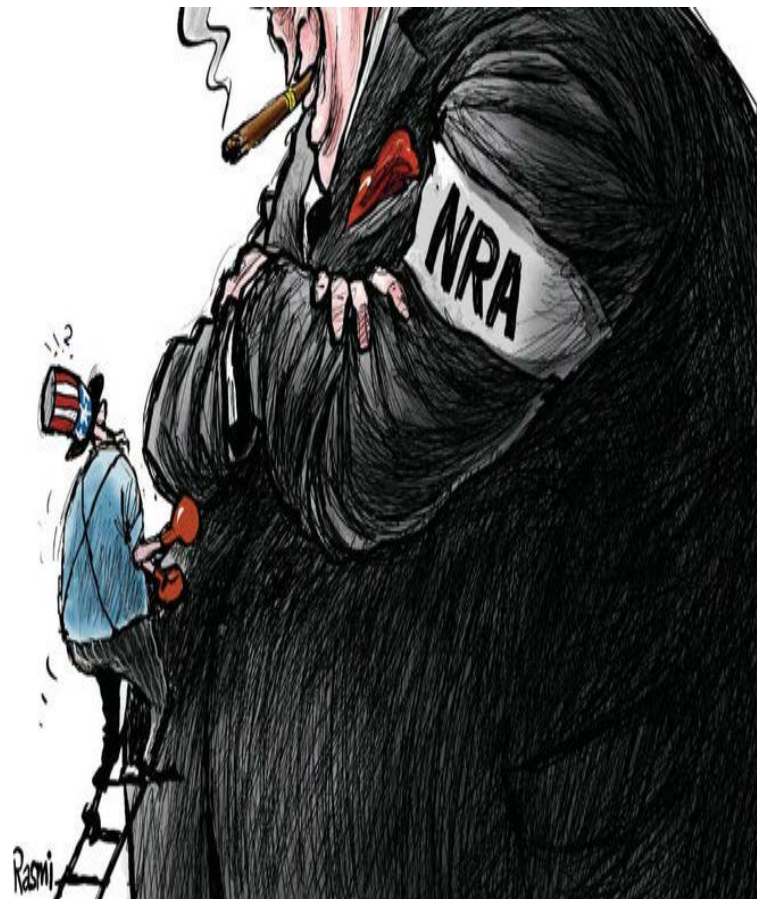
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World needs more from the US

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken delivered a speech on US' China policy at George Washington University, which is so far the most comprehensive and systematic policy exposition by the Biden administration on the relations between the two countries.

In a speech that lasted about an hour, Blinken outlined the Biden administration's China strategy as "invest, align and compete." That is, invest in US competitiveness, align with allies and partners, and compete with China, in an attempt to form the so-called "comprehensive deterrence" against China.

In general, this speech appears to be relatively "restrained," especially compared with the "new iron curtain speech" by former US secretary of state Mike Pompeo in 2020, with a posture that is less aggressive and belligerent. It even contained some "beautiful words."

The diplomatic rhetoric still requests Beijing to submit to Washington's hegemonic demands and this speech on China policy follows Washington's inconsistency between minds and words. It wants to be in the international moral high ground while putting the interests of the US first.

We certainly hope that Washington is serious about not falling into a "new Cold War" with China, but the biggest problem is that it always says one thing and does another. US President Joe Biden announced the launch of the "Indo-Pacific Economic Framework" during his just-concluded Asian trip, which is considered to be a "clique" to exclude China, and issued a joint statement with many parts of the content targeting China after the Quad summit. On many occasions, the US has talked a lot about "avoiding a new Cold War," but in practice, it has divided the camp with ideology, put the pluralistic world into a battle between "democracy" and "autocracy" and arbitrarily asked other countries to choose sides. Isn't this paving the way for a "new Cold War?"

Even in Blinken's latest policy speech declaring "no new Cold War," many of his words reflect ideological prejudice and Cold War mindset, which is consistent with the characteristics of the US' current behavior. For example, China is described as a "challenge," while the US' response is a kind of "deterrence," as if China is the aggressor and the US is the defender. In addition, Blinken continued the practice of the Pompeo era of trying to separate the Communist Party of China and the Chinese government from the Chinese people, which not only is an attack on the country's system but also is arrogant to the Chinese people.

In recent years, US' choice to confront China hasn't made the US great again. China's policy toward the US is consistent and clear, and it always fulfills its commitment. The key point is whether the US can walk the talk. The mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation between China and the US are good news for China and the US and good news for the whole world.

Kazakhstan's constitutional amendments to expand people's participation in State Governance

Erlan Karin



Deputies of the Mazhilis will be elected by a mixed electoral system: by a system of proportional representation in the territory of a single nationwide constituency, as well as in single-mandate territorial constituencies (new version of paragraph 3 of Article 50 Constitution). The introduction of a mixed electoral system will make it possible to fully take into account the rights of all citizens and better reflect the interests of voters

Navigating constitutional amendments

President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev signed a decree on holding on 5 June a national referendum on the draft amendments and additions to the country's Constitution. The upcoming constitutional reform is an important step in the implementation of the President's programme of political reforms outlined in his state-of-the-nation address in March.

The draft amendments and additions to the Constitution were developed by leading legal and constitutional scholars and received a positive assessment from the Constitutional Council. The draft constitutional amendments are based on the requests from citizens and are implemented in the interests of the entire society.

All amendments and additions to the Constitution are interrelated and form part of a single goal – to create a legal framework for:

1. the final transition from a super-presidential model to a presidential republic;
 2. redistribution of a number of powers;
 3. strengthening the role and status of Parliament;
 4. increasing the participation of the people in the country's governance; and
 5. strengthening mechanisms for protecting citizens' rights.
- The draft Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Amendments and Additions to the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan" was officially published in the state's print media on May 6.
- For an unqualified person, it may be very difficult to navigate through the numerous amendments, to see the difference between the old and new versions of the Constitution. Therefore, to make it easy to become acquainted with these amendments, they are divided into large blocks of amendments and additions, indicating specific points and articles of the Constitution.
- The final transition from a super-presi-

dential model to a presidential republic

The constitutional reform will create an optimal balance of relations between the branches of government, ensure maximum equidistance of the institution of the presidency. Article 43 of the Constitution is supplemented by paragraph 3, which stipulates that the President of the Republic should not be a member of a political party while in office. Based on the same logic, this ban is extended to the chairpersons and judges of the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court and other courts, the chairpersons and members of the Central Election Commission, the Supreme Audit Chamber of the Republic (new version of paragraph 2 of Article 23 of the Constitution). This will result in increased political competition, creation of equal conditions for the development of all political parties, independence and impartiality in decision-making. The Head of State should act as a steadfast guarantor of equal opportunities for all citizens. Therefore, Article 43 of the Constitution is supplemented by paragraph 4, according to which close relatives of the President are not permitted to hold positions of political civil servants and heads of quasi-public sector companies.

At the suggestion of the members of the Working Group, the provisions on the right of the First President to be elected more than twice in a row (a new version of Article 42 (5) of the Constitution) and Article 46 (4) of the Constitution, which stated that the status and powers of the First President are determined by the Constitution and constitutional law, are excluded. Article 91 of the Constitution excludes the provision on the status of the First President as the Founder of independent Kazakhstan (new version of paragraph 2 of Article 91 of the Constitution). The outcome of the constitutional reform should be the expansion of the powers of local government and self-government, implemented by local representative and executive bodies responsible for the state of affairs in the relevant territory. The draft envisages the exclusion of the President's powers to terminate or suspend in whole or in part the acts of governors of regions, cities of national significance and the capital (a new version of subparagraph 3 of Article 44 of the Constitution).

It also envisages the exclusion of the President's power to dismiss akims (mayors) of districts, cities, and rural districts (new version of Article 87, paragraph 4, of the Constitution). The procedure for obtaining powers by governors of regions, cities of national significance and the capital is significantly

changing. According to the new wording of paragraph 4 of Article 87 of the Constitution, they will now be appointed by the President with the consent of deputies of maslikhats (local representative bodies) located in the territory of the region, or deputies of maslikhats of cities of national significance and the capital, respectively. At the same time, the Head of State will offer at least two candidates to be voted on. The candidate who receives the most votes from the deputies who took part in the voting is considered to have received consent. As such, the powers of the President in relation to local authorities are reduced and concentrated on regional governors, while the role of maslikhats is significantly strengthened.

Redistribution of a number of powers
The presidential quota in the Senate is to be reduced from 15 to 10 deputies. Moreover, five of them will be proposed by the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan (a new version of paragraph 2 of Article 50 Constitution).

The powers of the Senate are supplemented by the right to approve candidates submitted by the President of the Republic for the posts of Chairpersons of the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Judicial Council (new versions of subparagraph 4 of Article 44, subparagraph 2 of Article 55, paragraph 4 of Article 82 of the Constitution).

Overall, the institution of constitutional control is being modernised with the establishment of the Constitutional Court (instead of the current Constitutional Council). The Constitutional Court will consist of 11 judges (the current Constitutional Council consists of 7 members). Its composition is formed as follows: 6 judges are appointed by the Parliament (3 judges each by the Mazhilis and the Senate), 4 judges are appointed by the President. The Chairperson of the Constitutional Court, as mentioned above, is appointed by the President with the consent of the Senate (new version of sub-paragraph 1) of Article 57, sub-paragraph 7) of paragraph 3 of Article 58, Article 71 of the Constitution). The Accounts Committee for Control over the execution of the national budget is transformed into the Supreme Audit Chamber, the chairperson of which will report to the deputies of the Mazhilis twice a year (new version of subparagraph 2 of Article 53, new subparagraph 3-1) of paragraph 1 of Article 56 of the Constitution).

The institute of the "Secretary of State" will be transformed into the institute of the "State Counsellor", which will be responsible for forming proposals and recommendations to the Head of State (a new version of subparagraph 19 of Article 44 of the Constitution). Strengthening the role and status of the Parliament As a result of the constitutional reform, the legislative branch of government will undergo a significant reformatting. As a result, the role and status of the Parliament and its chambers will significantly increase. As already mentioned, the Senate will coordinate the appointment by the President of the chairpersons of the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Judicial Council.

In addition, the President will appoint not 15, but 10 deputies of the Senate, 5 of them will be suggested by the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan (new version of paragraph 2 of Article 50 Constitution).

At the same time, the quota of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan is transferred from the Mazhilis to the Senate and reduced from 9 to 5 deputies. Accordingly, the total number of deputy mandates in the Mazhilis will be reduced from 107 to 98 (new version of paragraph 3 of Article 50 of the Constitution).

Deputies of the Mazhilis will be elected by a mixed electoral system: by a system of proportional representation in the territory of a single nationwide constituency, as well as in single-mandate territorial constituencies (new version of paragraph 3 of Article 50 Constitution). The introduction of a mixed electoral system will make it possible to fully take into account the rights of all citizens and better reflect the interests of voters.

The right of voters to revoke the mandate of deputies of the Mazhilis elected in a single-mandate territorial constituency is introduced (a new version of paragraph 5 of Article 52 of the Constitution). As a result, democratic traditions will be significantly strengthened, and a new political culture based on mutual responsibility and trust between deputies and voters will take root.

The competence of the Mazhilis is being expanded, and parliamentary control over the quality of execution of the state budget is being strengthened. For this purpose, as already mentioned, the Accounts Committee for Monitoring the execution of the state budget is transformed into the Supreme Audit Chamber, the chairperson of which must report twice a year to the deputies of the Mazhilis (new version of subparagraph 2) of Article 53, new subparagraph 3-1) of paragraph 1 of Article 56 of the Constitution). This will further strengthen the status of the Mazhilis and the Parliament as a whole. In order to strengthen the mechanism of checks and balances in the political system and optimise the legislative procedure, it is proposed that the Mazhilis pass laws (previously considered and approved bills), while the Senate approves or does not approve laws (previously the Senate passed laws) (new version of paragraphs 4 and 5 of Article 61 and paragraph 5 of Article 62 of the Constitution). Constitutional laws will be adopted by the Parliament at a joint session of the Chambers in at least two readings (new version of Article 53 of the Constitution). A special mechanism for prompt adoption of laws in exceptional cases is being introduced. Draft laws introduced as a legislative initiative of the Government in order to promptly respond to conditions that pose a threat to the life and health of the population, the constitutional order, the protection of public order, and the economic security of the country are subject to consideration by the Parliament immediately at a joint session of its chambers. For the period of consideration of these bills, the Government has the right to adopt temporary normative legal acts that have the force of law (supplement to paragraphs 2 and 3 of Article 61 of the Constitution).

This mechanism is designed for special circumstances that require immediate joint coordinated work of the branches of government to overcome particularly dangerous threats. It is not intended for everyday use and is ensured by mutual responsibility of members of Parliament and members of the Government. In-

creasing people's participation in the country's governance The Constitution definitively and unambiguously establishes the norm that the land and its subsoil, water, flora and fauna, and other natural resources belong to the people. The State exercises the right of ownership on behalf of the people (new version of article 1, paragraph 2 Constitution). As already mentioned, it is proposed to elect deputies of the Mazhilis using a mixed electoral system: according to the system of proportional representation in the territory of a single nationwide constituency, as well as in single-mandate territorial constituencies (new version of paragraph 3 of Article 50 and paragraph 1 of Article 51 Constitution).

It is also going to be possible to revoke the mandate of deputies of the Mazhilis elected in a single-mandate territorial constituency (new version of paragraph 5 of Article 52 of the Constitution).

Governors of regions, cities of national significance and the capital will be appointed by the President on an alternative basis (at least two candidates) with the consent of all deputies of maslikhats of the region/city (new version of paragraph 4 of Article 87 of the Constitution). Thus, the guarantees of local public administration and self-government, implemented by local representative and executive bodies responsible for the state of affairs in the relevant territory, are strengthened.

Strengthening the mechanisms for protecting the rights of citizens

As already mentioned, the Constitutional Council is being transformed into the Constitutional Court, which, at the request of citizens will consider the compliance with the Constitution of normative legal acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan that directly affect their rights and freedoms enshrined in the Constitution (new version of Articles 71-74 of the Constitution).

The decision to abolish the death penalty at the constitutional level is finally fixed (new version of paragraph 2 of Article 15 of the Constitution).

The competence, organisation and procedure for the activities of the Prosecutor's Office will be determined by the constitutional law (new version of paragraph 4 of Article 83 of the Constitution). This should strengthen the system of human rights activities and highest supervision of compliance with the rule of law in the Republic of Kazakhstan on behalf of the State within the limits and forms established by law.

Provisions of the new article 83-1 of the Constitution grant immunity to the Ombudsman for Human Rights and guarantees independence and non-accountability to any other state bodies and officials when exercising their powers to promote the restoration of violated human and civil rights and freedoms. To achieve this, they will have the right to appeal to the Constitutional Court.

The legal status and organisation of the activities of the Ombudsman for Human Rights will be determined by the constitutional law.

Ultimately, it can be rightly argued that the constitutional reform will expand the participation of citizens in governance and ensure genuine democratisation of political processes.

Erlan Karin is the State Secretary of Kazakhstan.

Briefs

PM lauds...

FROM PAGE 01

firmly in common religious, cultural, and linguistic links and transcend political changes on either side. He mentioned that both countries were celebrating the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. "In these seven and a half decades, the two sides have always stood by each other in the face of all changes," he said, adding that people-to-people and cultural contacts were on an upward trajectory. PM Sharif said Pakistan was now focusing on economic cooperation with Turkey as the current level of bilateral trade still was not a true reflection of the excellent state of the relationship.

PTI to send...

FROM PAGE 01

during "Azadi March" — so that they can be shared with the United Nations and other human rights organisations. In a press conference flanked by PTI leader Hammad Azhar, the ex-information minister said male police personnel entered the residences of party leaders and "misbehaved" with women. "We are gathering footage of the incidents and will raise it on international forums. Such brutality was not witnessed even during the regimes of dictators," the PTI leader said. But despite making continuous claims of holding a peaceful march towards the federal capital, PTI Chairman Imran Khan admitted a day earlier that the protesters that accompanied him during the "Azadi March" were carrying weapons with them.

'Faced...

FROM PAGE 01

no-confidence move. The former Prime Minister also mentioned that he has been saying for 26 years that the former President Asif Ali Zardari and PML-N leaderships are not separate. There was no deal behind calling off the long march, he said. "I have been saying for 26 years that Asif Zardari and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) are the same," the ex-premier said, reiterating that he had not made a deal with anyone to call off the Long March. He explained that if the long march wasn't called off it could have led to bloodshed. The PTI Chairman said PTI does not need to go to National Assembly for confirmation of resignations, after the party members have resigned from NA. He added that the party members announced their resignation on the floor of the National Assembly and going back would mean accepting the imported government.

Grigore...

FROM PAGE 01

His music was selected for several feature films and documentaries from Romania and other countries, such as The Pharaoh, Gunpowder, Treason and Plot (a BBC production), and Wild Carpathia (a Travel Channel production). He was invited to perform worldwide at festivals in Washington, D.C., Bloomington, Paris, Berlin, Athens, Montreal, Basel, Morelia, Frankfurt, and London. When asked to share his experience of giving music to well-known international movies, he said ostensibly it was a great experience. He said today people try to become stars overnight, which is not a professional approach. A good artist always banks upon his or her works and takes pride in his professionalism. He said when he woke up in the morning he heard sound of the Azaan (prayers) and he suddenly felt as if he were in an old traditional town of Romania with his elders. He stressed exchange of artists between Romania and Pakistan adding he was ready to host Pakistani artists in Romania. "If they come to Romania, I will certainly arrange for them performances and interaction with the Romanians counterparts", he added. He said a good artist speaks through his works.

(Detailed interview shall be published in the July issue of Centreline magazine)

Azerbaijan, Pakistan eye mine clearance cooperation

Bilal Hayee joined representatives of the diplomatic corps visiting Azerbaijan's liberated Kalbajar region on May 31. Over 80 diplomats and military attaches from more than 50 countries and 10 international organizations joined the trip

DNA

BAKU: Pakistani Ambassador to Azerbaijan Bilal Hayee has said that his country and Azerbaijan are discussing mine clearance cooperation. "Pakistan already maintains contacts with the Azerbaijani government on issues of activity in the sphere of mine action. Pakistani sappers and other specialists will come to Azerbaijan's Karabakh to help with the demining process," Hayee said. The ambassador underlined that there are economic opportunities for the growth of entrepreneurship in liberated Karabakh. "I hope that as soon as the restoration work is completed, many Pakistani companies will research the existing economic opportunities here," he opined. Another area that demands attention, according to the ambassador, is the potential to research natural resources, especially freshwater supplies in Azerbaijan's liberated lands. "The stunning beauty and landscape of Kalbajar are very impressive. I believe that many Pakistanis will come to Karabakh to enjoy its beauty. This place will become a special tourist center for the rest of the world," Hayee stressed. Incidentally, Hayee joined representatives of the diplomatic corps visiting Azerbaijan's liberated Kalbajar region on May 31. Over 80 diplomats and military attaches from more than 50 countries and 10 international organizations joined the trip. "Visiting Kalbajar region with diplomatic corps. Sheer beauty and abundance of natural resources. The landscape resembles GB [Gilgit-Baltistan] of Pakistan," Hayee wrote on his Twitter account.



During the 44-day war with Armenia in 2020, Pakistan was among the first countries to voice political support for Azerbaijan. The fraternal country also supports Azerbaijan in the restoration of the country's liberated territories. Furthermore, the parliaments of Azerbai-

jan, Turkey, and Pakistan have signed the Baku Declaration on cooperation. The document was signed following the trilateral meeting held by speakers of the three countries' parliaments on July 27, 2021. The countries also cooperate in the military field. The Azerbaijani, Turkish and Pakistani

special forces conducted joint international Three Brothers - 2021 drills in Baku. The drills were aimed at improving the coordination among the special forces units of friendly and partner countries during combat operations, preparing for operations in peacetime and wartime, as well as exchanging knowledge and experience. Azerbaijan and Pakistan also cooperate in various fields of economy. The relations between the two countries date back to 1991. Pakistan was among the first countries to recognize Azerbaijan's independence. Over 80 diplomats and military attaches from more than 50 countries and 10 international organizations are taking part in the trip. During the trip, the diplomats got familiarized with the work on the construction of a tunnel through the Murovdagh mountain range. The visitors were informed about the process of construction of the tunnel, as well as the Toghani-Kalbajar-Istisu highway. Besides, they were informed that the construction of the highway is planned to be completed in 2024-2025, and after its commissioning, the travel time will take no more than an hour. Later, the guests were familiarized with the work on the restoration of hydropower plants. The visitors were informed about the beginning of the restoration of two hydropower plants, which were completely destroyed during the Armenian occupation, in Kalbajar and Lachin regions and viewed a hydropower plant in Kalbajar. The purpose of the visit is to familiarize the foreign diplomats with the aftermath of the destructions caused by the Armenian occupation and with the restoration process in the liberated territories.

Karim Benzema named UCL player of the season

SPORTS DESK

PARIS: Real Madrid forward Karim Benzema has been named as the Champions League player of the season. The France international, 34, won the competition for a fifth time as Real beat Liverpool 1-0 in the final. He scored 15 goals in 12 Champions League games and is a leading contender to win this year's Ballon d'Or. Benzema's team-mate Vinicius Jr, who scored the only goal in the final, has been selected as the tournament's young player of the season. The 21-year-old scored four goals and made six assists in the 2021-22 campaign. The pair are joined in the Champions League team of the season by Real midfielder Luka Modric and goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois, who was man of the match in Paris. Runners-up Liverpool also have four players included, with defenders Trent Alexander-Arnold, Virgil van Dijk, Andy Robertson and midfielder Fabinho featuring. The team of the season is completed by Paris St-Germain striker Kylian Mbappe, Manchester City's Kevin de Bruyne and Chelsea defender Antonio Rudiger.

Brazil storm death toll rises to 100

RECIFE: The death toll from torrential rains that triggered floods and landslides in northeastern Brazil has risen to 100, officials said, as emergency workers searched for more victims. The force of the landslides ripped apart houses in neighborhoods including Jardim Monteeverde, a poor community just outside the city of Recife. Rescue workers have found dozens of bodies buried in the mud that tore through the neighborhood, and said they expect to find more. At least 14 people remain missing, said disaster management officials for the state of Pernambuco, scene of the latest in a series of deadly weather disasters to hit the country in recent months. President Jair Bolsonaro posted a video on Twitter that showed him flying in a helicopter over the disaster zone where brown floodwater inundated large areas and gashes of mud scarred hillsides where houses once stood. — Agencies

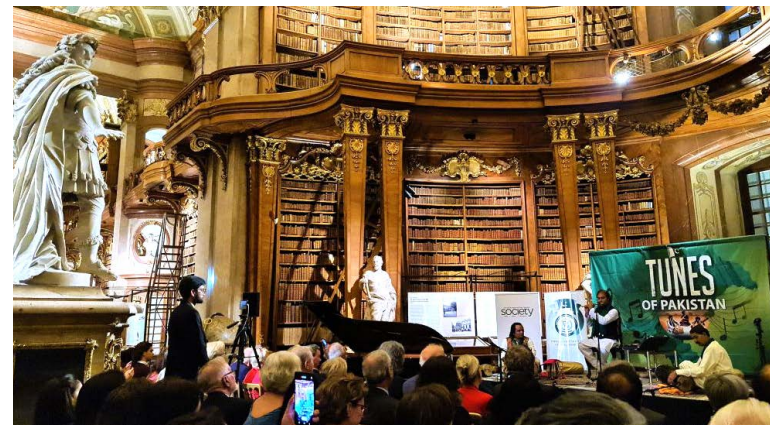
'Tunes of Pakistan' concert held in Vienna

NEWS DESK

VIENNA: On the occasion of the celebration of the Pakistani-Austrian friendship, Ms. Mag. Gertrud Tauchhammer, Editor of Society Magazine, and H.E. Aftab Ahmad Khokher, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in the Republic of Austria, together with his wife, Mrs. Afshan Khokher, invited to the concert "Melodies of Pakistan". The concert took place in the wonderful state hall of the Austrian National Library, which with its imposingness provided a fairytale backdrop for this exotic musical event. The assembled guests were welcomed by Ambassador Khokher and the organizer of the event, Mag. Tauchhammer, followed by a

speech by the esteemed Dr. Teresa Indjein, Head of the Culture Section at the BMEIA (Federal Ministry for European and International

Affairs) and finally a speech by the Ambassador's wife, Ms. Khokher, who, to everyone's surprise, was in charge of the programme.



Medvedev, Tsitsipas crash at Paris

AGENCIES

PARIS: World number two Daniil Medvedev and fourth-ranked Stefanos Tsitsipas crashed out of the French Open in the fourth round on Monday as women's top seed Iga Swiatek took her winning streak to 32 matches after surviving a huge scare. US Open champion Medvedev was beaten by 20th seed Marin Cilic 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 in just 1hr 45 min on Court Philippe Chatrier. Tsitsipas, the 2021 runner-up to Novak Djokovic, was defeated by Danish teenager Holger Rune 7-5, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 earlier in the day. Cilic will face Russia's Andrey Ru-

blev in his third career Roland Garros quarter-final. "It's one of the most beautiful matches of my career, it was fantastic from the first to the last point," said Cilic, adding he is playing his "best tennis in recent weeks". Medvedev had enjoyed his best run in Paris 12 months ago when he reached the quarter-finals. He hadn't dropped a set at this year's tournament but was completely outplayed by the 33-year-old Cilic who broke serve five times. Medvedev was unable to carve out a single break point as the Croatian got the better of the Russian for the first time in four meetings. Rublev made the quarter-finals for the second

time when Italian opponent Jannik Sinner retired with a left knee injury with the Russian 1-6, 6-4, 2-0 ahead. Rune became the first Danish man to reach the French Open quarter-finals when he shocked Tsitsipas. Rune, just 19 and ranked 40, swept to a memorable win on the back of 54 winners. With fellow 19-year-old Carlos Alcaraz already into the quarter-finals, it's the first time two teenagers have made it this far in Paris since Hendrik Dreekman and Andrei Medvedev 28 years ago. In a tense fourth set, Rune gave up a 5-2 lead and fought off three more break points in the 10th game before securing victory when Tsitsipas hit long.

'NATO allies forgot Turkey's contributions to bloc'

MONITORING DESK

ANKARA: President Recep Tayyip Erdo an criticized NATO allies for overlooking Turkey's contributions to the military bloc when there are no threats to their national security, as Ankara opposes Sweden and Finland's membership for their support of terrorist groups that threaten Turkey's national security. In an exclusive article written for the British weekly The Economist on Monday, Erdo an said his country's increased defensive capacity has contributed to the alliance's resilience and strength. "Whereas our partners have always appreciated Turkish contributions to NATO's collective security mission, they quickly forgot about them when there were no threats to their national security. Our partners who only remember Turkey's importance in turbulent times, such as the crisis in the Balkans, mistakenly thought that long-term stability could be achieved without Turkey," he said. "Thus, after the elimination of the immediate threat, they disregarded geopolitical realities and the potential threats that might emerge in the region. Needless to say, such pipe dreams turned out to be short-lived as a result of international crises," he explained. Noting that threats to international peace and security have recently changed, which led many to believe that NATO was an "obsolete" organization, that ceased to serve its purpose, Erdo an said even the French president said in 2019 that the bloc was experiencing "brain death." He continued by saying that the same individuals questioned Turkey's role in NATO, which he said cost the alliance many years. The president continued by saying that Turkey did not think the shortsighted and occasionally reckless attitudes of some member states reflect the position of NATO as a

bloc, adding that Ankara underlined the importance of the alliance and called on member states to take necessary steps. "That call was in line with our nation's response to the international system's deepening instability, too." Erdo an drew attention to Turkey and argued that NATO — like all other international organizations — had to implement certain reforms to cope with emerging security threats. "Specifically on terrorism, the lack of collective action, in spite of direct attacks against many member states, undermined security cooperation and fueled deep distrust among the citizens of NATO countries about the organization," he said. "Turkey has highlighted that trend at all NATO summits and maintained that international cooperation was vital for transforming the fight against terrorism. We wanted NATO to cooperate better on intelligence and military issues when dealing with terrorist organizations, not only to prevent terrorist attacks but also to curb terrorist financing and recruitment within NATO borders. We remain committed to that position," he outlined. Erdo an noted that Turkey made legitimate and necessary demands for NATO, as multiple civil wars broke out in Turkey's neighborhood, to ensure the security of its borders, airspace and human security. "Largely abandoned, our country dealt with all those crises by itself and paid a high price during that effort. Ironically, any steps taken under the NATO umbrella would have prepared the alliance for future conflicts and crises at its borders," he noted. "The new state of affairs, which emerged out of the war in Ukraine, proves that Turkey's expectations and calls were accurate. Certain member states, which suddenly appreciated Turkey's geopolitical positioning as the conflict caused widespread disruption, saw that our nation had been right to take certain steps in the past. Turkey was



right to ask NATO members to prepare for coming geopolitical challenges and, in spite of those who argued that NATO was irrelevant, Turkey was absolutely right to state that the organization would be increasingly important," he explained. He said it was unfortunate that some NATO members fail to acknowledge certain threats to Turkey while all NATO allies accept the country's critical importance to the alliance. "Turkey maintains that the admission of Sweden and Finland entails risks for its own security and the organization's future. We have every right to expect those countries, which will expect NATO's second-largest army to come to their defense under Article 5, to prevent the recruitment, fundraising and propaganda activities of the PKK, which the European Union and America consider a terrorist entity," he highlighted. Stressing the demand of his country

that the candidate countries restrain the activities of all terrorist organizations and extradite their members, Erdo an said: "We provided clear evidence to the authorities in these countries and waited for action from them. Also, Turkey wants these countries to support the counterterrorism operations of NATO members. Terrorism is a threat to all members and the candidate countries should recognize this reality before joining. Unless they take necessary steps, Turkey will not change its position on this issue." Erdo an also underlined that all forms of arms embargoes are incompatible with the spirit of military partnership under NATO. "Such restrictions not only undermine our national security but also damage NATO's own identity. Sweden's and Finland's uncompromising insistence on joining the alliance has added an unnecessary item to NATO's agenda," he said.

PM arrives in Turkey

FROM PAGE 01

and his delegation at the airport. During his visit, the prime minister will have a tete-a-tete with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan which would be followed by delegation-level talks. Besides discussing the Pakistan-Turkey bilateral relations, the two leaders would also exchange views on regional and international issues. They will also address a Joint press stakeout after their meetings. As both countries are celebrating the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, the two leaders would jointly unveil a logo, marking the commencement of the celebrations. The prime minister will have extensive interaction with leading Turkish businessmen and potential investors from diverse sectors.

Govt, banned TTP talks...

FROM PAGE 01

Khyber couple of days back. Haji Bismillah Khan confirmed to this scribe, constituting of 50-member Jirga for visiting Kabul. According to official circles, fir making conclusive dialogues in Kabul two top figures of banned TTP Haji Muslim Khan and Malik Mahmud have already been pardoned off through a Presidential decree and airlifted into Kabul. Both of them are playing key role in the negotiation between the two sides. Banned TTP chief Mufti Noor Wali Mehsud is already staying in Kabul and leading his team. However, identity of Pakistan negotiation team yet to be determined. Banned TTP sources already made claims about acceptance of 60 per cent demands included release of all prisoners, withdrawal of registered cases and others whereas talks about reversal of tribal areas merger, recognition of TTP as an armed group with special free zones and compensating the TTP victims are in progress. Former Ambassador to Pakistan and ex-Chief Secretary Rustam Shah Mohmand while talking to this scribe said, "still certain obstacles exists in proposed reconciliation accord." He said, "Taliban's demand for withdrawal of armed troops and recognition of banned TTP as an armed group" might be hard for the government to comply with. Brig. (Retd) Saad M Khan believe, "reversing of merged tribal districts status is impossible." He said that former FATA merged in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa through a constitutional amendment and now it is impossible to go for its reversal as it would require two-third majority in parliament.

IS-Afghan...

FROM PAGE 01

encounter continued for couple of hours. The Afghan sources at Asadabad, head-quarter informed that three Taliban and one IS militants killed and several other injured. It was first ever direct encounter between IS and Taliban militants in the area since empowering of Taliban on August 15th 2021 last. Sheringal area of Sheigil district in Kunar province is considered very tough for the Afghan and international security forces in last four decades conflict. Al Qaeda founder Osama Bin Laden, after fall of Jalalabad and collapse of Taliban regime in mid of November 2001 last, shifted to this area.

'Imran...

FROM PAGE 01

resulted in the death of three — two PTI workers and a police constable. But in her address at an event, the PML-N vice president said: "Imran Khan is a gang leader [...] his political campaign is more dangerous than terrorism." The PML-N leader said Khan had admitted in a recent interview that his party workers were armed, whereas, in her rallies, "not a single person carries weapons." "Our goal is not to spread fitnah and fasad (anarchy and lawlessness). Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's people have understood the politics of Khan, which is why they were not part of his long march and his facial expressions were enough to show that the long march failed," she added.

Briefs

Iranian, Tajik presidents discuss Afghanistan

DNA

TEHRAN: Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi held talks in Tehran on Monday with Tajik President Emomali Rahmon. Discussions focused on the situation in neighboring Afghanistan. Raisi said both countries want stability and security in Afghanistan and throughout the region and consider the presence of terrorists in this country very worrying. The two parties signed co-operation agreements in various fields less than two weeks after the inauguration of an Iranian factory for military drones in Tajikistan. Iran and Tajikistan agree on the issue of Afghanistan and that an inclusive government should be formed, said Raisi. He stressed that Iran and Tajikistan "believe that the outsiders and the evil hands of arrogance that strengthen ISIS and terrorist groups in the region do not even think about the security of the people of Afghanistan and the region, and they are only pursuing their own political goals and interests." "Evidence of this was the 20-year presence of NATO and the United States in Afghanistan, which resulted in nothing but war, bloodshed, and destruction for the country," he added. Raisi had traveled to Dushanbe in September on his first foreign visit. Raisi said his visit helped increase trade relations between the two countries fourfold.

Oxfam urges truce extension in Yemen

DNA

LONDON: The international charity Oxfam has urged Yemen's warring sides to extend a two-month truce, appealing to the parties to the conflict to work together to avoid "catastrophic hunger" in the war-wrecked country. Oxfam said on Tuesday that the United Nations-brokered ceasefire is essential for millions of Yemenis suffering from a lack of basic services and soaring prices of food and other goods. The charity's Yemen director, Ferran Puig, said the truce has brought a "long overdue sense of hope that we can break the cycle of violence and suffering in Yemen". A Saudi-led coalition, the internationally recognised Yemeni government, and the Iran-aligned Houthi rebels agreed to a truce that started on April 2, which expires on Wednesday night. "The opportunity must be seized to extend the truce and push for a lasting peace if we are to avert the risk of millions of Yemenis being forced into acute hunger," Puig said. More than three dozen aid groups working in Yemen have joined Oxfam's appeal, saying in a joint statement addressed to the warring sides that "the gift for a better life for the people of Yemen is in your hands". The truce has been the first nationwide ceasefire in the past six years of Yemen's civil war.

Lebanese parliament re-elects long-time speaker

BEIRUT: Lebanon's new parliament has re-elected Nabih Berri for a seventh term as Speaker of Parliament, during the first parliamentary session held since elections on May 15. "I invite you to work together for a parliament that consolidate civil peace," Berri told parliamentarians on Tuesday after his re-election. "We want a parliament that refuses political vacuums and fulfills its constitutional obligations." Berri received 65 votes from Lebanon's 128 parliamentarians, less than the 98 he obtained at the start of his last term back in 2018. He has been speaker of Parliament since 1992. In Lebanon's fragile sectarian power-sharing system, the speaker is always a Shia Muslim. Berri's Amal Movement is a crucial ally of its fellow Shia party, Iran-backed Hezbollah. Twenty-three legislators cast blank ballots, while the remaining 40 placed void protest votes. - DNA

Kazakhstan accredits 272 foreign observers for June 5 Referendum

83.92 percent of Kazakh citizens support the presidential initiative to hold the June 5 national referendum on amendments to the Constitution, according to the CCS online survey conducted from May 24 to May 29, 2022



DNA

NUR-SULTAN: The Central Referendum Commission (CRC) has accredited 272 representatives of international organizations who will serve as foreign observers at the June 5 constitutional referendum, reported the commission's press service on May 30. 272 foreign observers will participate in June 5 constitutional referendum. Photo credit: atpress.kz. Fourteen observers from the European Union Delegation to Kazakhstan, as well as from Estonia, Germany, Indonesia, Iran, North Macedonia, and Iran have applied for accreditation at the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

As of May 25, CRC Chair Nurlan Abdirov said that 10 representatives from the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) Referendum Assessment Mission, 43 representatives from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Observer Mission, and 13 independent representatives from Armenia, France, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Palestine, Russia, Tajikistan, Thailand, and Turkey will take part as observers. The national referendum on constitutional amendments will be held upon the initiative of Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported recently that Kazakh citizens living or traveling in 52 countries will be able to

MFA's dialogue discusses referendum

NUR-SULTAN: At the snap meeting of the Consultative and Advisory body Dialogue Platform on Human Dimension under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan the major issue on the country's current political agenda was discussed - a nationwide referendum on amendments and additions to the Constitution scheduled for 5 June 2022, Kazinform has learned from the press service of the Kazakh Foreign Affairs Ministry. The event was chaired by Usen Suleimen, Ambassador-at-Large of Kazakhstan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In his opening remarks, he stressed the great importance of the forthcoming poll and the fact that, in case the proposed amendments are adopted, on the basis of the updated Constitution, amendments will be initiated to other currently applicable legislative acts, or new laws would be adopted. The keynote speakers on the content of the referendum and the process of preparation for it were Secretary of the Central Election Commission of Kazakhstan Mukhtar Yerman and Director of the Legislative Department of the Ministry of Justice of Kazakhstan Nazken Zhamaladin. - DNA

participate in the referendum. 83.92 percent of Kazakh citizens support the presidential initiative to hold the June 5 national referendum on amendments to the Constitution, according to the Central Communications Service (CCS) online survey conducted from May 24 to May 29, 2022. This means an increase by 12 percent as compared with the previous poll results provided by the CCS in mid-May - 72 percent. Overall, the level of public awareness of the upcoming event has grown by eight percent. Now, 76.51 percent of the respondents intend to vote in the referendum, 79.10 percent support the proposed package of constitutional amendments, and 80.04 percent approve of the course of reforms initiated

by President Tokayev. The recent survey was conducted among 1,200 citizens from 17 regions of Kazakhstan over the age of 18. The citizens eligible to vote will be able to cast their ballots in one of 10,013 polling stations that will open on the referendum day. The adoption of amendments to 31 articles and addition of 2 new articles to Kazakh Constitution will allow people to expand their participation in state governance and ensure genuine democratization of political processes, including the transition from a super-presidential model to a presidential republic, redistribution of powers, strengthening the role of Parliament, as well as reinforcing mechanisms for protection of citizens' rights.

Matiari to Lahore DC transmission project completed

ISLAMABAD: As Matiari converter station resumed work last week, the Matiari to Lahore DC transmission project successfully completed its first maintenance since its commercial operation, according to a report published by CEN. With summer fast upon us, a safe and successful supply of electricity matters more than ever. As one of Pakistan's electricity life lines, the maintenance of the ±660 KV HVDC Transmission Line project was of great significance. It is also the 1st time that Matiari and Lahore converter stations, as well as 18 control towers along the 886km long 4000 MW ±660 kV HVDC Transmission Line, stopped operation in turns and conducted maintenance. A team consisting of 120 staff from Pakistan and China participated in the work under extreme heat, the threats of the ongoing pandemic and a tight schedule. It was highlighted by the Ministry of Energy and China Electric Power Equipment and Technology Co.Ltd. (CET) that the maintenance needs to be done in a relatively short period of time. Thanks to adequate preliminary research, after the Lahore converter station completed its maintenance work, the team quickly adjusted its working plan and managed to reduce the working hour at Matiari converter station from 8 hours to 6 hours. The total maintenance work took only 13.5 hours—which means the team has minimized the impact on the local's livelihood. "I was touched by the professionalism demonstrated by the Chinese workers," Abu Bakar Abid, an engineer at the mega project told the reporter, "As record setting heat blast Pakistan, Chinese workers had to wear thick working suits and perform precise operations for us under blistering heat." - DNA

Kazakhstan pays tribute to victims of 'Great Famine'

DNA

NUR-SULTAN: Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev took part in the wreath-laying ceremony at the monumental complex on the Day of Remembrance of Victims of Political Repressions and Famine on May 31, reported Akorda Press. President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev took part in the wreath-laying ceremony at the monumental complex on the Day of Remembrance of Victims of Political Repressions and Famine on May 31 in the capital. Photo credit: Akorda. In the Soviet period, some 100,000 people were unjustly convicted from 1921 to 1954 in Kazakhstan and a quarter of them received death sentences. The President honored the memory of those who lost their lives with a minute of silence. Families and relatives and friends of the victims attended the ceremony. The head of state also visited the



Khazret Sultan Mosque to participate in a service in memory of the victims of repression and famine. The state commission for the political rehabilitation of victims of repression began its work in November 2020. The group includes 316 expert scientists and 261 of them have access to work in archives. The commission has been conducting a large-scale scientific project to study Kazakh history in the 1920-50s of the 20th century, to restore the chronicle of tragic events and the history of the Kazakh people who suffered during the years of totalitarian rule.

Secretary of State Erlan Karin, who spoke about the results of the work of the commission to Kazinform, said that the Prosecutor General's Office declassified more than 2.4 million materials, the National Security Committee declassified more than 1,500 archival documents, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs declassified more than 5,300 documents. The experts will also be engaged in methodological and consulting activities. An open digital database of repressed people and the publication of scientific collections will continue. - DNA



KUALA LUMPUR: Pakistan High Commissioner to Malaysia Amna Baloch calls on Chief Minister of Sabah, Datuk Seri Hajiji Bin Haji Noor. Views were exchanged on issues of mutual interest. - APP

Turkey summons German and French envoys

ANKARA: The German and French ambassadors to Ankara were summoned to the Turkish foreign ministry to protest events organized by Kurdish militants in those countries, Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on Tuesday. Speaking to state-run Anadolu news agency, Cavusoglu said the ambassadors were told of Turkey's discomf by the events organized by the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which is considered a terrorist organization by Turkey, the United States and the European Union. Separately, Turkey has said it opposes Sweden and Finland's bids to join NATO over what Ankara calls its harboring of Kurdish militants in those countries, and also over their arms export ban. Finland has to stop "protecting" the PKK and take Turkey's security concerns seriously if it wants Turkey to accept it in NATO, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's spokesperson told a Finnish newspaper on Tuesday. "The problem is not that Finland would not understand Turkey. Finland refuses to take Turkey's security concerns seriously," Communications Director of the Turkish President, Fahrettin Altun told Finland's largest daily Helsingin Sanomat by email. Altun's words echoed what Erdogan's chief foreign policy adviser Ibrahim Kalin told his US counterpart on Monday, calling for the two Nordic countries to "take concrete steps regarding the terrorist organizations that threaten Turkey's national security". "Eventually Finland's government must decide which is more important, to join NATO or protect these kinds of organizations," Altun told the paper. - DNA

Saindak's driver save others at a suicide attack

"Not everyone understands what we are doing. They simply think we are depleting local resources. Some even attacked us for that", said Muhammad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A driver of Saindak project sees defining moment of his life saving others at a suicide attack. While narrating his experience, he stated that there are also occasions when he acts as an "ambassador" of Pakistan-China friendship. According to a report published by Gwadar Pro, if there is one day that Muhammad Ibrahim will never forget during his twenty years' career as a driver, it is August 11, 2018. On that day, when driving a bus in Dalbandin, a city in Chagai district of Balochistan province and about 340 km southwest of the provincial capital of Quetta, he encountered one of the most horrifying moments of his life. A minitruck moving slowly a little ahead of the bus, exploded all of a sudden, shattering the glass windows in the bus and damaged the front of the vehicle.

"Suicide attacks were things that usually happened on TV. I hadn't expect it to be several feet away from me", said Mr. Muhammad Ibrahim. "Luckily, I pressed the emergency brakes before our bus hit the truck. Otherwise, the whole bus would have burnt. As I pressed the brakes, the truck exploded with a big bang." The next moment, Muhammad found himself in pain. "The heat wave from the blast and the bursting glasses scorched and pierced my skin. But I need to get everyone out of there", recalled Muhammad. On the bus were several Chinese engineers working for Pakistan's biggest functioning mine, the Saindak Copper-Gold Mine project. "He was a reticent guy, but at that critical juncture when no one knew what would happen next, he stepped out, helping us carry luggage off the bus despite he borne most of the shock at the driver's seat", said Mr. Ren, one of the passengers of the ill-fated

bus. Thus, the cohort retreated rapidly and safely, and Muhammad along with other injured were rushed to the hospital after simple treatment by local corps. "Naturally, there was shock. But uncertainty is what drivers face every day. There are unexpected weathers, road conditions, and things like this. But we place full trust on our company. In the hospital, officials of Chinese consulate in Karachi visited me, making me feel warm and secured", said Muhammad. Three months later, he returned to his post. Honours followed. As the saviour of the suicide attack, he was awarded as model worker and outstanding staff member of CPEC Projects. For Muhammad Ibrahim, it seems his job is more about driving people to and from certain places. There are defining moments in his career of saving others at a suicide attack, there are also occasions when he acts as an "ambassador" of Pakistan-Chi-

na friendship. "Not everyone understands what we are doing. They simply think we are depleting local resources. Some even attacked us for that", said Muhammad. At this time, Muhammad would explain how the project has brought benefits to local people, such as creating jobs, providing free COVID-19 vaccines to nearby villagers and staff, and upgrading local infrastructure. "It is hard to find a good job in this remote area. Because of my job, my three daughters are happily married", he said. "Due to the far-flung location and anti-COVID travel restrictions, we're not able to go back to my family very often. Sometimes we stay at the workplace for over half a year straight. And in the summer, we work in a temperature as high as 50", Muhammad's colleague said. "But these hardships pay off", Muhammad said, "this job offers me not only decent salary, but also respect and self-worth".

French diplomats to go on strike

DNA

PARIS: French diplomats will go on strike for the first time in 20 years on Thursday in protest against a perceived lack of recognition and reforms pushed by the president that they say could damage France's global standing. The action won support from 500 foreign ministry civil servants in a newspaper opinion piece and has seen widespread backing from senior diplomats and ambassadors on social media. The strike comes at a bad time for President Emmanuel Macron, with France holding the European Union presidency until the end of June, as he seeks to play a leading role in the bloc's response to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and looks for fresh impetus to his new presidential mandate. Public sector reforms will see the diplomatic career structure change, including scrapping a special status for senior foreign ministry officials, meaning they would fall into a broader civil service pool. "The reform of the senior civil service is the latest attack on our professions, our expertise, our future," said a strike notice for June 2 sent by unions. "This reform reflects an incomprehensible desire to undermine our ministry and risks permanently weakening our country's ability to project and defend itself in the world." Ministry officials have played down the effect, and in a statement on May 19, Ministry Spokeswoman Anne Claire Legendre said solid guarantees had been obtained to preserve the diplomatic profession and careers.

Ossetia cancels referendum on joining Russia

DNA

TBILISI: The leader of Georgia's breakaway region of South Ossetia has cancelled plans to hold a referendum on joining Russia which his predecessor had scheduled for July 17. South Ossetia was at the centre of the Russia-Georgia war in 2008 after which the Kremlin recognised the territory as an independent state and stationed military bases there. In a decree issued on Monday, the Moscow-controlled enclave's de facto President Alan Gagloev invoked "uncertainty of the legal consequences of the issue submitted to a referendum". The decree also stressed "the inadmissibility of a unilateral decision of a referendum on issues affecting the legitimate rights and interests of the Russian Federation". Gagloev ordered "to hold, without delay, consultations with the Russian side on the entire range of issues related to the further integration of South Ossetia and the Russian Federation". On May 13, Gagloev's predecessor, Anatoly Bibilov, signed a decree on holding the referendum, citing the region's "historic aspiration" to join Russia, his office said at the time. Bibilov lost his bid for re-election earlier this month. Russia has expressed hope that Gagloev will preserve "continuity" in ties with Moscow.

EU leaders agree to Russian oil ban

DNA

BRUSSELS: European Union leaders have agreed in principle to cut 90 percent of oil imports from Russia by the end of this year, cutting off a vital source of funding for Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, after reaching a compromise deal with Hungary. The 27-nation organisation has spent weeks haggling over a complete ban on Russian oil but encountered stubborn resistance from Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban who said an embargo would destroy his country's economy. At a meeting in Brussels on Monday, leaders hatched a compromise deal to exempt deliveries arriving in Europe by the Druzhba pipeline. "Agreement to ban export of Russian oil to the EU. This immediately covers more than two thirds of oil imports from Russia, cutting a huge source of financing for its war machine," European Council chief Charles Michel said in a tweet at the end of the first day of a two-day leaders' summit.

Briefs

Ukraine convicts two Russians for shelling villages

FOREIGN DESK

KYIV: Two Russian soldiers were both sentenced to more than 11 years in jail on Tuesday after a Ukrainian court found them guilty of firing artillery at civilian areas. The verdict comes one week after a court in the capital Kyiv handed a 21-year-old Russian soldier a life sentence for killing a civilian – the country's first judicial reckoning on Russia's invasion. Alexander Bobykin and Alexander Ivanov, the servicemen convicted on Tuesday in the central region of Poltava, were on trial for violating norms and customs of warfare. "The Kotelevsky District Court in the Poltava region sentenced them to 11 years and six months in prison," the Ukrainian prosecutor general said in a statement on social media. Her office distributed a blurred picture of two men with shaved heads wearing casual clothing and sitting in a transparent box for defendants in the courtroom.

Tajiks in Afghanistan call on UN, other forums for help

Unfortunately, we are not supported by any country or govt in Afghanistan

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR— A group of Tajik nationals residing in Kabul and Mazar-i-Sharif Afghanistan have called on the UN and other international organizations to help them in getting safety and protection as they face threats to lives and properties in native Tajikistan. These Tajik Nationals slipped into Afghanistan after disintegration of former USSR and empowering of Imam Ali Rehmanov as President of Tajikistan. Amir Hamza, head of Tajik Refugees in Afghanistan through a letter addressed to UN Secretary General and copied to other global forums states, "I have said many times before that: 'Unfortunately, we are not supported by any country or government in Afghanistan'. We are unfortunately under the strong persecution of the current Tajik regime, but we are Tajik refugees in Kabul, Afghanistan and unfortunately, we are stateless', also registered by UNHCR as asylum seekers. "Due to the deteriorating human rights situation in the Republic of Tajikistan, I'm writing a very short letter, because it is very urgent and we ask all the respected officials of the United Nations and International legal organizations

to consider the request urgently. Since we have been refugees from Tajikistan in Afghanistan and other countries for 30 years, and unfortunately our situation abroad is getting worse day by day, please share our request immediately with Mr. Imamaly Rahmanov." "We, the Justice Group of the Republic of Tajikistan, respectfully ask the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Antonio Guterres, the leaders of international organizations and international legal experts, and the leaders of the international community to: "Please be a serious observer of our justice desk period". We, the Justice Group of the Republic of Tajikistan, respect all UN programs, documents, and conventions. If Mr. Imamaly Rahmanov also respects all international instruments, he comes to the table of justice and says, "I also respect all international instruments". We, the justice groups of the Republic of Tajikistan, hope that Mr. Imamaly Rahmanov himself will come to justice. We want justice, law, and the functioning of international instruments in the society of the Republic of Tajikistan. Since we have been outside the Republic of Tajikistan for 30 years, we respect the United Nations "Repatriation

and accept the return program provided that Mr. Imamaly Rahmanov comes to our justice table. We have already said to the esteemed officials of the United Nations, the international legal organizations that please: "If Mr. Imamaly Rahmanov has any suggestions or questions, he should tell us at the justice table". We, the Justice Group of the Republic of Tajikistan, respectfully ask the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Antonio Guterres, and the leaders of international organizations and international legal experts of the international community to respectfully ask: "Please be a serious observer of our justice desk period". Because, unfortunately, the current Tajik regime is clearly violating human rights for 30 years, the rights of Tajik citizens inside and outside Tajikistan have been violated. That the deteriorating situation in Badakhshan province of the Republic of Tajikistan is attributed to the current Tajik regime's visit to the UN delegation. For us, the people of the Republic of Tajikistan, it is a shame that the current Tajik regime attributes the deteriorating situation in Badakhshan province, of the Republic of Tajikistan, to the UN envoy to Badakhshan province, of the Republic of Tajikistan.

Of course, this is a weakness of the work of the UN Office in the Republic of Tajikistan, because for 30 years the injustices of the Tajik regime have been recorded in the Republic of Tajikistan, and complaints about the crimes of the Tajik regime and human rights violations in Tajikistan are daily. He reached the UN office, but unfortunately, Mr. Imamaly Rahmanov was not once held accountable for the rule of law. This is the mistake and weakness of the UN Special Representative in the Republic of Tajikistan. As a result, unfortunately, the deteriorating situation in Badakhshan province, of the Republic of Tajikistan, is attributed to the United Nations by the current Tajik regime. However, for obvious reasons, the current regime is guilty of worsening the situation in Badakhshan province, of R/Tajikistan. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). The current Tajik regime continues to threaten the OSCE office. We have written about this many times before to the United Nations Office. The United Nations, international legal organizations and international legal organizations, and the international community need to know that the current Tajik regime is a clear violation of international law.

Finally, I respectfully ask all of you to invite Mr. Imamaly Rahmanov to a social justice desk in one of the countries of the world to implement law and justice in the society of the Republic of Tajikistan. Please make this legal responsibility your humanitarian duty and force Mr. Imamaly Rahmanov to sit down with us and answer our legal questions. We hope that Mr. Imamaly Rahmanov will accept your invitation to the international community and that Mr. Imamaly Rahmanov himself will sit at the table of justice to resolve the political, economic, social, cultural, and security situation in Tajikistan. Because according to the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan, we form a large group of the society of the Republic of Tajikistan, and in case of emergency, the Republic of Tajikistan has the right to decide according to the law, and this right should be given to us by Mr. Imamaly Rahmanov. If Mr. Imamaly Rahmanov does not accept and does not allow us the right to a decision given to us by the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan and does not come to the table for justice, please refer our case and that of Mr. Imamaly Rahmanov to the international High Criminal Court. (ICC)."

Nepra increases electricity prices by Rs3.99 per unit

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Increasing the burden of inflation on consumers, National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) on Tuesday increased electricity tariff price by Rs3.99 on the request of the Central Power Purchasing Company. The recommendation was to increase by Rs8 per unit from July 1 this year but Nepra increased Rs3.99 per tariff power tariff increase. The government has started taking 'difficult decisions' adhering to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) demands to end the subsidies on fuel, electricity and food items for the release of \$1 billion loan tranche. Pertinent to note that the prices of fuel have already been jacked up by Rs30 per litre in line with the international lender's demand.

Lankan envoy condoles death of Adnan Aurangzeb

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Sri Lanka High Commission has condoled with the family, loved ones and friends of Mr Mi-angul Adnan Aurangzeb, who lost his life in a road accident on his way from Haripur to Islamabad. He was an engineer, former member of Parliament and current head of the former princely family which ruled SWAT princely state. He was one of the leading figures with an indepth knowledge of Gandara Buddhist heritage and have been actively taking part to put SWAT on the Buddhist map. He has been a dear friend of all the Sri Lanka High Commissioners who served in Islamabad. As per his beliefs may Allah rest his soul in peace and give strength to family and friends to bear the irreparable loss.

In touch with KP Govt for Dua's recovery

DNA

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that he was in touch with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government for the recovery of Dua Zehra. He said that the high court had given time till Friday and by that time the girl would be recovered. Murad said that the girl had gotten married in Punjab, where the police tried to recover her but then she moved to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). "I am in touch with the KP government, and their police were trying hard to comb her out", he said Commenting on the transfer of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Sindh, Murad said.

Pakistan needs to empower agri producers with technology: WB

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan needs to empower the agriculture and livestock producers with increased use of technology to ensure broader adaption of climate-smart agriculture. Improved focus and efficiency in government expenditures are also essential to adjust the food system to higher food and energy prices. According to an article published by the World Bank, Pakistan needs to encourage greater use of digital technologies in both rural and urban areas to make the food system more responsive, resilient and efficient. Collaboration across government actors, private sector, civil society, and charitable organizations, is necessary for improving identification of vulnerable households, targeting beneficiaries of social safety nets, and monitoring effectiveness of different food security support instruments. Pakistan also needs to address food insecurity in both rural and urban areas via multi-sectoral interventions that improve production, processing, transport, storage, and marketing. It also needs to make markets more accessible to both producers and consumers. It's important to prioritize work on legislation, guidelines and regulations for enhanced quality control, better payments systems, and consumer protection regulations. The COVID pandemic highlighted the risk and impact of disease transmissions from

animals to humans. Pakistan has a large stock of livestock with a substantial viral and bacterial load. This makes it particularly important for the government to take concrete steps such as enhancing vaccination campaigns against common livestock diseases, formulating improved regulations for the establishment and operations of livestock colonies, and developing institutional capacities and protocols for surveillance, monitoring, and reporting system in both rural and urban areas. The "One Health" approach launched by Government provides an excellent opportunity to take a more holistic and integrated approach to human, animal, and plant health. The article added that the impact of COVID-19 pandemic was particularly severe on daily wage earners and others with no employment protection. The lockdowns imposed and disruption in economic activities increased food insecurity. An estimated 50% of the population ate less or switched to lower quality food. Some 40% of the population faced moderate to severe food insecurity during April to July 2020. The agriculture sector was also affected by lockdowns and disruptions in markets. Higher imports helped ensure consumers had ready access to key staples. For example, wheat imports reached 3.6 million tons in 2020 – a level not seen for several decades. – APP



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Hina Rabbani Khar, in a meeting with Uzbek Ambassador, Oybek Usmanov. – DNA

'Pakistan can boost mango production with China's help'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) President Wang Zihai suggested that Pakistan needed to enhance cooperation with China to modernise farming structures and techniques to increase mango production. It could also help to produce quality fruits and improve competitiveness in the global markets to boost exports and earn valuable foreign exchange, he added. According to Gwadar Pro on Tuesday, he made the suggestion at an online meeting with the executive members at PCJCCI Secretariat, Lahore. Wang Zihai observed that the decline in mango production due to an unusual spike in temperatures coupled with water shortages is an emerging problem in Pakistan. He added that a drip irrigation system

should be followed for the successful growth of mangoes as the system delivers small amounts of water only where needed. Since Pakistan is currently facing huge water shortages due to less snowfall and rain, this method will help increase the crop yield of mangoes, he maintained. Ehsan Chaudhry, Senior Vice President PCJCCI said that until 2018, Pakistan produced 1.9 million metric tons of mangoes annually, thus ranking sixth in the world, preceded by India, China, Thailand, Indonesia, and Mexico. The country's mango production has declined over the past four years due to global warming. Currently, Pakistan's annual mango production stands between 1.7 million and 1.8 million metric tons. He suggested that there was a dire need for joint ventures with China for establishing quality enhancement centres, fruit processing units, de-

hydration plants, drip irrigation and cold storage chains so Pakistani fruits could be exported in line with international standards. Pakistan can be on the list of top three exporters of mangoes in the next five years, both in terms of volume and value, if the government continues to adhere to making prudent and result-oriented policies in this regard. Sarfraz Butt, Vice President PCJCCI said that outdated cultivation and harvesting techniques, high cost of production, substandard cold storage facilities, and lack of research and development are the major hindrances to the growth of the mango industry. He said that China has already helped Pakistan overcome multiple issues that Pakistani farmers were facing by improving electricity supply and road infrastructure across the country under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Turkish envoy wants to see enhanced trade ties Motiwala suggests removal of duty on denim cloth in Turkey

DNA

KARACHI: The Consul General of Turkey, H.E Cemal Sangu, during his visit to SITE Association of Industry, said that the history of Pakistan Turkey relations dates back to centuries and we should be proud of this. The two countries have great leaders. There is potential to increase trade between the two countries for which joint ventures are needed. Exchanging views at a meeting held at SITE Association of Industry for a meeting, Turkish Consul General said that we need to unite our strength and experience about defense, tourism, education, agriculture, textile, food security etc. There are some areas where Turkey has an edge and vice versa. We want to bring our expertise & latest technology to Pakistan. Turkish Commercial Attache, Eyyup Yildirim, Zubair Motiwala, Patron-in-Chief of SITE Association of Industry, SVP Saud Mahmood, VP Muhammad Kamran Arbi, former president Majyd Aziz, Anwer Aziz, Chairman International Relations sub-committee, Sikandar Imran, Zafar Ahmed Shaikh, Saleem Nagaria, Abdul Kadir Bilwani, M. Farhan Ashrafi, Naveed Wahid, Muhammad Riaz Dhedhi, Khalid Riaz, Junaid-ur-Rehman and Haris Shakoor attended the meeting. On the matter of uncultivated land as pointed out by Zubair Motiwala, Turkish Consul General remarked that it is a very important issue being a potential area. In agriculture, we are one of the self-sufficient countries. We wish to find investors and do joint ventures here. "Many companies are now starting cheese manufacturing in Pakistan. He also informed the members about the details of cargo train service between Pakistan, Iran and Turkey and added that Turkey is producing and providing Military ships to Pakistan and it will bring expertise & technology to Pakistan as well", envoy said.

Zubair Motiwala, Patron-in-Chief of SITE Association of Industry, said that we are brothers right from the time of the Pakistan freedom movement. He suggested that duty on denim cloth be removed to promote trade with Turkey. He appreciated the Turkish stitching quality standard. B2B is the real thing to expand relationships. Motiwala added that Turkey can also help in modernizing the Agriculture sector in Pakistan and for that drip irrigation, American sprinkles and seed banks are required. Food security will be the main subject in coming years and Pakistan has got 54 million hectare of uncultivated land which can be cultivated to produce food for a large segment of the world. Zubair Motiwala said, "If we are able to travel to Turkey via train, we are in Europe. We started a train which took much longer to reach due to unknown problems. Afghanistan is a Muslim country, it needs our help and we should work for them. People are dying of starvation and kids are suffering from malnutrition. There is too much of a problem in Afghanistan. We are negotiating a barter trade with Afghanistan. He stressed the need for exchange of delegations between the two countries and to see the possibility of holding a single country exhibition." Earlier, SVP Saud Mahmood of SITE Association of Industry, welcoming the consul general and Commercial Attache, presented a brief introduction of SITE area, highlighted its share in the national economy and exchequer and said that bond between the people of Turkey and Pakistan are very strong due to historical background of the two countries. In the past, Turkey has been a beacon of light for the Muslim world. He appreciated the Turkish President for openly supporting the Kashmir issue recently in the General Assembly taking a clear cut stance. He also appreciated the Turkish economic performance with a per capita GDP of more than 10,000 dollars.

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