



Islamabad POST

Saturday, May 14, 2022

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Price Rs. 20

The UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed dies aged 73

Detailed News On Page-01

Baku, Yerevan mull border delimitation

Detailed News On Page-07



Amir Khan retires from pro boxing

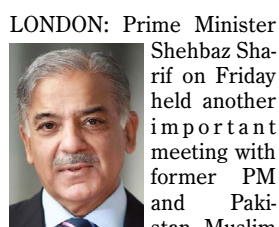
Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

PM holds meeting with Nawaz

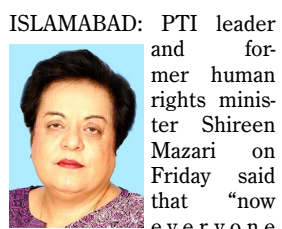
DNA



LONDON: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday held another important meeting with former PM and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif in London. During the meeting, matters pertaining to country's economic situation and measures to improve economy came under discussion. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif arrived at Hassan Nawaz's office for a meeting with former PM Nawaz Sharif on third consecutive day. On the occasion, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah said that the visit was extended for one day for further consultation. If Shehbaz Sharif could not reach the court tomorrow, he would apply for one day's absence. The minister said that the rising value of the dollar is the result of the economic devastation of the previous government, adding that Imran Khan is misleading the youth.

'Neutrals' were not actually neutral

KHAYAM ABBASI



ISLAMABAD: PTI leader and former human rights minister Shireen Mazari on Friday said that "now everyone knows the neutrals were not actually neutral," and went on to question whether they were "part of the conspiracy to derail Pakistan on the economic and democratic front". The word neutral is a reference to the military, which has consistently claimed it is neutral as the country goes through political upheaval since the filing of the no-confidence motion against former premier Imran Khan on March 8. In a press conference in Islamabad, Mazari minced no words in her criticism of America and "those who supported it" to allegedly topple the PTI government.

Holiday Notice

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

Inside...

- Initial wheat procurement target achieved - Page 02
- The US Embassy supports Pak Women-led start-ups - Page 03
- Alvi asks HEC to encourage Associate Degree Programmes - Page 04
- Afghan women under Taliban rule - Page 05
- G7 allies vow to support Ukraine 'until victory' - Page 06
- Eighth session of Europe-Asia symposium held - Page 07
- OIC denounces India's delimitation exercise - Page 08

Economic catastrophe

Govt holds Imran Khan responsible

Info Minister says people facing 'economic terrorism' due to inefficient Imran govt

DNA

LONDON: Holding former prime minister Imran Khan for present economic catastrophe and US dollar's unprecedented flight against rupee, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb said on Friday that the PTI regime plunged the country in the quagmire of problems. Giving her reaction to the statement of PTI leader Chaudhry Fawad Hussain, she said that Imran was squarely responsible for the US dollar's historic flight against the Pakistani rupee. The minister said that Imran Khan had signed the agreement with International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the people of Pakistan were facing high inflation as its result. The minister said that the people faced "economic terrorism" in the country due to inefficient and competent Imran government and cartels and mafia raj for nearly four years. Today the economic instability in the country was the outcome of Imran's policies, she said adding that in the case of

'Violation of IMF deal reason for inflation'

NEWS DESK

LONDON: Finance Minister Miftah Ismail on Friday blamed PTI Chairman Imran Khan's deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and its violation as the reason for the rise in inflation. Berating the PTI-led government, the finance minister, in a statement, said that the subsidy on petrol has put a strain on Pakistan's economy. "There has been a loss of Rs120 billion this month and no government can bear such a huge deficit," he said. He added that it is not an easy

Continued on Page 06

Continued on Page 06

The UAE President Sheikh Khalifa dies

Sheikh Khalifa took over as the UAE's second president in November 2004

NEWS DESK

ABU DHABI: The United Arab Emirates' President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan died aged 73 on Friday, state media said, after battling illness for several years. "The Ministry of Presidential Affairs concedes the people of the UAE and the Islamic world... on the passing of Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan on Friday, May 13," the official WAM news agency said. The ministry announced 40 days of mourning with flags at half-mast from Friday, with work suspended in the public and private sector for the first three days. Sheikh Khalifa took over as the UAE's second president in November 2004, succeeding his father as the 16th ruler of Abu Dhabi, the federation's richest emirate. He has rarely been seen in public since 2014, when he had surgery following a stroke, although he has continued to issue rulings.

Pak announces 3 day national mourning

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: President Arif Alvi, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani and other leaders of Pakistan have expressed their deep grief over the sad demise of UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan. Meanwhile, in solidarity with the brotherly people of UAE, the Government of Pakistan has

Continued on Page 06

Iran nuclear talks 'reopened': EU

The 2015 deal gave Iran sanctions relief in exchange for curbs on its nuclear programme

WEB DESK

WANGELS, Germany: Stalled negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme have been unblocked after fresh talks in Tehran, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said Friday, adding that he believed a final deal was within reach. Borrell said a mission by EU envoy Enrique Mora this week to help revive the 2015 nuclear pact between Iran and world powers had gone "better than expected". "The negotiations had stalled and now they have been reopened," Borrell told reporters on the sidelines of a G7 meeting in Germany. "There is a perspective of reaching a final agreement." Mora held two days of meetings with Iran's chief negotiator Ali Bagheri in Tehran this week. The emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, meanwhile met Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and President Ebrahim Raisi on Thursday to push for progress.



The 2015 deal gave Iran sanctions relief in exchange for curbs on its nuclear programme to guarantee that it could not develop a nuclear weapon, something Tehran has always denied wanting to do. Formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the agreement was left on life support in 2018 by then-US president Donald Trump's unilateral decision to withdraw and impose punishing sanctions. This prompted Iran to begin rolling back its own commitments. The departure of Trump from office has restarted bids to revive the accord, with Mora playing a key role during a year of on-off talks in Vienna. Among the main sticking points in

the negotiations has been Tehran's demand for the US to remove Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps from a designated list of terrorist groups. Borrell said "these disagreements on what to do about the Revolutionary Guards" had hampered progress in the talks for two months. He said Mora had taken the EU's message to Tehran "that we couldn't continue like this". "The answer has been positive enough," Borrell said. "These kind of things cannot be solved overnight. Let's say things were blocked and they have been de-blocked." Borrell declined to comment on Mora's tweet that he had been briefly held at Frankfurt airport by German police, saying only that "the issue is over". Mora had tweeted earlier on Friday that he had been "retained by the German police" while travelling back to Brussels. "Not a single explanation. An EU official on an official mission holding a Spanish diplomatic passport," he wrote. After being released, he tweeted he had still not received "any explanation for what seems a violation of the Vienna Convention". There was no immediate comment from German police.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Switzerland Bénédicte de Cerjat calls on Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. The ambassador congratulated the FM on assuming the charge of the office. -DNA

Rupee crosses 192-mark against dollar
The rupee was trading at Rs193 during the intraday

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: The downward trend in the Pakistani rupee continued Friday as the currency fell by nearly Re1 against the US dollar in the interbank market on the back of uncertainty over the resumption of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) loan programme and shrinking foreign exchange reserves. The rupee was trading at Rs193 during the intraday, however, at close the current settled at Rs192.53 with a loss of Rs0.76 or 0.4%. The slide of the local unit was weighed down by a surging trade deficit, dwindling foreign exchange reserves - that dropped to their lowest level since December 2019 - and a delay in the release of the IMF tranche. Taking to his Twitter, PTI chairman Imran Khan highlighted that the rupee was at an all-time low of Rs193 [per dollar] (from Rs178 per dollar on March 8); interest rates at 15% highest since 1998; stock market down 3,000 points or 6.4%; stock market lost Rs604 billion capitalisation; inflation 13.4% - highest since January 2020.

Announce elections or face tsunami of people: Imran

Says that he along with former Shaukat Tarin had warned 'neutrals' about possible economic woes

MONITORING DESK

MARDAN: Former prime minister Imran Khan on Friday warned that a "sea of people" set to march towards Islamabad would "sweep everyone away" if the government did not announce a date for elections. Addressing a huge public gathering in Mardan, Imran said an "absconder" sitting in London must realise that he would not be allowed to take decisions about Pakistan. Emphasising that he was calling people to Islamabad for a "revolution" and not for politics. Referring to Shehbaz Sharif, Asif Zardari and Maulana Fazlur Rehman as the "three stooges", the PTI chief said they were slaves of America with their wealth stashed abroad. He alleged that the coalition government would

'PTI pushing Pak towards civil war'

DNA

LONDON: PML-N leader Ahsan Iqbal has said that PTI is pushing the country towards civil war by launching an organized campaign against national institutions. Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal did a press briefing along with Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah in London. Imran Khan is pushing the country

Continued on Page 06

Continued on Page 06

DISCOVER PAKISTAN

A LAND OF LAKES AND MOUNTAINS
Islamabad | Faisalabad | Quetta | Swat | Gilgit | Altit, Hunza | Shigar | Khaplu

For reservations, please call 111-133-133 or email at sales@serena.com.pk

serenahotelsofficial serenahotelsofficial serena_hotels

Initial wheat procurement target achieved

The Secretary Archives Punjab also visited various centers in the district including Jaranwala and Sarshmir and checked the arrangements



ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Secretary Archives Punjab / Incharge Wheat Procurement Campaign Saqib Manan visited Faisalabad and presided over a meeting on implementation of Wheat Procurement Campaign at DC Office. Deputy

Commissioner Ali Shehzad briefed on the latest status of the campaign. Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue Abid Hussain, Assistant Commissioners Muhammad Umar Maqbool, Sahibzada Muhammad Yusuf, DFC Waqar Yusuf, Deputy Director Agriculture Khalid Mahmood and other officers were also present.

Deputy Commissioner briefed the house that he initial target of 110,000 metric tonnes of wheat procurement campaign has been completed in the district while speedy steps are being taken to achieve the additional target of 26,000 metric tonnes and the campaign is being closely monitored. He said that check posts were being carried out at motorway entry points and also on highways to check the smuggling of wheat and Stern action is being taken for any violation. The Secretary Archives Punjab expressed satisfaction over the ongoing progress of wheat procurement drive in the district and said that all out efforts should be made to meet the additional target. The Secretary Archives Punjab also visited various centers in the district including Jaranwala and Sarshmir and checked the arrangements.

Shazia Marri visits BISP's Central Zone office, Karachi



STAFF REPORT

KARACHI: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety & Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Shazia Marri has visited the office of the Director

General, Benazir Income Support Programme, Central Zone, Karachi hereon today. Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Shazia Marri during a review meeting on Friday directed to the concerned officers to resolve issues and complaints re-

ceived from beneficiaries of Benazir Income Support Programme on top priority. Ms Marri said that she is committed to visit the offices of Benazir Income Support Programme situated in whole Sindh and to meet people directly and also to check the system of

BISP beneficiaries. She directed the officers to ensure their attendance and to maintain punctuality during office timings. On this occasion, Deputy Director, Rafique Ahmed Buller, Deputy Directors Abdul Hadi, Shazain Akhtar and others were also present.

DPO Gujrat holds meeting with journalists

ANWAR CHOHAN

GUJRAT: The newly appointed DPO Gujrat held an introductory meeting with the journalists at the DPO Complex, which was attended by representatives of electronic and print media, national and local newspapers and senior

journalists. On the occasion, DPO Gujrat said that they believe in the supremacy of merit and justice. Eradication of crime from the district is the top priority. He further said that the role of media is very important for maintaining law and order in the country. DPO Gujrat stressed the need

for an ideal working relationship between the media and the police. On this occasion, media representatives welcomed DPO Gujrat in the district and assured him that the media would continue to play its full role in eradicating crime from the district and providing justice to the citizens.



57,593 Hajj applications received

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony received total 57,593 applications for the Government Hajj Scheme through banks till Friday - the last date and there will be no extension in the deadline due to time constraints. Balloting would be held on Sunday (May 15) for the intending pilgrims, who wanted to perform the religious obligation through the Government Hajj Scheme. Ministry's Spokesperson Muhammad Umar Butt told APP. He said the bank officials would complete online data entry and verification of the Hajj applications on Saturday. The spokesperson said for the convenience of overseas Pakistanis, the last date for submission of passports was Zu al-Qadah 20. - APP

FCCL to submit result oriented budget proposals

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Federal budget is a key document for the integrated economic development and Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCL) in line with its previous traditions will submit a comprehensive, workable and result oriented budget proposals to be included in the upcoming federal budget for the financial year 2022-23, said Mr. Atif Munir Sheikh President FCCL. He said that the ulti-

mate objective of this exercise is to make the budget business friendly so that it could help the business community to continue its activities without any hiccups. Addressing a joint meeting of the business leaders representing all local trade and industrial organizations in addition to the chairmen of the FCCL standing committees, he said that government of Pakistan, Ministry of Commerce and FCCL are repeatedly sending reminders to send budget proposals without any further

delay as budget formulation was in the final stages. He said that most of the associations have no adequate resources or expertise to prepare the budget proposals according to the government's approved format. He requested the representatives of the associations and standing committees to provide their sector specific budget proposals in written form so that it could be discussed with a team of chartered accountants to give it a proper shape. "It will help the MOF to immediately make it a part

of the next year's budget", he said and added that it would also ensure inclusion of our maximum proposals in this annual document. He further said that he has discussed budget related issues with the leading chambers and we have decided to share our proposals before forwarding the same to the Ministry of Finance. "It will create much needed harmony among the budget proposals presented by different chambers", he added. Quoting his meeting with former Advisor to Prime Minister on Commerce Mr. Abdul Razak Dawood, he said that we had discussed with him all economic related problems and issues with their workable solutions including schemes of Kamyab-Jawan, Women Entrepreneurs and SME which must be continued in best interest of the economy.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah cutting ribbon to inaugurate 17th My Karachi-Oasis of Harmony Exhibition' organized by KCCI at Expo Centre. - DNA

Not to let bad times return to Karachi, says CM Murad

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: While referring to last night's blast in which a 24-year old boy was killed and 10 others were injured, Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah vowed that the Sindh government would not let the bad times return to Karachi and would track down terrorists in every single area of Karachi to completely eliminate them. "Even a single murder in the province is unacceptable and cannot be tolerated. I strongly believe that terrorists have no religion or language. They aren't Pakistanis or even humans", he added while speaking at

the inauguration ceremony of 17th My Karachi - Oasis of Harmony Exhibition here at the Karachi Expo Center on Friday, Sindh Minister for Industries & Commerce Jam Ikramullah Khan Dharejo, Sindh Minister for Labor Saeed Ghani, Special Assistant to Chief Minister Waqar Mehdi, Commissioner Karachi Muhammad Iqbal Memon, Chairman Businessmen Group Zubair Motiwala, Vice Chairman BMG Jawed Bilwani, General Secretary BMG AQ Khalil, President KCCI Muhammad Idrees, Senior Vice President Abdul Rehman Naqi, Vice President Qazi Zahid Hussain, KCCI Managing Committee Mem-

bers and a large number of diplomats along with senior bureaucrats attended the inauguration ceremony. Chief Minister Sindh further stated that after 2013 when the city was ranked on 7th position as the most dangerous cities of the world, peace and stability had returned to Karachi and the city was on a better place in the crime index. The entire nation collectively fought against terrorism. While praising the leadership of Businessmen Group and paying glowing tribute to Late Siraj Kassam Teli for his commendable contribution, Murad Ali Shah also appreciated all the exhibitors, diplomats and other

participants, saying that the exhibition will certainly prove to be fruitful as Karachi is a vibrant city with tremendous potential. "Today's House full at the Expo Center and the presence of so many diplomats clearly indicates that they all believe in the people of Pakistan and the resilience of the people of Pakistan." CM said, "I know a lot of people won't agree with me but I am saying this from the bottom of my heart that Karachi, which contributes 70 percent to the national exchequer, has the potential to even contribute 90 percent. We want remaining Sindh and Pakistan to develop as well and pay taxes.

Good news ahead of PTI Faisalabad show

DNA

FAISALABAD: A prominent lawyer's group from Faisalabad has announced to join Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) ahead of their public demonstration. PTI has mounted a big victory ahead of their public demonstration in Faisalabad as a prominent lawyer group from the city has joined the party. Members of the lawyer forum held a meeting with PTI chairman Imran Khan and Vice

Chairman Shah Mehmood Qureshi. Senior Vice President PTI Fawad Chaudhry and Farrukh Habib also attended the meeting. Former President Faisalabad Bar Association Shehzad Cheema announced joining PTI and condemned the ouster of an elected government through a foreign conspiracy. Lawyer leaders announced to follow Imran Khan in his vision of real independence and assured that they will participate in PTI's upcoming Azaadi March too.

Chairman FIEDMC lauds services of Dr. Wasif

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Chairman FIEDMC Zafar Iqbal Sarwar appreciated the industrial and commercial services of the outgoing Secretary Industries Punjab Dr. Wasif Khurshid and said that Dr. Wasif Khurshid has always played a vital role for resolution of the problems and issues faced by Punjab industry and especially FIEDMC, his services will always be remembered. Chairman

FIEDMC Zafar Iqbal Sarwar welcomed to newly appointed secretary industries Punjab Dr. Ahmed Javed Qazi and expressed the hope that newly appointed secretary industry will play a bridging role for immediate solutions to the problems of industries and especially for better relations between FIEDMC and Govt. of the Punjab. Chairman FIEDMC Zafar Iqbal Sarwar further congratulated newly appointed secretary industries and assured his full cooperation.

Islamabad POST Available in following cities

ISLAMABAD
Qamar News Agency
03105460372

RAWALPINDI
Asim News Agency
03435802610

KARACHI
Nazir Siyal
03337554016

PESHAWAR
Zarbagh News Agency
03005412069

FAISALABAD
Ishfaq Mughal
03007689850


GUJRAT
M. Yoosuf Bhutta
03338436820

JHELUM
Iqrah News Agency
03005412069

KHARIAN
Ijaz News Agency
03068863870

LALAMUSA
Gulzar Ahmed Noshi
03359494788

SARA-I-ALMAGIR
0300 5428178



Universal Service Fund

NOTICE FOR INVITING BIDS FOR PROVISION OF NEXT GENERATION- BROADBAND FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (NG-BSD)

Ministry of Information Technology & Telecommunication
DIGITAL PAKISTAN

SERVICES IN 1 NH&MW & 1 NG-BSD Main LOT
Tender ID: NG-BSD/PHASE-19/2022/05

- In accordance with the Pakistan Telecommunication (Re-organization) Act 1996 and Universal Service Fund Rules 2006, as amended, USF will conduct auction for the following lots under Next Generation Broadband for Sustainable Development (NG-BSD) program:

Sr. No.	Lot ID	Districts	Deadline for Registration	Bid Submission Date & Time	Bid Opening Date & Time	Information Packages Availability
1	NG-BSD/Lot9-NH&MW-N35/2022	Attock, Haripur, Abbottabad, Mansehra, Batagram, Kohistan	July 13,22	July 29, 22 1100 Hrs	July 29, 22 1130 Hrs	May 30,22
2	NG-BSD/Lot50-Gwadar-2/2022	Gwadar	July 22,22	August 8, 22 1100 Hrs	August 8, 22 1130 Hrs	May 30,22

- USF will conduct a reverse auction bidding process for the award of subsidy to be paid to the successful applicant, to assist in meeting the costs of providing Telecommunication Services in identified areas for a contractual period of 10 years. Bidding will be conducted in accordance with the open competitive bidding procedure provided in the bidding documents.
- Only USF Contributors are eligible to participate in the bidding process under the Universal Service Fund Rules 2006, as amended. The bidder must be an Active Taxpayer (verifiable through ATL) and have a valid NTN and Sales Tax registration. NTN and Sales Tax registration certificates are mandatory and must be provided within the technical proposal.
- Information regarding Lots, auction process, services to be provided, eligibility to participate in auction, registration instructions, mode of auction, event schedule and other necessary information is available in the respective "Information Package" placed on the USF website.
- Information packages of NH&MW and G-BSD Main Lot shall be made available as mentioned in the above table.
- Detailed bidding documents (RFA/SSA/Information Packages) can be received from the office of the undersigned after registration and payment of PKR 1,000, for each lot/small lot, non-refundable, in the shape of Demand Draft or Pay Order in favor of "Universal Service Fund".
- Registered participants must submit their bids, along with a bid bond of Pak Rs. 10 million for each NH&MW and NG-BSD main Lot in the manner and mode prescribed in the RFA, to the undersigned at the address mentioned below.
- Any bid received after specified date and time shall be returned un-opened.
- This advertisement is published on USF and PPRA websites.
- USF may reject all bids or proposals any time prior to the acceptance of a bid or proposal

Chief Technical Officer
Universal Service Fund
3rd Floor, Evacuee Trust Complex,
Agha Khan Road, F-5/1, Islamabad.
Phone: +92 51 9212308 & 9212309,
Fax: +92 51 9212461
Email: projects.tenders@usf.org.pk
Website: www.usf.org.pk

PID (I) No.7925/21

Briefs

President approves reconstitution of CCI

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi Friday approved the reconstitution of the Council of Common Interests, on the advice of the prime minister. Approved by the president under Article 153 of the constitution, the CCI would be headed by the prime minister and would comprise the chief ministers of four provinces besides three federal ministers. Three federal ministers would also be part of the Council who were nominated by the prime minister. The federal ministers include Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, Commerce Minister Naveed Qamar, and Railways and Aviation Minister Khawaja Saad Rafiq.

NHA maintaining road section from Lahore to Rwp on N-5

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications and Postal Services Asad Mahmood on Friday said that National Highway Authority (NHA) is maintaining the road section from Lahore to Rawalpindi on N-5. In a written reply during Questions Hour in National Assembly, he said that the total length is 280 kilometers (dual carriageway) which are 560 km in linear length. The minister said that out of 560 km, 158 km (Linear length) have been improved cost of Rs. 6,019 million. He said further improvement of 122 km Linear Length of Rs. 3,137 million is in the procurement stage and shall be completed by end of December 2023. Asad Mahmood said that the Lahore Gujranwala section is a 50 km dual carriageway (6 lanes), adding that its linear length is 100 km and out of which improvement works on 39 km are in process. He said that the general condition of this section is not good condition, therefore, NHA has got approved its PCI from CDWP and presently consultants are mobilized for its detailed design and preparation. The minister said that road maintenance is a continuous process and its deterioration is a regular phenomenon. He said that to assess the damages, NHA regularly conducts annual condition surveys of its roads, adding that as such no assessment has been done in the present government. - APP

Post office to be established in I-11 sector

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Communication here on Friday informed the National Assembly that a Post Office in the I-11 sector would be established subject to the availability of funds for the construction of the building in the annual budget grant for the financial year 2022-23. In a written reply, the ministry said, the proposal of establishing a Post Office in the I-11 sector in Islamabad was already under consideration. The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has also allocated land measuring 1400sq.ft to the Pakistan Post office department on lease in the area for the purpose. - APP

ECP arranges students voters' awareness session

ISLAMABAD: Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Friday organized students voters' education and awareness session at Government Associate College for Women Tehsil Chakwal. Ms. Zile Huma, Public Relations Officer of Chief Election Commissioner of Pakistan apprised the female students about the role of gender in the electoral process and the importance of casting vote. She highlighted the constitutional obligations of the Election Commission of Pakistan and the purpose of organizing these awareness sessions. Syed Abid Hussain Shah, District Election Officer explained the local government system while talking to the young students. - APP

Alvi asks HEC to encourage Associate Degree Programmes

President expressed these views during a briefing on Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology (GIKI), Topi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has asked the Higher Education Commission (HEC) to actively encourage universities to introduce and increase the number of Associate Degree Programmes as the market desperately needed more educated and skilled professionals. He underscored that HEC must ensure fast decision making on such an important issue and regretted that the decision-makers were slow to fully comprehend the requirements of the fast-changing global market. The President expressed these views during a briefing on Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology (GIKI), Topi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. The meeting was attended by Rector GIKI, Prof Dr Fazal A. Khalid, Executive Director of the Society for Promotion of Engineering Sciences and Technology (SOPREST), Mr Shakil Durrani, members of the senior management of GIKI, representatives of HEC and Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training. Addressing the meeting, the President emphasised the need to in-



crease access to higher education and produce more highly qualified and professional graduates. He also underlined the need for enhanced collaborations among universities and the industrial sector to meet the requirements of the market. He stated that universities were required to introduce and promote online and hybrid

modes of learning to impart in-demand skills to their graduates. Rector GIKI briefed the meeting about the various new initiatives taken by the university for the promotion of education. It was informed that GIKI was introducing a comprehensive online education system to increase the number of graduates.

It was further apprised that the institute would offer new programmes in Computer Science and Cyber Security in the academic year 2022-23, besides introducing MS and PhD programmes in Artificial Intelligence, Data Science and Civil Engineering. It was highlighted that GIKI was developing research collabora-

tions and international linkages with local and international organizations to promote research and development in the country, besides enhancing the quality of education. The meeting was also briefed about the future programmes as well as the infrastructure development and upgradation plans of the university.



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister of Pakistan Hina Rabbani Khar received EU Special Envoy for Afghanistan Tomas Niklasson. Both sides shared perspectives and concerns on the latest situation in Afghanistan. - DNA

CDA should pay attention on acute shortage of parking

STAFF REPORT / DNA

ISLAMABAD: The capital city is facing an acute shortage of parking space while the growing population and the number of vehicles registered in Islamabad is adding to the situation. It has become almost impossible to find a parking stall, particularly in Blue Area, F-8 Markaz which houses the district courts, Karachi Company, Aabpara Market, Jinnah Super Market, Super Market, and F-11 Market etc. Similarly, finding a parking space in other shopping centres and markets is not an easy job. One has to roam around the Centre for quite a long time to grab a parking stall. Advocate Ehtisham Raja told APP that parking lots in F-8 Markaz get filled very quickly in the morning. "I never get a parking space for my car in F-8 whenever I reached my office located inside the Katchery after 9:30 a.m. in the morning." On the other hand, about 1.3 million vehicles have so far been registered in Islamabad. This indicates that the city, which has a population of 2.6 million, is under an unprecedented burden of vehicular traffic. This load of vehicular traffic will increase manifold in the coming years as some 2,500 to 3,000 more vehicles are registered every month in Islamabad. Explaining about the growing number of vehicles, an official of the Islamabad Excise said multiple factors were increasing the need for personal vehicles such as the limited public transport and expensive cab rides. Besides, he added, "A large number of people have leased cars from banks to register them with online cab services." To tackle the situation, Capital Development Authority (CDA) is working on constructing six multi-story parking plazas in different areas of Islamabad. However, according to the inside information, construction work on the Blue Area parking plaza has not been started yet.

Workers' remittances rise 7.7% to \$26.1 bn in 10 months

ISLAMABAD: With \$3.1 billion inflows during April 2022, the overseas Pakistani workers' remittances continued strong trend and crossed the \$3 billion mark in a month for the first time ever. In terms of growth, during April 2022, remittances increased by 11.2 percent on month-on-month basis and 11.9 percent on year-on-year basis. Cumulatively, at \$26.1 billion, remittances grew by 7.6 percent during 10 months of FY22 compared to the same period last year. According to data released by SBP on Friday, remittances' inflows during April 2022 were mainly sourced from Saudi Arabia (\$707 million), UAE (\$614 million), UK (\$484 million) and the USA (\$346 million). During the corresponding month, the overseas Pakistanis living in Bahrain sent \$51.5 million, from Kuwait \$89 million, from Qatar \$103.7 million whereas \$114.6 million were dispatched from Oman. - APP

Screen addiction leading to psychological health challenges

ISLAMABAD: Health experts on Friday warned of uncontrolled use of social networking sites among youngsters which can lead to exposure for risky content, changes in behavioral patterns, feeling of inferiority, cyber bullying, resulting in grave mental health challenges and illnesses. "Prolonged screen time is not only affecting children's physical activity levels but could also have long-lasting effects on their eyesight," experts said while speaking to a private news channel. Motivational Speaker Dr Javed Iqbal explained that social media has become a daily habit in most people's lives and individual groups across different age groups are becoming an addiction for using social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter for communication and networking sites.

He added that social networking sites are now more addictive than cigarettes and alcohol and it can have an overall negative effect on young people's mental health. Social media can create unrealistic views of people's lives, leading to peer pressure and unhealthy comparisons for kids, he said, adding, Internet use has likely increased for kids during the COVID-19 pandemic. He urged that the parents give their children must be balanced against the need to monitor their activities without violating their privacy. Mostly, parents are not required to track everything their children do online, he said, adding, parents, however, must be on the lookout for signs that their child's social media usage is negatively impacting their mental health. Children and youngsters' mental health can be ad-

versely impacted by social media usage, he mentioned. He said there is a range of consequences, including anxiety, childhood depression, body image concerns, self-harm, and substance abuse. A Psychologist Dr. Fareda Zeab said that no doubt today's children have grown up with a vast array of electronic devices at their fingertips and they can not imagine a world without using long hour screen time. Too much time engaging in sedentary activity, such as watching TV and playing video games, can be a risk factor for becoming overweight and aggressive behaviour issues. The use of electronic devices prior to going to sleep makes it not only more difficult to fall asleep, but also disrupts sleep during the night, and causes poorer quality sleep, she mentioned. - APP

Memorial service held for Chinese victims

ISLAMABAD: A memorial service was held to remember the Chinese victims of the recent Karachi University attack, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday. The event was attended among others by Pakistani federal ministers Shazia Marri and Khurram Dastgir Khan. The Pakistani ministers vowed to punish the perpetrators of the attack that also killed a Pakistani national. "Attended memorial service of the victims of terrorist that took precious lives of Chinese nationals Mr Huang Guiping, Ms Ding Mufang, Ms Chen Sai and driver Khalid Nawaz," Shazia Marri, the minister for poverty alleviation, later tweeted. She added: "Pakistan and China have always stood together in challenging times and will continue this tradition of mutual respect." Minister for Power Khurram Dastgir Khan said the perpetrators of the Karachi University (KU) terror attack would be punished. Addressing the event, he expressed his deepest condolences to the families of the victims, and the government and the people of China. The minister said Pakistan condemned terrorism in its all forms. On April 26, at least four people, including three Chinese nationals, were killed while four others were injured in a suicide attack outside the University of Karachi Confucius Institute. The incident happened as a van, carrying staff members, was about to enter the Confucius Institute, located next to the commerce department. Television footage showed a white van in flames with plumes of smoke rising from its remains. The windows of nearby buildings were also seen shattered from the impact of the explosion. CCTV footage of the attack showed a burqa (veil)-clad woman standing outside the entrance of the Confucius Institute. - DNA

Chilam Joshi Festival kicks off

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A four-day Chilam Joshi festival, kicks off on Friday in Kalash Valley, the festival commemorates the arrival of summer and celebrates the abundance of dairy products during the season. The people of Kalash love music and dance to the beat of drums. Both men and women partake in dancing festivities, where they make circles and enjoy the sound of music. This festival gives an excellent opportunity to celebrate the beginning of summer and to give a message of peace to the world. During this festival, the people of Kalash pray for the safety of their fields and animals.

World migratory birds day to be marked tomorrow

ISLAMABAD: World Migratory Bird Day will be marked today on May 14 across the globe including Pakistan which is a two-day event annually held on the second weekend of May to highlight the need to protect migratory birds and their habitats. The United Nations is one of the many organizations that support this global awareness campaign. On the second weekend each May, people around the world celebrate World Migratory Bird Day by organizing public events such as bird festivals, education programs and bird-watching excursions. Although the event is usually on the second weekend of May, the first World Migratory Bird Day was launched on the weekend of April 8-9, 2006. The event was created to help turn the world's attention to the wonders of bird migration and the need for their conservation. Each year, the total number of registered World Migratory Bird Day events has steadily increased along with the number of countries in which these events occurred. - APP

PNCA arranges puppet show

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) on Friday organized a puppet show aimed at entertaining families that featured folk dances, stories, theme-based speeches, and skits for children and adults". The colourful puppet show revolved around current issues including gender disparity, discrimination in education, and environmental challenges and an exclusive infotainment show for kids based on the theme. Due to COVID-19, the puppet shows were being cancelled, but now the shows were scheduled four times a month as a regular feature by the National Puppet Theatre (NPT) of PNCA, said a press release issued here. The role of such events in providing the required boost to puppetry and spreading awareness among people especially the younger generation regarding this craft. The "traditional art of puppetry was dying" and PNCA has been struggling for a long time to revive this art, adding that such events would help in reviving this traditional art form. "The art of puppetry and puppet shows have been a part of Pakistani culture for years and an effort to bring back this art form can be useful for both entertainment and education purposes". - APP

Lack of quorum leads to adjournment of NA session

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Lack of quorum on Friday led to adjournment of National Assembly session to meet again on Monday at 04:00 pm. Saira Bano of Grand Democratic Alliance pointed out the lack of quorum. Deputy Speaker Zahid Akram Durrani who was chairing the session, adjourned the session to meet again on Monday. However, the House was not in order which led to suspension of session till Monday.

CDM Smith USA delegation visits ICCI

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of CDM Smith, USA led by Jeff Montero, Senior Vice President visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) and assured to contribute to reducing environmental and infrastructure challenges in Pakistan. Keith F. Williams Associate Delivery Leader for Asia-Pacific Region, Tahir Shamsad Chief of Party CDM Smith Peshawar and Dr. Mohammad Tufail Chief of Party, Energy Infrastructure Monitoring Services Project, CDM Smith Islamabad were in the delegation. Speaking at the occasion, Jeff Montero said that CDM Smith, USA was a global privately owned engineering and construction firm providing smart solutions in water, environment, transportation, energy and facilities and was celebrating its 75th anniversary worldwide as it was established in 1947. He said that CDM

Smith has already made useful contributions in mitigating the miseries of people during the devastating earthquake in 2005 and flash floods in 2010 in Pakistan. He said that Pakistan was an important country for them and they wanted to learn about how they can expand their operations here. Welcoming the delegation, Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry lauded the initiatives of CDM Smith to solve the world's environmental and infrastructure challenges. He said it was encouraging that CDM Smith was providing legendary services and smart solutions in various fields including water, environ-

ment, transportation & energy. He said that Pakistan needed better solutions in these fields and hoped that CDM Smith would continue to work to address challenges in these areas in Pakistan that would help our country to achieve better economic growth. He assured that ICCI would extend all possible cooperation

and support to CDM Smith in its initiatives in Pakistan that could help address the environmental and infrastructure challenges in our country. He also lauded the services of Tahir Shamsad, Chief of Party at CDM Smith Peshawar, who has held many prestigious positions in Pakistan. Tahir Shamsad, Chief of Party at CDM Smith briefed the business community about the contribution of CDM Smith in construction of schools, hospitals, energy efficiency projects in Pakistan and its future plans to address environmental and infrastructure challenges in our country. Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President, Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI, Khalid Iqbal Malik Chairman Founder Group, Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi former President ICCI, Fasee Ullah Khan and others also spoke at the occasion and lauded the positives contributions of CDM Smith in Pakistan's economy.



Briefs

Govt holds Imran Khan responsible

FROM PAGE 01

petroleum, the former PM had done irreparable damage to the economy only to divert attention from his failed politics. "Imran sahib is responsible for difficult decisions being taken now", she said and added that the PTI chairman had (once again) climbed on the container to cover up his anti-people economic crimes. She reminded Imran Khan that putting the country's economy and people's future at stake for political purposes was tantamount to treason. Marriyum said that it was ironic that PTI regime's incompetence and bad economic policies were the reason behind the inflation being faced by the people, but now they were making the noise about inflation. She advised Imran Khan that instead of making hue and cry, he should hold himself accountable for inflation and economic crisis. Four years of incapable, inefficient and incompetent rule accompanied by cartels and mafias carried out economic terrorism against the people.

'Violation of IMF deal reason for inflation'

FROM PAGE 01

task to stabilise the economy that Imran Khan has left behind in shambles. "There is a difference between the petrol prices in the world market and the selling price in Pakistan," added Ismail. The finance minister said that the petrol subsidies are the reason for the rise in inflation and the turmoil in the market. "If the government gives subsidies without having money, then it has to take more loans, increasing the interest rates, and putting pressure on the rupee," he said. The PML-N said that the former premier took the "biggest loan in the country's history during his tenure, which was 80% of the total debt of 71 years. "Khan borrowed Rs20,000 billion," he said, adding that Khan left Rs10.4 billion in the foreign exchange reserves which are equivalent to 45 days of imports. "The foreign exchange reserves should be double the amount," he said, adding that the PTI chairman created issues in relations with all the countries, including China and Saudi Arabia.

Announce elections or face tsunami of people: Imran

FROM PAGE 01

son approach the US for help, adding that Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari was also set to hold a meeting in America in this regard. "It is the same America that had tapped your phone call with your mother when she was sharing the details of your family assets abroad," Imran said, referring to Bilawal. He continued that the PPP chairperson would "beg for more money" from the US on the pretext that Imran would return [to power] if the money was not provided. "I know Americans very well... they say there is no free lunch. Everything has a cost and in the context of Pakistan, the cost is to provide them [military] bases," the ex-PM said. Imran said his government was set to procure wheat and oil from Russia at a 30 per cent discount, adding that "the current government cannot trade with Russia due to US pressure." He said Pakistan, under the new regime, would have to give statements against Russia because the US wanted it. The PTI chief claimed he was also told the same. "But I refused it as we are a sovereign country and not slaves of anyone." The former prime minister took to the Twitter to react to the historic fall of Pakistani rupee against US dollar said. "Rupee at all-time low Rs193/\$ (from Rs178 on March 8); interest rates at 15 per cent highest since 1998, stock market down 3,000 points or 6.4pc; stock market lost Rs604 billion capitalisation; inflation 13.4pc highest since Jan 2020."

G7 allies vow to support Ukraine 'until victory'

AGENCIES

WANGELS: Leading democracies on Friday pledged unwavering support for Ukraine in its war with Russia while the European Union promised to hike military support for Kyiv by more than half a billion dollars. Foreign ministers of the Group of Seven (G7) met on the second day of a three-day meeting in the German resort of Wangels, joined by their counterparts from Ukraine and Moldova. French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said the G7 were "very strongly united" in their will to "continue in the long term to support Ukraine's fight for its sovereignty until Ukraine's victory." EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said the bloc was pledging an extra 500 million euros (\$520 million) in military aid. The cash will raise the EU's total military aid for Ukraine to two billion euros, he said. "The recipe is clear -- more of the same," Borrell said. "More pressure on Russia, with economic sanctions. Continue working on international isolation of Russia. Countering the disinformation about the consequences of the war... And presenting a united front to continue supporting Ukraine." British Foreign Secretary Liz Truss also called for further support for Ukraine. "It is very important at this time that we keep up the pressure on Vladimir Putin by supplying more weapons to Ukraine, by increasing the sanctions," she said. They were joined on Fri-



day by their Ukrainian counterpart Dmytro Kuleba, who praised their resolve to help Kyiv but also urged them to go further. "Today I asked G7 countries to adopt legislation and put in place all necessary procedures needed to seize Russian sovereign assets and give them to Ukraine to use this money to rebuild our country," he said. Kuleba also urged the EU to ensure that an embargo is placed on Russian oil, warning that an omission of the ban on the bloc's next package would mean its unity was "broken". The war in Ukraine had led to greater unity among Western allies, the minister said. "It is Ukraine who made the G7 strong again. It is our struggle that brought back confidence in the G7 to lead, to shape international affairs and to counter attempts of authoritarian re-

gimes to defeat democracy," he said. **'Repugnant form of war'** The ministers were also joined by Moldovan Foreign Minister Nicu Popescu, whose country is facing a huge influx of refugees from Ukraine. Separately in the southwestern German city of Stuttgart, agriculture ministers of the G7 as well as their Ukrainian counterpart gathered on Friday to discuss how to head off a looming international food crisis sparked by the war. Accusing Russia of theft from Ukrainian farmers, Germany's agriculture minister Cem Oezdemir said this was "an especially repugnant form of war that Russia is leading, in that it is stealing, robbing, taking for itself grain from eastern Ukraine." Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24 but

Ukrainian forces managed to push Moscow's forces back from Kyiv, and the conflict is now well into its third month. Western countries have supplied Ukraine with weapons, including artillery, anti-aircraft missiles, anti-tank weapons and other powerful material, but Kyiv has been pushing allies for more support. Le Drian pointed to the global effects of what he called a "lasting conflict... particularly in the area of food security". German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock had also on Thursday highlighted the growing impact of the war on poorer countries. "We as the strongest industrialised democracies have a special responsibility" to help poorer nations weather the food and energy squeezes caused by the war, she said.

'PTI pushing Pak towards civil war'

FROM PAGE 01

towards chaos by launching an organized campaign against institutions, he said. He added that the country is under severe financial and political crisis, and immediate and effective actions need to be taken. Economic revival is the government's first priority and all necessary decisions would be made by taking Alliant parties into confidence, Ahsan said. Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah said that they have come to London to take a guideline from their leader Mian Nawaz Sharif. Some things can only be discussed face to face and not via video link, he added. No decision would be made without taking alliants into confidence, he added. All government and party officials have travelled and are staying in London out of their own pocket, Rana clarified. He added that Imran Khan derailed the country's economy and political norms. The PTI chairman is misleading the youth of the country, he added.

Pakistan announces 3 day national mourning

FROM PAGE 01

announced three days national mourning from 13-15 May 2022. The National Flag shall also fly at half-mast during the mourning period. President Dr Arif Alvi expressed grief over the death of the President of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, remembering him as a "great friend of Pakistan". The president conveyed his condolences to the royal family and the people of the UAE, saying that the people of Pakistan shared their grief. He also praised the late UAE president for his services to the Muslim Ummah as well as the Pakistan-UAE friendship. "Today, Pakistan has become deprived of a great friend," President Alvi remarked. In his condolence message on Twitter, the prime minister said with the death of Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Ak-Nahyan, the UAE had lost a visionary leader and Pakistan lost a great friend. "We send our heartfelt condolences & sympathies to the government & people of the UAE. May Allah rest his soul in peace," the prime minister remarked. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan served as the president of the UAE and Ruler of Abu Dhabi since November 3, 2004. Born in 1948, Sheikh Khalifa was the second President of the UAE and the 16th Ruler of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has expressed grief and sorrow on the sad demise of UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan. In a condolence statement, he said the role of Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan in the development of the United Arab Emirates is commendable and unforgettable. He said with the demise of Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, the Arabian region lost an extraordinary ruler. The Foreign Minister said he shares the grief of the people and the royal family of UAE on the death of Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan. Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa and all ranks of Pakistan Army have expressed heartfelt condolence on the sad demise of UAE President Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan. "Pakistan has lost a great friend. May Allah Almighty bless his soul and give strength to the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss, Ameen", the COAS said in a condolence message shared by the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director General on his official Twitter handle. Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani, on Friday expressed deep sorrow over the sad demise of UAE President, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan. In his message, the Chairman Senate said that Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan had played an important role in the development and prosperity of the UAE. His services were also invaluable for the unity and solidarity of the Muslim Ummah, he underlined. Due to his economic and people-friendly policies, the United Arab Emirates had grown by leaps and bounds and made significant strides.



SHUSHA: Pakistani group representing colors of Pakistan in 5th "Kharibulbul" International Folklore Festival being held in Shusha. - DNA

Ailing Rafael Nadal falls in Italian Open third round

NEWS DESK

ROME: Defending champion Rafael Nadal crashed out of the Italian Open in the third round on Thursday with the record 10-time Rome winner complaining of a recurring foot problem after a shock 1-6, 7-5, 6-2 defeat by Canadian Denis Shapovalov. Defeat in Rome for 'King of Clay' Nadal casts doubt over his prospects at the upcoming French Open, where he has been crowned champion 13 times but faces a threat from teenage phenomenon Carlos Alcaraz. The 35-year-old, who had reached at least the quarter-finals every year in Rome since 2008, had been out for six weeks with a rib injury before returning for last week's tournament in Madrid. Nadal began limping in the third set, later telling reporters that a foot problem had flared up during the second set but couldn't say whether he would be able to take part at Roland Garros. "I'm not injured, I am a player living with an injury. That's it," Nadal told reporters. "It's something that is there unfortu-



Nadal has won an all-time record 21 Grand Slam titles in a glittering

nately and my day by day is finally reaching its downturn. World number 16 Shapovalov, who had pushed Nadal all the way when knocked out at this stage of the tournament last year, will now face Casper Ruud in the quarter-finals. "It definitely sucked to see him in pain at the end... He brings so much to our sport so hopefully he's fit and ready to go for the French," said Shapovalov. "It's super satisfying to beat the best player on clay of all time." Last year's Rome runner-up Novak Djokovic swept past Swiss veteran Stan Wawrinka 6-2, 6-2 in one hour, 16 minutes to reach the quarter-finals as he bids for a sixth Italian Open title. Djokovic is in his record-extending 369th week as the world number one and must reach at least the semis to avoid losing his top ranking spot to Daniil Medvedev. Wawrinka, whose first-round victory over Reilly Opelka was his first win in 15 months, was no match for top seed Djokovic and beyond a few classic passing shots he offered little resistance.

Amir Khan retires from professional boxing

KARACHI: Pakistani-British boxer Amir Khan, now 35 years old, took to Twitter on Friday to announce his retirement from professional boxing. In his tweet, he said that it was time to leave the sport. "It's time to hang up my gloves," wrote Amir Khan in his tweet. He continued by thanking all the people who were involved in his boxing journey throughout the years. "I feel blessed to have had such an amazing career that has spanned over 27 years. I want to say a heartfelt thanks and to the incredible teams I have worked with and to my family, friends and fans for

the love and support they have shown me." Amir Khan, currently hold a record of 34 wins and six losses. Meanwhile, he won 21 out of the 34 fights through knockouts. Amir Khan's claim to fame was his silver medal at the age of 17 in the 2004 Olympics. This feat made him the youngest Olympic medalist for Britain. Amir Khan is a former unified light-welterweight world champion, having held the WBA (later Super) title from 2009 to 2012. He also held the IBF title in 2011. At the regional level, he won the Commonwealth lightweight title both in 2007 and 2008. - APP



Real's Benzema equals with Raul

MADRID: Real Madrid's French forward Karim Benzema leveled with Raul Gonzalez as the Spanish football club's second all-time top scorer late Thursday. A Real Madrid regular since 2009, Benzema, who scored in the Whites' six-goal romp against Levante on Thursday, tallied 323 goals in total. Real Madrid's Spanish legend Raul, 44, hit 323 goals in 1994-2010. The Spanish club's all-time highest scorer is Cristiano Ronaldo as the Portuguese superstar - now a Manchester United forward - scored 451 goals for the Whites. An ex-Olympique Lyon forward Benzema, 34, has a contract with Real Madrid until June 2023. - APP

AC Milan on brink of Serie A title

SPORTS DESK

ROME: AC Milan welcomes Atalanta to the San Siro on Sunday knowing this could be the weekend that they snatch the Scudetto from local rivals Inter Milan. Needing four points from their final two games of the season, Milan stand on the brink of a first Serie A title since 2011 and they could have one of the six teams still fighting relegation hand them the crown. Stefano Pioli's Milan will extend their lead on reigning champions Inter to five points if they beat Atalanta, who are still in the hunt for Europa League football. Inter would then have to win at Cagliari to ensure that an enthralling title race enters a final week, a theoretically simple task given the gulf in class between the two sides. Simone Inzaghi's side are fresh from a thrilling, extra-time Italian Cup triumph over old foes Juventus on Wednesday and will be hoping to use that wave of enthusiasm in the climax to the campaign. "Whenever I've needed a response from the team I've got one, from July to today," Inzaghi said after lifting the cup at the Stadio Olimpico in Rome. "It's been one long emotional rollercoaster." Cagliari are scrapping for their Serie A lives and showed that they still have plenty of fight last week by snatching a point at Salernitana thanks to an equaliser in the ninth minute of stoppage time. Stuck just inside the drop zone a point behind Salernitana, Cagliari saved themselves from almost certain relegation in Salerno. Now the Sardinians face Inter and then bottom side Venezia on the final day hoping for a way out. Last week's results con-



spired to leave over a quarter of the division at the risk of the drop, with Genoa's shock win over Juve and Venezia's dramatic 4-3 victory over Bologna closing the gap on Spezia and Sampdoria, who sit in 15th. Venezia are five points behind Salernitana and will go back down to Serie B if they don't win at Roma on Saturday evening. They would be the first team relegated after Dennis Johnsen saved their skins with

a last-minute winner last weekend. Tonali took a pay cut to make his move to Milan from Brescia permanent last summer, and the Italy international has come of age in the Rossoneri midfield this season.

Briefs

Russia claims shooting down Su-27, 15 UAVs

WEB DESK

MOSCOW: The Russian Defense Ministry said on Friday that one Su-27 fighter jet and 15 unmanned aerial vehicles were shot down in night strikes at Ukraine's military infrastructure.

Also, the air defense systems intercepted two shells from Smerch multiple rocket launcher, ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov said at a press briefing in Moscow. Besides, an oil refinery and tanks with gasoline and diesel fuel were destroyed with high-precision air- and sea-based weapons, Konashenkov added.

The aviation hit 153 areas of concentration of manpower and military equipment, two Grad multiple launch rocket systems, and a US-made radar station while the rocket forces struck 15 control points, 520 areas of concentration of manpower and military equipment, six artillery units in firing positions, as well as a warehouse of missile weapons, he noted.

"In total, since the beginning of the special military operation, 165 aircraft, 125 helicopters, 842 unmanned aerial vehicles, 304 anti-aircraft missile systems, 3,032 tanks and other armored combat vehicles, 368 multiple rocket launchers, 1,491 field artillery and mortar guns, as well as 2,869 units of special military vehicles have been destroyed," the spokesman also said.

Fed chair terms US inflation 'painful,'

WASHINGTON: Describing the US' record-high inflation as "painful," Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell said a soft landing for the economy will be "challenging." "We understand that inflation is very painful, that the Fed is accountable to get inflation down to 2%, and that we have the tools and the strong desire to get inflation under control," he said on American radio program Marketplace on Thursday.

"I will also say that the process of getting inflation down to 2% will also include some pain, but ultimately the most painful thing would be if we were to fail to deal with it and inflation were to get entrenched in the economy at high levels."

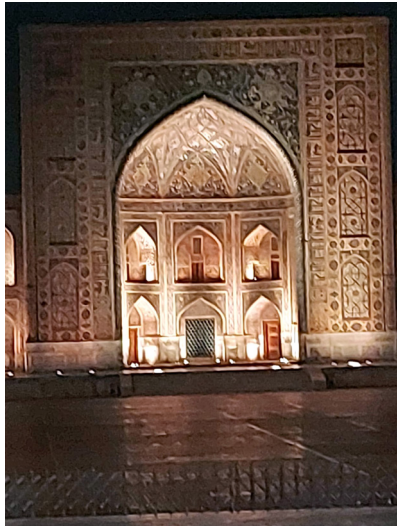
Powell repeatedly said last year that inflation in the US is "transitory," but consumer prices have continued to climb up, eventually reaching 8.5% in March - the highest annual increase in more than 40 years. Behind the curve in getting inflation under control, the Fed started raising interest rates with a hike of 25 basis points in March and another 50 basis points last week. - APP

Death toll rises to 6 in blast in Slovenia

BELGRADE: The death toll from an explosion at a chemical plant in southern Slovenia rose to six, local media reported Friday. Two workers at the plant in Kocevje, a town of roughly 8,000 people about 55 kilometers (30 miles) from the capital Ljubljana, suffered severe burns, and two others are missing from the Thursday explosion. Firefighters at the scene found at least five lifeless bodies at the facility. At least 20 people were also injured. "Unfortunately our fears have been confirmed," Srečko Stefanic, the factory's manager, told reporters. About 200 people were employed at the facility.

Residents in the surrounding area said the explosion occurred around 8.30 a.m. local time (0630GMT) and shook the entire area. Regional broadcaster N1 television said a local emergency council met for an urgent session as firefighters and emergency crews rushed to the plant. The Slovenian Press Agency described the explosion at the plant, which produces the industrial chemical melamine, as the worst industrial fire in the country's recent history. - Agencies

Eighth session of Europe-Asia symposium held in France



Famous city hall - famous because the city was bombed during WW II and then rebuild with a completely new architecture at the time

DNA

PARIS: The University of Le Havre, the largest port in France (and ranked ninth largest port in Europe) hosted the eighth session of a Europe-Asia symposium devoted to the emergence of Eur-



asia (under the title: "The completion of Eurasia?"). From session to session, this symposium becomes a more significant and broader academic event, at a time when the idea of Eurasia is becoming more pregnant in the diplomatic circles and in the media. For the first time, representatives of Pakistan were invited, including a representative of the Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Four Pakistanis, two women and two men, two online and two in physical presence, participated in the event: a diplomat, a president of a think-tank, an independ-

ent analyst, a businessman. The symposium of May 11-12 brought together in four workshops 42 speakers from 21 countries, representing 35 institutions and 13 academic fields. Uzbekistan's ambassador to France and other diplomats also contributed. The participants came from all the countries of post-Soviet Central Asia plus Afghanistan and Mongolia, many neighboring countries of this large Central Asian group, and other more distant regions, including North America and the West Africa. Seven French people, some post-

ed abroad, intervened in the debate. Three topics dominated the contributions: Eurasian identity and its ongoing reconstruction since the end of the USSR / connectivity and new transcontinental routes / the consequences of the end of the Afghan conflict and the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine. This symposium will lead to a publication, like the previous sessions; the most recent of these publications, in April 2022, focused on the link between Logistics and Diplomacy <https://www.sefacil.com/logistics-diplomacy-keeps-mov->



The Organizer

ing-forward The University of Le Havre wishes to continue the reflection on the Eurasian thematic, from both political and economic (cross-border logistics movements) standpoints; and plans to hold its next sessions in countries participating in the workshops, in particular Turkmenistan, Pakistan and Tajikistan Pierre Chabal Sc. Dr.Habil in political sciences and international relations, Le Havre University, Sciences-Po Europe Asia Campus / Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (Almaty) visiting Professor.

Mine blast kills Azerbaijani civilian in Karabakh

BAKU: Azerbaijani civilian Rashad Bakhtiyarov, 40, was killed in a mine blast in the liberated Aghdam region, Azernews reports per the Prosecutor-General's Office. Bakhtiyarov, who was engaged in agricultural activities, died of shrapnel injuries received as a result of an explosion of ammunition in Aghdam's Chamani village at about 1600 on May 12, the report specified. As the Chamani village community head, Rabil Guliyev said, the explosion went off while Bakhtiyarov was grazing sheep. The victim was placed in the Aghdam region Central Hospital with serious injuries, but his life could not be saved.

The case is now being investigated by the Aghdam regional prosecutor's office. Similarly, Capt Suleyman Heydarov, chief of the fortification and pyrotechnic training department of the Special Risk Rescue Service of the Emergencies Ministry, was injured in a mine-clearing operation in Aghdam, the ministry said on May 13. The victim is being provided with necessary medical care, the report added. Although about 18 months have passed since the 44-day war between Azerbaijan and Armenia, mines of different types planted by Armenia in the formerly occupied territories continue to endanger human lives in the liberated lands. Almost every day, there is news of civilians or military personnel being injured or killed as a result of mine explosions in Azerbaijan's liberated lands. This once again proves that Armenia continues its mine warfare against Azerbaijan's both civilian and military personnel. - Agencies



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan, Ulanbek Totuiaev calls on Deputy Chairman Senate Mirza Muhammad Afridi. - DNA

Israeli forces attack mourners at Abu Akleh's funeral in East Jerusalem



OCCUPIED JERUSALEM: Israeli police assaulted Palestinian mourners in the funeral procession of slain Al-Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh on Friday in occupied East Jerusalem. Eyewitnesses told Anadolu Agency (AA) that the Israeli police attacked the funeral procession as it started from the French hospital in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood. They added that the Israeli police surrounded the mourners and used stun grenades and batons to as-

sault the pallbearers carrying Abu Akleh's casket. The Israeli police allowed a few Palestinians to accompany her casket to Jerusalem's Old City, where she will be buried at the Mount Zion Protestant Cemetery. Veteran journalist Shireen Abu Akleh was covering Israeli military raids near the Jenin refugee camp in the occupied West Bank when she was shot dead on Wednesday. Palestinian officials and the Doha-based network say she was targeted by Israeli forces.

Abu Akleh's death has drawn widespread condemnation. Video footage from the moments after she was shot showed Abu Akleh, 51, wearing a blue vest marked "Press". At least two of her colleagues who were with her said that they had come under Israeli sniper fire and that they were not close to militants. Israel, which has voiced regret at Abu Akleh's death has proposed a joint investigation with the Palestinians, asking them to provide the bullet for examination. - Agencies

Hamas hails Jenin's resistance

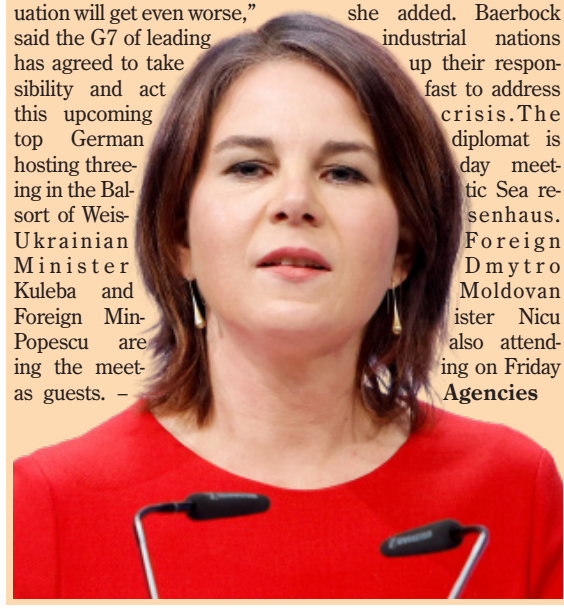
DNA

GAZA: Hamas spokesperson Abdel Latif al-Qanqa hailed the determination and strong will of Jenin's resistance fighters, who are still fighting Israeli occupation forces (IOF) since the early morning hours on Friday. Jenin is still fighting and bravely resisting the occupation. It will never be broken and will be victorious, he added.

A comprehensive intifada and confrontation with the occupation is inescapable to stop Israeli attacks, al-Qanqa stressed. Earlier Friday, the IOF blew up a Palestinian house in Jenin refugee camp, after storming and besieging the area. At least six people were injured during the events. The PIC reporter confirmed that IOF soldiers stormed the camp and surrounded a local house belonging to Mahmoud al-Daba'i, which led to the outbreak of violent clashes. Israeli snipers were also deployed in large numbers in the surrounding areas.

Germany warns of global food crisis due to Russia's war on Ukraine

BERLIN: Global food crisis is on the horizon due to Russia's war on Ukraine, Germany's foreign minister warned on Friday. In her opening speech at the G7 foreign ministers' meeting, Annalena Baerbock accused Russia of conducting a "hybrid war" and preventing grain exports from Ukrainian ports. "Russia is not allowing millions of tons of grain being exported. This is a big, big danger," she said. "And we can only see the tip of the iceberg, at the moment. We all know that if climate crisis hits in summer around the world, the situation will get even worse," she added. Baerbock said the G7 of leading industrial nations has agreed to take responsibility and act this upcoming crisis. The top German diplomat is hosting three-day meeting in the Baltic Sea resort of Weisbaden. Ukrainian Minister Kuleba and Foreign Minister Popescu are also attending the meeting as guests. - Agencies



Russia expels 1 Bulgarian, 10 Romanian diplomats

MOSCOW: In a retaliatory move, Russia on Friday declared a Bulgarian and 10 Romanian diplomats persona non grata. Cristian Istrate and Atanas Krastin, the ambassadors of Romania and Bulgaria, were summoned by the Russian Foreign Ministry and handed notes ordering the expulsion of their diplomats from Moscow. The measure was taken in response to Bulgaria and Romania's "unmotivated decision" in April to expel Russian diplomats from embassies in Sofia and Bucharest, the Foreign Ministry said. Regarding Romania, the ministry said Moscow "resolutely rejects" what it termed Bucharest's "groundless attempts ... to lay the blame for war crimes in Ukraine on Russia."

It condemned Romania for "whitewashing the atrocities perpetrated by nationalist (Ukrainian) battalions against the civilian population," as well as for supplying "weapons, equipment and other assistance to the regime in Kyiv." - Agencies

Erdogan, Qatari emir discuss bilateral ties

ISTANBUL: President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Friday received the Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani in Istanbul's Vahdetin Pavilion to discuss bilateral ties and regional issues. Emir's visit to Turkey will bring continuous coordination and great rapprochement on bilateral relations and important issues, Qatar's ambassador to Ankara said Thursday. Ambassador Sheikh Mohammed bin Nasser bin Jassim Al Thani told Anadolu Agency (AA) that the emir's visit to Turkey coincided with a period when the world is going through great challenges and difficult times at all levels, and that requires constructive cooperation and exchange of views on regional and international developments in order to face and counter these challenges. Emphasizing that the visit takes place in the context of continuous coordination on important issues with bilateral relations and a great convergence in attitudes toward these issues, the envoy praised the durability and sustainability of Qatar-Turkey relations, strategic cooperation in all sectors, as well as the great harmony in many international and regional issues. Turkey and Qatar in December signed 15 different agreements to enhance cooperation between the two countries, while President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the ruling emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, met in Doha to co-chair the seventh meeting of the Turkey-Qatar Supreme Strategic Committee. Ankara and Doha enjoy strong relations, particularly since the 2017 blockade of the Gulf country by Saudi Arabia and others. The two countries have strengthened military and economic ties in recent years. - Agencies

Baku, Yerevan to set up border delimitation body

NEWS DESK

BAKU: Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov has said that the chairmen and format of the Azerbaijan-Armenia border delimitation commissions have been determined, Azernews reports, citing the ministry. Bayramov made the remarks at the CIS Council of Foreign Ministers' meeting in Dushanbe on May 13, the ministry added. The Azerbaijani top diplomat briefed the participants in on the post-conflict situation in the region, adding that the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict was over and that the nation's major focus today is on reviving its liberated lands and ensuring long-term peace and stability through the restoration of economic and communication ties. The minister reiterated Azerbaijan's determination and readiness to normalize ties with Armenia, including the signing of a peace treaty and the beginning of the border delimita-

tion procedure. Steps have been taken in this respect to begin the process of drafting a peace deal, Bayramov was quoted as saying. The top diplomat emphasized that Azerbaijan is committed to the efforts of bolstering regional peace, stability, and security. Furthermore, the minister thanked Kazakhstan for its effective chair-

manship of the organization and Tajikistan for organizing a high-level meeting to discuss issues of cooperation within the CIS in a spirit of mutual understanding, as well as exchange views on topical issues of the international agenda. Bayramov underlined the successful development of friendly relations between the member countries in the

CIS format. He reminded the participants that several of the union's member nations are commemorating a key event in 2022: the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties. This occasion is viewed as an excellent chance to reflect on the nations' paths, learn from the past, summarize the outcomes of long-term collaboration, and make

plans for the future. Bayramov stressed that the passage of a variety of papers fostering future collaboration between the CIS member states, notably in the humanitarian domain, is on the agenda, and Azerbaijan considers that the frameworks for cooperation in education, research, culture, health, tourism, youth work, and other sectors are useful.



