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**Saturday, May 21, 2022** 

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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**UN Rights Chief to** begin landmark China visit from Monday

**Detailed News On Page-08** 

Colonna named new French Foreign Minister

**Detailed News On Page-08** 

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Min-

istry of Foreign Affairs

today hosted a briefing on

the China-Pakistan Eco-

nomic Corridor (CPEC)

for resident diplomatic

missions of ASEAN mem-

ber countries. Chaired by

the Additional Secretary

(Asia-Pacific), the panel

of briefers included senior

officials of the Ministry,

CPEC Authority, and the

In her briefing, the Addi-

the underlying vision of

CPEC, which was based on

Pakistan's desire for con-

nectivity with the region

Continued on Page 06

Pak-IMF

talks: Govt

to withdraw

subsidies

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: In a ma-

jor development on the

third day of negotiations

between Pakistan and the

Fund (IMF), the federal

government has decided

to withdraw subsidies on

petroleum products and

electricity before Mon-

day, media reported, cit-

ing sources. According to

sources, during the ongo-

ing technical talks with the

Fund mission in Doha, the

Pakistani delegation also

Continued on Page 06

Monetary

International

Secretary shared

Board of Investment.

tional



Zaheer takes charge as HC to Canada

**Detailed News On Page-07** 



## Briefs

### **FM** to leave for China today

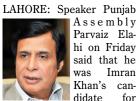
**DNA** 



invitation of State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi. This will be the Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's first bilateral visit abroad since assuming office last month. Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar and senior officials will be part of the foreign minister's delegation. During the visit, the foreign minister will hold extensive consultations with State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi. The two leaders will review the entire gamut of bilateral relations, with a particular focus on stronger trade and economic cooperation between Pakistan and China

#### Will dissolve PA on Imran Khan's order

STAFF REPORT



didate Chief Minister Punjab and will dissolve the Punjab Assembly within half an hour is PTI asks him to do so.

Speaking to a private news channel after ECP de-seated 25 PTI MPAs of the Punjab Assembly for voting in fa vour of Hamza Shahbaz, Parvaiz Elahi said Imran Khan was their leader and they would sit with Imran Khan to decide on the election of the provincial assemblies. "We will have to devise a strategy on getting a two-third majority to rule the country," he said.

Speaking on the dissolution of the National Assembly, Parvaiz Elahi said that people should wait for some time for dissolution of the National assembly and early election is now a matter of days only. Earlier, the ECP de-seated 25 dissident PTI MPAs who voted for PML-N's Hamza Shehbaz Sharif in Punjab chief minister election.

## **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.

> Inside... Power sector

being rehabilitated on war-footing

Diplomats' wives

assure to play role for

Women Entrepreneurs

NHM police hold

awareness seminar at

Agosh College

Low

Covid vaccination

rates

Stage set for

high tempo Pakistan.

India match

Baku prepared for

coop with Yerevan to

bolster peace

Sri Lanka categorically

rejects Canadian

Parliament motion

- Page 02

- Page 03

- Page 04

- Page 05

- Page 06

Page 07

# ECP de-seats 25 dissident PTI MPAs

'MPAs defected from the party by voting in favour of Hamza Shahbaz,' the ECP said

#### SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Friday unseated the 25 dissident members of the PTI while announcing its verdict in a case pertaining to the dissident members of the Punjab Assembly (MPAs). The ECP announced the unanimous verdict while accepting the reference - submitted by Punjab Assembly Speaker Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi - against PTI's dissident members who voted for Hamza Shahbaz in the election of Punjab chief minister. "MPAs defected from the party by voting in favour of Hamza Shahbaz," the ECP said in the verdict. In the election for the chief minister's slot on April 16, 2022, PML-N leader Hamza Shahbaz received 197 votes as opposed to the required number of 186 in the House of 371, meaning the support of PTI's dissident members was crucial for his victory. Hamza will now lose the majority as the seats of the dissident members have

Continued on Page 06

## ECP's decision escalates political turmoil

A sister publication of **CENTRELINE & DNA News Agency** 

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Political and constitutional turmoil in the Punjab Assembly escalated after the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) decided to de-seat 25 dissident members of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). In the Punjab Assembly, the numbers game has become important again and an Interesting situation has been created for both parties. Punjab CM Hamza Shehbaz currently has the support of a total of 172 members and after including 5 deviant members of PML-N, the

Continued on Page 06

## ong march between 25, 29 May: Imran

Demands immediate dissolution of assemblies



MULTAN: PTI Chairman Imran Khan addressing a big public rally in Multan.

## BUREAU REPORT

MULTAN: Former prime minister Imran Khan said on Friday that he had called a session of the PTI core committee on Sunday in Peshawar, where a final decision on the date for his long march to Islamabad will be decided. Addressing a huge rally in Multan, Imran said the march could be held on any day between May 25 and May 29.

He demanded that the National Assembly be dissolved immediately and a date for elections announced, lashing out at the current government for what he said was its inability to govern the country. Since his ouster as prime minister on April 10, Imran has held a series of large public rallies across the country, terming his ouster a foreign conspiracy and urging the public to prepare for a march to the capital to pressure the authorities into accepting his demand for immediate elections in the country. Criticising the PML-Nled coalition government, Imran said "they were busy conspiring but now that they have assumed power, they must tell us why they are struggling to govern the country."

"A convict is taking decisions. Sometimes they are asking the National Security Committee to hike prices," he said. The former premier said his government collected record tax, IT exports surged by 75 per cent during his tenure and Pakistan's employment rate was the highest in the entire sub-continent. "You toppled our government and now I am happy comparisons are taking place." Imran said if he did not care for the

Continued on Page 06

## KARACHI: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif addressing the launching ceremony of MILGEM Class Corvette PNS Badar at Karachi Shipyard and Engineering Works. - DNA Briefing on PM Shehbaz Sharif CPEC held for benefiting from for ASEAN Missions Turkish expertise

The Premier lauds the govt and people of Turkey for their support on Kashmir issue

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Turkish Minister for National Defence, Hulusi Akar held delegation-level talks with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif sion, the Prime Minister highly appreciated the deep-rooted strategic cooperation between the two brotherly countries in all fields including shipbuilding, engineering, solid waste management and transport. He also thanked the government and people of Turkey for their unwavering support to Pakistan's stance on Kashmir issue at all international fora. The Prime Minister directed the authorities concerned to benefit from Turkish expertise and experience in all possible avenues. Earlier, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif launched MILGEM-class ship PNS Badar, which has been jointly constructed by Pakistan and Turkey. Addressing

## **Turkey to** boost Pak military support

**News Desk** 

ISTANBUL: Turkey will provide all support needed to strengthen Pakistan's military infrastructure, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Friday. In a video message



Continued on Page 06

## No one allowed to malign armed forces

KHAYAM ABBASI

Continued on Page 06

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Friday informed the National Assembly that maligning of armed forces, judiciary and others constitutional institutions was against the constitution and no one could be allowed to do so. Replying to various supplementary questions during Question Hour, she said the government had absolutely zero tolerance policy in that regard and it was being monitored at three levels including PTA, FIA Cyber Wing and PEM-



three institutions dealt such issues under Prevention of Electron-Crimes Act 2016,

she said. Marriyum Aurangzeb regretted Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) targeted various institutions through twitter and a campaign was run against the state

Continued on Page 06

# Pakistan to ensure peace, stability in region: FM FM Bilawal says ties with India 'particularly complicated' by New Delhi's abuses in Kashmir

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW YORK: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari says Pakistan has always played a proactive role to ensure peace and stability in the region as peaceful coexistence is one of main objectives of

our foreign policy. Talking to media in New York on Friday, the Pakistani Foreign Minister said that Islamabad adopted an integrated strate-

gy to counter terrorism and formulated an effective National Action Plan to tackle extremism and terrorism in country. "As far as the question of our relationship with India is concerned, it is particularly complicated" by New Delhi's actions in Kashmir - firstly the August 5, 2019 decision to unilaterally annex Jammu and Kashmir and now the delimitation commission move aimed at turning the disputed state's Muslim majority into a minority, he told the press confer-

# Pakistan, India clash at the UN

NEW YORK: Delegates of Pakistan and India got into a fresh verbal duel in the UN Security Council ministerial-level meeting on food security, after Pakistani Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari denounced New Delhi's repressive actions in Occupied Kashmir, saying it is "implementing a racist policy" in the disputed territory. The Indian delegate to the UN reacted to FM Bilawal's pointed words, claiming that Kashmir was an integral part of India and accusing Pakistan of being involved in terrorism.

Exercising his right of reply, Pakistan's delegate Imran Khan rejected India's claim that Jammu and Kashmir was its part. "Jammu

ence before his departure for Islamabad. "Having said that, we are very cognizant of the fact that economic activity, dialogue, diplomacy are ultimately the ways

and Kashmir is not and has never been a part of India," Khan, a counsellor in the Pakistan mission to the UN, said, adding that any official UN map can verify that the Himalayan state is "disputed territory". "As stipulated in the Security Council resolution 47(1948), the 'final disposition' of the State of Jammu and Kashmir is to be decided by the people of Jammu & Kashmir through a fair and impartial plebiscite, to be held under UN auspices," he said. Pointing out that India had accepted the UN Security Council resolutions, but he said they remain to be implemented, "India's refusal to do so. for over seven decades now, constitutes a flagrant and continuing violation of the Security Council resolutions, of the UN Charter,

and means for countries to engage with each other and resolve disputes," the foreign minister said in reply to a question. "I just note that, particularly at the

and the international law," the Pakistani delegate said. "The Indian government's unilateral and illegal actions of 5 August 2019, to rob occupied Jammu and Kashmir of its identity, to oppress its people with 900,000 occupying troops and to change Jammu & Kashmir's demography from a Muslim majority state to a Hindu majority state logue on Jammu and Kashmir."

have narrowed the space for dia-As regards India's allegations regarding terrorism, the Pakistani delegate said that they are nothing but a smokescreen to conceal state terrorism against the Kashmiri people. History bears testimony that colonizers and occupiers often attempt to justify their suppression of legitimate struggles for self-determination and freedom by por-

moment, given this aggressive, hostile behaviour, the practical space for that

traving them as "terrorism".

Continued on Page 06

#### Saturday, May 21, 2022

# Power sector being rehabilitated on war-footing



ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Federal Minister for Energy Engineer Khurram Dastgir said on Friday that work was in full swing on an emergency basis for rehabilitation of the power sector and to cope with the current situation, being faced by the sector.

During his visit to FESCO Headquarters here, he hoped that receiving of RLNG [Regassified Liquified National Gas] supply would not only improve the power supply in the country but also help overcome the power crisis. Former MNA Haji Muhammad Akram Ansari also accompanied the minister. He said that after the supply of RLNG and furnace oil from the Ministry of Petroleum, more gas would be available which would significantly reduce load-shedding period during the next

few days. He expressed satisfaction on overall performance of Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) and said that in view of the current situation, the company officers and officials would have to work harder, diligently and enthusiastically so that not only FESCO but also the power sector could overcome the difficult situation.

The minister said that due to wrong policies of the former government, the current government had to face the day and load-shedding was taking place across the country due to shortage of electricity. Due to unavailability of fuel, power was not being generated as per demand and as a result, consumers were facing load management, he added. Khurram Dastgir said that the coalition government was trying its best to solve the problems being confronted by the public. He said that revenue targets of all distribution companies

were also being reviewed. "We are the public representatives and our aim is to resolve the grievances of the distribution companies and to improve their performance," he said.

He said that at present, the circular debt is about Rs 2,450 billion. When the PML-N left the government in 2018, the circular debt was only Rs 1,060 billion and at that time, the load-shedding was zero, but at present, the circular debt had doubled.

He said that an increase in temperatures was also likely to increase hydropower generation. He said that there was no balance in affairs of the previous government; had there been a balance, these problems would have not come up. He said the present government is fully aware of the plight of people and is working to alleviate it. Earlier, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) FESCO, Engr. Bashir Ahmed briefed the minister and stated that FESCO's recovery is 100% while its line losses are the lowest. He said that FESCO's distribution system had been upgraded and now FESCO's distribution system was able to carry maximum load during the summer season. He further said that FESCO had provided 256 transformer trolleys in all the subdivisions with the aim of restoring power supply immediately in case of any fault in the transformer. He said that FESCO had set up a state-of-the-art Customer Service Center for instant solution of consumer electricity related issues. Similarly, FESCO has introduced a mobile app "FESCO Light" for online information and registration of consumers' complaints, he added.



Kaira chairing a briefing session on Kashmir issue. - DNA

#### **Police** crackdown on criminal elements

SAQIB MUSHTAQ

LODHRAN: Police arrested a criminal gang involved in more than 18 incidents including dacoit gang leader. DPO Abdul Rauf Babar while giving a press conference told media that arrested dacoit gang leader Ayub boy accomplice Munawar and Irshad are involved in dacoit gang from Lodhran different Police Stations. More than 18 incidents of robbery, robbery and attempted murder have been revealed in President Qureshiwala. So far, Rs. One million The arrested accused were also involved in various incidents and firing at various stores and big

shops at gunpoint. The accused were residents of Jalalpur pirwala, SHO Qureshi wala Nizakat Iqbal and CIA team arrested the gang from which further revelations are expected. Abdul Rauf Babar said that protection of life and property of citizens is the first priority and crackdown against criminal elements will continue. Investigating officers should give priority to justice and merit in

disposing of cases.

## Marri visits gem and jewelry exhibition



STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Special measures need to be taken to overturn the ongoing fiscal deficit and to propel the economic growth of Pakistan, said Federal Minister, Shazia Marri during her media talk after visiting Gem and Jewelry exhibition.

The Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Shazia Marri, was invited by the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce to visit their exhibition regarding Gems and Jewelry held at a local hotel.

The minister visited each stall set up at the event and appreciated the fact that there were participants from all over the country exhibiting their creative talent. She mentioned that Pakistan is a rich country when

it comes to gem stones and emphasized on the fact that there should be optimal utilization of such raw materials. she was pleased that there was international representation at the exhibition as there were stalls set by participants who had come all the way from South Africa, Qatar and Afghanistan.

Shazia Marri stressed on the fact that all the reservations of the business community need to be dealt with on immediate basis. The Chamber of commerce was assured that all the issues faced by the business community would be forwarded to the relevant ministry and she would personally convey business community reservations to the Prime Minister. She thanked the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce for inviting her to the esteemed exhibition and wished everyone well to work for the utmost prosperity of Pakistan.

#### Research conference concludes at PMC

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: The two day 15th Undergraduate Medical Research (UMR) conference organized by Peshawar Medical and Dental Colleges concluded here at PMC main campus. Student researchers from 25 medical and dental colleges across the country participated in the conference.

Prof. Dr. Shoaib Shafi President of the College of Physicians & Surgeons, Pakistan presided over the plenary session on the second day. while Prof. Dr. Anis Ahmad vice chancellor Riphah International University, Islamabad was the chief guest at the concluding session and gave away prizes to the winners of various research competitions, students and staff organizers of the event. Prof. Dr. Shoaib Shafi appreciated the successful and uninterrupted holding of the unique event since 2007.

## Coordinator EOC renews resolve for polio eradication

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: Additional Secretary Health (polio) and Coordinator Emergency Operations Center Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Abdul Basit renewed resolve for polio eradication saying that the government stand committed to wiping out the scourge from the last endemic region by vaccinating every eligible child against the crippling virus of polio. He said this while kicking off May round of

anti-polio drive here Friday at EOC Headquarters by administering polio and vitamin A drops to the children. Deputy Coordinator EOC, Zamin Khan, Provincial Team Lead Polio UNICEF, Dr Andrew Etsano, Technical Lead N Stop, Dr Shabnam and EPI staff were also present on the occasion.

Talking to media, Abdul Basit said provincial government was taking every measures to address ground challenges specially in the southern belt of the province and ensure conducive environment to frontline workers to achieve the target of vaccination. He said that polio eradication is our national responsibility and is a matter of our children's health that needs serious and concerted ef-

"May round of anti-polio drive is of critical importance given the reporting of three cases from North Waziristan and presence of

virus in the environment", he added.

EOC Coordinator informed media that during the May campaign over 7.28 million eligible children will be vaccinated against polio for which a total of 30981 teams have been established out of which 27763 are mobile teams, 1908 fixed teams, 1161 transit and 149 roaming teams.

He said that adequate measures have been taken to ensure security to the teams and over 40 thousand law enforcement agencies (LEAs) personal will be deployed in the May campaign at various plugging points and with teams. The campaign will be carried out in all districts of the province including Afghan Refugees camps from May 23, 2022, he said. "People should not adhere to anti-polio propaganda by vested elements as ensuring healthy life to children was the prime obligations of the caregivers and every responsible citizen of the country", he stated. Earlier, he administered anti-polio drops to the children to formally inaugurate the May round of polio campaign in the province.

## West concerned about a new bloc in Asia

LAHORE: Talking about the recent political instability in the country, PML-Q Deputy Secretary Information Khawaja Rameez Hassan said that West is deeply concerned about the formation of a new bloc in Asia. Under the CPEC, the Road Belt Initiative is the backbone of the block connecting the cold and hot water. Promoting an atmosphere of anarchy in the country is a link in the foreign conspiracy. Decisions in the region need time to be decided in the region. He demanded that the state should play its significant role in sabotaging the foreign agenda. - DNA

# AKF providing best services to the people

BUREAU REPORT

FAISALABAD: Al-Khidmat Foundation is undertaking mega welfare projects but providing the facilities of boarding,

lodging, health and education etc to more than nineteen thousand orphans across the country is a unique distinction this NGO. Addressing the Eid Milan party

abad. He said that he himself is affiliated with the Lion International Club which is also a leading global NGO working for the welfare of neglected segments of the society. "I am highly impressed

are housed only in Faisal-

working Al-Khidmat Foundation and shall try my best to convince business community to erously", he added. During this

#### o f Al-Khid-الخدمت فاؤنديشن ياكستان **ALKHIDMAT FOUNDATION PAKISTAN**

mat Foundation, Mr. Atif Munir Sheikh, President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) said that Al-Khidmat Foundation has extended the best services to the calamity hit people in the most transparent manner. He said that the transparency has restored the confidence of donors and they feel free to donate generously for this NGO without any hesitation. He said the taking care of nineteen thousand orphans is a major initiative out of which one thousand children

colourful event, the students presented skits: tableau and other programs while a drawing contest was also held. President Atif Munir Sheikh appreciated the skills of the children and presented them "Eidee" worth Rs. 1 Lac from his own pocket. Rana Sikandar e Azam former president FCCI, Chaudhary Talat Mehmood and executive member Mian Abdul Waheed also participated in it and appreciated the effectiveness of the projects launched by Al-Khidmat Foundation.

## **KP-EZDMC** chief visits Mohmand EZ

PESHAWAR: CEO Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zones Development and Management Company (KP-EZDMC), Javed Iqbal Khattak along with CFP and Chief Physical Planning & Development (PP&D) visited Mohmand Economic Zone on Friday, Zone Manager briefed CEO about the ongoing civil works and colonisation drive. The CEO inaugurated newly constructed industrial Facilitation Office in Zone. Various issues including infrastructure work, colonization drive and access road were discussed in detail and a way forward to resolve the long outstanding issues in Zone. Mr. Nouman Nadeem from KP-EZDMC assured full support and cooperation from KP-EZDMC for providing facilitation and support to enhance the linkages between academia and industry. - APP

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ISLAMABAD: Delegation of British Pakistani Forum from Birmingham UK had very fruitful meeting with Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry at Marriott hotel. - DNA

# **Growing inequality in Pakistan**

Mohsin Ullah

akistan's economy has been hit by serious macroeconomic issues over the past few decades. However, young nation like Pakistan can restart building their policies, as we see many other nations in the region have become best performing from a low point and have achieved consistent economic growth after implementing new reforms.

It is referred to capitalism which means rich get richer and poor become poorer. This is easily said but there are many reasons, which are enabling the industrialist and business owners to grow more and exploit the opportunities they get in their way as they have more resources than most of the population. United Nations Development Program highlighted the issue of inequality, they present it as an idea of two separate Pakistanis, as one

ity education, facilities of health care, and living luxurious life style and the other for the poor with no access to even the bare minimum. It is said that Pakistan's most powerful groups accumulated to the tune have become richer.

demic, the 10 percent of the world acquired three quarter of the wealth in the whole world. The evidence gathered in the report over the past 40 years, governments have gone poor but nations

"They are busy in making money through real estate. Business class needs to think as money is projected to non-productive activities, which can create, disparities' effecting the business"

of Rs 2,660 billion in 2017-2018, which is equivalent to 7% of the country's GDP". It states that income and wealth inequality is rising from 1980s. It has pointed the increasing control of wealth within few individuals, and by the Covid-19 pan-

Governments in Pakistan create Opportunities for elites to capture these opportunities. The amnesty scheme on real estate is a supreme example which has not only provided cover to untaxed income and black money but has also proworth of their assets while the poor are struggling two times meal a day. The elite class in Pakistan is also responsible for neither paying proper taxes nor investing in industrialization, which can create employment for the new generation. They are busy in making money through real estate. Business class needs to think as money is projected to non-productive activities, which can create, disparities' effecting the business.

There should be creation of assets for the society's relatively less well-off classes by transparently distributing agricultural state land; launching programs to increase the availability of more productive dairy animals, making credit available to small farmers to purchase better quality livestock, and providing subsidies on livestock insurance; and developing small plots and building houses for the poor and lower middle class.

#### 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 / Kazakstan Armed Forces Day

May 08 / Czech Republic National Day

May 09 / European Union

May 17 / Norway Constitution Day

May 21 / Hungary

May 22/ Yemen Republic Re-unification Day (National Day)

Armed Forced Day

May 24 / Eritrea

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



#### **Hotels &** Restaurants

Serena Hotel.....111 133 133 Marriott......051-2826121 Monal......0334-5421812



#### **Airlines**

Turkish Airlines.....8494949



## **Emergency**

Rescue (Police).....15 Bomb Disposal.....15 Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad......1122 & 16 Emergency Ambulance..1122 & Rescue Services.4451122 Motorway Police....9266044 Motorway Police..9270601-20 Women Police Stations ..9222596 Islamabad.... Rawalpindi......9270601-20



## **Enquiry**

Edhi Ambulance	115
PIAFlightInfo	114
PIACargo	9280979
Railway Inquiry	117
Railway Exchange	270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi.	.5555489
CAA	9281092



## Hospitals

СМН	5611111	
MH	561116	
Cantt Hospital.	9270907-11	
DHQ	5556311-4	
RGH	9290301-7	
Holy Family	9290322-7	
PIMS	9261170-79	
Polyclinic	9218300-09	
Shifa International 4603666		



## Departments

CDA9221334-43		
CDA9208301-04		
Met Office9250360-6		
RDA5555864		
TMA5770886		
Contonment Roard 0270151 2		

#### Islamabad Metropolitan

med opendan	
Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224
RawalTown	5773343

## **Water Tank**

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

# Diplomats' wives assure to play role for Women Entrepreneurs

#### SHUJAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Madam Albana Planeja, wife of Ambassador of Italy and Ms. Mariana Neves Pochino, wife of Ambassador of Portugal visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry to discuss matters for promoting women entrepreneurs in Pakistan. They interacted with women entrepreneurs of various sectors including IT, automobile, real estate, fashion designing, handmade products, health, education and discussed with them various options for better promo-

tion of women entrepreneurs. Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that women are half of our total population and without bringing them in the mainstream of economy, it is not possible for Pakistan to realize its full economic potential. He said that ICCI has always been raising a strong voice for the economic empowerment of women so that they could achieve a prosperous career and play a more effective role in the economic development of the country. He briefed the wives of diplomats about the various initiatives of ICCI to promote women entrepreneurs in the region.

Ms. Fatma Azim former Senior Vice President ICCI, Dr. Afshan Malik, Irum Pirzada, Zaibun Nisa, Arifa Liaquat, Safeena Shah, Nasira Ali, Nageena Khaleeq and others briefed the wives of diplomats about the products being produced by women entrepreneurs in the region and their potential in international market. They also highlighted the key issues being faced by the businessmen in Pakistan. They said that Pakistani women are very talented and have great potential to excel in the business field. However, lack of easy access to finance, stringent collateral requirements of banks and lack of supportive measures from the government side were major barriers for women start-ups and stressed that the government should address these issues to promote women entrepreneurs. They said that women entrepreneurs needed support to connect them with the international market and emphasized that the diplomatic sector should play a role to provide them opportunities in potential world markets. Madam Albana Planeja, wife of Ambassador of Italy and Ms. Mariana Neves Pochino, wife of Ambassador of Portugal appreciated the resilience and en-

trepreneurial spirit of businesswomen,





grow in business and contribute more effectively towards the economic development of Pakistan.

Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President and Muhammad Faheem

Khan Vice President, ICCI thanked the wives of diplomats for visiting ICCI and hoped that diplomatic sector would cooperate in promoting women

## 'Generating 60% electricity through clean energy'

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Climate Change Sherry Rehman on Friday informed the National Assembly that we have to made commitment to generate 60 per cent of electricity through clean renewable energy by 2030. Replying to various supplementary questions during Question Hour, the minister said that Pakistan had vast resources to generate clean energy. Currently 32 per cent electricity was being generated through clean while 68 per cent from other resources called dirty energy, she said.

She said there were 11 coal based power plants out of which six were operational. Coal based generated energy was not environment friendly as per international standard, she added. The minister said Pakistan Clean Air Programme had been initiated to cope with the issue of pollution and improve air quality. Under the Clean Green Programme, ministries of Energy, Petroleum and Industries would work jointly, she said. She said that zigzag technology had been installed at around 20,000 brick-kilns to reduce air pollution with the assistance of foreign donors.

After 18 constitution Amendment, Ministry of Climate protect the environment within territorial jurisdiction of Is-

## Govt planning to launch 5G service: NA told

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi on Friday apprised the National Assembly that the government was planning to launch 5G service in the country. In response to various questions during Question Hour, the minister said the Information Technology Ministry was formulating a policy to launch 5 G in consultation with all other stakeholders.

He said that the 4G technology was also launched by PML-N government. 4G services were available in 89 percent area of the country and in the next nine months the whole country would be covered, he said.

He said cellular operators were continuously expanding their networks and Currently, Pakistan has 90 percent teledensity with mobile penetration of 89 percent. The total mobile subscribers stands at 193.4 million, he added.

He said that the cellular operators were obliged to extend 4G coverage as per license conditions and charge consumers on the basis of data used/consumed by the subscribers irrespective of the technology i.e. 2G/3G/4G. To a separate question, the minister said that the incumbent government had plan to promote digital literacy in the country and a project was currently being implemented under which one hundred smart classrooms would be made functional in the universities by the end of the year, he said. - APP

## FDI inflows down 1.6% in 10 months

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Pakistan declined to US\$1.455 billion in July-April (2021-22) compared to the FDI inflows of \$1.48 billion recorded during same period, a year ago, showing a negative growth of 1.6 percent.

On year-on-year basis, the FDI rose to US\$170.6 million in April 2022 against US\$169.0 million recorded during the same month of the preceding year, according to the data released by State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Friday.

The country-wise data shows that China remained the top country posting US\$355.8 million FDI during first 10 months of current fiscal year compared to the investment worth of US\$699.6 million recorded during same period of last year. United States was the second largest country with investment of US\$223.4 million during the period under review against the net investment of US\$112.7 million recorded during first 10 months of of the fiscal year 2020-21.

Foreign Direct Investment from Honkong rose to \$133.9 million in during the period under review compared to the net FDI of \$127.6 million in Jul-April 2020-21.

The foreign investment from Netherlands



posted a growth as it surged to US\$80.8 million compared to the FDI of US\$46.6 million during July-April 2020-21. Similarly, the FDI from Singapore witnessed a surge of 2,532 percent as it rose to \$97.4 million from mere \$3.7 million in the first 10 months of the preceding fiscal year.

The FDI from Switzerland also surged to \$119.8 million from \$54.3 million and that of U.A.E. rose to \$118.2 million in Jul-April (2021-22) from \$94.3 million. Investment from Malaysia also increased from \$36.0 million last year to \$71.0 million in the corresponding period of current fiscal year. Similarly the FDI from Kuwait also rose to \$40.1 million from zero investment in same period of previous fiscal year. - APP

#### NEPRA holds awareness session

ISLAMABAD: As part of its "Power with Safety" drive, National Electric Power Reg-ulatory Authority (NEPRA) on Friday organized a webinar on "Workplace Stress Management" in collaboration with Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) and K-Electric. Jawad Syed, Professor of LUMS and Muhammad Taimoor Khan, head of HSE, K-Electric shared their ideas and skills to control stress, said a press release.

Chairman NEPRA, Tauseef H. Farooqi in his opening remarks, highlighted the importance of stress management given the very challenging nature of jobs in power sector and hoped that this awareness session would impart practical ideas and skills to manage stress. The webinar was attended by hundreds of HSE professionals from the entire power sector of Pakistan, as well as NEPRA officials. - APP

#### Friday visited the National Assembly and witnessed its proceedings. Deputy Speaker National Assembly Zahid Akram Durrani announced their presence in the

**Students** 

witness NA

proceeding

ISLAMABAD: A group of

students of postgraduate college Mansehra and Na-

tional University of Modern Languages (NUMLs) on guests' gallery; parliamentarians welcomed them by thumping the desk. - APP

#### NAB Chairman bans transfers/ postings in bureau

ISLAMABAD: National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Chairman Justice Javed Iqbal on Friday immediately banned transfer/postings in anti-graft watchdog. The chairman also immediately stopped postings/transfers that have been made recently in the bureau besides directing the NAB Headquarters as well as its all regional bureaus to abide by the decision of the Supreme Court of Pakistan in true letter and spirit. - APP

#### Overall punctuality of trains improved by 90 percent last month

ISLAMABAD: The overall

punctuality ratio of Pakistan

Railways trains improved

by 90 percent in last month

due to untiring efforts of the management to improve facilities on tracks. "Pakistan Railways has observed 77 percent punctuality of mail and express, 100 percent in intercity and over 90 percent punctuality in the month of April," an official in the Ministry of Railways told APP. He said that with the punctuality of trains and concrete measures taken by the government, over 20 million passengers have been added in the system, which is an ample proof of department's achievement. "The quality of food served in the passenger trains had been improved considerably as it had been officially supervised by the authorities that passengers should get pure and quality food on the trains," he added. To a question, he said in pursuance to the policy of the Federal Government, Pakistan Railways had outsourced some of its trains under Public Private Policy (PPP). According to policy decision given by Railways Board, Ministry of Railways, the bids more than the Railways earning would be accepted, he added. The official said a number of steps had been initiated by the coalition government to rationalize and improve the affairs of Paki-

stan Railways including the

hiring of a new Chief Finance

Officer (CFO) from private

sector to ensure strict finan-

cial discipline in Pakistan

Railways. - APP



Rights, Mian Riaz Hussein Pirzada, at his office, on Friday. - DNA

## **Uzbek envoy hinted at possibility of Pak- Uzbek FTA**

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan, Aybek Arif Usmanov on Friday said that the possibility of signing a free trade agreement between Pakistan and Uzbekistan cannot be ruled out. A Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) has been signed for the promotion of bilateral liberal trade between the two countries, which has a great potential to increase bilateral trade in the future, Ambassador Aybek Arif Usmanov told APP here. The Ambassador said that a bilateral PTA and Transit Trade Agreement had been signed between Pakistan and Uzbekistan which also facilitated the movement of land trade between the two countries including trucks. He said that the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in Pakistan and Uzbekistan could play a better role in promoting bilateral trade if there was a similar trilateral agreement in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Uzbekistan. He said that after signing such an agreement, economic integration in Central Asia and South Asian countries would increase and regional trade

He said that regional trade is needed at this time and in regional trade we have the best examples of the European Union (EU) and Association of South East Asian

also would increase.

Nations (ASEAN) where regional trade and economic connectivity is the best example.

Replying to a question he said that promotion of trade and trade connectivity between Pakistan and Uzbekistan and other Central Asian States is essential for regional trade. Thus, according to the government policy of the Uzbek government, region to region trade will also be promoted, which will bring the countries of the region into a common trade and economic power. The envoy said that work was underway on a railway line project between Pakistan and Uzbekistan which was being carried out by engineers and technical staff of both the countries and all the three parties including Afghanistan had agreed to implement it. The Afghan province of Mazar-e-

Sharif is already connected to Uzbekistan by railway line, he said. He added that the railway link between Pakistan, Afghanistan and Uzbekistan would not only link our trade with the countries of the region but also give them access to Euro-Asian and European markets. He also said that he would like to complete all major gas pipeline projects including the Turkmenistan Afghanistan-Pakistan and India (TAPI) for economic and trade integration of the countries of the region.

He said that for the energy needs of Pakistan, Central Asia South Asia (CASA-1000) should be completed, which would be able to meet the energy needs. In response to another question, he said that the foundation of economic relations between Pakistan and Uzbekistan was laid by former Prime Minister, Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. In the past, bilateral trade was only \$20 million, which has now reached \$185 million

He said that the Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) has been signed between Pakistan and Uzbekistan, which will increase bilateral trade. He said that now agreements have been signed also between the prov-



inces and cities of Pakistan and Uzbekistan on mutual cooperation. While talking Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), annual summit of the Heads of State Council to be held in Samarkand (Uzbekistan), he said the role of Pakistan and Uzbekistan in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is of paramount importance and is a milestone in regional and global economic integration. Uzbekistan is at the center of Central Asian countries and Pakistan has its own geostrategic importance which can play a significant role in its economic and trade integration in the SCO, he said. The Ambassador said that Uzbekistan, as the chair of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization annual summit 2022 of the SCO Heads of State Council hoisting by on September 15-16 in Samarkand. He said that this SCO annual

summit would be attended by the Heads of State and Foreign Ministers of all the member countries and economic, trade and political cooperation among the member countries would be discussed.

He said that the SCO summit would have a total of 80 sessions in which 40 sessions would be of foreign ministers in which delegations of member countries would discuss issues of mutual interest. The Ambassador said that regional to regional cooperation would be discussed at the SCO summit which would be helpful in mutual cooperation among the member countries. Central Asian countries also have a policy of regional cooperation which can enhance bilateral relations, he said. He said that SCO member countries have huge economic powers which can play their full role in economic and trade cooperation between the countries. Responding to another question, he said that the SCO summit would seek new economic drivers for the promotion of economic and trade cooperation among the member countries in which technology and innovation are very important.

The envoy said that the use of information technology and modern technology in new dimensions is very important which will be discussed at the summit for its promotion. On this occasion, he said that there is an agreement on transit trade between Pakistan and Uzbekistan signed, which needs time to be implemented. In addition, rail, air and road connectivity are crucial for the development of economic relations. He said the SCO meeting will also discuss bilateral trade cooperation and the promotion of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). - APP

#### Saturday, May 21, 2022

Health minister for making

**Pakistan polio-free** 

ISLAMABAD: Minister

for National Health Services (NHS) Abdul Qadir

Patel on Friday reiter-

ated his commitment to

make Pakistan polio-free

and asked parents to

play their part in making

the polio campaign a suc-

cess. "The entire nation

should actively take part

in the administration of

polio vaccine to children

in order to defeat the

menace", he urged while

speaking to the PTV news

channel. He said that the

role of parents had great

importance in a successful

anti-polio campaign, add-

ing, that parents should

administer polio drops to

their children to protect

them from lifelong disability. He also appreciated the efforts of workers of

polio eradication teams

who always reach out to children in far-flung and

hard areas of the country, adding, that the safety of

polio workers topmost pri-

ority of the government.

The Pakistan Army and

other security forces

would provide their full

support to polio vacci-

nation teams in their ef-

forts to reach out to the

children in far-flung areas

of the country, he men-

tioned. Qadir Patel also

expressed his serious con-

cern over the recent polio

Minister

cases. - APP

## **Court awards** sentence in a murder case

RAWALPINDI: Additional and Sessions Judge Masood Akhtar Kiani on Friday awarded the death sentence to an accused in a murder case. The accused, Abid Ali, was found guilty of killing a citizen in the area of the City Police station.

After recording evidence of the witnesses and final arguments by the defence and prosecution, the Court also imposed a fine of Rs 400,000 on him besides giving a death sentence. The convict had killed the victim by firing over a motorcycle parking dispute in December 2020. – **APP** 

#### Four more diagnosed with corona

RAWALPINDI: more Corona cases had been reported during the last 24 hours, raising the district's tally of confirmed cases to 46,586. According to new data issued by the District Health Authority here Friday, the total infected cases included 43,080 from Rawalpindi and 3,506 from other districts. Among the news cases, three had arrived from Rawalpindi Cantonment and one from the Taxila area. "Presently, 23 confirmed patients are quarantined at homes and no one at health faculties", the report added. The report further said that 6,873,791 people, including 44,788 health workers, had jabbed themselves against the lethal coronavirus (COVID-19) across the district since the vaccination administering drive launched on

March 10, 2021. District Health Authority updated that during the last 24 hours, 1,026 samples were collected, out of which 1,022 were declared negative, while the positivity rate was recorded at 0.4 per cent. - APP

#### IHC grants protective bail to MPA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday granted protective bail to Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI)'s member Sindh Assembly Haleem Adil Sheikh in matter pertaining to Masjid e Nabvi incident. Chief Justice Athar Minallah heard the case filed by Haleem Adil Sheikh against his possible arrest. The petitioner adopted the stance that although he was not named in the FIR regarding the incident but still there was chances of his arrest by the police. He prayed the court to stop the police from harassing and arresting him. The court granted the protective bail and instructed the petitioner to submit surety bonds. - APP

#### PTI govt responsible for load shedding

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal on Friday criticized the previous PTI government over the current load shedding in the country, saying the PTI had failed to procure fuel or repair power plants in a timely manner due to its incompetence. Talking to PTV News Channel, he said that the previous government had shut down the power units, which were used by our PML-N government to generate low-cost electricity, adding that now the country's situation will get better

with each passing day. He lashed out at the economic policies of the PTI government and vowed that maximum efforts would be made to move the country on the path of economic growth and development. Responding to a question, he said that the government has banned the import of unnecessary and luxury items to control inflation and strengthen the economy, adding that the present government would provide maximum relief to the common man. - APP

# NHM police hold awareness sentence in a NHM police hold awareness sentence hold awareness sent

MURREE: National Highways Motorway police conducted Road safety briefing session at AGOSH COLLEGE MUREE on the topic (Road Safety is shared responsibility of community and State) incharge ROAD SAFTEY WING Atif Ghafoor BHATTI along with his team highlighted the importance of road safety and emphasised on shared responsibility of community along with state to ensure traffic safety on Highways and Motorways. AZAM KHAN PRINCIPAL AGOSH COLLEGE MUREE also addressed the audience/ participants





## PCJCCI to establish online Pakistan-China **Tech Gateway**

of Pakistan China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) Wang Zihai pledged that after the successful working of Pakistan-China Knowledge Portal, an online Pakistan-China Technology Gateway will be established soon, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro. Speaking at a think-tank session held at PCJCCI premises, he maintained that technological advancement for human resource development is the prime agenda of PCJCCI.

"After the successful working of Pakistan-China Knowledge Portal, we are keen to establish an online Pakistan-China Technology Gateway," he informed. Wang Zihai elaborated that this project would be initiated with collaboration with China, and the purpose for this project would be primarily the transfer of redundant technology from China. He promised to spur the pace of technological advancement in Pakistan through Chinese cooperation. On the occasion, Ehsan Chaudhry, Senior Vice President PCICCI said that the acquisition of appropriate technology from China in the field of renewable energy and alternative sources of energy such as solar, nanotechnology, wind power and run of the river power plants were also included on priority. Sarfaraz Butt, Vice President PCJCCI mentioned that PCJCCI was planning to establish stateof-the-art Chinese information and material center that would be executed in two phases., he added.

Salahuddin Hanif, Secretary General PCJCCI told the audience that they will also initiate online technological courses for youth through this Pakistan-China Technology Gateway. "These courses will convey contemporary knowledge and information related to various sectors which include electronic and automotive advancement, insurance, agriculture, textiles, shoe manufacturing, chemicals, battery recycling plant and real estate advisory," he explained.

## NA Speaker, Acting Speaker condole of Asif Ali's demise

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf and Acting Speaker Zahid Akram Khan Duranni have condoled the death of former Federal Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali. In their separate condolence messages to breaved family, Speaker and Acting Speaker expressed their heartfelt grief and sorrow over the sad demise of former Minister and paid rich tribute to his political and social services. Speaker and Acting Speaker prayed Almighty Allah to rest departed soul in eternal peace and grant strength and courage to bereaved family to bear irreparable loss with equanimity. - APP

# Senate body on Climate Change visits fire pickets, control room in MHI

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Climate Change led by Senator Seemee Ezdi on Friday visited the fire control room and pickets in the Margalla Hills National Park.

On the occasion, they were informed about the firefighting arrangements by the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (IWMB) and the Capital Development Authority (CDA).

The chairperson of the Committee was accompanied by Senator Abida Muhammad Azeem, Senator Keshoo Bai, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed who also visited two firefighting pickets at Pir Sohawa Road and Gokina top in the national park. Chairperson IWMB Rina Saeed Khan further briefed on the IWMB endeavours to protect the national park. She said the fire season started from April to June in Margallas, where pine needles, that are highly inflammable and the reason for bush fires in the national park, fall in this season. Khan said the Board had recruited 36 individuals through proper recruitment process that also included forest and firefighting staff, adding that the Board had a total of 60 staffers. "Moreover, 400 CDA fire staff and locals also chip in during firefighting efforts to put out the fire amicably". This season, she said seven fires

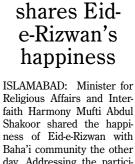
al Park (MHNP), of which five were minor ones. The recent fire in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, that also entered into the MHNP, was severe, and was controlled by joint efforts of IWMB, CDA and the KP Forest department. "We cannot leave our pickets, as the key areas become vulnerable to manmade fires. However, strict vigilance is maintained as wildfires increase in fire season", Rina added. She informed that 90% fires were man-made in the MHNP, whereas the TikTokers involved in glamourising bushfire were taken to task, while three of them were detained and search for the remaining culprits was underway.

The Board, she said had completed the inquiry and the perpetrators were tracked, where the Divisional Forest Officer Abbottabad was pursuing the case. According to Pakistan Penal Code (PPC), six months to three years imprisonment was the penalty for starting a deliberate bushfire, she told the Committee members. Senator Abida Azeem raised her concerns over serious bushfire in Balochistan's Koh-e-Sulaiman range that damaged very valuable pine trees, wildlife and birdlife. Responding to Senator Abida, Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman commented

that the fire incident occurred in the Koh-e-Sulaiman range of Balochistan was a matter of grave concern.

"We cannot intervene in the matters of the provincial government, but as citizens can share our concerns on the matter". The TikToker glamourised the fire incident in KP, which was a criminal misconduct, and should be held accountable as per the law, she added. Senator Mushahid Hussain queried the Board chairperson for no use of firefighting kits by the staff and suggested that instead of makeshift arrangements, holistic, modern and well-designed gadgets should be used for firefighting. Senior IWMB Member Z.B. Mirza also explained the MHNP ecology and challenges to the Committee members.

Secretary MoCC Asif Shah said the forest fires were handled manually, which was a drawback and there should be some advanced facilities as well. "We need to coordinate with KP Forest department to control such fires which can help to improve early warning mechanisms. We can use firefighting kits and improve rock climbing techniques for better response to bush fires", he suggested.Director General Environment CDA Irfan Niazi also briefed the Committee. - APP



ness of Eid-e-Rizwan with Baha'i community the other day. Addressing the participants here at the auditorium of National Library of Pakistan, he said the religious festival conveyed message of peace to the masses and let the world know that Pakistan was a land of religious coexistence. He said it was a good omen that they were celebrating Eid-e-Rizwan with the same zeal and zest like every year. He said celebrating minor-

ity communities' festivals created an environment of religious harmony and a feeling of positivity in the society. The mufti said that Eid-e-Rizwan was a living evidence that all minority communities were enjoying the equal rights enshrined in the Constitution of the country. He said today, the world was confronted with sectarianism, racism and extremism which had been projecting negative sentiments in the society.

The minister said it was need of the hour to put aside all the differences, and instead regard for each other's social and religious values. Appreciating the role of minorities, he said, the minorities had been playing a constructive role in the development and prosperity of the country since day one. – **APP** 



## PSAI arranges Salatul-istasqa for rains in twin cities

**DNA** 

ISLAMABAD: The scorching summer with extreme heat waves has struck the whole country and the twin cities of Islamabad & Rawalpindi have

witnessed the highest temperature of the season and more to be seen in the days ahead. PSAI with collaboration of Aims Education System Who is known an Islamic School in town with its norms and values provide venue's to arranged a special day of Prayer for



rains i.e. Nimaz e Istasqa in Islamabad on Friday. The prayer was arranged on special

appeal of private schools association Islamabad. Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon, President PSAI Mr Zofran Ellahi, Chairman AIMS Almass Ayoub Sabir, Secretary General PSAI Abdul Waheed Khan, media persons prominent personalities of town were also present at this occasion. A huge gathering of all students, faculty members and entire management has participated to perform these prayers at the main campus of AES for more rains in the coming days for better crops and to battle against the water scarcity. This has always been an initiative taken by PSAI to inculcate all Islamic values in students commonly trended amongst Boys and Girls to adopt the values for a better life ahead.

In the special prayer for rain (Salat-ul-istasqa) khutbah (sermon) emphasized on repentance and reliance on Allah SWT who is Merciful and magnificent.

## Positive talks with IMF underway ISLAMABAD: Federal Min-

ister for Finance and Revenue Miftah Ismail said here on Friday that talks were underway with International Monetary Fund (IMF) and expressed the hope that there would be a turnaround in country's economic situation very soon.

In a tweet, the federal minister said that the country's current account deficit (CAD) during the month of April has come down to \$623 million, less than half of the average for the first nine months of the fiscal year 2021-22.

"The Current Account Deficit for April came in at \$623 million, less than half the average for the first 9 months of the fiscal year. This is a very good sign for external stability. With positive IMF turnaround in the economic situation very soon," he

tweeted. The minister thanked the foreign multinationals that operate in Pakistan and pay a large amount of taxes, provide employment and bring in technology. He requested all of them to present a plan to export out of Pakistan also and offered to give

them tax breaks for that. "I am truly grateful to all the foreign multinationals that operate in Pakistan, pay a large amount of taxes, provide employment and bring in technology. However I request all of them to present to me a plan to export out of Pakistan also. I will give them tax breaks for that," he

#### NEPRA imposes Rs 65m fine on **IESCO**

ISLAMABAD: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) on Friday has imposed a fine of Rs 65 million on Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) for its negligence resulting in fatal incidents during the period from July 2019 to June 2021. The NEPRA upon receipt of reports of 39 deaths in different electrocution incidents during the aforementioned period, constituted two member Investigation Committee under Section 27A of NEPRA Act 1997 to visit the respective areas, conduct investigation, ascertain and determine the facts and possible violations of NEPRA Laws, Rules and Regulations, said a press release.

The Authority has therefore, imposed a fine of Rs 65 million on IESCO. The Authority has also observed that IESCO has awarded compensation to the tune of Rs. 3.5 million to the families of its employees who lost their lives in these electrocution accidents, however, compensation of Rs. 750,000/ has been awarded to some of the families of deceased persons from the general public but not all (15 Victims). - APP

# Positive side of currency devaluations

MANAHIL KHAN

akistan's currency is devaluing with speed losing its value against dollar since last 10 years constantly, everybody is cursing it and only looking at the bad picture of the story, but the depreciation of the currency somehow can be beneficial to stable the economy and help controlling in inflation in the long run as depreciation of currency has its positive sides to if we look them from macro approach.

Today 1 \$ worth approx 195 Pakistani rupee which means it will take large sum of Pakistani rupee imports will be reduced as only

few amount of the population will when any currency depreciates its be able to purchase imported prodgoods abroad becomes cheaper and ucts as majority will give preference import becomes more expensive for to home manufactured products because they are more reasonable

This will helps the home manufacturers and industries businesses to grow andin the long run it will

"Nigeria is an example who has succeeded in improving its balance of payments through depreciation of currency from 1961 to 2012"

cause of this depreciation of the currency can give boost to the exports of the country which will improves the situation of balance of payments of the country as the demand for now. On the other hand in abroad the products from Pakistan will be cheaper so the consumer over there will also prefer Pakistani products it also give rises to the tourism industry in Pakistan.

Nigeria is an example who has succeeded in improving its balance of payments through depreciation of currency from 1961 to 2012. Added to these future benefits

there are many industries and

rupee. depreciation of currency have increased the source of income for many individuals and companies such as freelancers , you tubers companies like call center who are earning in dollars and also this is motivating many other individuals to work on these platforms and earn reducing the unemployed rate in Pakistan. Everything has its positive and negative side to it but it is us who choose in which way we

benefiting from the apprecia-

tion of dollar against Pakistani

have to take it. The writer is a student of

## Low Covid vaccination rates

hen Covid-19 first emerged, the "Hermit Kingdom" lived up to its nickname - shutting its borders in January 2020, long before most of the world had taken real heed of the disease spreading in China. With healthcare already on its knees and a malnourished population, North Korea was exceptionally badly placed to cope with any serious outbreak of illness.

For more than two years, it insisted that it had no cases whatsoever. Then, last week, it announced its first cases, of Omicron. The country's leader, Kim Jong-un, warned of "great turmoil". Now it has reported almost 2m cases of unspecified "fever" – probably because it can't test for the virus – with 741,000 still being treated, and 63 deaths. Mr Kim, due to celebrate his 10th anniversary in power this year, has blamed officials for an "immature" response. But underlings can hardly be blamed. Closing the country off for so long, when it is heavily dependent on China and ordinary people were already struggling to survive, has left many in even direr straits. Yet the leadership failed to use the time to vaccinate the population, ignoring offers of doses from the Covax pooling scheme. For years, it has impoverished its people and allowed healthcare to deteriorate, while pouring money into a weapons programme, the chief function of which is to safeguard the regime. Within hours of announcing the Covid outbreak, the country had launched yet another missile test.

Since admitting the outbreak, it has stonewalled offers of help from South Korea and the World Health Organization, although it has accepted basic medical supplies from China. Not only are medicine and oxygen supplies scarce, even power is limited, with blackouts frequent.

The wealthier world should also remember that North Korea is not alone in its lack of protection. Other countries are not much better covered. The more than 12bn vaccine doses delivered globally have overwhelmingly gone to richer nations. More than 75% of people in upper- and middle-income countries have received at least two doses. For low-income countries, the figure is just 13%. Across Africa, only 16.7% have received

As WHO officials noted, when asked about North Korea and Eritrea which has also snubbed offers of vaccines - unchecked transmission could spur the emergence of new variants. Though wealthier countries are far better protected, they too could still be at risk from the pandemic - or new diseases in future. Self-interest, as well as a sense of responsibility, should persuade them to do the right thing.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

**Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti Deputy Editor: Abid Raza** 

> Member APNS / ABC Certified Vol: 02 Issue: 316

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## The need to become an exporter

MUHAMMAD OMAR IFTIKHAR

n a recent turn of events, the government of Pakistan banned the import of luxury and non-essential items. This step was taken to strengthen the economy and stop the devaluation of the Rupee. While the step will and may have its consequences in one form or the other - or will have a positive impact - the current scenario must be explored. While this step will reduce the country's reliance on imports, do we have an industrial base where the same products can be manufactured? Pakistan has manufacturing zones and it has the resources to do so. The problem is that we never stood up as a country that produced goods and exported them to the world.

Imagine a country like Vietnam exporting electronic goods (2021: US\$50.8 billion); Machinery (2021: US\$38.3 billion); and footwear (2021: US\$17.8 billion). If a country like Vietnam can do it, then why are we behind? The government's decision to ban luxury items should be seen as a blessing in disguise. The concerned ministries of the government of Pakistan should join hands, collaborate and plan the production of goods that we can export to the region and the world. Competing against China will not be fruitful and not advisable, but we can export items to the countries in South Asia, Far East Asia, the Middle East, etc. We must focus our attention on building Pakistan as a brand - at the regional

Moreover, our freelance and tech base is evolving and attracting billions of dollars annually. We must foster a plan to create regional offices of global tech companies in Pakistan so that these tech-based initiatives can attract foreign investment into Pakistan. The government's emergency fiscal plan should turn into a Future Economic Plan to guide the country out of its monetary and economic predicaments, so it may stand without external help.

## China's growing footprint bodes well for the Middle East

Ishtiaq Ahmad



Being a global power with global interests. China would naturally like to gain a greater foothold in strategically important regions like the Middle East. Through the Belt and Road Initiative, China seeks to capture new markets and invest and export its surplus capital and industrial capacity. However, a key driver of China's interest in the Middle East is to secure access to its critical energy resources and maritime trade routes, as well as seaports like Dubai, through which 60 percent of its trade bound for Europe and East Africa passes. China also has a huge stake in the region's expanding consumer markets and its own areas such as the development investments in the development sector

s the US reduces its security engagement in the Middle East, China is stepping up its diplomatic and economic footprint in the region. While most Middle Eastern countries have aligned their interests with rising China for economic reasons, the pundits in Washington tend to present this development as a reflection of China's hegemonic ambitions in the region. The evidence on the ground, however, suggests otherwise. This is clear from the nature of China's emerging role in the Middle East and the key drivers that are shaping the contours of its strategic partnerships in the region. There is no doubt that China's economic footprint is extensive – and increasing. It is

the outcome of proactive diplomacy by both Chinese and Middle Eastern leaders. In the past decade, President Xi Jinping and Foreign Minister Wang Yi have traveled to the region and concluded "comprehensive strategic partnerships" with Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Algeria and Egypt. China has also hosted prominent Middle Eastern officials, including the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, Turkey and Iran in January.

This diplomatic push has enabled China to emerge as the biggest source of foreign direct investment in the region and the largest trading partner for several countries in the Middle East, especially the Gulf Cooperation Council. Most of the Arab League member states in the Middle East and North Africa have joined China's Belt and Road Initiative, which seeks to revive the old Silk Road by financing infrastructure development across the world. Syria and Morocco are the latest additions. The rest are waiting for the opportunity. China's stateowned and private companies have invested close to \$250 billion in development projects in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt, Iraq, Turkey and Israel in the past two decades. These investments are operational in diverse of seaport and transportation facilities, industrial complexes, 5G networks, artificial intelligence, emerging technologies

and renewable energy. China has also concluded a 25-year deal with Iran worth \$400 billion, but its implementation remains on paper. As for trade, a third of China's energy imports come from the GCC countries, including the largest portion from Saudi Arabia. China also imports a fifth of Iran's oil and half of Iraq's oil. It is the largest trading partner of the GCC, accounting for \$180 billion in 2020. China is also the largest trading partner of Saudi Arabia, with bilateral trade growing exponentially from a mere \$3 billion in 2000 to more than \$72 billion in 2019. Being a global power with global interests, China

would naturally like to gain a greater foothold in strategically important regions like the Middle East. Through the Belt and Road Initiative, China seeks to capture new markets and invest and export its surplus capital and industrial capacity. However, a key driver of China's interest in the Middle East is to secure access to its critical energy resources and maritime trade routes, as well as seaports like Dubai, through which 60 percent of its trade bound for Europe and East Africa passes. China also has a huge stake in the region's expanding consumer markets and its own investments in the development sector. For their part, the Middle East's states are responding to the opportunities of engagement with China, while simultaneously reacting to the perceived unreliability of American protection. Three factors drive their growing interest in China. First, China is the largest oil importer globally and thus a critical patron of the Middle East's oil economy. The Gulf states, in particular, want to diversify investments and reap the benefits of rising China. They seek to develop critical infrastructure, for which Beijing provides a better alternative in terms of efficiency and productivity. China also has the technological edge in telecommunications, which is why Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the UAE have opted for Huawei's 5G

cellular network. Second, China is a role model for economic development in the Middle East, especially the Gulf states. All of them are in the process of economic diversification away from oil and gas, as is clear from the Saudi Vision 2030 and other states' programs. They want to emulate China's journey to global economic power through infrastructure development and the subsequent acquisition of surplus capital and industrial capacity, which is being channeled globally through the Belt and Road Initiative. Third, China provides the Middle Eastern states with an escape from US hegemony. China adheres to the principle of noninterference and does not, therefore, link its diplomatic and economic role with issues of democracy and human rights, as the US does. That is why China enjoys a favorable public image in the region. The Arab regimes and people are also disillusioned with the US for waging imperial wars, such as in Iraq, and refusing to tackle their deadly consequences, particularly the persistent danger from Iran and its proxies. They perceive no such danger from China, which is

focused on economic issues. Hence, the question arises: Does China intend to play a security role in the Middle East or emerge as a geopolitical rival to the US? Several indicators

suggest it does not. First, even in East Asia, where China's vital national interests lie in Taiwan and the South China Sea, it is the Biden administration's deliberate strategy of containment that has compelled Beijing to undertake countervailing security measures. And China is a beneficiary of America's role in protecting energy resources and maritime trade routes in the Middle East. Therefore, it would like the status quo to persist.

Second, China's security relations with the Gulf nations are also modest and restricted to developing their indigenous defense capabilities in drone and ballistic missile technologies in the UAE and Saudi Arabia, respectively. Their respective vision programs also emphasize achieving self-sufficiency in defense production.

Third, China does not want to embroil itself in Middle Eastern conflicts. It does not invest in unstable countries. Belt and Road Initiative investments are conditioned on peace and stability in the partner nations or regions. The Arabian Gulf is stable and hence the development projects are operational. Iran is unwilling to make peace with the Arabs, meaning the long-term investments are put on hold. There is also least interest in strife-torn Syria. The region's states are responding to the opportunities of engagement with China, while simultaneously reacting to the perceived unreliability of American protection.

Finally, on the Ukraine war, the real issue is not that China and its Middle Eastern partners are hedging their bets by being neutral, while navigating the complex ties with the US and Russia. They simply do not want to entangle themselves in a European war being driven by contested historical narratives.

Of course, if push comes to shove, China may assume responsibility for protecting energy resources and trade routes, as well as its investments and expatriate populations in the Middle East. There is no indication vet that Beijing intends to play such a role in the foreseeable future, though it has offered to share the security burden with the US. China is also lobbying for a self-sustaining regionally integrated security order, which is a perfect recipe for resolving Middle Eastern conflicts.

We can therefore safely argue that China neither seeks animosity with the US nor aspires to export illiberal values to the region. It wants safe returns on its investments so as to sustain national economic growth. This promising trend has the potential to liberate the Middle East from the catastrophic implications of the Arab Spring and American im-

Ishtiaq Ahmad is a former journalist who has been vice chancellor of Sargodha University in Pakistan and Quaid-e-Azam Fellow at the University of Oxford.

## Türkiye's operation in Iraq benefits both countries

**Ibrahim Karatas** 

The TAF cross-border preventive measures have been so effective that the number of armed PKK terrorists in the mountains has fallen below 200. The terror group has moved outside Türkiye and rarely conducts attacks in the country. Turkish territories have never been so secure in terms of terrorist ates were not able to maintain attacks. If TAF simply waited at the border, casualties would be much higher

aghdad's condemnation of Ankara's latest operation is out of step with reality.

On April 18, the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) launched Claw-Lock, its latest military operation in northern Iraq, as part of its ongoing series of operations to eliminate the PKK. Tens of terrorists have been killed in the mountainous region, which is home to several PKK strongholds, including the headquarters of the terror organisation.

Besides clearing the region from terrorists, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan also hinted

at Ankara's aim to "crush" the PKK's leadership through operations. Soon after his speech, PKK co-leader Duran Kalkan threatened to spread fighting into cities. Indeed, a bus carrying prison officers was bombed by PKK affiliates in the city of Bursa, killing a guard and wounding four others just two days after the start of the counterterrorism operation. Another bomb exploded in Istanbul on April 21, targeting a youth foundation's building. While the PKK and its affili-

attacks in cities thanks to the efforts of the Turkish police, there is still a chance for further attempts. The official rhetoric of the Ira-

qi government and the Arab League has been critical of Türkiye's latest cross-border operation, arguing that it violates Iraq's security and sovereignty.

Yet these statements show a misplaced critique on the part of those parties. Ankara's operations work to save lives in both Türkiye and Iraq from the terrorist threat in the Qandil Mountains and ultimately support, not hurt, Iraq's sovereignty.

Turkish authorities have repeatedly underlined that Ankara's actions are in line with Article 51 of the UN Charter, which gives the right to use self-defensive measures in case of armed attacks. In addition, bilateral agreements between Türkiye and Iraq allow the former to conduct anti-terror operations on the latter's territories. The PKK has launched countless attacks from Qandil Mountains, killing thousands of Turkish security staff and civilians. The attacks on Turkish lands are conducted with orders sent via radio and other methods from Iraq.

The TAF cross-border preventive measures have been so effective that the number of armed PKK terrorists in the mountains has fallen below 200. The terror group has moved outside Türkiye and rarely conducts attacks in the country. Turkish territories have never been so secure in terms of terrorist attacks. If TAF simply waited at the border, casualties would be much higher.

Turkish military bases and operations conducted in Iraq only target the terrorist organisation. If Türkiye really intended to violate Iraq's sovereignty or occupy its territory, it would not focus on the treacherous terrain of the Qandil Mountains.

Furthermore, the Turkish army never assaulted or targeted Iraqi troops.

It is not the Turkish army but the PKK – which aims to control the north of the country per its goal of creating an independent state – that is a threat to Iraq's sovereignty. Ultimately, Türkiye's operations against the PKK help Iraq further assert its sovereignty over its territory.

The semi-autonomous KRG - which hasn't objected to Ankara's operations – is also disturbed by the presence of the PKK. The terror group controls some towns and villages and even gives municipal services there. KRG's peshmerga forces are blocked from entering those areas and clashes erupt at times over their control.

On the other hand, it is apparent that the Iraqi army doesn't have the capacity to uproot the PKK on its own. It already faces myriad issues, including ensuring central government authority across the country and fighting Daesh.

Today, the PKK also has access to US-supplied weapons from the YPG, its Syrian offshoot, and collaborates with Shia militant groups. In other words, the Iraqi army is facing challenges on mul-

But it is still Baghdad's duty to prevent foreign armed groups, particularly terrorist organisations, from taking root on its soil. In fact, it successfully fought Daesh with the help of the international coalition. When it comes to its fight against the PKK, it also needs support in carrying out operations among the sharp rocks of Qandil.

Instead of directing accusations at Ankara for its operations - which does nothing to improve relations between the two countries the Iraqi government can do its part in the fight against terrorism.

Ankara continuously underlines that it wants the unity and security of Iraq. While the Daesh threat has been minimised, the PKK is still a threat to both countries. Iraqi officials should admit that a terror-free Iraq means no Turkish intervention and

better relations with Türkiye. Courtesy: TRT World

**Turkey to...** 

From Page 01

sent to the launching ceremony of the third vessel of the MILGEM Ada class

corvette - a joint venture of Turkey and Pakistan,

Recep Tayyip Erdogan said

"The production process of

all these ships, which are

equipped with the most

modern weapons and sen-

sor systems developed by

our country, continues as

planned." The Turkish Pres-

ident said the MILGEM

project is an indication for

the developments to come.

He said most modern weap-

ons and sensors have been

used to build this vessel.

Tayyip Erdogan said various

defence industry projects

will be realized one by one

gradually that will further

strengthen friendship be-

tween the two countries.

### Saturday, May 21, 2022

## Briefs

## **ECP de-seats...**

From Page 01

become vacant. The verdict has gained special significance after the Supreme Court's interpretation of Article 63(A), holding that the vote of dissident MPs cannot be counted. The ECP bench, headed by Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja, had reserved the verdict on Tuesday after listening to the arguments of PTI lawmakers. The dissident members had argued that since they did not get any clear policy guidelines from the parliamentary party, and in the absence of any direction, the party cannot move against them. Earlier, the ECP - in its May 11 verdict - rejected the disqualification reference against the MNAs of the PTI involved in floor-crossing during the no-confidence motion against Imran Khan. The ECP said in its verdict that the reference against 20 MNAs of the PTI was not proved.

Sagheer Raja Ahmed (PP-7 Rawalpindi) Malik Ghulam Sangha Khushab)

Akbar Saeed Khan (PP-90 Bhakkar) Muhammad Ajmal Cheema (PP-97 Faisal-

abad) Aleem Khan (PP-158 Lahore) Nazeer Chohan

(PP-167 Lahore) Mohammad Ameen Zulqarnain (PP-170

Lahore) Noman Langrial

(PP-202 Sahiwal) Mohammad Salman (PP-217 Multan)

Zawar Warraich (PP-224 Lodhran) Ahmed Nazeer

Khan (PP-228 Lodhran) Fida Hussain (PP 237 Bahawalnagar)

Zahra Batool (PP 272 Muzaffargarh) Mohammad Tahir

(PP-282 Layyah) Ayesha Nawaz (W-

322 special seat) Sajida Yousuf (W-

327 special seat) Haroon Imran Gill (NM-364 minority seat)

Uzma Kardar (W-Malik Khokar (PP-168 Lahore)

Aijaz Masih ( 365 minority seat)

Sibtain Raza (PP-273 Muzaffargarh)

Mohsin Ata Khan Khosa (PP-288 DG Khan) Mian Khalid Mehmood (PP-140 Sheikhupu-

Mehr Mohammad Aslam (PP-127 Jhang) Faisal Hayat (PP-125 Jhang)

A total of 16 of these MPAs belong to the disgruntled Jahangir Tareen group, five to the Aleem Khan group and four to the Asad Khokhar group of PTI. There are a total of 371 members in the Punjab Assembly, and after the unseating of the 25 mem-

#### 346 members in the House. ECP's...

## From Page 01

bers, there will be a total of

number reaches 177. On the other hand, PTI currently has 158 members out of 183 members of PTI after the removal of 25 dissidents. The 158 members of PTI include the vote of the Deputy Speaker and out of 25 dissidents, 5 members belong to reserved seats but PTI will increase the number of votes to 163 by bringing new faces in 5 reserved seats.

## PM Shehbaz...

## From Page 01

the launching ceremony, the Prime Minister said relationship between Pakistan and Turkey is reaching new heights and both countries will continue to cooperate with each other in diverse fields. He said the MILGEMclass corvette ship PNS Badar is a sign of growing cooperation between Pakistan and Turkey. He said it is a huge milestone towards self-dependence in the ship building industry. Shehbaz Sharif said Pakistan's relations with Turkey date back to pre-independence times when Muslims of Sub-Continent started a movement for Caliphate in Turkey.

He also mentioned Turkev's role during various natural disasters in Pakistan and thanked the Turkish government and its people for their love and help. The Prime Minister lauded the work manship of the engineers and workers of Karachi shipyard.

## Asia Cup in Indonesia

# Stage set for high tempo Pakistan, India match

## The Men's Asia Cup will burst into action on Monday in Jakarta, Indonesia, with eight teams in action

burst into action on Monday in Jakarta, Indonesia, with eight teams in action. The participating teams are: India (FIH World Ranking: 3), Malaysia (WR: 11), Korea (WR: 16) Japan (WR: 17), Pakistan (WR: 18), Oman (WR: 23), Bangladesh (WR: 30), and Indonesia (WR:45). The event takes on extra significance in the hockey calendar as not only do the winners rightfully call themselves champions of Asia but it is a qualifying event for the FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup 2023, Bhubaneswar - Rourkela.

If anyone doubts the passion and excitement surrounding this event, then they only have to tune into watch the opening day's clash between India and Pakistan. Expect a high tempo game with both sets of players

leaving absolutely nothing in the tank as they resume their traditional hockey-centred rivalry. Both India and Pakistan have a proud history at this event, having both won medals on nine of their 10 appearances to date. It is Korea, however, who has the most gold medals, having emerged as continental champions on four occasions

This will be the 11th edition of the Men's Asia Cup, the first time the competition was held was back in 1982, when Pakistan won the first of three consecutive gold medals, beating India into second place on each occasion. In recent years, since the turn of the century, India and Korea have dominated the gold medal positions. India is the current reigning champion, they beat Malaysia 2-1 in the 2017 final, with Pa-

**DNA** 

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Inter

Provincial Coordination (IPC) Eh-

san-ur-Rehman Mazari Friday attend-

ed a meeting of the heads of tourism

administrations of the Shanghai Co-

operation Organisation (SCO) mem-

ber states. The minister, who is on a

visit to Uzbekistan to attend the SCO

Summit also met with that country's

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of

Tourism and Sports Aziz Abdulkhaki-

mov, said a press release issued here.

He also attended a meeting of heads

of ministries, responsible for the de-

velopment of physical culture and

sports in SCO member states. He said

it was welcome that the SCO had a

comprehensive view of international

relations, including not only security

and defence but also culture, sports

and tourism, which were often over-

looked by regional organizations. "We

need to continue the exchange and co-

operation to deepen relationships and

mutual trust between our people," he

added. He said that since becoming a

member in 2017, Pakistan had always

een committed to the Shanghai spirit

kistan emerging bronze medal winners after they defeated Korea.

Of the participating teams, India, Bangladesh, Malaysia and Pakistan have competed in all ten editions, while for hosts Indonesia this is a first appearance. The Indonesian team will be coming into the event on a confident high after they won bronze at the Asian Games Qualifier, which took place just a week ago. At the same event, Oman defeated Bangladesh in the final, so both of those teams will also be competition-ready. One team who will be grateful for a return to international competition is Malaysia. The team has not participated in an official event since the Olympic Qualifiers in November 2019. The Speedy Tigers missed the Men's Asian Champi-

Uzbekistan: IPC minister

attends SCO Summit

platform to enhance cooperation with

all SCO member states in the areas of

politics, economics, security and peo-

"Pakistan is ready to showcase its di-

verse sports which include not only

modern sports but also traditional

sports which are unique to our coun-

try," he said. "Pakistan's topography

makes it an ideal destination for moun-

taineering and adventure sports. We

are ready to cooperate with all SCO

Pakistan trade deficit

due to structural flaws

"It seeks to make the best use of this member countries in these games,"he

ple-to-people and cultural exchanges.

ons Trophy in December 2022.

The takes place at the same stadium that hosted the Asian Games 2018 hockey competition. It is a venue that the Japanese players will look forward to returning to - both the men's and women's national teams were victorious in 2018 at the Asian Games. The opening day of action begins with Malaysia versus Oman. Korea will then face Bangladesh before Japan welcome Indonesia to the event. The finale of day one is the aforementioned match between India and Pakistan. There are three qualifying spots for the FIH Hockey Men's World Cup on offer at this event, although if pre-tournament favourites India come in the top three, they will already have qualified as host nation so the fourth-place team will also qualify. - APP

## Long march...

#### From Page 01

nation, he would wish they [PML-N] stayed in power for more months so that people curse the as well as those "who brought them to power". He said a wave of inflation is on its way because when the rupee depreciates, "it has an impact on everything". "If they stay in power longer, they will make Pakistan into Sri Lanka. That's why I demand an election date as soon as possible and dissolution of assemblies."

## Pakistan to...

#### From Page 01

happening is very limited," he said. He said that India ternational laws and resolu-Nations regarding Indian Ilistan's humanitarian crisis, the Foreign Minister called forts to address Afghan crisis. He said that internationrole in resolving the issue.

has openly violated the intions passed by the United legally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir by taking illegal and aggressive measures in occupied territory. He said the solution to the Kashmir issue is essential for peace and stability in the South Asian region. about Afghanfor joint and collective efal community must play its

## Pak-IMF...

## From Page 01

discussed the programme to privatise power plants. The schedule for privatisation of state-owned enterprises has also been shown to the IMF. While Pakistan's leadership has agreed to most of the conditions of the international lending body, sources, however, revealed that they have sought concession on a hike in the policy rate, citing its negative impact on business activities as a major reason. The central bank is scheduled to announce the monetary policy for the next

month on May 23 (Monday).

## Briefing on...

#### From Page 01 and interest in deepening

linkages with Central Asia, the Middle East, and the East Asian region as envisaged under the Vision East Asia policy. She emphasized that CPEC had added a new dimension in the Pakistan-China All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership, which was based on mutual understanding and respect. Pakistan welcomes development partners and enterprises from around the world to strengthen investment and trade linkages and consider opportunities in Special Economic Zones (SEZs). Thanking the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and relevant Government departments for the briefing, the heads of diplomatic missions underscored abiding mutual interest in enhanced economic cooperation between Pakistan and ASEAN member countries.

## No one...

## From Page 01

institutions through fake twitter accounts, you tubers and bloggers during its four year rule. Soon record would be presented in the House in that regard, she added. The minister said PTV fee had been collected through electricity bills since 2004 and it was a very transparent process. PTV received an amount of over Rs 5.94 billion through electricity billing from PEPCO and K-Electric during the current fiscal vear till February, she added.

## Djokovic, Nadal, Alcaraz in same half at Paris

MONITORING DESK

PARIS: Defending champion Novak Djokovic, 13-time winner Rafael Nadal and new teenage star Carlos Alcaraz were drawn in the same half of the French Open on Thursday. World number one Djokovic and Nadal, ranked five, are seeded to meet as early as the quarter-finals. Alcaraz, 19, is bidding to become just the eighth teenager to win a Grand Slam men's title. He could face either Djokovic or Nadal, who holds a record 21 majors, in the semi-finals in a top-heavy draw for the second Grand Slam of the season. "I am very motivated to play my best tennis," said two-time French Open champion and 20-time major winner Djokovic.

"In Paris, I always play very strong. Last year, it was the toughest major that I had won." Djokovic had to twice come from two sets down last year to beat Lorenzo Musetti in the last-16 and Stefanos Tsitspas in the final having also beaten Nadal from a set behind in a bruising semi-final.

"Musetti, Rafa, Tsitsipas every match lasted more than three hours. It was exhausting but I loved the outcome." Djokovic, who celebrates his 35th birthday on Sunday, the opening day at Roland Garros, faces 94thranked Yoshihito Nishioka of Japan in the first round. Djokovic defeated Nishioka in straight sets in the Australian Open third round in 2020. He will be fired up to defend his title having been deported from Melbourne in January because of his re-

fusal to get vaccinated.

Nadal starts against Australia's Jordan Thompson as he looks to extend his French Open record of only three defeats in 108 matches at the tournament since his title-winning debut in 2005. Thompson, ranked at 82, made the third round in Paris in 2019 before losing to Juan Martin del Potro. Nadal arrived at Roland Garros looking to shake off the recurrence of a long-term foot injury which saw him limp to an early defeat in Rome last week where Djokovic claimed a sixth title in the Italian capital.



## Hamburg close in on Bundesliga return

BERLIN: Hamburg have one foot back in the Bundesliga after earning a 1-0 win at Hertha Berlin in Thursday's relegation/promotion play-off, first leg thanks to a speculative strike by midfielder Ludovit Reis. Reis' winner at Berlin's Olympic Stadium gives Hamburg, who were relegated from the top flight in 2018, the edge ahead of Monday's home second leg. "It doesn't matter who scores or how the ball goes in," Reis told Sky. "The main thing is we have to stay positive and keep the focus for Monday." In front of a sell-out crowd of 76,000, Hertha looked to have taken the lead when Algeria striker Ishak Belfodil headed into the bottom corner, but Maximilian Mittelstaedt was offside when he put in the cross. Reis, a Netherlands Under-21 midfielder who also qualifies for Slovakia, broke the deadlock with a speculative cross-cum-shot to the far post which looped over Hertha goalkeeper Oliver Christensen on 57 minutes. - Agencies

## WAQAR HUSSAIN

he trade balance is a metric that represents a country's competitive power; the lower the trade deficit, the more competitive a country is and the faster its economy grows. The global trends of trade movement and policies have a significant impact on international trade, economics, and economic growth. Pakistan has had a trade deficit since 1947, with the exception of three years. Pakistan had a 125-million-rupee surplus in 1947-1948, owing to a large quantity of export. Pakistan's trade surplus in 1950-1951 was Rs. 176 million, owing to extra cotton and jute exports from East Pakistan (Bangladesh) and the Korean War. The devaluation of the currency (Pak Rupees) from Rs. 4.76 to Rs. 11 per dollar was the cause of the surplus in 1971-1972. In 1972, there was a surplus of Rs. 124 million. Pakistan's trade deficit widened dra-

matically to \$3.64 billion in March 2022, up 12 percent from the same month the previous fiscal year, according to the latest figures released on

Saturday. Pakistan's foreign trade model has numerous problems that make it difficult to maintain long-term export increases. It also has weaknesses that make keeping import growth in line with export growth and GDP growth challenging. As a result, we occasionally see imports expand too quickly while exports develop too slowly or remain stable. When the trade gap grows, officials strive to find quick fixes. However, structural problems worsen over time. Uncertainty lingers. And, every few years, the economy must bear the cost of an unexpected increase in the trade deficit. One of the main reasons Pakistan has failed to build a viable international trade model in the last two decades is that it has not fully embraced a key fact: There is no way around increasing GDP growth through increased foreign trade rather than the home economy. It is vital to acknowledge the growing relevance of foreign trade in economic growth before building a sustainable international trade strategy. Instead of arbitrarily limiting imports, governments should focus on enabling sectors to absorb additional imports in order to produce high-value-added exportable

Pakistan's international trade model is that our industrial base is limited, and we do not manufacture a large number of consumer items that could be produced domestically with modest technological and skill development. Mobile phones can now be manufactured and exported in the country. This could have been done much sooner and would have aided in the increase of merchandise exports. Pakistan's export approach should have been structured to encourage technological indigenization through international partnership. Pakistan's exports are stagnating due to a lack of competitiveness and value addition in services and goods. Similarly, the government should take governmental steps to increase the volume of foreign direct investment. One of the key causes of economic instability is the continuous depreciation of the Pakistani rupee and wild fluctuations in the currency rate. Pakistan's economy is also import-dependent, which increases local spending and thus the country's trade deficit.

added Mazari also visited the Paki-

stani Embassy in Tashkent and met

with Pakistani tour operators to dis-

cuss their issues. Besides, he met

Pakistan's Ambassador to Uzbekistan

Ali Asad Gilani, Member National As-

sembly Rana Qasim Noon, Director

General Pakistan Sports Board Col

(retd) Muhammad Asif Zaman, Joint

Secretaries of the Ministry of IPC Riaz

Ahmed and Fayyaz-ul-Haq and Direc-

tor Muhammad Abrar are also accom-

goods. Another structural issue with

The writer is a student of SZABIST

## **Biochemical warfare effect on economy** my, nearly bankrupting it. Pakistan's econo-

CH. MUHAMMAD JUNAID KHALID

iological weapons are germs like distributed purposely to cause sickness and death in human beings, animals or plants," according to the World Health Organization (WHO). "Ebola or Lassa viruses (which) were utilized as biological agents" which are included by WHO in this categorv. Bioterrorism is defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as "the deliberate release of bacteria, viruses or any other organisms with the potential to sicken or kill humans, animals, or crops." The expansion of the COVID-19 disease has had a negative impact on economic growth, travel, and international trade of all kinds. Speculation has centered on Saudi Arabia's aim to maintain high oil prices and Russia's goal to expand its presence on the global oil market.

Oil price swings have been highlighted as a major cause of economic downturns and negative growth. An increase in oil prices in rupees might result in a significant drop in revenue, especially for countries whose economies are strongly dependent on oil and export. The influence of oil price rate fluctuation on economic growth is determined by whether a country is an oil im-

porting KSA country or not. Low-income Because of high taxes in the form of petroleum levies and high costs, commodities from across the border. Oil consumption in fiscal

2020-21 was 16.36 million mt. down from 18.31 million mt the previous fiscal year. Pakistan's gasoline consumption fell slightly in the fiscal year 2020-21, from 7.351 million mt to 7.316 million mt. Diesel consumption fell by 9%, while furnace oil sales fell by 36% to 1.926 million mt last year. When mortality is used as a proxy for the

burden of this infectious illness, the influence of COVID-19 stock returns became more obvious. The long-term price of Brent oil remains higher than the short-term price. To put it another way, a study found that price differences between contracts for delivery now and six months from now have no sign of abating.

Market instability might be to blame for low oil and stock returns. According to figures from Pakistan's Ministry of Finance, the country's GDP fell by 0.4 percent in fiscal 2020-2021. The government imposed a statewide lockdown to battle the spread of the coronavirus, which led in the closure of thousands of businesses across the country, resulting in negative growth in the industrial sector. It also had a detrimental influence on the transportation industry's fuel demand. Even though Pakistan's economy was sputtering before the COVID-19 breakout. the country was not on the verge of collapse. The pandemic, on the other hand, has had a disastrous impact on the country's econo-

my is unable to withstand the tremendous disruption produced by the epidemic, even though practically all countries have been significantly impacted. Pakistan was forced to seek an Extended Fund Facility (EFF) programmed from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) some months before the outbreak, in July 2021, due to its twin deficit concerns, namely the fiscal and current account deficits. Using strict import controls and a massive devaluation, the country was able to reduce the current account deficit (CAD) by more than 70% in the first seven months of FY 2019-20. Because of this, economic growth plummeted from 5.6 percent in 2018 to 3.3 percent in 2021. Absent a pandemic, it was expected to drop much lower, at 2.4%, by 2020. Even though tax collections fell well short of expectations, the government cut development spending to show a positive primary balance, which was a requirement for participation in the IMF programme. This allowed the deficit to grow unabated. Expenditure pressure is also expected to rise soon. OPEC Crude Oil has a role in both situations. At 32 million barrels per day in 2024, demand for OPEC crude oil will rise, then drop to 31 million

barrels per day in 2025. The writer is a student of SZABIST Is-

# virus, bacteria, fungus or other poisons that are developed and

countries in Saudi Arabia are comparable in terms of energy supply and consumption, and oil demand is rising. Exports and exchange rates are in the same boat. Most of these countries have modest levels of services and exports. There was a 34.9% drop in crude oil exports and 68.1% drop in petroleum products and 27.22% drops in petroleum crude top naphtha exports. Travel, business, IT, and religious tourism all benefit from the country's booming economy due to the country's reliance on the oil industry. Oil prices are directly linked to inflation. The economic instability in Covid-19 resulted in a dramatic decline in demand and price for crude oil and industrial metals. When the economy returned to normal following the closure, we expected demand for gasoline was increased. Better agriculture economics, lower interest rates, and a 2.1 percent real GDP growth in the 2021-22 fiscal year were all likely to boost demand. Demand for gasoline and diesel would rise in the current fiscal year, despite forecasts for oil prices to rebound and reduced economic growth, which might restrict the growth rate of oil consumption. The cost of gasoline and other fuels will continue to grow.



## **Briefs**

## Biden approves \$691M TOW missile sale to Egypt

WASHINGTON: The Biden administration notified Congress on Thursday that it has approved a prospective \$691 million sale of anti-tank missiles to Egypt. The sale, if it is finalized, would include 5,070 TOW 2A Radio Frequency (RF) Missiles, spare parts, tools, test equipment and training, according to the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA).

"This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a Major Non-NA-TO Ally that continues to be an important strategic partner in the Middle East," the agency said in a statement. The sale will help Egypt replenish its existing stockpiles and the TOW missiles will be used for counter-terrorism operations and border security operations, according

The state of Arizona-based Raytheon Missiles & Defense will be the sale's primary contractor. The notification to lawmakers sets off a 30-day legislative review period in which Congress can pass a joint resolution disapproving the sale, but it has never been able to successfully block a transaction, according to the Congressional Research Service. - Agencies

## Belgium lowers voting age to 16

#### MONITORING DESK

BRUSSELS: Belgian residents from the age of 16 will be able to vote in the European elections as the federal parliament approved lowering the voting age. Over 283,000 additional Belgian and EU citizens residing in the country can cast their votes on the composition of the European Parliament in 2024 after the decision of the Belgian federal parliament adopted late Thursday. "By giving young people the opportunity to actively participate in our democracy, we allow them to make their voices heard and we further stimulate their interest in politics," **Interior Minister Annelies** Verlinden said in a statement, calling the decision

"a historic step." The young people have to first register for the vote, and in line with the constitutions, they will be obliged to participate in elections afterwards. The decision only concerns European elections because lowering the general voting age for federal and local referenda would have required constitutional change and a two-third majority in the parliament. Belgium is the fourth country in Europe that allows young people to have their say in European elections after Austria, Greece, and Malta.

## Occupation forces injure 4 **Palestinians**

## WEB DESK

QALQILIA, Friday, May 20, 2022 (WAFA) - At least four Palestinians were injured by Israeli occupation forces today during the weekly protest against Israeli settlement construction in the village of Kafr Qaddum, in the West Bank province of Qalqilia. Morad Shtewi, a local anti-occupation activist, told WAFA that Israeli soldiers attacked the protesters with rubber-coated rounds and tear gas canisters, injuring four of them by rubber-coated rounds and causing many cases of suffocation from gas inhalation. All of the injured protesters were treated at the scene of the clashes. For many years, villagers from Kafr Qaddum and neighboring villages have been protesting every Friday against illegal Israeli settlement construction. Between 500,000 and 600,000 Israelis live in Jewish-only settlements across the occupied Palestinian Territories in violation of

international law. - APP

# Business / World



VATICAN CITY: Ambassador Aamir Shouket presented credentials to Pope Francis as Ambassador of Pakistan to the Holly See, in the Vatican City. - DNA

# Baku prepared for coop with Yerevan to bolster peace

**DNA** 

BAKU: Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov has reiterated Azerbaijan's commitment to cooperation with Armenia to bolster regional peace and security, Azernews reports, citing the ministry. Bayramov made the remark at the 132nd session of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CoE) in Turin, Italy on May 20. The minister emphasized that Azerbaijan adheres to international norms of law and principles, such as state sovereignty and territorial integrity within internationally recognized boundaries, and that these principles are the foundation of international peace, security, and stability.

Further, Bayramov briefed the participants in the meeting on the

Japan pledges

\$2.1m for IAEA

Foreign Desk

TOKYO: Japan has pledged nearly \$2.1 million to support

activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

Japan's Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi and IAEA Di-

rector General Rafael Mariano Grossi said at a joint press

conference Thursday in Tokyo after a meeting that they

agreed to continue cooperation in ensuring the security of

nuclear power plants in Ukraine, where Russia continues

its war. Japan is funding the dispatch of IAEA experts and

necessary equipment for the Ukrainian nuclear facilities,

said Hayashi. Grossi expressed his gratitude to Japan for its

efforts to ensure the safety of Ukrainian nuclear plants. As

a part of his visit to Japan, Grossi was also briefed on the

status of a plan to release radioactive water into the sea at

the tsunami-wrecked Fukushima nuclear plant.

to ensure the safety of nuclear power plants in Ukraine.

steps taken to normalize relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia. The top diplomat stated that Azerbaijan continues its efforts to improve ties with Armenia, noting that the April 6 meeting of Azerbaijani and Armenian leaders in Brussels, which was mediated and attended by the President of the EU Council, had a positive impact on the process. Following the meeting, the foreign ministers of the two countries were instructed to start drafting a peace agreement, and agreed to establish a Joint Border Commission on delimitation and demarcation of the border between the two countries, he added. Welcoming the organization of a meeting between the Azerbaijani and Armenian civil society representatives at the initiative of the Council of Europe Secretary-General, Bayramov underlined that the organization could



contribute to the implementation of confidence-building measures between the two nations that are vital to

baijan is facing, the minister named the threat of landmines and the lack of information about 4,000 citizens,

Bayramov called on the international community to actively support and contribute to overcoming these problems for the sake of lasting peace and stability in the region. Noting that Azerbaijan is committed to cooperation with the member states and bodies of the Council of Europe, the minister noted that during the visit of the secretary-general to Azerbaijan in April 2022, cooperation with Azerbaijan was widely discussed. The Council of Europe presented a new action plan for Azerbaijan in 2022-2025 that has laid a new foundation for joint action. The minister said that during the presidency of Ireland, Azerbaijan will continue its results-oriented cooperation in line with the priorities of the Council of Europe on the basis of common values.

## this effect. Among the problems Azerwho went missing during the war in Zaheer Janjua assumes charge as Pakistan's HC to Canada

**DNA** 

OTTAWA: Zaheer Aslam Janjua has assumed his new responsibilities as Pakistan's High Commissioner to Canada. Before assuming his assignment in Canada, Ambassador Janjua had been serving as Pakistan's Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg and the European Union since 7th September. 2019. Previous to that, he served at the headquarters as Additional Secretary for Europe as well as Pakistan's Ambassador to the Russian Federation from 2014 to 2016.

Janjua vowed to work for strengthing the bilateral partnership between Pakistan and Canada and also expressed his resolve to serve the Pakistani diaspora in Canada with full commitment. As a career diplomat, Ambassador Zaheer A. Janjua joined the Foreign Service of Pakistan in 1988. He has

held various diplomatic assignments in Pakistan's bilateral and multilateral missions including Amman (2007-2011), Moscow (2002-2005) Geneva (1999-2002) and Tashkent (1992-1996). At the headquarters he held the posts of Additional Secretary



(2016-2019), Chief of State Protocol (2013), Director General (2011-2012), Director (2005-2007) and Section Officer (1990-1992 and 1996-1999).

KARACHI: Turkish Minister of National Defense Hulusi Akar visits the mausoleum of Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan. - DNA

## Kazakhstan raises level of flight safety

assessment of the current situation of flight safety in Kazakhstan will be published by the EU in early June 2022, Trend reports citing the press service of the Civil Aviation Committee of Kazakh Industry and Infrastructural Development Ministry. The EASA conference was held in Brussels with the participation of the heads of aviation authorities from 27 EU countries, on May 17, which heard a report on Kazakhstan's situation in the sphere of civil aviation. Kazakh delegation included: Chairman of Civil

Ministry of industry and infrastructure development Talgat Lastayev, Adviser to the Minister of Industry and Infrastructure Development Azat Bekturov, Director General of "Aviation Administration of Kazakhstan" JSC Katalin Radu, representatives of Kazakh Embassy in Belgium and Air Astana airline group. Kazakh delegation reported on the progress and measures taken by the country in the sphere of aviation safety and also informed about the independent audit of the ICAO. - Agencies

# **Saving money in recession**

MUHAMMAD FAKHAR ABBAS

global recession and an eventual market crash are just around the corner. After one of the most profitable bull-run it is high time for a trend shift and understandable that the subsequent downturn will cut fast and slash deep. Inflation will spin out of control and your money is at risk. Pakistan has the third highest inflation in the world, clocking in 13.37 percent in April 2022. Right at the end of 2021 Turkish lira lost half of its value in a matter of days against US Dollar. Last month Srilanka defaulted on its sovereign debt payments and is cut off from global trade. Pakistan is stuck between a rock and a hard place and a fate similar to that of Türkiye or Srilanka awaits if a solution cannot be found sooner rather than later. The IMF represents a rock, which wants Pakistan to stop subsidizing oil and

start taxing it. The hard place is the sheer unwillingness of the government to do the bidding of the IMF because it would translate in immense negative public opinion and would be akin to political suicide.

cies is that even if both countries are performing horribly, whichever country performs the worst comes out on the losing end and Pakistan is major contender for the worst performing country in the current global down trend.

### "The third option is a lot more risky and potentially more rewarding. This article is for educational purposes and should be considered as financial advice"

In these dark days it is essential to know just where to bury your money so that at the very least it would retain its original value or if your risk tolerance is sufficiently high enough even turn a profit out of your investment. There are three options at your disposal: Exchange your Pakistani Rupee and be done with it.

GBP, EURO, JPY, USD are the most stable options out there. The secret of foreign currenExchanging your money for a foreign currency is double-edged however; as it would mean that you will be actively contributing to the manifold economical crises of Pakistan. Buy gold and hoard it - you can use the traditional method and buy it from a jeweler or if you do not want to assume the responsibility of your precious metal's safety then you can use the government approved and recommended

Meta Trader 4 app and buy your gold virtually. Buy Bitcoin and Hold on for Dear Life. Bitcoin is classified as a high-risk asset and is powered by the block-chain technology. Tech based markets generally perform worse than the traditional markets during the downturn but it also means that it will be a bargain if you do decide to invest in it and on the plus side technological markets usually are the first to ones to recover. Bitcoin is, at the time of writing almost 60 percent down from its all time high and could very well go all the way down to 80 to 90 percent and hence an opportune time to buy and hold it until the next all time high. The first two options will for the most part help you in retaining the value of money and safest. The third option is a lot more risky and potentially more rewarding. This article is for educational purposes and should be considered as financial advice.

The writer is student of SZABIST

#### **Armenia shells Azerbaijani** military positions

News Desk

BAKU: Positions of the Azerbaijani army have come under fire by the Armenian armed forces in the direction of the liberated Kalbajar region near the border with Armenia, Azernews reports, citing the Defense Ministry. On May 19, in the afternoon, the units of the Armenian armed forces stationed in Basarkechar region's Ashaghi Shorzha settlement near the state border fired at Azerbaijani army positions in the direction of Kalbajar's Yellija settlement, using small arms,

the ministry said. The Azerbaijani army units took adequate retaliatory measures to suppress the opposite side. Armenia periodically shells Azerbaijani military positions located on its liberated territories. Since early May Azerbaijani positions have multiple times come under Armenian fire. The previous truce violation took place on May 18 in the same direction.

In the same vein, the army's engineering troops continue the engineering activities in Azerbaijan's de-occupied lands, the Defense Ministry said in a separate report on May 19. Units and subunits of the Azerbaijani army are demining and upgrading the roads to enable safe and uninterrupted vehicle movement, working on fortifying combat positions and trenches, as well as creating new supply routes for the units stationed in complicated terrain.As a result of the demining activities carried out by the engineer-sapper units in the liberated lands on May 1-19, over 950 hectares of land were totally cleaned of mines and explosive ordnance. "To date, more than 17,200 hectares of area in the liberated territories have been cleared of mines and unexploded ordnance by the engineer-sapper units. In total, more than 6,000 anti-personnel mines, more than 2,100 anti-tank mines, and more than 9,400 unexploded ordnances have been detected and neutralized,"

the ministry said. The major efforts in the liberated regions are focused on demining settlements, agricultural fields, highways, and infrastructural facilities. Over 140 km of new supply roads have been payed for the units of the armed forces stationed in mountainous and challenging terrain. Other vital efforts such as identifying and neutralizing mines and explosive ordnance, as well as engineering support in the liberated lands are continuing.

## Australia confirms 1st case of monkeypox

SYDNEY: Australia on Friday confirmed its first case of monkeypox from the Victoria state while another one is under investigation in Sydney, officials said.

The affected man, 30, developed mild symptoms before returning to Melbourne on May 16 and immediately sought medical attention, the state Health Ministry said in a statement.

"Testing has confirmed that he has the virus, and he remains in isolation at The Alfred with mild symptoms,' said the ministry. Monkeypox is a rare virus that starts with flu-like symptoms, such as fever, headaches and muscle aches, and pains. It causes a distinctive blistering rash and swollen lymph nodes. Cases have recently been identified in the UK, Spain, Portugal, the US, Italy, Sweden, France, and Canada.

Meanwhile, the Health Ministry of New South Wales also reported that a man in his 40s, who recently returned from Europe, has been isolated at home due to symptoms clinically compatible with monkeypox. "NSW Health Ministry has issued a clinician alert to GPs (general practitioners) and hospitals across the state and has also been in contact with sexual health services to increase awareness of the cases identified overseas and to provide advice on diagnosis and referral. We will be speaking with GPs about this issue again today," said NSW chief health officer Kerry Chant. - Agencies



# Islamahar POST



**WHO calls** 

emergency meeting over

monkeypox

Monitoring Desk

LONDON: The World Health Organization was due to hold an emergency

meeting on Friday to dis-

cuss the recent outbreak of

monkeypox, a viral infection

more common to west and

central Africa, after more

than 100 cases were con-

firmed or suspected in Eu-

rope. In what Germany de-

scribed as the largest-ever

outbreak in Europe, cases

have now been confirmed in

at least five countries - the

United Kingdom, Spain Por-

SATURDAY, MAY 21, 2022 | WWW.ISLAMABADPOST.COM.PK

## **Briefs**

## Kaira calls on Ch Shujaat to inquire his health

**DNA** 

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Qamar Zaman Kaira called on PML-Q Chief Chaudhary Shujaat Hussain. Qamar Zaman Kaira inquired about the health of Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, said a press release. Moreover, the press release also stated that both leaders discussed the current political situation of the country. Meanwhile, PML-Q Chief congratulated Qamar Zaman Kaira on taking over the portfolio of Adviser to PM on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan. Federal Minister Chaudhry Salik Hussain was also present in the meeting.

#### Macron to shuffle govt ahead of polls

**News Desk** 

PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron is to reshuffle his government on Friday ahead of parliamentary elections next month, which could include changes at the heavyweight foreign and defence ministries. The 44-year-old head of state, re-elected in late April, named former labour minister Elizabeth Borne as prime minister on Monday, making her the first woman to fill the role in more than 30 years. Several days of media speculation about the composition of the wider cabinet will end later Friday when the rest of the government is

announced. "Obviously we're not dragging our feet. I can assure you that we are working on it very closely." Borne said on Thursday when asked about ministers. The presidency confirmed on Friday morning that an announcement would be made later in the day by Macron's chief of staff. Such changes in the middle of the ongoing conflict in Europe would raise eyebrows, though Macron has taken the lead on France's response the crisis. The centrist needs a parliamentary majority in elections next month to push through his domestic reform agenda which includes welfare and pension overhauls, as well as more tax cuts.

## PM Shehbaz to appear before FIA court today

**DNA** 

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has decided to appear before the Federal Investigation Agency Court in Lahore today. Federal Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar on Friday informed the media that Prime Minister Shehbaz had decided to appear before the FIA court tomorrow adding that the premier had directed all other party leaders and ministers to face cases against them in courts. He said that Prime Minister Shehbaz had expressed his full confidence in judiciary and believed that he would get justice from courts. The law minister also made it clear that no high-profile case had been rescinding.

The Supreme Court on Thursday barred the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) and the Investigation Federal Agency (FIA) from withdrawing the high-profile cases from courts. The apex court also slapped a ban on new appointments and transfers of officials involved in high-profile cases, NAB cases as well as those being heard by special courts.

The apex court issued notices to NAB Chairman Justice (retd) Javed Iqbal, FIA director general and the interior secretary while hearing a suo motu case relating to "per-ceived interference" by "persons in authority" in investigations and legal proceedings of criminal matters against the government officials.

## Alleged genocide

# Sri Lanka categorically rejects Canadian Parliament motion

Govt reiterates that the term genocide has specific legal connotations and has never been used in relation to the Sri Lankan conflict by the United Nations

**DNA** 

COLOMBO: The Government of Sri Lanka notes with regret the adoption of a motion in the Canadian Parliament on the alleged genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka and recognizing May 18 as Tamil Genocide Remembrance Day. The Government categorically rejects the blatantly false allegation of genocide contained in the parliamentary motion with reference to Sri Lanka, which contradicts the official position of the Canadian Government, i.e., that "it has not made a finding that there was genocide in Sri Lanka.' It is recalled that the Canadian Govern-

WEB DESK

KÖNIGSWINTER, GERMANY: Ger-

many's finance minister on Friday

ruled out any joint EU borrowing to

help cover the massive cost of rebuild-

ing war-scarred Ukraine, after the idea

was floated by top European officials.

After chairing G7 talks in Germany

that saw countries pledge nearly \$20

billion (19 billion euros) in aid to

Ukraine, Christian Lindner said there

would be no repeat of the EU's land-

mark post-pandemic recovery fund,

known as "Next Generation", that is

"If there is any consideration of do-

ing something like 'Next Generation

EU' again, then the answer would

have to be no. This was a one-off op-

being financed by common debt.

ment has been briefed at the highest level of the actual situation in Sri Lanka during the end stage of the conflict, which entailed the conduct of a humanitarian operation by the Sri Lankan Government to save its population in the former conflict zones, while taking appropriate action to defeat LTTE terrorism. Today, 13 years since the end of the conflict, Sri Lanka has made significant progress in its process of reconciliation which is ongoing, and on which the Canadian Government has been regularly apprised.

The Government reiterates that the term genocide has specific legal connotations and has never been used in relation to the

Germany rejects pooling

EU debt to rebuild Ukraine

portunity," Lindner told reporters in

Koenigswinter. Top European Union

officials earlier this week urged mem-

ber states to be ambitious in helping

Ukraine rebuild after the war, possibly

using the pandemic fund as a model

With the war still raging, the extent of

Ukraine's reconstruction needs is not

known, but the European Commission

believes the damage already done is

already in the hundreds of billions of

euros. "There is a time, sooner or lat-

er, when we will have to look at fund-

ing on a European scale as we did for

Covid," Commission Vice President

Frans Timmermans said in Brussels

In a document reviewing ways the

EU could help Ukraine, the Com-

mission said the rescue of Ukraine

could be paid through added contri-

on Wednesday.

Sri Lankan conflict by the United Nations, nor by any of its inter-governmental bodies including the UN Human Rights Council. It is observed that the term is arbitrarily and erroneously applied to the Sri Lankan situation only by a minority of politically motivated anti-Sri Lanka elements in the diaspora inimical to Sri Lanka's interests.

It is a matter of particular regret that such misguided action is undertaken by the Canadian Parliament at a time when the Sri Lankan people are faced with enormous challenges emanating from the economic crisis in the country, and therefore deserving of constructive engagement by the international community.

nadian Parliament on Wednesday unanimously adopted the motion to recognise May 18 as the Tamil Genocide Remembrance Day in tribute to the victims of the 2009 civil war in Sri Lanka. The motion was forwarded by Liberal MP Gary Anandasangaree, who said it is a result of a contribution by the Tamil communitv. survivors, and loved ones, Canadian Press reported. Taking to Twitter, Cana-

#### dian Defence Minister Anita Anand said that the recognition is to "honour and remember the victims who tragically lost their lives during the 26 years of armed conflict in Sri Lanka." Russia to cut gas to Finland today:

Finnish company HELSINKI: Russian supply of natural gas to Finland will be cut on Saturday morning, Finnish state-owned energy company Gasum said Friday, after the Nordic country refused to pay supplier Gazprom in rubles. "It is highly regrettable that natural gas supplies under our supply contract will now be halted," Gasum CEO Mika Wiljanen said in a statement. However, we have been carefully preparing for this situation" and "there will be no disruptions in the gas transmission network," Wiljanen said.

The supply contract will end on Saturday at 7:00 am (0400 GMT), Gasum said. In April, Gazprom Export demanded that future payments in the supply contract be made in rubles instead of euros, but Gasum rejected the demand and announced on Tuesday it was taking the

Queried about the matter, Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov on Friday referred reporters to Gaz-

issue to arbitration.

prom for "details" but said that "it is obvious that nobody is going to deliver anything for free." Natural gas accounts for about eight percent of Finland's energy consumption, most of which comes from Russia. In efforts to mitigate the risks of relying on Russian

energy exports, the Finnish government earlier on Friday announced that the country had signed a 10year lease agreement for an LNG (liquefied natural gas) terminal ship with US-based Excelerate Energy. "The LNG terminal will make it possible for us to break free from Russian gas," Finance Minister Annika Saarikko told reporters. - APP

## Biden begins Asia trip in South Korea

PYEONGTAEK, SOUTH KOREA: US President Joe Biden arrived in South Korea Friday, his first Asia trip as US leader, aiming to cement ties with regional security allies despite growing fears of a North Korean nuclear test. Biden wants the trip to boost a years-long US pivot to Asia, where rising Chinese commercial and military power is undercutting Washington's dominance. He received a warm wel-

come from South Korea's new President Yoon Suk-yeol, but there is growing concern that North Korea's unpredictable leadership could conduct a nuclear test while he is in the region. Speaking at a huge Sam-

semiconductor factory in Pyeongtaek, alongside Yoon, Biden described the advanced chips manufactured there as "a wonder of innovation" and crucial to the world's economy. - APP

## tugal, Germany and Italy- as well as the United States. Canada and Australia.

First identified in monkeys, the disease typically spreads through close contact and has rarely spread outside Africa, so this series of cases has triggered concern. However, scientists do not expect the outbreak to evolve into a pandemic like COVID-19, given the virus does not spread as easily as SARS-COV-2. Monkeypox is usually a mild viral illness, characterised by symptoms of fever as well as a distinctive bumpy rash. "With several confirmed cases in the United Kingdom, Spain and Portugal, this is the largest and most widespread outbreak of monkeypox ever seen in Europe," said Germany's armed forces' medical service, which detected its first case in the country on Friday.

#### Musk denies sexual harassment allegations

WEB DESK

CALIFORNIA: Billionaire Elon Musk took to Twitter late on Thursday to denounce as "utterly untrue" claims in a news report that he had sexually harassed a flight attendant on a private jet in 2016. Business Insider reported earlier on Thursday that Musk's SpaceX paid \$250,000 in 2018 to setfrom an unnamed private jet flight attendant who accused Musk of exposing himself to her. The article quoted an anonymous person who said she was a friend of the flight attendant. The friend had provided a statement as part of the private settlement process, according to the article.

"I have a challenge to this liar who claims their friend saw me 'exposed' - describe [sic] just one thing, anything at all (scars, tattoos, ...) that isn't known by the public. She won't be able to do so. because it never happened," Musk tweeted. Reuters was not able to verify the Business Insider account. Musk and SpaceX did not respond to Reuters requests for comment on the Business Insider story or on Musk's tweets.

#### Catherine Colonna named French FM

PARIS: Catherine Colonna, France's ambassador to Britain and former spokesperson for President Jacques Chirac, was named foreign minister on Friday, a move that may be aimed to win over diplomats after fractious relations with the presidency. Colonna, 66, is the second woman to take the helm of France's foreign ministry after a short stint by Michele Alliot-Marie in 2010. The seasoned diplomat has held posts in Washington and Brussels, is a former ambassador to Italy and a former secretary of state for European affairs. Her appointment may signal that President Emmanuel Macron is seeking to appease a diplomatic corps angered by his past accusations of civil servants at times working against the executive.

More recently Macron's decision to reform the diplomatic career structure has led to their unions calling for a strike next month, only the second in their history. The reform will scrap a special status for senior foreign ministry officials meaning they would fall into a broader civil service pool.

'She will be appreciated at the foreign ministry. She will reassure at a time when the ministry is facing doubts, uncertainty and the end of the diplomatic corps," said Jean de Gliniasty, former ambassador to Russia. "The foreign ministry is not in a good state psychologically." - Agencies

## UN rights chief begins China trip from Monday a years-long crackdown in the province

**DNA** 

GENEVA: The UN rights chief will travel to China's Xinjiang region next week for a visit under intense international scrutiny after demands for her to call out abuses against its Uvghur minority. After years of requesting "meaningful and unfettered" access to far-western Xinjiang, Michelle Bachelet will finally stage a six-day mission to China starting Monday, her office said. The visit, at the invitation of Beiiing, has been widely anticipated and marks the first trip to China by a UN rights chief since Louise Arbour went there in 2005.

Bachelet herself has been demanding access to all regions of China since she took office in 2018.

Putin promises to

bolster Russia's

IT security

WEB DESK

MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin said on Friday

that the number of cyber attacks on Russia by foreign

"state structures" had increased several times over

and that Russia must bolster its cyber defences by re-

ducing the use of foreign software and hardware. The

websites of many state-owned companies and news

websites have suffered sporadic hacking attempts

since Russia sent its armed forces into Ukraine on

Feb. 24, often to show information that is at odds

"Targeted attempts are being made to disable the in-

ternet resources of Russia's critical information infra-

structure," Putin said, adding that media and financial

institutions had been targeted. "Serious attacks have

been launched against the official sites of government

agencies. Attempts to illegally penetrate the corporate

networks of leading Russian companies are much more

frequent as well," he said. In a meeting with the Secu-

rity Council, Putin said that Russia would need to im-

prove information security in key sectors and switch to

with Moscow's official line on the conflict.

using domestic technology and equipment.



HALIT-COMMISSAIRE

She has repeatedly voiced concern about allegations of widespread abuses in Xinjiang but has been criticised for not taking a strong enough stance. The visit comes as rights groups pile pressure on her office to release a long-postponed report on the situation in the region. Beijing has waged in the name of stamping out terrorism and developing one of its poorest regions. But rights campaigners accuse the ruling Communist Party of widespread abuses in the name of security, saying at least one million mostly Muslim minorities have been incarcerated in "re-education camps".

butions to existing EU programmes

and boosting the EU budget. But, it

said, "given the scale of the loans

that are likely to be needed, raising

funds on behalf of the EU or with

national guarantees from member

states is among the options being

considered." The 800-billion-euro

Next Generation EU fund had to

overcome deep reticence by so-

called "frugal" member states such

as the Netherlands and Denmark to

come into being. Aware of the head-

winds the suggestion of new com-

mon debt might face, an EU official

said the commission's proposals

remained intentionally vague. "We

are inviting member states to play

with ideas and see whether there is

a willingness to go along and take

this further," the official said.

The US government and lawmakers in a number of other Western countries have labelled China's treatment of the Uyghur minority in Xinjiang "genocide". Beijing has vociferously denied the allegations, calling them the "lie of the century" and arguing that its policies have countered extremism and improved livelihoods. In March, the UN rights office announced an agreement had finally been reached on arranging a visit.

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman in a meeting with German ambassador Bernhard Schlagheck. – DNA

## 'This is not a life': Palestinians in Jenin camp a tree, now surrounded by flowers

AGENCIES

JENIN, PALESTINIAN TERRI-TORIES: Weeks of Israeli raids and clashes with Palestinians have filled residents of the flashpoint Jenin refugee camp with fear and anxiety, and a longing to "live in dignity". A hub of armed Palestinian groups, the Jenin area in the north of the occupied West Bank has been targeted by Israeli raids time and again since a wave of anti-Israeli attacks in late March. The operations to track down suspects and clashes with Palestinians have often turned deadly for both sides. Palestinian-American Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh was shot in the head and killed near the camp on May 11, while covering an Israeli raid.

"We sleep and wake to the sound of clashes, so we are worried and afraid," said 16-year-old Majd Owis. "This is not a life. We want to live in dignity and peace," added artist Fidaa Sammar. Mother of three Ahlam Benara said for weeks most of the Israeli raids, and ensuing clashes with Palestinians, have erupted in the early morning hours. "Between 7:30 and 8:30 am," just when she has to prepare her children for school. "My eight-year-old says he no longer wants to go to school because it's located near the main road," which Israeli jeeps use, she added. Israel captured the West Bank from Jordan during the 1967 Six-Day War and controls all entry points to the territory. About 475,000 Israelis live in West Bank settlements, alongside 2.9 million Palestinians - 14,000 of whom live in Ienin camp.

During the second intifada against Israeli occupation, an uprising that broke out in 2000 and lasted five years, Jenin was in the spotlight of In 2002, the violence. army besieged the camp for more

than a month amid fierce fighting that killed 52 Palestinians and 23 Israeli soldiers. Twenty years later, portraits of the Palestinians killed in clashes with Israelis over the years cover drab grey cement walls in the

camp, where residents consider them "heroes" while Israel brands them "terrorists". The army says it has launched "counter-terrorism" operations in Jenin camp to arrest suspects responsible for the wave of anti-Israeli attacks since March 22. The raids spark clashes with Palestinians punctuated by heavy gunfire. "Sometimes I have to turn the volume on the TV high to drown out the sound because it scares my (10-year-old) daughter," said Benara. "She has not been sleeping well" and lately began wetting her bed, she added. Owis, the 16-year-old, lives near the street where Abu Akleh was killed during an Israeli army raid on May 11. Outside his house stands

Mourners have also left messages of farewell such as "thank you Shireen" and "goodbye Shireen". There are also drawings of her and other Palestinian "martyrs", including the late iconic leader Yasser Arafat, on easels. Dark paint or charcoal were used for the drawings, "to show (our) sadness", said Sammar, the artist who made them. "Every home (in Ienin), has its own sad and painful story," she said, referring to residents killed in decades of violence. "The situation is frightening. We wake up to the sounds of gunfire and fear grows that Israeli army

tanks will roll in," she said.

and portraits of the well-respected

Al-Jazeera journalist.

## Published by Ansar Mahmood Bhatti, Printed at Rohani Art Press, Islamabad Ph: 051-2266165, Email: newsroomisbpost@gmail.com