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# Islamabad POST

**Indonesian President in Moscow with Zelensky's message**

Detailed News On Page-06

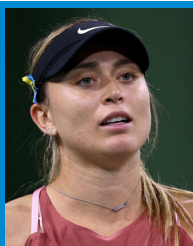
**US 'should sell' F-16s to Turkey**

Detailed News On Page-08



**Paula Badosa advances to 3rd round**

Detailed News On Page-06



## Punjab CM election LHC orders recount sans PTI dissidents

For the recounting of votes and re-election, a Punjab Assembly session will be held today at 4pm

ABID RAZA / DNA

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Thursday declared the oath of Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shehbaz as illegal and ordered recounting of votes for the election of Punjab's chief minister held on April 16, directing that the votes of 25 dissident PTI MPs be excluded from the recounting process. A five-member larger bench comprising Justice Sadaqat Ali Khan, Justice Shahid Jamil Khan, Justice Shehram Sarwar Chaudhry, Justice Sajid Mahmood Sethi and Justice Tariq Saleem Sheikh announced the eight-page verdict with a 4-1 majority. Justice Sajid Mahmood Sethi dissented with his fellow judges. The Lahore High Court (LHC) accepting the PTI's intra-court appeals declared the oath of Hamza Shehbaz as null and void. The court in its eight-page written verdict ordered the presiding officer to recount the votes polled during the election of chief minister by excluding the 25 votes of PTI rebel MPs who voted for Hamza Shehbaz on April 16 last. In the short order issued after the hearing on Thursday, the LHC instructed that votes in the election held on April 16 be recounted after excluding 25 votes of the defecting PTI lawmakers. If the required majority for Hamza — which is 186 votes in the 371-member strong house — to stay the CM is not secured, the election will be held again under Article 130(4), unless another candidate has majority votes. According to Article 130(4), in the second round of voting, a member will not require 186 votes but needs a simple majority of those "present and voting" to be elected the chief minister. The court said that Hamza Shehbaz will cease to be the chief minister if he loses the required majority after the exclusion of 25 votes by the presiding officer. For the recounting of votes and re-election,

Continued on Page 06

## PTI to approach SC against verdict

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister and PTI chairman Imran Khan on Thursday has announced to approach SC against the Lahore High Court (LHC) verdict regarding Punjab CM vote recount, media reported. Addressing a ceremony in Islamabad, Imran Khan said PTI is moving SC against LHC's verdict tomorrow. The former premier said what is happening in Punjab from last two and half months is in front of everyone, no one is bothering to take notice of the plight of the country's biggest province, he added. He reiterated that no one has trust on the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). The only way to move forward is announcement of fresh elections. Imran Khan claimed attempts are being made for pre-poll rigging in the Punjab bypolls. The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Thursday ordered recount of votes in election of Hamza Shahbaz as chief minister of Punjab, in a landmark verdict. A five-member larger bench of the high court, headed by Justice Sadaqat Ali Khan, approved petitions against the incumbent chief minister, PML-N's Hamza Shahbaz. The bench has decided the case with 4-1 on the petitions challenging the election of Hamza on April 16. Justice Sajid Mahmood Sethi dissented the majority verdict.



BAKU: Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev exchanging views with Chairman Senate Pakistan Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani, who called on him on Thursday. — DNA

## German, Spanish envoy's emotional farewell messages

“I will not see the beautiful surroundings of the Red Zone as I leave Thursday night but I am confident Pakistan will prosper and grow”, says German envoy

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of Spain Manuel Duran and Ambassador of Germany Bernard Schlagheck released rather emotional statements on the occasion of their departure from Pakistan. The Spanish embassy on its official Twitter handle recognized services of Ambassador Manuel Duran and wished him best of luck for all his future endeavors. The message says, “Manuel Duran was an excellent diplomat and warm person who will be missed by colleagues and friends all across Pakistan”. Ambassador Manuel in his brief chat with this newspaper during a farewell reception he hosted at his residence told that he would never forget Pakistan and people of Pakistan. He was all praise for the support he got from the people and Pakistani authorities. During his tenure he was able to organize a number of Spanish musical events in Islamabad and elsewhere besides other activities. The German ambassa-



Amb. Schlagheck Manuel Duran

dor bid adieu in style. During his early morning bicycle ride he took a tour of the entire Red Zone and then stopped right in front of the Parliament House where he recorded his video message. Ambassador Bernard found his stay in Pakistan extremely productive. “It has to be said without any hesitation that Pakistani people's hospitality and friendship is just remarkable”. He said trust and friendship between the two countries will always remain there. Interestingly, during my recent interaction with the German ambassador when I asked whether he will be able to pay courtesy call on the Presi-

dent of Pakistan, he told me they had requested the President but he was not sure whether he will have this opportunity. And finally he left Pakistan without meeting with the President of Pakistan. The German ambassador however was able to meet with the Chief of the Army Staff. Similarly the Spanish ambassador also left Pakistan without being able to pay a courtesy call on the President. Ambassador of Switzerland nevertheless was lucky in the sense that he had a courtesy call on the President. Diplomatic sources believe the European Union ambassadors were not received by the President because of their proverbial letter which they had written to the former Prime Minister Imran Khan in which they, according to the then government, tried to dictate the then Prime Minister to criticize the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Since Switzerland is not member of the EU therefore its ambassador was allowed a courtesy call on the President, sources further said.

## Briefs

### Always respected judiciary

DNA

LAHORE: Hamza Shahbaz, ousted from the office of Punjab chief minister by the Lahore High Court on Thursday, has said that he respects the decisions of the judiciary “as always”. Speaking to the media at his party's office in Model Town in Lahore on Thursday, he said that the verdict has put an end to the three-month-old constitutional crisis in Punjab. “The opposition had pushed the province into a constitutional crisis only to massage their egos,” the ousted Punjab chief minister said. Hamza pointed out that the people now know who tried to undermine the Constitution. When asked about his ouster, Hamza proclaimed, “Positions are temporary!” and that his objective was to help the people.

### Jalsa: PTI finalizes preparations

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Central Secretary General Asad Umar urged the people to come out of their houses on July 2 to send a strong message that Pakistan was no longer a country where governments were being changed by conspiring behind closed doors. PTI has given finishing touch to the preparations for a big and historic protest rally scheduled to be held on July 2 against back-breaking inflation and cruelties unleashed by the impertinent government. Asad Umar, in his video message on Thursday, urged the people of the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi to ensure their participation in the parade ground on Saturday evening (July 2).

## COAS meets top Qatari leadership



NEWS DESK

RAWALPINDI: Army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa said on Thursday that Pakistan and Qatar's ties, which are based on the “deep spirit of brotherhood,” are being transformed into an enduring partnership. A statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said that Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa met Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs Dr Khalid Bin Mohammed Al Attiyah

during his official tour. It said that matters of mutual interest, defence and security co-operation, and regional environment were discussed during the meeting.

“Both countries share a great history of cordial relations and a deep spirit of brotherhood, which are being transformed into an enduring partnership,” said Gen Bajwa. The ISPR said that both sides underscored the importance of further enhancing cooperation in all fields. The Qatari officials also appreciated Pakistan's continuous efforts for peace and stability in the region and pledged to keep working for better relations between the two brotherly countries.

## PTI snatched Punjab's right: Maryam

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Following the Lahore High Court's (LHC) order of recounting the votes of Punjab chief minister's election, PML-N Vice-President Maryam Nawaz Thursday berated the PTI and said that it has “snatched the right of the people of Punjab.” Earlier, the LHC ordered to recount the votes of Hamza Shahbaz's election for the CM's slot. The court directed to exclude the votes of 25 PTI dissidents. PTI had filed five separate pleas challenging the conduct of Punjab Assembly on April 16, alongside Hamza's election.

## Govt jacks up petrol price by nearly Rs15

ISLAMABAD: The government on Thursday announced a hike of Rs14.85 per litre in the price of petrol, the fourth such raise in the last 35 days, taking the cumulative amount of all hikes since May 26 to nearly Rs100. According to a notification issued by the Finance Division, petrol will now be priced at Rs248.74 after the latest hike, followed by high speed diesel at Rs276.54, kerosene oil at Rs230.20 and light diesel at Rs226.61. The new prices will come into effect from midnight tonight.

Since coming to power in April, the PML-N-led coalition government had first raised the petrol price by Rs30 on May 26, followed by another increase of Rs30 on June 2 and nearly after a fortnight on June 15, it hiked the fuel price by another by Rs24. According to a media report, the government, under the structural benchmarks, will start imposing the petroleum development levy (PDL) from July



1 (Friday) at the rate of Rs10 per litre on all products, except Rs5 per litre on high-speed diesel (HSD). The levy would then keep going up at the rate of Rs5 per month to a maximum of Rs50. Pakistan had on Tuesday received the Memorandum of Economic and Fiscal Policies (MEFP) from the IMF for the combined seventh and eighth reviews of its \$6 billion loan programme, which has been stalled since April. — DNA

## Russia abandons strategic Snake Island

Oleksii Hromov, brigadier general in Ukraine's armed forces, told a briefing that Ukrainian forces were not yet occupying the island, “but they will be, believe me”

NEWS DESK

KYIV: Russian forces abandoned the strategic Black Sea outpost of Snake Island on Thursday, in a major victory for Ukraine that could loosen the grip of Russia's blockade on Ukrainian ports. Russia's defence ministry said it had decided to withdraw from the outpost as a “gesture of goodwill” to show Moscow was not obstructing U.N. efforts to open a humanitarian corridor allowing grains to be shipped from Ukraine. Ukraine said it had driven the Russian forces out after a massive artillery and missile assault overnight. “KABOOM!” tweeted Andriy Yermak, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's chief of staff. “No Russian troops on the Snake Island anymore. Our Armed Forces did a great job.” Ukraine's southern military command posted an image on Facebook of what appeared to be the island, seen from the air, with at least five huge columns of black smoke rising above it. “The enemy hurriedly evacuated the remains of the garrison with two speed boats and probably left the

## Biden sending more weapons to Ukraine

MADRID: President Joe Biden said on Thursday the United States will provide another \$800 million in weapons and military aid to Ukraine, hailing the courage of Ukrainians since Russia invaded in February. Speaking after a NATO summit that saw the alliance also agree to take in Finland and Sweden, Biden said the United States and its NATO allies were united in standing up to Russian President Vladimir Putin. “I don't know how it's going to end, but it will not end with Russia defeating Ukraine,” Biden told a news conference. “Ukraine has already dealt a severe blow to Russia.” Biden, who appeared to be readying allies for a long conflict in Ukraine despite talk in March of a possible victory, added: “We are going to support Ukraine for as long as it takes.” He declined to give more details. The pending formal announcement of more weapons would come on top of the more than \$6.1 billion already announced by the United States since Russia forces rolled into Ukraine on Feb. 24 and brought full-scale war back to Europe. The plans for fresh aid, as NATO repositions itself again on a Cold War footing with a massive forces build-up, came as Ukrainians used Howitzers to retake the strategic outpost of Snake Island. Biden had earlier pledged more American troops, warplanes and warships for Europe as NATO agreed to strengthen its deterrents, putting more than 300,000 troops on high alert from the middle of next year — News Desk

island. Currently, Snake island is consumed by fire, explosions are bursting,” Oleksii Hromov, brigadier general in Ukraine's armed forces, told a briefing that Ukrainian forces were not yet occupying the island, “but they will be, believe me”. The bare rocky outcrop overlooks sea lanes to Odesa, Ukraine's main Black Sea port, where Russia is blocking food cargos from one of the world's leading grain suppliers. Snake Island has held the world's attention since Russia seized it on the war's first day, when a Ukrainian guard, ordered by Russia's flagship cruiser Moskva to surrender, radioed back “Russian warship: go fuck yourself”. “The most significant aspect is that this could open the door to Ukrainian grain exports from Odesa, which is critical for Ukraine's economy and for the global food supply,” tweeted Rob Lee, a senior fellow at the U.S.-based Foreign Policy Research Institute. Lifting the blockade has been a primary strategic goal of the West: U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken has accused

Continued on Page 06



# Expansion of Serena Hotels in Peshawar to promote tourism

## BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: Tourism Promotion Services (Pak) Limited has entered into a Business Sale Agreement with Pakistan Services Limited to acquire Pearl-Continental Hotel Peshawar, with the intent to promote the untapped potential for tourism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. It will be Serena Hotels' second property in KP province after the Swat Serena Hotel, increasing the total number of Serena Hotels in Pakistan to 9. The addition of Serena Hotel in Peshawar, the oldest city of Pakistan with

a rich cultural heritage, will not only help in extending the tourist circuit in KP province but will also allow regional connectivity for tourists and business travelers through its portfolio of hotels in Islamabad, Peshawar, Kabul and Dushanbe. The Serena Hotels has plans to further expand its portfolio to other Central Asian countries in the future. Serena Hotels in Pakistan is playing a pivotal role in promoting tourism in underdeveloped areas of Pakistan with four properties in Gilgit-Baltistan including three Heritage properties. Two new Serena Hotels are under construction in Hunza and Sost in Gilgit-Baltistan. The properties will showcase the

scenic areas, rich cultural heritage, local cuisine, and traditional hospitality of the region, while providing economic opportunities for the local community through skill development, employment, and enhancement of the value chain. As destination hotels, they will not only allow tourists to relax and enjoy the stunning views, but will also provide venues for corporate retreats, family reunions, weddings, and conferences. The Company plans to invest in Peshawar Hotel for upgrading the guest rooms, restaurants, banquet hall, meeting rooms, health club, public areas, and service delivery in line with Serena Hotel's standards.

## Danish envoy visits waste water treatment plant



### ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: The Ambassador of Denmark to Pakistan Mrs. Lis Rosenholm termed the mega project of Eastern Waste Water Treatment Plant as state of the art worth Rs.1.9 billion. Ambassador along with Managing Director WASA Abu Bakar Imran, Project Director Saqib Raza, Additional Deputy Commissioner General Qaiser Abbas Rind and other officers visited the site of construction of waste water treatment plant at Chack No. 244 RB Chamiana.

Project Director Saqib Raza gave a detailed briefing on the wastewater treatment plant project to the Danish Ambassador Mrs. Lis Rosenholm on site. The Danish Ambassador said that the mega project of wastewater treatment plant in the eastern part of Faisalabad has its value and there will be a flagship project that will be a role model project for South Asian countries as well, because treating wastewater and making it viable for crops is possible only with technology and today using this technology, this mega project through this, the environmental problems of the peo-

ple of Faisalabad will also be solved. The importance is clear to all so after the completion of the project it will be possible to prevent the waste of wastewater and that is why there is a special focus on this mega project. Women should be encouraged in terms of employment as well as special assistance on building the capacity of the project's skilled and unskilled employees. The Danish Ambassador added that if women contribute to the economy, the country's economy will prosper because very few women in South Asian countries participate in the national economy. But the Danish government is keen to give women full representation in the project. Earlier, She co-chaired a meeting with Abu Bakar Imran, Managing Director, WASA at Head Office. On the occasion, Additional Deputy Commissioner Qaiser Abbas Rind also briefed about the transfer of land for the wastewater treatment plant project. The Managing Director said that he was grateful to the Danish government for the mega project of Rs 19 billion worth of wastewater treatment plant managed by WASA Faisalabad.

## Dozens of outlets run by 'quacks' busted

### FAISAL MUNIR

ATTOCK: A team of health officials busted scores of outlets run by quacks posing as general physicians, maternity homes, haakeems, homeopathic doctors, opticians, dentists and bone-setters during surprise visits carried out in various rural and urban parts of Attock. The team of the Punjab Healthcare Commission led by Deputy District Health Officer Dr Shahryar Iqbal launched crackdown over quack clinics and illegal medical stores and sealed them. Challans were issued to a number of hospitals,

clinics, maternity homes and medical stores for not observing hygiene and storage cited as the Punjab Healthcare Commission Act 2010. Briefing the newsmen about the crackdown, Deputy District Health Officer Dr Shahryar Iqbal has said that these quacks were operating in the city especially rural areas in guise of qualified professionals and were also a major cause of the spread of hepatitis B and C and many other diseases. He said that raids were carried out on almost all types of healthcare establishments (HCEs) including hospitals, laboratories and aesthetic centers and their cases were referred to drugs courts for further legal action and in this connection all political pressure was rejected in the best interest of public health.

## FESCO issues notification

### DNA

FAISALABAD: On the movement of Divisional Commissioner Faisalabad Zahid Hussain the FESCO has issued notification regarding exemption of 11 KV feeders from 4:30 P.m to 9:30 P. m in commercial areas. Divisional Commissioner informed that due to this initiative the traders of Chinioot Bazar, Aminpur Bazar, Katcheri Bazar, Karkhana Bazar, Rail Bazar, Bhowana Bazar, Jhang Bazar, Tata Bazar, Montgomery Bazar, New Anarkali, College road, Railway road, Circular road, Satiana road and Jaranwala riad would get relief. Commissioner said that promise with traders has done now the traders could do their business in peak hours without load shedding. He asked the traders to close the markets at 9 P. m as the directions of Govt to save the energy. Meanwhile the traders thanked the Commissioner for exemption the commercial areas from load shedding and assured their complete cooperation regarding closing markets at 9 P.M.

## Chinese CG meets Sindh Police chief

KARACHI: Consul General of China Li Bijian along with a 13-member delegation met Inspector General of Police (IGP) Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon at Central Police Office Karachi and discussed various matters of mutual interests including security measures for Chinese nationals, experts and other staff associated with CPCC projects and routes in detail. The Additional IGP Counter Terrorism Department briefed the delegation about the Karachi University terrorist attack case and informed about the progress made so far while DIGP Special Protection Unit/ CPCC also gave detailed information on all security issues on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. On the occasion, Consul General of China thanked the Sindh Police on behalf of the Government of China for the overall security measures being taken in the province and said, the Government of China would continue its cooperation with the Sindh Police. DIGP Headquarters Sindh, DIGP IT, DIG CIA, SP Foreigners Security Cell and AIGP Operations Sindh and AIGP Admin CPO and CTD officers were also present on the occasion. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Germany to Pakistan Bernhard Schlagheck calls on Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq to discuss matter of mutual interests. - DNA

## Imran used NAB to destroy the economy, says Safdar

ABBOTTABAD: Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N) leader Capt. (R) Muhammad Safdar Awan Thursday said Imran Khan used National Accountability Bureau (NAB) to destroy the country's economy. He expressed these views while addressing a press conference at Abbottabad Press Club here. The Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) knew the fact from the very first day that the Imran Khan could not run the federal government, masses are showing their dissatisfaction with Imran Khan by not participating in his public gatherings, Nawaz Sharif will come to the country like Khomeini, and people will welcome him on the streets, Capt. (R) Safdar said.

He said that the former prime minister cannot tell where did he spend international loans as he destroyed the country, Pakistan is passing through a difficult time but gradually the issues would be resolved by the coalition government. Mohammad Safdar said that a commission should be formed on Panama cases, Justice Gulzar and Saqib Nisar should answer as they brought the Panama case under a conspiracy and gave verdicts by twisting their arms resulting in the country had lost its path towards the prosperity. While highlighting the ideology of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, Bacha Khan, Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan and others he said that people are still following

them and they are still alive, now the people believed that the country is in safe hands, he added.

Capt. (R) Safdar said that in the past, Mian Nawaz Sharif had written a Charter of Democracy, PDM is the ideology of the Charter of Democracy, Nawaz Sharif's government had ended the power crisis and why today we are facing a huge shortfall of electricity is because the power production units are closed. While criticizing the former Prime Minister he said that Imran Khan did not think about the country and masses and wasted the time of NAB and other courts, and destroyed the economy of the country by using NAB. - APP

## CM KP summons PESCO high officials

### OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood while taking notice of the unscheduled power load-shedding in the province has summoned the PESCO officials to his office on Thursday and expressed great concerns over the unscheduled power outage in the province. He directed the PESCO officials to take immediate steps to improve the situation and give relief to the people adding that a way forward be devised on war foot basis to stop the unscheduled load-shedding of electricity in the province. He made it clear that unscheduled power load-shedding in urban areas due to billing issues in few areas would not be acceptable and added that the province should get its full share of electricity in the total production. "Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is the producer of electricity and on other hand provincial government is providing significant funds to PESCO to improve the power transmission system in the province", he remarked. Chief Secretary Dr. Shehzad Bangash, Advocate General Shumail Butt Advocate, Focal Person to Chief Minister Muhammad Khaliq, Chief Executive PESCO Jabbar Khan and other relevant officials were also present on

the occasion. The chief minister said that the provincial government has provided huge amount of Rs.4.5 billion to PESCO from the development funds of members provincial assembly in order to install the electric poles, transmission lines, transformers and other infrastructure. However, he said that certain irrelevant and non elected political elements were trying to get the credit which was not acceptable at all. He made it clear to the PESCO officials that the funds provided by the provincial government must be spent through the concerned MPAs to complete the works for which the funds had been provided. He further directed them to complete the development works well in time adding that no delay would be allowed in this regard. Mahmood Khan also stated that the mechanism of power load management and it's time table would be devised in accordance with the priorities of the provincial government adding that the representatives of the provincial government would finalize the matters with PESCO officials to this effect. He further directed the PESCO officials to prepare plan in order to start the meterization of electricity in the rest over areas of the province and said that provincial government would all out support and resources for the purpose.

## Tahir Ullah successfully defends M.Phil Thesis

### OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: M.phil Education research Scholar Tahir Ullah student at the Institute of Education and Research, University of Peshawar successfully defended his research thesis. The Scholar conducted his research work study on the title "A Comparative Study of Teaching Competencies of Professional and Non-professional Teachers of Public School in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa" under the supervision of professor Dr. Arshad Ali and the external examiner was Dr. Alam zaib from University of Swat. The Scholar successfully answered the questions of the participants and the external examiner in defence session held at the Conference room of IER, University of Peshawar.

## Afghan CG thanks Pakistan for humanitarian assistance

### DNA

PESHAWAR: Afghan Consul General Hafiz Mohibullah on Thursday appreciated generosity of Pakistani people and charity organizations for helping the people of Afghanistan hit by the recent deadly earthquake. He was speaking at the function held to handover donations

and funds collected by businessmen for the quake victims of Afghanistan. Representatives of Sarafa and Jewelers Association, Currency Exchange Association and traders organizations were present on the occasion and assured all possible help to the Afghan people. He thanked Pakistan for offering its sincere sympathy over the loss of human lives, timely humanitarian assistance and sup-

port following the deadly earthquake in Afghanistan.

The Afghan consul general also appreciated the businessmen and people of Peshawar for their support in collection of cash donations for the aid of brothers awaiting help in the neighboring country. Hafiz Mohibullah also expressed the hope that the bilateral cooperation for the welfare of the two countries would continue in future.

## Bugti lauds US efforts in curbing smuggling of narcotics

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Narcotics Control Nawabzada Shzain Bugti on Thursday acknowledged the United States of America's (US) efforts in curbing the production and smuggling of narcotics in the region. A delegation led by Todd D Robinson, Assistant Secretary for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of US Department of state along with US Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Bloeome met with the minister. In the meeting, the minister acknowledged the efforts made by US in curbing production and smuggling of narcotics in the region and said that even with meager resources and limited manpower, Pakistan was effectively controlling smuggling of narcotics on its western borders, said a press release. The minister said there was a need for more advanced technological tools to cater the needs of anti-narcotics forces.

"Pakistan is planning to induct 10,000 personnel for narcotics control. Besides these there is a dire need for advanced surveillance technologies like drones and other vehicles to overcome powerful drug networks," he added. Bugti said the biggest challenge was use of new forms of drugs in young generation. "Pakistan is working towards making efforts for public awareness in this regard." The minister also acknowledged US support in expanding and modernization of Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) academy.

"Provision of vehicles and modern equipment will greatly enhance the capabilities of ANF



against trafficking." He also applauded US efforts in providing technical training to staff and persons in combating drug trafficking.

The assistant secretary assured full support to Pakistan in combating the menace of drug trafficking and its use. The meeting was also

attended by Secretary Narcotics Control, Humaira Ahmad and higher officials of ministry and INL. - APP

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## National Days and Armed Forces Days

<b>JUNE</b>	
June 02 / <b>Italy</b>	National/ Independence Day
June 04 / <b>Finland</b>	Armed Forces Day
June 06 / <b>Sweden</b>	National Day
June 10 / <b>Portugal</b>	Portugal Day (National Day)
June 10 / <b>Jordan</b>	Arab Revolution & Army Day
June 11 / <b>United Kingdom</b>	Birthday of Her Majesty The Queen Elizabeth
June 12 / <b>Philippines</b>	Independence Day
June 12 / <b>Russian Federation</b>	Day of Sovereignty of the Russian Federation (National Day)
June 13 / <b>Zambia</b>	Armed Forces day
June 17 / <b>Iceland</b>	National Day
June 18 / <b>Seychells</b>	National Day
June 25 / <b>Croatia</b>	National Day
June 25 / <b>Mozambique</b>	National Day
June 26 / <b>Azerbaijan</b>	Army Day



## Hotels & Restaurants

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



## Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....	8494949
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## Emergency

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

## Water Tank

Islamabad.....	0321-5744480
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**ISLAMABAD:** The Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan Yerzhan Kistafin met Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Pakistan Federal Minister for Economic Affairs-Co-chairman of the Kazakhstan-Pakistan intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, and Technical and Cultural cooperation. During the meeting, the issues of the bilateral agenda and current year events were discussed. – DNA

# ICCI urges govt to take steps preventing diabetes

Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that according to a report of IDF, diabetes was responsible for 400,000 deaths in Pakistan in 2021, which should be a cause of concern for the govt

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) in collaboration with The Diabetes Centre (TDC) Islamabad organized an awareness session on diabetes care. Dr. Asjad Hameed, Chairman, The Diabetes Center, Islamabad gave a detailed presentation on diabetes. He highlighted the diabetes causes and its preventive measures. He said that diabetes affects all vital organs of the body and should be taken very seriously. He said that 26% people in Pakistan were involved in diabetes and if no preventive measures were taken, it could reach 30-35 percent in a few years. He said that the government should take measures to control this disease otherwise it could turn into a national crisis. Shehzad Lodhi Head of Marketing and Communications of TDC said that the Centre was operating on a 60:40 model as 60 per cent patients were treated from donations and 40 percent were being charged a fee. He said that the business community should

extend full support to TDC so that it could provide better care to diabetes patients. Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that according to a report of International Diabetes Federation (IDF), diabetes was responsible for 400,000 deaths

in Pakistan in 2021, which should be a cause of concern for the government. He said that one in four adults in Pakistan are living with diabetes, which is one of the highest national prevalence in the world. He said that Pakistan has now the third highest number of people living with diabetes in the world, after China and India,

which is a very alarming situation. He stressed that the government should focus on controlling diabetes to save the nation from its serious implications. He appreciated the noble cause of TDC led by Dr. Asjad Hameed and assured that the business community would try to extend its cooperation in this noble mission.

Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President, Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI, Mian Shaukat Masud former President and others also spoke at the occasion and lauded the noble cause of TDC. They assured that the business community would cooperate with TDC in taking forward its good mission.



# Pakistan rolls out National single window for trade

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: In line with Pakistan's commitment under Article 10.4 of the World Trade Organization's Trade Facilitation Agreement, Pakistan successfully rolled out the first phase of the Pakistan Single Window (PSW) for trade and transportation integrating Pakistan Customs, Department of Plant Protection, Animal Quarantine Department, Federal Seed Certification & Registration Department, Pakistan Standards & Quality Control Authority, and the Export Development Fund. In addition,

29 commercial banks are already integrated with the PSW platform for the exchange of cross-border trade-related financial information in real-time. The PSW system began rolling out in July 2021 and currently has more than 52,000 registered users. Services currently offered by the system include electronic customs registration, online processing, and issuance of import permits, Phyto-sanitary certificates, release orders and other documents pertaining to the above-mentioned government agencies, and digital payments. Under a major reform initiated in collaboration with the State

Bank of Pakistan, digital integration with commercial banks replaced electronic Form 'E' and Form 'I' previously required for each trade transaction. In March 2022 PSW also launched its Trade Information Portal providing a single access point for all information related to imports, exports, and transit also in compliance with Article 1.2 of the TFA. Implementation of the PSW system is supervised by the PSW Governing Council chaired by the Minister of Finance and comprising of the federal secretaries from the key ministries regulating cross-border trade as well as representatives of the private sector.

## Schedule for CSS 2023 exams announced

ISLAMABAD: The FPSC Thursday announced the schedule for CSS 2023 exams. In this regard, the FPSC has issued an advance public notice as well for the recruitment in the federal government as grade 17 officers. The CSS exam process will start with the publication of the Public Notice on July 1 and would culminated with the start of the written exam on February 1, 2023. Meanwhile, an advertisement for MP test 2023 will be published on August 7, 2022 and online applications for the MP test will be received from August 8 to August 22, 2022. – DNA

## Islamabad to host Pakistan-Iran joint specialized exhibition

This three-day specialized exhibition is scheduled to be held from July 24 to 27 with the presence of various Iranian and Pakistani companies

**TEHRAN:** The first specialized exhibition of Iran and Pakistan will be held in Pakistan's capital of Islamabad with the participation of Iranian businessmen and craftsmen, and Iranian knowledge-based companies. This three-day specialized exhibition is scheduled to be held from July 24 to 27 with the presence of various Iranian and Pakistani companies. Iranian craftsmen and business people active in the sectors of energy, petrochemicals, chemical products, construction materials, road and construction machinery, medicine, medical equipment, food, and sweets will attend the exhibition. After the ninth meeting of the Iran-Pakistan Trade Committee which was held in Tehran in November last year, three exhibitions were held in Karachi and Lahore with the mutual cooperation of two friendly neighboring and brotherly states. – DNA

# Nations remain alive who preserve their culture: Kaira

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: Language is an expression of connection with culture and only those nations remain alive who preserve their language and culture, Said, advisor to the Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan, Mr. Qamar Zaman Kaira while addressing the closing ceremony of a four-day international training workshop on "Language Documentation" at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU). On this occasion, he praised the role of Allama Iqbal Open University in taking an initiative for the revival of the endangered languages of Pakistan. He said that language documentation is an excellent initiative. He congratulated Vice chancellor, AIOU, Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum and assured the VC that government will provide full support to AIOU in promoting these kind of initiatives. He also added that VC, AIOU has a very vi-



brant personality and I have requested him to establish a Chair for Kashmir in AIOU. Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qa-

yyumwhile addressing the ceremony said that we are trying to contribute to our society through different projects and initiatives.

Our aim is to build this society and promote tolerance and democratic values in our youth. He said that the AIOU has recently established a centre for social reconstruction and three different Chairs under the umbrella of Center of Excellence and we will establish a chair for Kashmir as per the recommendation of Mr. Kaira. Director, Centre for Language and Translation studies, Dr. Ghulam Ali explained the aims and objectives of the training workshop. He said that scholars from 35 Pakistani universities participated in this workshop. It is pertinent to mention here that this workshop was organized by the Center for Language and Translation Studies, AIOU & ORIC in collaboration with the University of North Texas, USA, and Englishers LLL International, Turkey. Trainers from the University of North Texas, USA and University of California were the resource persons.

## Neurological conditions, disorders discussed

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: COMSTECH, Dr. Panjwani Center for Molecular Medicine and Drug Research (PCMD), Royan Institute, Mustafa (pbuh) Science and Technology Foundation and Sindh Innovation, Research, and Education Network jointly organized international webinar on "Genomic Characterization of Neuromuscular Disorders in Pakistan" on Wednesday. This was the third webinar of the PCMD-Royan Institute webinar series. This webinar series is a joint venture of PCMD and Royan Institute, Iran. It is held physically in Pakistan and Iran and people around the world join these webinars online. COMSTECH, Mustafa (pbuh) Science and Technology Foundation and Sindh Innovation, Research, and Education Network provide support in the organization of these webinars. Dr. Ishtiaq Ahmad Khan, Associate Professor at the Dr. Panjwani Center conducted this webinar. He talked about the genomic characterization of neuromuscular disorders in Pakistan. He said neurological disorders are heterogeneous group of disorders, they affect the peripheral and central nervous system. Dr. Ishtiaq talked about neuromuscular disorder and presented the current status of the prevalence of this disorder in Pakistan. He said Pakistan lies in the region which is under high burden of neuromuscular disorder and the basic reason is consanguineous marriages. Dr. Ishtiaq mentioned that neurological conditions pose a great diagnostic challenge due to complex clinical presentation, phenotypic overlap, and rare disorders. He said that next generation sequencing and bioinformatics are very helpful in diagnosing neurological disorders. Dr. Ishtiaq said that Jamil-ur-Rahman center for genomics research center at the ICCBS is first genomics facility of Pakistan. He said this center is providing training to researchers from all over Pakistan. Dr. Ishtiaq Ahmad Khan is Associate Professor at the Dr. Panjwani Center. He is Ph.D. from the H. E. J. Research Institute of Chemistry, ICCBS, University of Karachi, and is post-doctorate from the Beijing Genomics Institute, Shenzhen China, and the Sanger Wellcome Institute, Cambridge. His research group is working on microbial, viral, and human disease genomics. During the current pandemic, his group carried out genomic surveillance studies on SARS-CoV-2 and contributed to informed decision-making at the national level.

**Reports regarding women bazaar baseless: DC**

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Commissioner, Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon Thursday refuted the news item circulating in some news sections about the transparency in allotment process of stalls at G-10 women bazaar and termed it baseless fabricated. The DC in a news statement clarified that the stalls in the bazaars yet to be allotted through balloting, whereas the application were still opened which can be submitted to the Manager Arts and Crafts Village, Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad till July 2nd. After the closing date an impartial and transparent balloting would be conducted for the allotment of stalls in which all the applications received would be included. He appealed to the media to ensure the authenticity of news before publishing in their news papers. Earlier the advertisement for stall allotment in women bazaar was appeared in news papers on February 2022. – APP



## Briefs

Three-day  
Shandur polo  
festival to  
start on July 1

ISLAMABAD: The Gilgit-Baltistan tourism and sports department has announced that the Shandur Polo Festival will be held in the region from July 1 to 3. The highest polo ground in the world (3,700 meters above the sea level) will host the annual polo tournament to be organised with the collaboration of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government, Radio Pakistan reported. The teams of Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral's districts will participate in it under 'freestyle rules'. Preparations have been finalised to organize Shandur Polo festival at world's highest polo ground on July 1 to 3. GB Chief Minister Khawaja Asif Khan invited his Khyber Pakhtunkhwa counterpart, Mahmoood Khan, to attend the festival on July 1 as the chief guest. Shandur Festival had been celebrated regularly since 1980 and had gained international fame attracting thousands of local and foreign tourists annually. The festival couldn't take place for a few years due to Covid-19-induced restrictions, but it would be held this year with the consent and mutual coordination of both KP and GB governments. – APP

Govt urged to  
tailor a policy  
to modernise  
agriculture  
sector

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Hi Tech Hybrid Seed Association Shahzad Ali Malik Thursday urged the government to tailor a viable strategy for rapid modernisation of agriculture sector on scientific lines for higher yield to meet food staple needs of population in the wake of Russia-Ukraine conflict and climate change. Chairing an executive committee meeting of association here, he said agriculture sector is a backbone of the country's economy and is expected to boost to 3.9 percent during upcoming year. He said agriculture sector posted growth of 4.4 percent against the last year growth of 3.5 percent while production of important crops including sugarcane, rice and maize achieved record production with impressive increase in per acre yield by using quality hi tech hybrid seeds. He said revival of both these crops would not only support growth momentum but will also ease out balance of payment pressure through less imports of food grains. It is pertinent to mention here that during the current fiscal year agriculture sector exceeded its envisaged targets. He said if government make it fully ensure hundred percent use of hi tech hybrid seeds in rice and maize crops across the country that will guarantee triple production substantially enhancing the profitability of the growers and farmers. Shahzad Ali Malik, Sitara-Imtiaz said private investment in the crop sector of agriculture registered high double digit growth of 25.6% which is close to 26% real growth in the crop sector attracted last year while public sector investment slightly inched. – APP

FIA arrests  
proclaimed  
offender

ISLAMABAD: Federal Investigation Agency's (FIA) anti-human trafficking circle (AHTC) has arrested a proclaimed offender wanted for eight years. According to the FIA Spokesperson, accused Awas Khan s/o Muhammad Shakeeb had attempted to go to Turkey on a student visa acquired on bogus degree in 2014. Anti-Human Trafficking Circle Islamabad has registered case against the accused in 2014. Sub-Inspector Shayan on the directives of Incharge AHTC Islamabad Circle Zubair Ahmed succeed to arrest the accused in a raid and obtained 3-day physical remand for further investigation. FIA would continue to arrest others absconders, the Spokesperson said. – APP

Kyrgyz Republic keen to  
enhance ties with Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of Republic of Kyrgyz, Totuaev Ulanbek Asankulovich said here on Thursday that his country had keen interest in enhancing relations with Pakistan on multiple fronts through enhancement of trade, investment and business. The ambassador, during a call on meeting with Finance Minister Miftah Ismail discussed mutual relationship between both the countries, according to press statement issued by Finance Ministry. On the occasion, the finance minister shared that the government of Pakistan attached great importance to development of bilateral relations with friendly countries, it added. He also apprised the Kyrgyz Ambassador about the potential investment avenues present in Pakistan. The minister thanked the ambassador and assured him of full support to enhance bilateral relations between both the countries in various sectors. – APP

Poor model digging  
deep into the economy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt on Thursday said the current economic model is very flawed and based on elitism which can bankrupt the country but will never allow it to develop. Unnecessary imports and not used by people but by the elite which wastes foreign exchange while the burden of debt falls on the poor, he said. Shahid Rashid Butt said that no government wants real development but strives for artificial development which continues to damage the economy for decades. Every attempt made for artificial development for

the sake of popularity results in huge deficits and crises, after which the country is saved by borrowing from external sources, he observed. The business leader said that reckless consumption is on the rise in the country, unnecessary imports are being encouraged and investment in savings the productive sectors has been made almost impossible. The focus of the entire country is on the property market and trading while few would opt for the industry. Many capitalists get cheap loans in the name of industrial expansion but they invest part of such loans in the property market for good returns. He warned that as long as imports continued unabated, the demand for dollars in the country will continue to increase and the

rupee will stay weak. Governments ignore the ground realities and try to ensure better growth rate, lower inflation and rupee stability by borrowing but reforms are ignored which results in a crisis every two to three years. Shahid Rashid Butt said that the policy of SBP to keep the rupee stable by selling dollars instead of exports and investments is destructive and has been followed for decades. He lamented that IMF has called for several more measures, including deregulation of petroleum prices, which could delay the repayment of loan instalments until August, which would have a negative impact on the economy, therefore the lender should reconsider its demands.

German envoy,  
Ayaz Sadiq discuss  
mutual ties

ISLAMABAD: Bernhard Schlagheck, the Ambassador of Federal Republic of Germany to Pakistan called on Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq to discuss matter of mutual interests. According to the press release, the Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq warmly welcomed the Ambassador of Federal Republic of Germany to Pakistan, Bernhard Schlagheck. The Minister stated that Pakistan and Germany enjoy a friendly and cordial relationship and a lot potential exist to enhance the relationship between both nations. Minister further stressed on the potential sectors in which collaboration is needed and highlighted special areas of cooperation between both nations including: climate change, renewable energy and energy efficiency. Minister further apprised the Ambassador about the solarization projects to save fuel and development of environmentally safe energy for government offices, residence and buildings. He also briefed the ambassador about the development projects in Balochistan including electrification of villages and solarization of tube wells. – APP

President  
felicitates  
Aga Khan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday felicitated The Aga Khan on the 65th anniversary of accession to the Imamate of the Ismaili Community. The president, in a letter addressed to The Aga Khan, the president said that under his visionary leadership, the community and the institutions of the Aga Khan Development Network continued to make invaluable contribution to the social and economic development of Pakistan, which had established an unparalleled legacy of public service and philanthropy. He said that the people of Pakistan joined him in conveying their profound appreciation and gratitude for his tireless work for the uplift of the most vulnerable in society. President Alvi prayed that Almighty Allah may grant him the strength and inspiration to continue his exemplary service to the Ummah.

NPO to  
organize  
webinar  
on 'AI'

ISLAMABAD: National Productivity Organization (NPO) will organize a webinar on 'Internet of Things (IoT) & Artificial Intelligence (AI)' on July 06 (Wednesday). The webinar would provide information about fundamental understanding of what IOT is, how it works, inspires new thinking on the types of solution that the business can introduce using IOT, according to NPO news statement. It would further inform about the applications and use cases and how it is transforming lives, identifying how to find out more through existing resources and training opportunities. The program would consist of presentation, virtual group discussions, exercise and activities. – APP

Govt releases  
Rs1,575.06m  
for 17 aviation  
sector projects

ISLAMABAD: government has released funds amounting to Rs1,575.06 million, under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP 2021-22) against total allocation of Rs3,558.20 million to advance 17 different projects and schemes to ensure improved services in the aviation sector. Out of the total disbursement of Rs1,575.06 million, around Rs733.7 million have been spent on the aviation sector projects during the fiscal year 2021-22, according to official data available with APP. As per the PSDP document, an amount of Rs11.077 million had been allocated for construction of double story Ladies Hostel/Barrack with provision of third storey alongwith Mess, Recreation Hall and allied facilities at Allama Iqbal International Airport, Rs37.581 million for construction 2X double storey Barrack with provision of third storey for Corporal to Inspectors and Assistant Director along with separate mess and allied facilities, Recreation Hall at Quetta Airport, Rs20 million for construction of Airport Security Force (ASF) Camp at Islamabad International Airport and Rs50 million for construction of Barrack accommodation for ASF personnel along with Mess and allied facilities, Ladies Rest Room MT, Store, Kote Magazine, Quarter Guard and OC Accommodation/Room at Skardu Airport. Similarly, Rs39.534 million had been kept for construction of Barrack accommodation for ASF personnel along with Mess and allied facilities, MT, Store, Visitors Room, Ladies Rest Room, Kote Magazine, Quarter Guard, and OC accommodation/Room at Chitral Airport, Rs21.285 million for construction of double storey Barracks for ASF at Paisalabad Airport, Rs6.213 million for construction of double storey Director South Secretariat Offices ASF along with allied facilities adjacent to ASF HQs Karachi, Rs500 million for construction of Rain Water Harvesting Kasana Dam at Islamabad International Airport, Rs57.719 million for construction of triple storey living accommodation for ASF personnel at Lahore Airport, Rs3.952 for construction of triple storey living Barrack for ASF personnel along with Mess, Recreation Hall at Multan Airport, Rs96.108 million for developing Reverse Linkage between Mamara Research Centre (MRC), Turkey and Pakistan Meteorological Department Islamabad, Rs239.736 million for installation of Weather Surveillance Radar at Karachi, Rs580 million for installation of Weather Surveillance Radar at Multan, Rs370 million for installation of Weather Surveillance Radar at Sukkur, Rs1,144.995 million for new Gwadar International Airport (NGIA project), Rs350 million for up-gradation of ASF Academy at Karachi and Rs30 million for up-gradation of ASF Academy, Karachi (Feasibility & Supervision). – APP

Pakistan's tourism significantly  
developed, says MD PTDC

Describing the country as 'one of the friendliest countries on earth, with mountain scenery that is beyond anyone's wildest imagination'

ISLAMABAD: Managing Director Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation Aftab ur Rehman Rana has said that Pakistan's tourism industry has significantly developed with improved tourism infrastructure and facilities. In a statement, he said that the country has number of attractions for foreign tourists such as hiking, rock climbing and mountaineering in mesmerizing landscapes of Rocky Mountains and lush greenery. He said that the government has taken number of initiatives for promotion and development of tourism

the country. Highlighting the potential of tourism, MD PTDC said, Pakistan has amazing landscape, natural beauty, history, rich cultural and heritage, adding that three mountains ranges, glaciers, lakes, Valleys of northern and unique wild flora and fauna can attract tourism from both local and foreign markets. He said that the British Backpacker Society has ranked Pakistan as the World's Top Adventure Travel Destination. Describing the country as "one of the friendliest countries on earth, with mountain scenery that is beyond

anyone's wildest imagination". Under the Ease of Visa Policy, as many as 191 countries can apply for E-Visa. The Karakoram Highway is the world's best highway where one can see the highest peaks from within car's window while the ancient silk route connects Pakistan and China to Central Asia and we are working to promote this Old Silk Route," he said, adding that "we have 9000 years old history on humankind including Meher Garh, Mohenjodaro and Gandhars which has centuries' old archaeological sites to promote heritage tourism. – APP



ISLAMABAD: FS Sohail Mahmood received Australian HC-designate Neil Hawkins. FS highlighted multi-dimensional and friendly ties b/w Pakistan and Australia. – DNA

## NORINCO's interested to invest in Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday welcomed the Chinese company NORINCO for showing interest to invest in Pakistan's huge potential for renewable energy. He expressed these views while talking to a high-powered delegation of Chinese state-owned Company NORINCO (China North Industries Corporation) led by its vice-president Wang Xiaobing and CEO (Pakistan) Li Chen. The NORINCO delegation showed keen interest in investing in the wide spectrum of renewable energy projects in Pakistan, especially in the wind corridor in Thatha whereby a 100 MW wind power project was proposed. The company also highlighted the potential venues for investment in fiber optic along the railway lines, copper and iron ore mining at proven reserves, and infrastructure development in big cities. The prime minister said deepening economic cooperation with China was critical to Pakistan's socio-economic uplift. He highlighted the significance of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as a transformational project for the mutual benefit and development of both the friendly countries. The prime minister also appreciated the company for its role in the Lahore Orange Line Metro Train

project, which, he said, was facilitating hundreds of thousands of commuters in Lahore on a daily basis. He recalled that it was for the first time that open bidding took place in a government-to-government project i.e. Lahore Orange Line. He stated that further negotiations were held with the lowest bidder, leading to a saving of USD 600 million, adding that it was certainly a milestone in the development history of Pakistan. The

“The delegation praised Prime Minister  
Shehbaz Sharif for his untiring efforts  
to steer Pakistan out of the current  
economic crisis”

prime minister stated that Pakistan was open to investment and that his government was taking steps to remove all impediments for further facilitation of the investors. He also thanked Chinese President Xi Jinping and H.E. Premier Li Keqiang for their consistent and unwavering support to Pakistan, particularly in current economic situation in Pakistan. The delegation praised Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for his untiring efforts to steer Pakistan out of the current economic crisis. It noted that PM Shehbaz Sharif was a great friend of China whose business-friendly

policies have deepened economic cooperation and facilitated foreign direct investment in the country. Federal Ministers Khawaja Saad Rafique, Syed Naveed Qamar, Chaudhary Salik Hussain, Advisor to PM Ahad Cheema, SAPMs Syed Tariq Fatemi, Mohammad Janhaz Khan, Zafar-Ul-Din Mahmood and officials from concerned ministries were also present in the meeting. China helps Pakistan in earth sciences

China is collaborating with Pakistan to establish a joint research centre on earth sciences at Quaid-e-Azam University to work on climate change mitigation in the region and help steer sustainable and environment-friendly development under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). This, according to Gwadar PG, was stated by Dr. Safdar Ali Shah, DG CPEC Cell at Higher Education Commission (HEC) while responding to a question at the first symposium of a series of seminars sponsored by the Embassy of People's

Republic of China at Comsats University. He talked about the situation regarding environmental challenges in the wake of massive development under CPEC. Dr Shah said that China had already taken into account the environmental aspects of CPEC very carefully, which was evident from the relevant documents and development interventions under the mega initiative. As per reports, China will contribute Rs5.4 billion to the total project cost of Rs8.4 billion for the establishment of the center. Dr. Shah further said that China-Pakistan collaboration in academic sphere was growing with each passing day. He said that the number of Chinese universities in CPEC Consortium of Universities had grown to 64 in 2022 compared with only 10 Chinese universities participating in the initiative in 2017. As many as 22 Pakistani universities are also part of the consortium. Moreover, a survey of 44 universities of Pakistan revealed that they have signed 325 MoUs on academic cooperation with Chinese universities which availed 63 trainings and won 506 scholarships offered by the Chinese universities. Also, he said that these 44 universities have 612 faculty members who have obtained degrees in higher studies and research from China. The HEC DG said Chinese cooperation with Pakistan in academic sector has always been tremendous.

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Meteorological Department has forecast that the first solar eclipse of the year of 2022 will be a Partial Solar Eclipse on mid night between Saturday and Sunday. This partial solar eclipse will be visible from southern South America, parts of Antarctica, over Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, Radio Pakistan Reported. According to the PMD, different phases of solar eclipse include partial eclipse begins at 23:45 Pakistan Standard Time on Saturday and maximum eclipse at 01:42 on Sunday. However, the Met department said that the phenomenon will not be visible from Pakistan as it will occur at midnight. – APP

Rehmani  
demands  
release of  
all Hurriyat  
leaders

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Freedom League (JKPFL), Muhammad Farooq Rehmani has drawn attention of the United Nations and other global rights' bodies to the worsening political situation of the Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir and plight of political detainees in different jails and demanded their release before Eidul Azha. According to Kashmir Media Service, Muhammad Farooq Rehmani in a statement issued in Islamabad said that since the leadership was incarcerated for years, while India considered any such call from any government as an interference in its affairs, so the UN and its rights groups should build direct pressure on the Modi establishment to respect humanitarian calls and release detainees. He said that Kashmiris were not only being arrested and killed but they were being brutalised and their homes and shops were seized, sealed, burnt and bulldozed against the letter and spirit of the Constitution itself. And, People's peaceful struggle according to the UN Charter and relevant resolutions remained banned, he deplored. – APP



## West must engage with Putin

UKRAINIAN President Volodymyr Zelensky has appealed to the G7 group of nations to end his country's war with Russia by the end of the year. The bloc, meanwhile, is busy supplying the Ukrainians with more advanced weapons that some experts fear only serves to prolong the war. Nato estimates that the conflict could continue for two years and has plans to bolster rapid-action forces from 30,000 to 400,000. Warships and fighter aircraft have been kept ready for any eventuality if the war spreads beyond Ukraine and envelops Eastern Europe that the erstwhile Soviet Union controlled before the fall of communism in the 1990s. Europe feels insecure and vulnerable so do the Russians who are silent about their military objectives and continue their war of attrition hoping that the Ukrainians would still throw down their weapons and surrender territory. The result has been a stalemate in a war that the rest of the world doesn't appear to be interested in after five months even as oil prices and inflation worries mount and hurt finances. Russian forces continue their attacks on Ukrainian positions on the eastern flank and are being met with stiff resistance by government troops. Cities in the country are in ruins, and ordinary Ukrainians are being displaced by the thousands daily. Twelve million have already left their homes. Europe faces a refugee crisis but its leaders are still struggling to find ways to talk to their adversary in the Kremlin which reveals a lot about their interest in peace. A plan to open diplomatic channels with Russian President Vladimir Putin is missing and the G7 is only fueling the fire. It's not about who started the war; how to end it without further bloodshed should be on top of their agenda as they meet in Germany. Many countries in the continent fear that the war is coming home. This is not about Ukraine and Russia alone, it's also about the state of smaller, less powerful liberal democracies in the continent that fear a return to their satellite status under Russia. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland feel closer to the line of fire. Finland and Sweden are also worried about a Russian bear hug and have recently applied to join Nato, the US-led military alliance. The tragic reality is this: no one's winning this war yet, though Russian forces are slowly gaining ground in the east of Ukraine. Lysychansk, Kyiv's last stronghold in the region is also set to fall according to the latest reports. What's clear is that Russian forces didn't expect the conflict to last this long back in February when they attacked their smaller neighbour. Now with the Ukrainians fighting for every inch of their land, Moscow is determined to wear them out. In this scenario, the G7 should go beyond sanctions on Moscow, and find ways to resolve the conflict. They would be advised to start a conversation with Putin. Zelensky's year-end deadline is impossible unless the Kremlin is on board.



## NATO must not see China as a challenge

At its three-day summit that concluded in Madrid on Thursday, NATO, while declaring Russia the "most significant and direct threat", for the first time singled out China as one of its strategic priorities for the next decade. "China is substantially building up its military forces, including nuclear weapons, bullying its neighbors, threatening Taiwan ... monitoring and controlling its own citizens through advanced technology, and spreading Russian lies and disinformation," NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said after presenting the organization's latest 10-year Strategic Concept. "China is not our adversary, but we must be clear-eyed about the serious challenges it represents." Such provocative remarks run counter to the facts and reflect the born-again Cold War ideologues that dictate policies in the West. They thus drew firm opposition from Beijing. "China pursues an independent foreign policy of peace, and is a force for world peace, a contributor to global development and a defender of the international order," a spokesman for the Chinese mission to the European Union said in response to the Strategic Concept, urging NATO to stop provoking confrontation. It is notable that differences remain among NATO members on whether to treat China as a security challenge, as French President Emmanuel Macron once quipped: "China is not in the North Atlantic". The fact that the European countries have finally bowed to pressure from the United States military, the most powerful member of the transatlantic alliance, to single out China as a serious challenge to the international order proves that it has degenerated into a tool of Washington's global geopolitical game. China is thousands of miles away from Europe, and has never in history posed any security challenge to the organization. Rather, the security challenge comes the other way round, with NATO in recent years flexing its muscles in the Asia-Pacific region by sending warships and military aircraft to the South China Sea. For the first time, NATO also invited leaders from regional countries including Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia and New Zealand to attend its summit, which prompted a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman to call on NATO to "give up the practice of creating enemies, and not try to mess up Asia and the whole world after disrupting Europe". NATO, as a remnant of the Cold War, should have been dissolved after the end of the era of bloc confrontation. Yet it has over the past decades bypassed the UN Security Council and waged wars against sovereign countries to create huge humanitarian crises in places such as the Balkans and Iraq. If you are a hammer, all you see are nails. NATO must stop its confrontational approach against China for the benefit of world peace and security.

## Modi's critics have a precarious life in India

Somdeep Sen

The Indian government has also attempted to prevent its critics from travelling. Earlier this year, the former head of Amnesty International India, Aakar Patel, was stopped from leaving the country after a "look out circular" (LOC) was issued for him. LOCs are usually reserved for "apprehending criminals at the border". Patel, however, was heading to the US to deliver lectures about...

ON June 16, the Supreme Court of India cautioned the Uttar Pradesh (UP) state government against taking punitive actions targeting those who participated in protests over Islamophobic comments made by two Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders. Specifically, the country's highest court was referring to the demolition of the homes of Muslim activists. Local authorities claimed that these homes were built illegally. However, others insist that the state government, led by hardline Hindu nationalist chief minister Yogi Adityanath, is running a retaliatory campaign against its critics. One of the homes that were demolished belonged to the leader of the Welfare Party of India, Javed Mohammed, who had earlier been arrested and charged with being the "mastermind" behind the protests. Mohammed and his daughter, Afsheen Fatima, are prominent activists, known for organising against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) of 2019, which grants fast-track citizenship to non-Muslim undocumented immigrants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. Protests against the Act were met with a brutal crackdown as right-wing mobs, led by BJP leaders, rampaged through Delhi, targeting protesters, while police arrested anti-CAA activists and charged them under India's stringent "anti-terror" law. Analysts like Angshuman Choudhury of the Centre for Policy Research in New Delhi were quick to point out that these home demolitions "bear [a] striking resemblance to Israel's tactics against Palestinians". As in Palestine, such measures are meant to introduce a sense of precar-

ity into the lives of Modi's critics. In India, they are the latest indicator that it is becoming increasingly hazardous to oppose the BJP. Throughout Modi's tenure, a variety of tactics have been used to target his critics. In 2021, it was revealed that the Pegasus spyware, developed by the Israeli cyber-arms company NSO, had been used to snoop on journalists, opposition politicians, bureaucrats, lawyers, academics, and activists. A prominent target of the spyware was lawyer and trade unionist Sudha Bharadwaj, who was imprisoned in 2018 without trial under the "anti-terror" law and accused of "plotting to overthrow the government". In 2020, Amnesty International – which was forced to cease its operations in the country as a result of a government witch-hunt against human rights organisations – uncovered a hacking campaign targeting human rights defenders in the country. These human rights defenders received emails with malicious links which – if clicked – deployed spyware and compromised the computer "in order to monitor their actions and communications". This use of digital tools to suppress dissent was equally on display in the arrest of 22-year-old climate activist and co-founder of the India chapter of Greta Thunberg's Fridays For Future movement, Disha Ravi. She was accused of "sedition, incitement, and involvement in an international conspiracy". The evidence presented was a WhatsApp group and a Google document put together by Ravi and other activists to gather support for the farmers' protests in India. While dismissing the case, the presiding judge deemed the evidence provided by the Delhi Police to be "scanty and sketchy", adding that there wasn't "even an iota of proof to support the claims of sedition, incitement, or conspiracy". The Indian government has also attempted to prevent its critics from travelling. Earlier this year, the former head of Amnesty International India, Aakar Patel, was stopped from leaving the country after a "look out circular" (LOC) was issued for him. LOCs are usually reserved for "apprehending criminals at the border". Patel, however, was heading to the US to deliver lectures about the crackdown on civil society in India under Modi's leadership. Speaking to the media, Patel described it as sending "a clear signal to activists, journalists, and politicians to shut up". A week before Patel, journalist Rana Ayyub was also stopped at Mumbai airport, accused of money laundering. The case was based on a first information report (FIR) filed by Vikas Sankrityayan, the founder of the NGO Hindu IT Cell. Ayyub was on her way to London where she had been invited by the International Centre for Journalists to participate in a discussion about "online violence against women journalists". The Enforcement Directorate (ED) is currently investigating the allegation that Ayyub raised funding for charitable purposes through the crowdfunding platform Ketto and used some of the donations for personal expenses. Ayyub has maintained that the "entire donation received through Ketto is accounted for and not a single paisa has been misused". In a statement supporting Rana Ayyub, the Washington Post said: "Almost every day Rana Ayyub faces threats of violence and death. She has been the target of prejudiced investigations and online harassment. Her bank account was frozen over charitable work. Journalists should not fear prosecution and smear campaigns."

But the targeting of journalists began earlier than this. In 2017, the residences and offices of Prannoy and Radhika Roy – the founders of the influential cable news station NDTV – were raided by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in what many deemed to be a "politically motivated witch hunt" because of NDTV's critical editorial stance. The CBI said it was investigating the allegation that the founders and NDTV had caused "losses to a private bank by defaulting loans". The network responded: "NDTV and its promoters have never defaulted on any loan...We adhere to the highest levels of integrity and independence. It is clearly the independence and fearlessness of NDTV's team that the ruling party's politicians cannot stomach and the CBI raid is merely another attempt at silencing the media". While this investigation was seemingly stalled due to lack of evidence, the CBI filed another case against NDTV in 2019 for allegedly violating foreign direct investment regulations and routing "tainted money of unknown public servants through shell firms". And it's not only journalists and activists who have been targeted. In October 2021, when Aryan Khan, the son of Muslim Bollywood superstar Shahrukh Khan, was arrested by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on charges that included "possession of drugs and contact with an international drug racket", it was widely seen as politically motivated. He was not found to be in possession of any narcotics and charges were eventually dropped in May this year. Many believed Aryan had been targeted because of his father's unwillingness, unlike many of his Bollywood colleagues, to unequivocally align with the Hindu nationalist agenda. Journalist Kavita Chowdhury noted that while others have churned out "jingoistic blockbusters pandering to Hindutva sentiments", Khan has remained a symbol of secularism and personifies the "ethos of Hindu-Muslim unity". All of this is impacting India's standing in the world. It has slipped to 150th out of 180 countries in the Press Freedom index and 46th out of 165 independent countries and two territories in the 2021 Democracy Index published by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU). While this is an improvement on its position – 53rd – in the 2020 index, it is a significant drop from its ranking of 27th in 2014, when Modi became prime minister. But more concerning than these alarming indicators is the impunity with which Modi has overseen India's swift decline into Freedom House's category of a "partially free country". Hindu nationalists have been bolstered by significant electoral successes, while Modi has benefitted from a cultural shift – one that he has, in many ways, orchestrated – that has led to a society that, more than ever, celebrates the ideological and political ways of Hindutva. Equally, as we were recently reminded with the arrest of Teesta Setalvad, who campaigned for justice for the victims of the 2002 anti-Muslim riot in Gujarat when Modi was chief minister, the prime minister is willing and able to mobilise public institutions for his political agenda. This leaves little by way of recourse for Modi's detractors in India and indicates that there are few barriers left to prevent the country's slide into authoritarianism.

– Courtesy: Al Jazeera

## How to combat Bosnian genocide denial

Hamza Karcic

First, national parliaments across Europe should adopt resolutions commemorating the Bosnian Genocide and declaring 11 July as Srebrenica Remembrance Day. The US Congress adopted landmark resolutions in 2005 and the European Parliament passed a watered-down resolution on Srebrenica in 2009. Several countries followed suit. Bosnian diaspora and Bosniak officials should work to ensure that American...

TEN steps to preserve the memory of the genocide. For many years after the 1992-1995 war, many Bosniaks believed that verdicts handed down by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) would be accepted as undeniable truth. The genocide rulings handed down by these two international judicial institutions were believed to have the effect of being universally acceptable. The assumption had been that judicially-established truth would be accepted by all so that the Bosnian society can move forward. However, over the past decade, denial of the Bosnian Genocide has been on the rise. The denial has been present since the war on Bosnia was launched in 1992 and takes various forms. It is now evident that international court verdicts failed to quell the continuation of genocide denial in Bosnia and the Balkans. In addition to denial, glorification of perpetrators of Bosnian Genocide is now ever more present in what Hariz Halilovic and Hikmet Karcic have termed a new stage of genocide denial: triumphalism. In light of these dangerous developments, the question is how to counter this revisionism. As the 27th anniversary of Srebrenica approaches, it is important to consider what should be done to ensure that the memory of the Bosnian Genocide is institutionalized. In short, the strategy to safeguard the memory of the Bosnian Genocide is to sideline the local and regional deniers by going global. Here are ten specific steps that should be taken. First, national parliaments across Europe should adopt resolutions commemorating the Bosnian Genocide and declaring 11 July as Srebrenica Remembrance Day. The US Congress adopted landmark resolutions in 2005 and the European Parliament passed a watered-down resolution on Srebrenica in 2009. Several countries followed suit. Bosnian diaspora and Bosniak officials should work to ensure that American Congress-style resolutions are adopted across Europe. This would pave the way for commemorations of the genocide in an ever-expanding number of countries.

Second, Bosnian diaspora should continue to work to ensure that their local governments commemorate the genocide. This practice has taken root in the US and Canada and should be continued and be expanded to other cities and municipalities. Annual commemorations on 11 July will keep alive the issue of what Bosniaks went through in Europe at the end of the 20th century. Sixth, Bosnian diaspora and Bosniak political leaders should work to ensure that memorials to the Bosnian Genocide are built in the US and across Europe. Memorials should be erected in Washington, DC, New York City, London, Berlin, and Brussels. Seventh, Bosnian businessmen and corporations in Bosnia and the diaspora should endow chairs in Bosnian Genocide Studies at reputed universities in North America. This would provide for a long-term institutionalised study of the genocide. Eighth, Bosnian universities can work to offer summer schools in Bosnian Genocide studies in English to incoming international students. These courses should be offered to exchange students studying abroad in Bosnia but can also be tailored as specific short-term summer courses. Ninth, a central memorial to the Bosnian Genocide needs to be built in the centre of Sarajevo. There are a number of memorials in the capital city but a central monument for the entire genocide would be the focal point. Foreign delegations visiting Sarajevo would be required as part of official protocol to pay their respects at this site. Tenth, the Srebrenica Memorial Center has been a very active institution over the past few years in preserving the memory of the genocide. The Memorial Center should continue its international outreach programs and should particularly continue working on developing curricula, hosting students, and organising international conferences. By going global, Bosniak writers, publishers, filmmakers, businessmen, political leaders along with the diaspora can keep the genocide alive internationally. This would ensure that the memory of the Bosnian Genocide is preserved in the years ahead.

– Courtesy: TRT World

## Israel's occupation is its Achilles' heel

Osama Al-Sharif

The Arab countries that have normalized ties with Israel continue to support the two-state solution and consider the West Bank to be occupied territory. While such a position is symbolic, it remains important

WITH the region witnessing a flurry of diplomatic activity ahead of US President Joe Biden's visit next month, there was a firm stand on one particular issue: The Palestine question. That position was reiterated during Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's recent regional tour, as well as in talks between Jordan's King Abdullah and the leaders of the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt. And while the region is facing multiple challenges – from conflicts in Syria, Yemen and Libya to the effects of climate change and food security, not to mention the controversial role of Iran and nonstate actors – the Palestinian issue remains central for most countries, as it should be. Both in Cairo and Amman, Riyadh underlined its commitment to a negotiated peace settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in line with the two-state solution and the creation of a Palestinian state on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital. The Saudi position, which has been unrelenting, preempts media speculation about its unwavering support of the Palestinian right to self-determination. The fact that the West is focusing on Russia's war in Ukraine and its long-term ramifications on European national security notwithstanding, for the people of this region, failure to end Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories represents a major threat to the stability of the Middle East and beyond. Two years after two Arab countries signed treaties with Israel under the Abraham Accords, the Palestinian issue remains an obstacle to full normalization. What the events of last year proved is that, even if the world ignores the Palestinians and their struggle for liberation, Israel itself can never achieve full security and a state of normality as a result of its occupation. The need for a just resolution to the Palestinian issue is not only in the interest of Arab countries, but also in the interest of Israel itself if it wants to be viewed and treated as a normal country. It is inconceivable that its occupation and aggressive annexation of Palestinian territory can ever be accepted by the rest of the world. The problem with the Israeli occupation and illegal settlement building is that it is rendering the two-state solution impossible to implement.

This is driving both the Palestinians and Israelis toward difficult, if not perilous and self-defeating, alternatives. Either to include more than 3 million Palestinians in the West Bank into the state of Israel as full citizens or continue with an open-ended, but eventually unsustainable, military rule. Israel itself has not provided an answer to this dilemma. So far, it is in violation of every single convention, international law and UN resolution on the conflict. International and Israeli human rights organizations have labeled it an apartheid state. It is facing serious charges of genocide and war crimes at the International Criminal Court. Not a week passes without its soldiers and radical settlers murdering Palestinians in cold blood. How long can this go on before the world takes action? While Israel is yet to find an answer to this crucial issue, the impasse is turning its occupation into an embarrassment for international law enforcement. The question that keeps popping up is about double standards and how the West is reacting to Russia's occupation of Ukrainian territory, while turning a blind eye to Israel's five-decades-old occupation of Palestinian lands. Biden's visit to Israel and Ramallah in mid-July will not change the reality that faces the Palestinians. While the current US administration says it supports the two-state solution, it has opted not to get involved in reviving peace talks or to put pressure on Israel to stop its illegal settlement building. Making things more difficult, Israel is pushing ahead with plans to defund UNRWA and bury the right of return once and for all. While Israel is trying to impose its own regional agenda and deflect attention from the Palestinian issue, the reality is that, the longer its occupation lasts, the more difficult it will be to find a solution. The Palestinians will never give up on their right to self-determination and both Israel and the Palestinians have passed the point of no return on the two-state solution, leaving them with impossible options. The hard truth is that, even if the world continues to ignore the Palestinian issue, in time it is Israel that will be forced to seek a solution. Occupation is a ticking time bomb and is Israel's Achilles' heel.

– Courtesy: Arab News



## Briefs

## LHC orders recount sans PTI dissidents

FROM PAGE 01  
if required, a Punjab Assembly (PA) session will be held on July 1, 2022 (today) at 4pm. The LHC stressed that the session cannot be adjourned until the election process was completed and the presiding officer "intimated the result of the elected chief minister to the governor". The governor shall preform his duty, under Article 130(5), of administering oath without any hesitation, at any time before 11am very next day, it added. The court said the PTI petitions are accepted as far as the recounting of votes were concerned and remained parts are rejected. The court also said that the detailed verdict of the case will be issued later.

Hamza Shehbaz was elected as the Punjab CM on April 16 during a provincial assembly session that was marred by violence. He received a total of 197 votes — 11 more than the required 186 — including from 25 PTI defecting MPAs that were crucial for his victory.

## Russia abandons strategic Snake Island

FROM PAGE 01  
Russia of deliberately causing world hunger, as "blackmail." Moscow denies blocking the ports and blames food shortages on Western sanctions it says limit its own exports. "We do not prevent the export of Ukrainian grain. The Ukrainian military has mined the approaches to their ports; no one prevents them from clearing those mines and we guarantee the safety of shipping grain out of there," President Vladimir Putin said on Thursday.

Several military experts said that driving the Russians from Snake Island would not by itself be enough to unblock the ports. "Does that mean that suddenly the grain flows? No it doesn't really," said Marcus Faulkner, a lecturer of War Studies at King's College London, noting that ports were still mined and that Russia could still intercept cargo ships at sea. Oleg Zhdanov, a Kyiv-based military analyst, also said the ports could not be opened immediately, but it was still a "big victory in the sense that we are liquidating the Black Sea Fleet's dominance." Last month Britain's defence ministry said that if Russia were able to consolidate its grip on Snake Island with air defence and coastal defence cruise missiles, it could dominate the northwestern Black Sea. Russia had defended the island since February, despite Ukraine increasingly claiming to inflict severe damage, sinking supply vessels and destroying Russian fortifications.

## PHF to host first-ever hockey league late this year

DNA  
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) on Thursday announced to host its first-ever hockey league late this year. In a press conference chaired by PHF's president Khalid Sajjad Khokhar, reporters were told that the hockey league will be staged with the title 'The Max'.

"It's a milestone for the PHF," Khokhar told media. "We have worked really hard for this day to announce our league. I am proud to announce it finally," he said. "This hockey league is our first step in reviving the sport to regain the lost glory of our golden hockey days and I am confident that working with a professional corporate team in place, PHF is now heading in the right direction!"

Khokhar hinted at minus foreign players but vowed to bring international players in next editions. "I think it will be tough to rope in foreign players initially. But, our plan will expand and soon international players will join this league," he maintained.



DOHA: Chief of the Army Staff of Pakistan General Qamar Javed Bajwa meets Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defense Affairs of Qatar Dr. Khalid bin Mohammed Al Attiyah. — DNA

## Indonesia invites Ukraine FM to G20 FM's meeting

NEWS DESK

JAKARTA: Indonesia has invited Ukraine to the G20 Foreign Minister's Meeting, which will be held in Bali on July 7 and 8, 2022, G20 Co-Sherpa Dian Triansyah Djani informed during an official briefing on Thursday. "We already invited the Ukrainian foreign affairs minister, but we are still waiting to see if his attendance will be virtual or in person," she said. G20 is an international forum comprising 19 countries and the European Union that work together to handle major issues. Indonesia is holding the presidency of the grouping this year.

Ukraine is among the 10 countries whose participation in the G20 FMM has been confirmed, in addition to the representatives of 10 international organizations. The meeting will be attended by the foreign affairs ministers of all G20 countries, most of whom are scheduled to attend the meeting physically in Bali, Djani informed. "Majority of them will come in person, but I cannot reveal their names due to security reasons and other issues. What is clear is that they have given their commitment to attend," she said. At the meeting, the G20 foreign affairs ministers will discuss a variety of issues that have become global challenges,

## Jokowi heads to Moscow to meet Putin

AGENCIES

JAKARTA: President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) and First Lady Iriana headed to Moscow, Russia, to meet President Vladimir Putin at the Kremlin on the fifth day of his working visit abroad. Based on an official statement received here, Thursday, President Jokowi and Mrs Iriana arrived at the Przemysl Główny Station in Przemysl City, Poland. From the station, the President, First Lady, and their entourage headed to Rzeszów-Jasionka International Airport, Poland, and immediately proceeded to Vnukovo II Airport in Moscow, Russia, by boarding the Garuda Indonesia GIA-1 aircraft at around 9:00 local time. In the afternoon, the president

including multilateralism, energy, and food. While the G20 FMM will not produce an official document or communicate, the discussion on global issues by the foreign affairs ministers is expected to encourage more concrete cooperation in the future, she said. Moreover, the FMM will be utilized by the ministers to not only discuss issues during the session, but also to conduct

ident is scheduled to meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin. Minister of Foreign Affairs Retno Marsudi and Cabinet Secretary Pramono Anung are also accompanying President Jokowi and Iriana on the flight to Moscow. President Jokowi is visiting Russia to conduct a mission of peace and the same reason behind his visit to Ukraine and meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy at the Maryinsky Palace, Kyiv. At a meeting with President Zelenskyy, Jokowi said his visit to Ukraine was a manifestation of the Indonesian people's concern for Ukraine. While conversing with Zelenskyy, Jokowi also accentuated Indonesia's stance to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a country. De-

duct bilateral meetings officially or on the sidelines of the session, she elaborated. The members of the G20 comprise 20 of the world's largest economies, notably Indonesia, Russia, South Africa, the United States of America, Saudi Arabia, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, India, the United Kingdom, Italy, Japan, Germany, Canada, Mexico, the Republic of Korea,

spite being challenging to achieve, Jokowi highlighted the importance of resolving the conflict between Ukraine and Russia and conveyed that the spirit of peace should be maintained. For his meeting with President Putin, Jokowi also offered to carry a message from Zelenskyy to Vladimir Putin. Earlier, Chief of the Indonesian Presidential Staff, Moeldoko, stated that Indonesia chose to actively pursue world peace through Jokowi's peace mission to Ukraine and Russia when other countries preferred to remain silent or take sides. "This is a very good momentum for us to build national pride. At a time when other countries choose to remain silent or take sides, Indonesia chooses to actively work for peace," he noted.

France, China, Turkey, and the European Union. Meanwhile, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov would attend the Bali meeting, a Russian embassy official in Indonesia told the press, last Tuesday. Ukraine is not a member of the G20, but Indonesia which holds the G20 Presidency, can invite officials from non-member countries to attend G20 meetings.

## Wimbledon: Paula Badosa advances to 3rd round

The Catalan continues in this way with a firm step in her journey in the 'great' London, in which last year she reached the round of 16

SPORTS DESK

LONDON: The Spanish tennis player Paula Badosa qualified for the third round of the Wimbledon tournament, the third 'Grand Slam' of the season, after defeating the Romanian Irina Bara with authority on Thursday in two sets 6-3, 6-2. The Catalan continues in this way with a firm step in her journey in the 'great' London, in which last year she reached the round of 16. So far, in his first two games he hasn't used too much 'energy' and has only been there for two hours, in which he has only given up eight games.

After overwhelming the American Louise Chirico in her debut (6-1, 6-2), she did not give options to her second rival, 122 in the WTA ranking and who was playing for the first time in the Wimbledon singles draw. More complications surely awaited her in order to repeat the fourth round since she will have to defeat the Czech Petra Kvitová, double champion (2011 and 2014). Badosa, who arrived in



London with a loss in his only game on grass and without his best feelings, played at a high level and gave the feeling of always having control of the match, supported above all by his powerful serve. The Spaniard only lost three points with the first and nine with the second, although she gave up two break balls without too much impact, while she did a lot of damage to Bara from the baseline, especially with the 'drive'. The fourth seed began commanding thanks to an early 'break' to take 3-1, an advantage that was instantly lost due to his worst game of the match, with two double faults and two unforced errors with his forehand. However, he did not accuse him and broke again to regain control and not have any problems to close the set. In the second, Bara tried to maintain the equality from the start, but Badosa accelerated and did not waste his moment to finish the contest. With 1-2 on the scoreboard, the Catalan took five consecutive games and firmly sealed her place in the third round.

## Islamic world needs unity: Ashrafi

FOREIGN DESK

KUALA LUMPUR: The problems of the Islamic world cannot be solved without the unity and stability of the Muslim Ummah. The issues of Islamophobia, Toheen-e-Namoose-e-Risalat (S.A.W), blasphemy, terrorism and extremism have to be thwarted by mutual unity, said Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, Chairman Pakistan Ulema Council, Special Aide to Prime Minister on Religious Harmony and Middle East. While addressing South Asia Ulemas-Mashaykh Conference held here on Thursday in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) in collaboration of Muslim World League and Ministry of Religious Affairs, Malaysia, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi said that Muslim Ummah must get united to resolve the issues of Kashmir and Palestine. The issues of Kashmir and Palestine are the burning problems of the Muslim Ummah said Tahir Ashrafi adding that Interfaith dialogue is need of the time for promotion of religious harmony. He also stated that it is responsibility of the Ulemas-Mashaykh to make it aware on the world that Islam is a religion of peace and brotherhood and it has nothing to do with terrorism and extremism. The 'South Asia Ulemas-Mashaykh Conference' was chaired by Secretary General Muslim World League Dr. Muhammad bin Abdul Karim Al-Issa while Prime Minister of Malaysia Haji Muhammad Sabri Yaqoob attended the conference as Chief Guest. The conference was attended by 60 delegates from different countries and hundreds of Malaysian religious scholars, Muftis and Ulemas-Mashaykh also attended the conference. Speaking with the conference, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi said that the message of Islam is peace and security, which needs to be made public. He said that amidst prevailing circumstances, evil forces are surfacing against the Islam and the Muslims and it is the responsibility of the Ulemas-Mashaykh and religious scholars to contain these anarchists and to guide public and Muslim youths against all these miscreants. Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi also said that all those elements spreading terrorism and extremism in the name of Islam have done great damage to Islam.

## FIFA lifts ban on Pakistan Football Federation

'This will enable the latter to finally carry out the tasks assigned to it in full,' the FIFA said

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: World football's governing body FIFA on Thursday decided to lift the suspension on the Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) that was imposed last year owing to "undue third-party interference". "The decision was taken after FIFA received confirmation that the normalisation committee of the PFF had regained full control of the PFF's premises and was in a position to manage its finances," a press release issued by Bureau of the FIFA Council stated.

"The PFF was also informed that any undue interference in its affairs or action that could hinder the fulfillment of the mandate of the normalisation committee might lead to the PFF being suspended again and/or the imposition of other sanctions provided for in the FIFA Statutes," the press release said.

It added that the deadline (today), by which the normalisation committee was required to

fulfil its mandate, was now no longer realistic, hence the bureau decided to extend the committee's mandate until June 30, 2023.

"This will enable the latter to finally carry out the tasks assigned to it in full," the FIFA said. Meanwhile, PFF Normalisation Committee



(NC) chairman Haroon Malik hailed the decision as a "historic day" for Pakistani football. "I congratulate the whole nation and football community on the news," he said in a video message. Malik said the Normalisation Committee was resolved to fulfilling FIFA's mandate and would revive footballing activities, as well as ensure participation of the national team in international competitions. He said that heading towards elections and reclamation of assets would also be among the top priorities for the PFF.

Pakistan was suspended by FIFA in April 2021 after its appointed NC was thrown out of office by a group of officials led by Ashfaq Hussain Shah, who claimed that the Haroon Malik-led committee wasn't sincere about holding elections. Rounds of talks between the PSB and the Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination with officials of the NC as well as the Ashfaq group and others eventually saw the NC return to the PFF headquarters after handing over an eight-month roadmap to hold the elections.

## Women's training camp due today

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan women's national cricket team's final preparations for the tri-series in Ireland and the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham begin from today (Friday) as 15-member squad will take part in extensive training and practice sessions in a 10-day camp at the House of Northern, Islamabad before the team's departure on 12 July.

During the camp, the squad led by Bismah Maroof would participate in fitness, fielding, batting and bowling drills besides playing scenario-based matches in accordance to the demands of the T20 format. Both the tri-series and Commonwealth Games are T20 events. As part of the preparations for the tour, national team's head coach David Hemp worked with Karachi-based players in a four-day long camp last week which was focused on individual and scenario-based practice sessions.

Pacers Aimen Anwar, Fatima Sana and Kainat Imtiaz and batters Muneeba Ali Siddiqui and Omaira Sohail were the players involved in the camp. Bowling coach Saleem Jaffer also assisted Hemp in the camp along with Sindh women's coach Azam Khan. The tri-series and Commonwealth bound squad would depart for Belfast via Dubai on 12 July.

**Squad:** Bismah Maroof (captain), Aimen Anwar, Aliya Riaz, Anam Amin, Ayesha Naseem, Diana Baig, Fatima Sana, Gull Feroza (wicket-keeper), Iram Javed, Kainat Imtiaz, Muneeba Ali Siddiqui (wicketkeeper), Nida Dar, Omaira Sohail, Sadia Iqbal and Tuba Hassan.

## Baku blames Yerevan for sending illegal military

NEWS DESK

BAKU: Armenia has once again confessed to sending illegal military units to Azerbaijani territories, Azernews reports per Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Leyla Abdullayeva. The remarks were made in response to remarks by an Armenian high-ranking military officer made at a meeting with parents of conscripts.

"The statement by Deputy Chief of General Staff of the Armenian Armed Forces Sahak Sahakyan on the replacement of Armenian conscripts by contractors in Azerbaijan's Karabakh is clearly another confession made by Armenia regarding the sending of illegal military units to Azerbaijan," the spokesperson said.

Commenting on the matter, Abdullayeva stressed that this is a gross violation by Armenia of the trilateral statement dated November 10, 2020. "We remind that Article 4 of this statement stipulates the withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the territories of Azerbaijan, in parallel with the deployment of Russian peacekeeping contingent to these territories," she added. Further, the official pointed out that Azerbaijan has previously repeatedly stated that Armenia violates the provisions of the trilateral statement, including the complete withdrawal of illegal armed groups from Azerbaijan.

## India planning to implement Israel's model in IIOJK

MIRPUR: In a new sinister move, the occupational forces in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) have started new mode of persecution against the Kashmiris struggling for liberation by burning down their homes. "The occupying Indian security forces are now using Israeli made gunpowder that is sprinkled over rooftops and set alight in the middle of night," said a report reaching here from across the line of control (LoC) on Thursday.

"As a result of this, a mysterious fire emerges on rooftops all of a sudden turning their properties to ash besides the massive human loss", the report said. It may be added that an European Union delegation which had visited the bleeding vale of IIOJK few years back, had declared the IIOJK an open air prison. — APP



## Briefs

India making  
Twitter  
silencing  
Pakistani  
voices

ISLAMABAD: Indian authorities don't want citizens to have access to Pakistani views—especially the official ones, writes Ananya Bhat-tacharya in an article published in Quartz India.

According to Kashmir media service, The article titled "The Indian government is making Twitter silence Pakistani voices" wrote: "On June 27, at the behest of prime minister Narendra Modi's government, Twitter India banned accounts of the neighbouring country's foreign missions in Iran, Turkey, Egypt, and at the UN. Radio Pakistan's account, too, was blocked." "The Twitter handle of Pakistani journalist Murtaza Ali Shah was recently withheld for allegedly sharing 'anti-India' views." "Interestingly, it was reported last week that the account of CJ Werleman, a journalist who writes on Muslim affairs, was also banned at the Indian government's behest," Quartz India added.

These verified accounts have 550,000 and 313,000 followers, respectively. "This social media clamp-down isn't restricted to Twitter alone. The Indian government earlier took down 16 YouTube channels, including six from Pakistan." Pakistan's foreign office, while urging Twitter to restore access, tweeted that the "diminishing space for plurality of voices & access to info in India is extremely alarming." – APP

Ukraine cuts  
diplomatic ties  
with Syria

## AGENCIES

KYIV: Diplomatic ties between Kyiv and Damascus have ended after Moscow's ally Syria recognized the "independence and sovereignty" of eastern Ukraine's two separatist republics, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy announced. The Syrian Foreign Ministry announcement came days after regime leader Bashar Assad met with a joint delegation from both regions in the capital Damascus. The brief Foreign Ministry statement carried by Syrian state news agency SANA on Wednesday gave no further details.

"The Syrian Arab Republic has decided to recognize the independence and sovereignty of the Luhansk People's Republic and the Donetsk People's Republic," the statement, quoting an unnamed official, said. It added that communication is ongoing between both regions "to strengthen relations including setting up diplomatic relations." The breakthrough Donetsk and Luhansk regions, whose independence Moscow recognized in February, are situated in the Donbass region which is at the center of Russia's invasion and losing Kyiv's control since 2014. Earlier this month, Russia had claimed to have taken control of 97% of one of the two provinces that make up Donbass, bringing the Kremlin closer to its goal of fully capturing the eastern industrial heartland of coal mines and factories.

Neanderthals  
dwelling  
found in south  
Uzbekistan

TASHKENT: Uzbek archaeologists have discovered a Neanderthal dwelling dating back to approximately 100-40 thousand years BC in a cave in the southern Surkhandarya region of Uzbekistan, the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Heritage said Thursday. Excavations in the Khatak cave, discovered in 2021, have been underway since early this month by Uzbek archaeologists, including an Australian paleontologist from the Center for Human Evolution Studies at Griffith University, it said.

"In a hard-to-reach cave formed at a height of 15-20 meters above the base of a vertical rock, they discovered a complete picture of the life of Neanderthals: the remains of ash, a round hearth, as well as stone weapons and crushed bones of wild animals," the ministry said. – APP

We will continue to fight against  
injustice, says President Aliyev

He further noted, "The Non-Aligned Movement is the second largest international institution after the United Nations, and of course we all want our voices heard around the world. The parliamentary network is not the only initiative we have put forward and won your support

## NEWS DESK

BAKU: The Baku Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement Parliamentary Network on "Strengthening the Role of National Parliaments in Promoting Peace and Sustainable Development in the World" kicked off at the Heydar Aliyev Center on June 30. President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev attended the conference. The head of state addressed the conference. While addressing to the conference President Ilham Aliyev said, "Today, I think, an important event is taking place in the history of the Non-Aligned Movement. Here in Baku, we are creating a Parliamentary Network of the Non-Aligned Movement. I thank the member states of the Non-Aligned

Movement for supporting this initiative of Azerbaijan, which is an additional step towards strengthening solidarity and mutual support. He further noted, "The Non-Aligned Movement is the second largest international institution after the United Nations, and of course we all want our voices heard around the world. The parliamentary network is not the only initiative we have put forward and won your support. I think now is the right time to take more steps towards institutional development, which in turn will help us protect our interests in the international arena and, of course, strengthen solidarity between our countries. President of the Republic of Azerbaijan said, "Territorial integrity, sovereignty, independence, non-interference



in each other's affairs - if these principles were upheld by all countries, there would be no war, conflict and injustice. From the first days of our activity, Azerbaijan has been very actively involved in all initiatives of the Non-Aligned Movement. While refereeing to the pandemic situation he said, "We have also donated \$ 10

million to the World Health Organization, half of which has gone directly to the Non-Aligned Movement. Thus, I think our efforts to combat COVID-19 have had a very significant global impact. Because we were one of the countries that openly protested against vaccinated nationalism. We all remember that in the first days and months

of the pandemic, some rich countries supplied perhaps three or four times as many vaccines as they needed, depriving other countries of access to vaccines."

While talking about the conflict with Armenia President of the Republic of Azerbaijan said, "Another important sign of solidarity we have witnessed was the most difficult period for our country during the liberation of our lands after nearly 30 years of occupation by Armenia. We fought on our own land, we restored justice, we restored international law. But, unfortunately, some countries have launched a campaign against us - a campaign of smear, slander and blackmail. He further said, "I want to emphasize once again that we were restoring justice. Azerbaijan was one of the countries in the world that

faced the greatest injustice. The occupation of 20 percent of our territory by Armenia has resulted in ethnic cleansing. One million Azerbaijanis became refugees and internally displaced persons. Our historical and religious heritage has been wiped off the face of the earth by the Armenian occupiers. I can say that the situation with the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict is not only a regional but also a global issue. Because this was not only a complete violation of the basic principles of international law, but also a gross violation of UN Security Council resolutions and their disregard. In 1993, the UN Security Council adopted four resolutions calling for the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian troops from our territory.

Marcos Jr.  
sworn-in as  
Philippine  
president

## DNA

MANILA: Ferdinand Marcos Jr., the son of a former dictator, was sworn-in as the 17th president of Philippines on Thursday. Known as "Bongbong," the 64-year-old won a landslide victory in last month's presidential election. He took the oath of office in a public ceremony at the National Museum in Manila, which was attended by supporters, as well as local and foreign dignitaries and journalists.

His inauguration marks the return of Marcos family to rule Philippines, 36 years after late president Ferdinand Marcos was ousted in a popular revolt in 1986. He died in 1989 in exile.

Marcos Jr. succeeds President Rodrigo Duterte, whose six-year term has ended. The two met before the swearing-in at the Malacanang Palace, the official residence of the Philippine head of state. Sara Duterte, the former president's daughter, was sworn in as the country's 15th vice president on June 20.

Born in 1957, Marcos Jr. was first elected to the country's House of Representatives in 1992. He also served as a senator from 2010 to 2016, and in 2016 lost his vice-presidential bid to Leni Robredo.

In his inaugural address, Marcos Jr. vowed to fulfill his mandate to serve and protect fellow Filipinos.

"This is a historic moment for us all," he said. "You picked me to be your servant to enable changes to benefit all. I fully understand the gravity of the responsibility that you have put on my shoulders. I do not take it lightly, but I am ready for the task." His wife, First Lady Liza Araneta-Marcos, and their three sons also graced the formal inauguration ceremony.

Tokyo records  
highest June  
temperature  
in 147 years

## DNA

TOKYO: Tokyo on Thursday recorded the highest temperature for June in past 147 years, Japan's weather agency said. The capital is sizzling under intense heat wave as the temperature climbed to 36.4 degrees Celsius (97.5 degrees Fahrenheit).

It is the highest temperature for June in records available since 1875, Japan Meteorological Agency said. Rise in temperatures has led to increase in use of cooling systems. However, authorities have insisted people to cut usage of electricity in the resource-scarce nation. Japan this month also saw early end to rainy season as the meteorologists said it was the shortest season in the capital region throughout the country's recorded history. The "unusual" early end has been recorded for the first time since 1951.

Indonesia  
holds vast  
potential in  
halal industry

## DNA

YOGYAKARTA: Head of the Standardization and Industrial Services Policy Agency (BSKJI) of the Industry Ministry, Dody Rahadi, stated that Indonesia holds vast potential in developing the halal industry. Rahadi noted that based on the 2020 State of Global Islamic Economy Report, Indonesia became the third-largest country by investment value. The value of halal products reached US\$6.3 billion, or grew 219 percent from the previous year. "Plus the demographic advantage, which is 209.1 million Muslims in Indonesia, is an open market and holds great potential in the development of the halal industry," he stated at a gathering of the Center for Standardization and Services for the Leather, Rubber, and Plastic Industry (BSPSRIKPP) of the Ministry of Industry in Yogyakarta, Thursday. Rahadi drew attention to the fact that the market share of halal food, Islamic fashion, halal tourism, and education was increasing along with individual awareness that the halal lifestyle was not only due to religious law but was also good and useful for life.

Ambassador  
Asad Majeed  
presents  
credentials  
to King of  
Belgium

## DNA

BRUSSELS: The Ambassador of Pakistan to the Kingdom of Belgium, Dr. Asad Majeed Khan, presented credentials to His Majesty Philippe Leopold Louis Marie, the King of Belgium, in a graceful ceremony held at the Royal Palace of Brussels. The Ambassador conveyed the greetings and best wishes of the President and the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the King of Belgium. Reaffirming the importance Pakistan attaches to its friendly relations with Belgium, the Ambassador expressed his determination to work hard for building a more strong, vibrant and diverse partnership between Pakistan and Belgium. His Majesty the King reciprocated the warm greetings and extended best wishes for the welfare and prosperity of the people of Pakistan.

Indonesia records  
trade surplus with  
China in Jan-April

The ambassador attributed the drop to the GACC's new regulation on processed food imports, which came into effect on January 1, 2022

BEIJING: Indonesia recorded a surplus of US\$1.12 billion in its trade with China during the January-April period this year. During the period, Indonesia's exports to China reached US\$22.74 billion, while its imports from the world's second-largest economy stood at US\$21.62 billion. "As a result, Indonesia recorded a trade surplus of US\$1.12 billion with China," Indonesian Ambassador to China Djauhari Oratmangun informed on Tuesday. During the period, bilateral trade between the two countries swelled 34.36 percent year on year to touch US\$44.36 billion. However, Indonesia's processed food and beverage exports to China in the first four months of 2022 fell 23.17 percent to reach US\$1.46 billion compared to US\$1.90 billion in the corresponding period of the previous year. The ambassador attributed the drop to the General Administration of Customs China's (GACC)'s new regulation on processed food imports, which came into effect on January 1, 2022. The enforcement of the new regulation hindered the unloading of goods from Indonesia at several ports in China for not meeting the GACC requirements. "The drop must motivate (us) that Indonesia's foods and beverages can be accepted and have the potential to increase their market share in China," he said. The regulation makes it mandatory for foreign producers of processed foods and beverages to register their production facilities with the GACC before exporting their products to China. – DNA

Voters would  
reject Scotland  
independence: Poll

## FOREIGN DESK

LONDON: Scottish voters remain divided over independence with those against breaking away from the United Kingdom having "the narrowest of leads" over those in favour, according to a new survey. "If a referendum were tomorrow, 44 percent of Scots say they'll vote Yes, while 46 percent say they'll vote No, leaving 10 percent undecided," Savanta ComRes, which conducted the poll for The Scotsman newspaper, said on Thursday. "Removing those gives a headline voting intention of 51 percent for No and 49 percent for Yes." The poll comes two days after Scotland's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said the devolved administration planned to hold a referendum on independence on October 19, 2023. Addressing the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh on Tuesday, Sturgeon conceded that Scotland may lack the power to call the vote without London's approval. To ensure legal clarity, it will seek an opinion from the UK Supreme Court before it asks voters: "Should Scotland be an independent country?" The phrasing of the question was the same as Scottish voters were asked in 2014, when Scots voted to stay in the United Kingdom by 55 percent to 45 percent. Sturgeon's Scottish National Party says the UK's divorce from the European Union, following a 2016 referendum, has transformed the debate with most Scottish voters opposed to Brexit. Sturgeon stressed the "consultative referendum" would only proceed with the approval of the UK Supreme Court. The Supreme Court confirmed it would consider the new legal bid and would schedule a hearing "in due course".

## NATO gears up for its 9th enlargement

## DNA

BRUSSELS: NATO has sent invitations to Sweden and Finland to join the military alliance in its ninth enlargement so far. Since its establishment 73 years ago, NATO has expanded to 30 members from 12. The latest enlargement occurs at a time when Ukraine, Georgia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina are waiting to become members. The foundations of NATO were laid down in 1948 with the Brussels Treaty signed by Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg to create a collective defense alliance. A year later, with the participation of the US, Canada, Iceland, Italy, Portugal, Norway, and Denmark, the North Atlantic Treaty, more popularly known as the Washington Treaty, was signed.

**First enlargement with accession of Greece, Türkiye**  
NATO has an open-door pol-

icy based on Article 10 of the treaty. The first enlargement was the accession of Türkiye and Greece on Feb. 18, 1952. The membership of West Germany on May 9, 1955 was the second and the membership of Spain in 1982 was the third expansion of the alliance. The accession of the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland on March 12, 1999 took the number of members to 19. The fifth enlargement process took place in 2004, with the membership of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. The entry of Albania and Croatia in 2009 and Montenegro in 2017 was recorded as the 7th and 8th expansion wave. The last enlargement was in 2020 with the accession of North Macedonia.

**NATO membership requires long, multi-step process**  
For a country to join NATO, unanimous approval is required, which equals the

approval of all 30 existing allied countries. NATO membership normally requires a long process. For this, a multi-stage process is required to be completed. Accordingly, when a country seeks to join the alliance, NATO sends an official invitation to that country. After that, a seven-step participation process begins. In the first step, NATO experts and representatives of the invited country meet in Brussels and hold talks. In these meetings, it is discussed whether the invited country meets the political, legal, and military requirements of NATO and whether it can fulfill the economic, military, legal, political, and intelligence obligations of NATO membership. Based on these negotiations, it is determined whether the invited country will reform to meet NATO terms and standards. For step two, the invited country sends an official letter of intent to the NATO secretary-general and de-

clares that it accepts the obligations and commitments of NATO membership. If reforms are to be made, a calendar of reforms is also laid out in this letter. For step three, NATO prepares additional accession protocols to the Washington Treaty. In this way, the founding agreement of the alliance is, in a sense, updated. These protocols are signed by NATO countries. For step four, the protocols must be ratified by NATO member states in line with their national laws and procedures. The approval process differs from country to country. For example, a two-thirds vote of the Senate is required for approval in the US, while a formal vote in the UK parliament is not required. For step five, all member states, after completing their ratification processes, issue a notification to the US – which hosts the treaty – that they have accepted the protocols that envisage the accession of the new member state.

## Pak, Bangladesh trade continue to grow substantially

The Bangladeshi high commissioner also presented a gift of books to the FCCI president. He also recorded his impressions in the visitor's book

## ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: Bilateral trade between Pakistan and Bangladesh is growing at a much faster pace and it will cross the mark of one billion dollars by the year-end, said Ruhul Alam Siddique, high commissioner of Bangladesh in Pakistan. He was addressing the business community at Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) here on Thursday. He said that Pakistan was very important for Bangladesh in terms of trade and the two countries must supplement and complement each other, instead of becoming competitors.

He said that trade potential between the two countries was enormous and "we must harness our skills and capabilities to tap it for the benefit of each other." He said that Bangladesh intended to cooperate with Pakistan in the fields of food processing, dairy and even textile. He said that Bangladesh did not



produce even a single bale of cotton, "but we are second in garment export after China". He said that a large number of Pakistanis were working in Bangladesh but his country still needed skilled manpower for its textile sector. He said that his

country's development was directly linked with the progress of the region and all regional states must concentrate on reactivating SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) and SAFTA (South Asian Free Trade Area).

He said that Bangladesh had signed only one free trade agreement (FTA). "We have some problems in signing FTA with Pakistan, but we must make collaborative efforts to overcome the emerging challenges," said Ruhul Alam Siddique, adding that he had good relations with the business community of Karachi and now he would develop similar linkages with the business circles of Punjab. Earlier, FCCI President Atif Munir Sheikh introduced Faisalabad and the FCCI and said that the city alone was contributing 45% share to the total textile export of Pakistan. He said that in 2021 Pakistani exports to Bangladesh were \$815.6 million, while imports from Bangladesh were only \$90.4 million. He proposed chamber-to-chamber links, exchange of trade delegations and constitution of Pak-Bangladesh business council to further enhance our bilateral trade. The Bangladeshi high commissioner also presented a gift of books to the FCCI president. He also recorded his impressions in the visitor's book.



## Briefs

Pervaiz Elahi  
to move SC  
against LHC  
verdict

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League – Qauid (PMLQ) leader and Punjab Assembly Speaker Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi on Thursday has decided to approach the Supreme Court against the Lahore High Court (LHC) decision of re-counting of votes for the election of Punjab's chief minister held on April 16, instructing that the votes of 25 dissident PTI lawmakers be excluded from the counting process. Pervaiz Elahi consulted the legal team in which Ali Zafar Advocate, Monis Elahi, Raja Basharat, Samsam Bukhari, Ghazanfar Abbas Chahina, Hussain Jahani Gardezi, Hafiz Ammar Yasir and other lawyers participated. It was decided in the meeting that the decision of the Lahore High Court would be appealed to the apex court while the preparation of legal petition for this has been started. During the meeting, it was briefed that 5 members of PTI have gone for performing Hajj, 6 members are abroad for necessary work and 5 members of PTI have not been notified by the Election Commission despite the decision of the High Court. There are many constitutional and legal ambiguities in the decision and the legal points will be placed before the apex court.

CEC seeks  
Pak army  
deployment  
during by-polls

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja has sought the assistance of the armed forces to ensure security during Punjab by-polls and NA-245 Karachi by-polls. In a letter to Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja requested the deployment of army and Rangers personnel in four Punjab Assembly constituencies of Lahore (PP-158, PP-167, PP-168, PP-170) and PP-217 Multan due to charged political atmosphere and extreme polarisation in the country. The CEC has requested the COAS to deploy quick-response contingents in the remaining 15 constituencies of the Punjab by-polls. The deployment of armed forces has also been sought for one National Assembly constituency in Sindh (NA-245). Referring to the support the armed forces had rendered during the general election and local elections in KP and Balochistan, Raja hoped for similar help in conducting the by-polls and two phases of local government elections in Sindh. Polling for 20 Punjab Assembly seats is to be held on July 17.

EU and New  
Zealand seal  
'state-of-the-art'  
trade deal

BRUSSELS: European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen said Thursday the EU and New Zealand had sealed a free trade deal after four years of talks, promising it would deepen ties. "This is a historic moment in our cooperation," von der Leyen told reporters at a joint press statement with New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, adding that the deal had come after "tough negotiations". Ardern hailed a "historic further milestone in the strong partnership between two closely-connected like-minded friends." The pact brings economies of vastly different sizes closer together: New Zealand has a population of just five million people against the EU's 450 million. Once it has survived a long ratification process, the EU said the deal would eliminate all tariffs on its exports to New Zealand and will open markets in key sectors such as financial services, telecommunications, maritime transport and delivery services. – APP



ISLAMABAD: President Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians Asif Ali Zardari and Foreign Minister, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari call on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. – DNA

Pakistan to work closely  
with China for progress

"Pakistan will continue to support Chinese investors with competitive incentives, access to high-quality infrastructure and unwavering security arrangements," he said in a meeting with Yang Jiechi, Member of the Politburo of the CPC

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said Pakistan stood ready to work closely with China for realizing the shared vision of connectivity, prosperity and public well-being. "Pakistan will continue to support Chinese investors with competitive incentives, access to high-quality infrastructure and unwavering security arrangements," he said in a meeting with Yang Jiechi, Member of the Politburo of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and Director of its Foreign Affairs Commission. Extending a warm welcome to Director Yang, the prime minister conveyed the most cordial greetings and best wishes for President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang. The prime minister noted that Director Yang's visit marked the continuation of high-level exchanges between Pakistan and China, which are the hallmark of the time-tested All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership between the two countries. He recalled his extensive conversation with Premier Li Keqiang in May 2022, during which both leaders had reviewed the entire spectrum of bilateral relations and

PM Shehbaz asks Zardari  
to convince allies

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday has asked Pakistan People's Party (PPP) co-chairman and former president Asif Ali Zardari to convince allies. Asif Ali Zardari and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari called on PM Shehbaz and discussed the current political situation and the new NAB chairman appointment. Federal Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah, former Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Federal Minister for Railways and Aviation Khawaja Saad Rafique and PML-N leader Malik Ahmad Khan were also present in the meeting. During the meeting, PM Shehbaz also asked Asif Zardari to convince the allies by resolving their concerns. On this, former president assured the Prime Minister of full cooperation and said that their concerns will be resolved soon. – DNA

exchanged views on the regional and international situation. PM Sharif underscored the significance of Director Yang's visit for accelerating the implementation of the leaders' consensus on further enhancing bilateral relations across all domains. He highlighted that economic cooperation had become a mainstay of the wide-ranging Pakistan-China partnership. He expressed

satisfaction at growing bilateral trade and financial linkages with China's unstinting support playing an invaluable role in helping Pakistan offset external shocks to the global economy and demonstrating the continued resilience of Pakistan-China cooperation at a time of heightened uncertainty on the world stage. The Prime Minister particularly thanked China for renewal of the RMB 15

billion (US \$ 2.3 billion) syndicate facility. He also thanked China for its support and assistance to Pakistan's efforts towards preventing the spread of COVID-19 pandemic by providing millions of vaccine doses as well as protective and medical equipment. The prime minister said that as a flagship of the visionary Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), CPEC had transformed Pakistan's economic base and strengthened capacity for self-development. He reaffirmed the government's resolve to accelerate the pace and complete CPEC projects at the earliest. The prime minister also underscored the high importance Pakistan attached to the strategic ML-I and other key projects including Karachi Circular Railway (KCR), Babusar Tunnel, and desalination plant in Karachi. The CPEC and growing economic linkages had deepened the roots of the abiding friendship between the peoples of both the countries, the prime minister noted. Atop this unshakable foundation, the Pakistan-China partnership would continue to play its valuable role as a factor of peace and stability in the region and beyond. – APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Switzerland Benedict de Cerjat pays a farewell call on President Dr. Arif Alvi. – DNA

US SC limits federal  
power to curb  
carbon emissions

MONITORING DESK

WASHINGTON: The US Supreme Court on Thursday imposed limits on the federal government's authority to issue sweeping regulations to reduce carbon emissions from power plants in a ruling that will undermine President Joe Biden's plans to tackle climate change.

The court's 6-3 ruling restricted the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) authority to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from existing coal and gas-fired power plants under the landmark Clean Air Act anti-pollution law. Biden's administration is currently working on new regulations. The court's six conservatives were in the majority in the decision authored by Chief Justice John Roberts, with the three liberals dissenting. The ruling is likely to have implications beyond the EPA as it raises new legal questions about any big decisions made by federal agencies. The Supreme Court's conservative majority has signalled ongoing scepticism toward expansive federal regulatory authority. Conservative legal activists have long advocated reducing agency power in what has been dubbed a "war on the administrative state".

Israel dissolves  
parliament, sets  
November election

TEL AVIV: Israeli lawmakers voted Thursday to dissolve parliament and send the country to its fifth elections in less than four years. New polls are to be held on November 1. Israel's foreign minister, Yair Lapid, will become caretaker prime minister just after midnight on Friday. He replaces Naftali Bennett, Israel's shortest-serving prime minister. The dissolution measure passed with 92 votes in favor and none against. Bennett, who has said he will not seek reelection, led a coalition of eight diverse parties that ousted longtime Israeli leader Benjamin Netanyahu just over a year ago. The historic alliance of groups from the right and left as well as from the Arab minority had sought to end a period of unprecedented political gridlock, in which the country held four elections in two years. In a statement Wednesday, Bennett said his government had left a "thriving, strong and secure country" and had shown that parties from different ends of the political spectrum could work together. The outgoing premier is also handing over the leadership of his nationalist Yamina party to Interior Minister Ayelet Shaked. Netanyahu, who has been indicted for corruption, has vowed to return to power in the upcoming election. While polls show his right-wing Likud party could emerge as the strongest force, it is not yet clear whether they will have enough support to form a majority. Netanyahu's main rival is expected to be incoming interim Prime Minister Lapid, a former talk-show host who heads a center-left party. **Prolonged political crisis:** The outgoing governing coalition made history by being the first to include an Arab party, the Islamic party Ra'am, but it was also dogged by its ideological divides. Bennett said the final straw came earlier this month, when the government failed to renew a measure that preserves the special legal status of roughly 475,000 Jewish settlers in the occupied West Bank. Most Israelis view the legislation as essential. – DNA

## Two killed as clerics meet to endorse Taliban rule

"We are taking into consideration the needs or thoughts and observations of them," he added. Women's rights activist Razia Barakzai told media Hanafi's comments were "intolerable logic"

KABUL: Two gunmen were shot dead in the Afghan capital Thursday near the site of a gathering by thousands of religious scholars called to endorse the Taliban's hardline Islamist rule. Taliban officials said the two started firing from a rooftop near where the meeting was taking place, but were "quickly eliminated by Mujahideen with the help of Allah the Almighty". Officials have provided scant details of the three-day men-only "jirga" – a traditional gathering of clerics and influential people that settles differences by consensus – and the media is also barred from attending. Some speeches were broadcast on state radio – with clerics calling for absolute loyalty to the Taliban's rule. "Obedience is the most important principle of the system," Habibullah Haqqani, the head of the gathering, said

in his opening remarks. "We must obey all our leaders in all affairs, sincerely and truly." It comes a week after a powerful earthquake struck the east of the country, killing over 1,000 people and leaving tens of thousands homeless. Even before the quake, the Taliban were struggling to administer a country that had long been in the grip of economic malaise, utterly dependent on foreign aid that dried up with the overthrow of the Western-backed government in August 2021. Officials from the United States were meeting senior Taliban leaders in Qatar Thursday for talks on unlocking some of Afghanistan's reserves, with Washington seeking ways to ensure the money goes to help the population rather than the Islamist group. A Taliban source told AFP this week that

criticism of the regime would be allowed at the jirga, and thorny issues such as girls' education – which has divided opinion in the movement – would be discussed. But women would not be allowed to attend the gathering, with deputy Prime Minister Abdul Salam Hanafi telling state broadcaster RTA on Wednesday there was no need because they would be represented by male relatives. "When their sons are in the gathering it means they are also involved," he said. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid told a press conference Thursday the decision to exclude women was made by the "ulema" – the religious scholars. "We are taking into consideration the needs or the thoughts and observations of them," he added. Women's rights activ-

ist Razia Barakzai told AFP Hanafi's comments were "intolerable logic". "Women should be part of the decisions about their fate," she said, adding: "Life has been taken away from Afghan women." Since the Taliban's return, secondary school girls have been barred from education and women dismissed from government jobs, forbidden from travelling alone, and ordered to dress in clothing that covers everything but their faces. They have also outlawed playing non-religious music, banned the portrayal of human figures in advertising, ordered TV channels to stop showing movies and soap operas featuring uncovered women, and told men they should dress in traditional garb and grow their beards. – Agencies

US Assistant  
Secy INLEA  
calls on  
Sana Ullah

ISLAMABAD: Assistant Secretary of United States for Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INLEA) Mr. Todd D. Robinson called on Minister for Interior Rana Sana Ullah here Thursday and Pak-US bilateral relations besides other issues of mutual interests came under discussion during the meeting. Both the sides expressed satisfaction over the completion of 75 years of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and the United States, said a statement issued here. They also stressed the need for a broad-based dialogue to promote relations between Pakistan and the United States. Money laundering, drug trafficking prevention and illegal human trafficking issues also came under discussion. Todd D. Robinson said Pakistan and the United States have a long-lasting relationship. Pakistan's efforts to curb money laundering and drug trafficking were commendable, he added. He said both Pakistan and the US Drug Enforcement Administration were pleased to have completed 40 years of relations. We would continue to provide technical and financial assistance to Pakistan for drug prevention, he added. Interior Minister said Pakistan attached great importance to its relations with the United States. The United States was Pakistan's largest trading partner, he added. – APP

Germany  
looks to buy  
Israeli or  
US defence  
system

BERLIN: Berlin is considering buying a missile defence system from Israel or the United States to defend against threats including Russian Iskander missiles in Kaliningrad, German weekly Welt am Sonntag reported on Saturday. The Iskander missiles can reach almost all of western Europe and there is no missile shield in place to protect against this threat, Germany's chief of defence Eberhard Zorn told Welt am Sonntag in an interview published on Saturday. "The Israelis and the Americans possess such systems. Which one do we prefer? Will we manage to establish an overall (missile defence) system in NATO? These are the questions we need to answer now," Zorn said. He did not specify the names of the systems but was most likely referring to Arrow 3 built by Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) (ISRAEL) and the U.S. system THAAD produced by Lockheed Martin (LMTN). Russia said in 2018 it had deployed Iskander missiles to its Kaliningrad exclave, a slice of Russia wedged between Poland and Lithuania. – Agencies

Kyiv sending  
delegation  
to recovery  
talks in  
Switzerland

BERN: Kyiv said Thursday that Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal would lead a delegation of around 100 people to Switzerland next week for an international meeting on rebuilding Ukraine. Ukraine is sending "a very high-level delegation", Kyiv's ambassador to Switzerland Artem Rybchenko told reporters in Bern, adding it would mark the largest delegation to leave his country since the Russian invasion. They will be among delegations from dozens of countries at the Ukraine Recovery Conference to be co-hosted by Kyiv and Bern in the southern Swiss city of Lugano on July 4 and 5. The conference had been planned well before Russia launched its full-scale invasion on February 24, and had originally been slated to discuss reforms in Ukraine before being repurposed for war reconstruction. It will not be a pledging conference, but will instead attempt to lay out the principles and priorities for a rebuilding process aimed to start even as Russia's war in Ukraine continues to rage. – APP