



Friday, June 10, 2022

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US President opens Summit of Americas, calls for unity

Detailed News On Page-06

NATO chief cancels Romania, Germany visit

Detailed News On Page-07



Mohammad Hasnain's action declared legal

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

Rocketing prices fuel Boris' woes

APP

LONDON: Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Thursday sought to reset his embattled leadership with a policy blitz to tackle Britain's cost-of-living crisis, including contentious new measures to boost home ownership. After narrowly surviving a no-confidence vote among his own Conservative MPs on Monday, Johnson is under pressure to turn the page on a series of scandals including lockdown-breaching parties in Downing Street. In a speech later, he was to vow "more affordable energy, childcare, transport and housing", according to excerpts released by Downing Street.

Aamir Liaquat dies

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Former Member of National Assembly (MNA) and television host Aamir Liaquat has passed away in Karachi, media reported Thursday. He was 50 years old. The PTI leader was found unconscious at his home in Khudad Colony and shifted to a private hospital in critical condition. Liaquat reportedly felt chest discomfort last night but refused to go to the hospital. His employee, Javed, said a scream was heard from Liaquat's room today morning. His domestic staff broke down his room's door when they did not receive any reply from him, media reported.

Maqsood's death: PTI wants probe

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Central Secretary for Information Faruk Habib said that sudden demise of the Sharif family's peon Malik Maqsood aka 'Maqsood Chaprasi', nominated in the money laundering case against Shehbaz Sharif and his family, raised many eyebrows because many important people related to the Sharif family's cases died abruptly.



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance Miftah Ismail, Minister for Planning Development and Reform Ahsan Iqbal and Federal Minister for Power Khuram Dastgir Khan launching Pakistan Economic Survey 2021-22 at P-Block Auditorium. — APP

Economic survey testifies PTI's success: Imran

Demands inquiries into mysterious deaths of Rizwan, Maqsood Peon

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan stated that the Economic Survey Report 2021-22 report testified the PTI's claims that Pakistan was on the trajectory of progress and the economy was thriving. In a televised address, while shedding light on PTI's economic performance, Imran Khan said that the data of the survey clearly indicated that Pakistan was prospering on the economic front during the tenure of his government. He said that PTI government put the country on a path of economic progress and prosperity during the last two years and



Maryam blames PTI for country's woes

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Maryam Nawaz has blamed Imran Khan what she said was destroying every sector of the country. She added that the previous government was responsible for the prolonged power outages. "There was zero load-shedding during the last government of Nawaz Sharif," Maryam said while speaking to the media in Islamabad, adding that during the PTI-led government no work on the construction of power plants was done. She said that the PTI chairperson had laid land mines for the incumbent government and destroyed the economy, adding that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was working day and

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PM for meeting Pak-Iran trade potential



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Thursday called for tapping the vast potential existing in the areas of

trade and economic cooperation between Pakistan and Iran by overcoming barriers and exploring new avenues of collaboration. The prime minister, in a meeting with Ambassador of Iran Seyed Ali Mohammad Hossenei, who called on him here, emphasized the early finalization of Polan-Gwadar project that would provide additional 100 MW of electricity from Iran to Pakistan. He thanked Iran for its timely assistance in controlling forest fire in Balochistan, highlighting that it was a testament to the strong fraternal bond that exists between our two countries and peoples. The prime minister conveyed his warm greetings to the Iranian leadership and highlighted the importance of close fraternal ties between the two countries, based on shared geography, common heritage and people-to-people linkages.

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Korea commits USD 1 bn to Pakistan for next 5 years

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Affairs Division (EAD) and the Embassy of the Republic of Korea held a ceremony here in Islamabad on Thursday at the Prime Ministers Office for the signing of the Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) Agreement, worth USD 1 billion that will be provided to Pakistan from the Government of the Republic of Korea for the years 2022 through to 2026. This agreement



was mutually signed by the Secretary of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Mr. Mian Asad Hayat Din, and the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, Suh Sangpyo. The Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Mr. Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and other senior EAD and Embassy officials were also present at the ceremony. This development comes, following months of constructive negotiations between the two sides and under the terms of this agreement, Federal and Provincial bodies are to submit their proposals to the EAD to avail funding for projects aimed at the socio-economic uplift of the country and its citizens. The Minister and Secretary EAD, while speaking at the ceremony collectively appreciated the Ambassador for paving the way for this agreement and thanked the Government of the Republic of Korea for its everlasting support to Pakistan. The Ambassador added that the Korea and Pakistan have always enjoyed cordial ties and Korea aims to further enhance the bilateral relations between the two countries to new heights.

Economic Survey 2021-22

GDP growth at 6%; above targeted 4.8%

However, the trade deficit stood at \$45 billion

SHJUAAT HAMZA/DNA

ISLAMABAD: A day before announcing the budget for the fiscal year 2022-23, the coalition government reflected upon the performance of the economy for the outgoing fiscal year with a growth of 6% against the envisaged target of 4.8%. Finance Minister Miftah Ismail, who succeeded Shaukat Tarin as the country's finance czar in mid-April (which interestingly is when the survey review period ends), chaired the launch ceremony of the Economic Survey 2021-22. "The situation in Pakistan has remained the same: whenever the country records growth, unfortunately, it falls into a crisis of current deficit," Miftah said in a televised press conference. The survey document released by the Ministry of Finance noted that though the economy recovered from the pandemic (a 0.94% drop in FY20) and maintained a V-Shaped recovery by posting real GDP growth of 5.97% in the fiscal year 2022, this high growth is "unsustainable" and has resulted in "financial and macroeconomic imbalances". It is worth mentioning that the National Economic Council (NEC) has approved

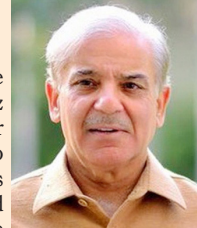
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PM calls for collective efforts to end power outages

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has called for collective efforts to end power outages and problems faced by the masses. He made the remarks in Islamabad while getting a briefing on the power situation in the country on Thursday. Officials of the Ministry of Energy apprised the PM of the latest situation of load-shedding in the country. The PM sought data about electricity's demand and supply. He also inquired about the power supply situation on different feeders. Earlier, PML-N leader and former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said that government was



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Newly posted TIOs would play a key role in enhancing exports

DNA

FAISALABAD: Newly posted Trade & Investment Officers (TIOs) would play a key role in enhancing exports, bringing maximum FDI and technology transfer for imports substitution industry, said Mr. Qamar Zaman Group Leader of the TIOs who visited Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) here today. He said that there were lots of complaints about the non cooperative attitude of the trade officers about 20 years ago but now strict selection procedure has been adopted for their selection while their scope of work has also been enhanced from exports only to bringing maximum FDI and technology to expand the export base. He said that new selectees have also been directed to report to the Board of Investment (BOI). He acknowledged the industrial, commercial and business importance of Faisalabad and said that Faisalabad alone is contributing almost half of the total textile exports. He said that earlier exporters have to face problems in linkages with trade and investment officers

posted in different countries but now they could establish reliable linkages through the internet in addition to conducting zoom meetings with the concerned stakeholders. He particularly mentioned the M3 and Allama Iqbal Industrial Estates and said that 80% industrial units in Punjab are being established in these two estates. He said that 65 units are being established in collaboration with foreign investors which could help attract more investors from the different countries. He said that the government is providing a facility of duty free import for machinery along with a ten years tax holiday for industrial units to be established in these estates. He said that a vacancy of TIO in India was lying vacant for the last five years as there was no trade between the two countries. "Earlier Pakistan was importing dyes and chemicals from India", he said and added that perhaps this import has been rerouted through other countries. He said that there are huge untapped opportunities for exports to Iran and Afghanistan as these countries have reliable systems of banking and payments, however, we must explore new avenues to launch joint

ventures with these countries. He suggested that FCCI should establish its liaison officer in Islamabad to interact continuously with the different departments of the Commerce Ministry. Earlier President Atif Munir Sheikh introduced Faisalabad and FCCI and said that this city was contributing 45-48% share in total textile exports of Pakistan. "Similarly, Faisalabad is also catering to the 80% domestic needs of clothes and clothing", he said and added that our more than one hundred members are dealing with the 15 countries where new trade and investment officers have been posted. He said that separate desks have been established for B2B meetings between the trade officers and our members dealing with these countries. "It would help them to directly interact and discuss issues and problems hampering exports", he said and added that FIEDMC has taken elaborate arrangements to facilitate the new investors. "In this connection, one window operation has been launched from where industrialists could get NOCs for 32 different departments", he said and added that NOCs are being issued within 90 days for high risk, 60 days for medium risk and 30 days for low-risk industrial units.



KP forests were set ablaze deliberately

DNA

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) police sources have claimed that the forest fires that ignited some days back were possibly deliberate. According to details, the KPK police made a shocking revelation regarding the forest fires in KPK in the past few weeks causing property and life losses. The forests were set ablaze to get relief package money from the gov-

ernment, the police claim. At least 12 people have been arrested for starting the fires, the forests were private and were set ablaze to claim monetary benefits from the government, the KPK forest department claims. According to the police, four of the detained are from Abbottabad, four from Swat, 2 from Lower Dir, and two were from Khyber. The arrested will be persecuted under the forests act of KPK. According to a forest department spokesperson, only

three government-owned forests were set on fire. At least four people including three women were killed as fire erupted in Swat's mountainous forest, Chaksair on Saturday. The locals had said that fire broke out at four locations in the Swat mountains namely Brekot, CharbaghKot, KabalSegram and Chaksair. Officials had claimed that the wildfire started on the K-P site but due to strong winds, it spread to other areas, including Sherani and Musakhail.

56 profiteers fined

FAISALABAD: The price control magistrates imposed Rs 88,500 fine on 56 shopkeepers on the charge of profiteering in the district during the past 12 hours.

A spokesman for the local administration said on Thursday that the magistrates inspected 765 shops in different markets and bazaars of Faisalabad and found dozens of shopkeepers involved in profiteering and overcharging. The magistrates imposed fine on them and warned that they would be sent behind bars if they did not shun profiteering, he added. - APP



ISLAMABAD: General Manager Islamabad Serena Hotel holding a lucky draw to give brand new car to the winner. - DNA

Awareness seminar held on World Clubfoot day

PESHAWAR: Paraplegic Center Hayatabad here on Thursday arranged an awareness seminar in connection with World Clubfoot Day to raise public awareness about the timely treatment of congenital crooked feet in children. Chief Executive Officer of the organization Dr Muhammad Ilyas Syed said that in a short span of four years since the establishment of Clubfoot Clinic at Paraplegic Center Peshawar in 2018, the institution had successfully treated the birth defects of more than 1,800 children and had helped hundreds of thousands of helpless parents. Physical Rehab Programme Manager, Red Cross, Ahmad Al-Debi and Country Manager Farukh praised the organisation's active role, saying that after the Paraplegic Center Pakistan, it had emerged as the only national institution for the effective treatment of spinal cord patients and the injured of civil war in Afghanistan. - APP

Banking sector endeavoring to ensure gender parity: SBP DG

FAISALABAD: Banking sector was endeavoring to ensure gender parity with a focus on mainstreaming female entrepreneurs particularly those belonging to the SME sector. This was stated by Muhammad Ashraf Khan, Director General State Bank of Pakistan - Banking Services Corporation (SBP-BSC) Karachi while addressing a one-day Thematic Programme on "SME Asaan Finance Scheme (SAAF) with a special focus on Women Entrepreneurs" in a local hotel on Thursday. He said that being a regulator SBP had taken fundamental steps to facilitate the female entrepreneurs. "The SME sector is a major challenge which remained deprived of finances and thus failed to play its proactive role in national progress and prosperity", he added. "We arranged a sur-

vey through World Bank to resolve problems being confronted by the SME sector. This study identified financial literacy as major handicap. Hence, we started work on promotion of financial literacy and this facility is provided to one million people with equal representation by the females", he said. He said, "There are 16000 bank branches across the country but we cannot provide this facility in every nook and corner of the country. Hence, Asaan Mobile Account was introduced. Now we are heading towards digital banking". He said that banking industry was one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy. "We have introduced "Raast" programme for the maximum payments through digital system. This program is still under the phase of awareness", he added. He said that corona lockdown

had further enhanced the importance of digital banking as it gave additional features of transparency as no one could delay in the approval of loan applications without any cogent reason. He said the major issue of SME sector was lack of documentation and we tried to accept their self-audited documents for the approval of loan applications. He said that 8 banks had been authorized to disburse collateral-free loans with a total portfolio of Rs 126.3 billion. He said that loans amounting to Rs 40 million had so far been disbursed in 6 districts affiliated with Faisalabad banking division. He said that special emphasis was given to the female entrepreneurs. Banks have been directed to ensure maximum representation of female staff so that they could easily handled the women entrepreneurs. - APP

FESCO staff asked to replace defective meters immediately

FAISALABAD: Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) Chief Executive Officer Engineer Bashir Ahmed on Thursday directed the FESCO officers and field staff to immediately replace defective meters across the region. During an E-court here at FESCO Headquarters, he said that FESCO was utilizing all available resources to improve the distribution system in addition to resolving electricity related complaints on top priority basis. He said that special steps had been taken to deal power pilferers with an iron hand and penalizing the corrupt elements of the company as well. He said that 45 consumers filed their complaints during E-court arranged on Facebook and necessary directives were issued to redress the same without any delay. Most of these complaints were relating to overloading of transformers,

replacement of electricity poles and electricity meters as well as shortage of voltages and non-installation of new connections. He said that FESCO officers and field staff were directed to immediately start work on replacement of defective and out-of-order electricity supply meters while the remaining issues would also be resolved amicably. He said that monitoring cell of FESCO was working round the clock to resolve consumers' complaints, and people could contact this cell through toll-free numbers 0800-66554 and 118 to get their complaints lodged. Superintending Engineers of all five circles of FESCO also attended the E-court online.



TBTTP achieves over a bln plantation target

ISLAMABAD: The federal government's flagship Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Plantation project has achieved over a billion plantation target till March 2022 that helped address decline in forest cover within four years time period. According to the Economic Survey 2021-22 launched by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Miftah Ismail along with Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal, Federal Minister for Power Khurram Dastgir, and Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Aisha Ghaus Pasha, the government has evolved policy frameworks backed by strategy to address various aspects of the climate change including major policy and climate related interventions. In this context, the Ministry of Climate Change (MoCC) has taken different initia-

tives to mitigate the effects of environment and climate. The Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Programme (TBTTP) was initiated in 2019 with a total cost of Rs 125.1843 billion for four years (2019-2023) to plant and regenerate 3.296 billion plants across the country. "The programme is being implemented by the provincial forest and wildlife departments through MoCC on 50 percent cost sharing basis except AJ&K and GB which are 100 percent funded by the Federal Government through PSDP", it said. The programme has achieved 579.093 million plants during July-March FY2022 and cumulatively has attained 1586.18 million plants till March 2022. Through this programme 327,877 people have been employed until March 2022, it added. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan Ihsan Mustafa Yurdakul visiting Quaid-i-Azam University Prof. Dr. Mohammad Ali for inauguration ceremony of incubation center at Quaid-e-Azam University. - DNA

PTI female members hold protest outside Parliament

ISLAMABAD: Female members of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Thursday held a protest outside the Parliament House. During the protest, they also tried to break into the Parliament's building, while the police officials closed the gates. The protest was led by the party's leaders Aliya Hamza, KanwalShauzab and Maleeka Bokhari. The protesters tried to enter the Parliament House building by climbing onto the gates to record their protest. They chanted slogans of "imported hukoomatnamanzor" (foreign government unacceptable) against the rising inflation in the country as well as the bills passed by the coalition government during a joint session. - APP

PTI govt removed Benazir's name from BISP: Shazi Marri



The minister said that Rs 30 billion funds of BISP were also diverted to Ehsaas programme. She said that PPP govt initiated its programme purely for the poor segments of the society and there was no political intention and all the stakeholders were taken on board

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Shazia Marri on Thursday informed the Senate that the previous government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) had initiated Ehsaas programme by removing the name of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto from Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) for political gains. Replying to a Calling At-

tention Notice moved by Senator Sania Nishtar, she said that Rs 77 million were spent to erase the name of Benazir Bhutto Shaheed from the (BISP) Card. The PTI government had played a political game by renaming BISP as Ehsaas, she said and added that PTI was scared of Benazir Bhutto Shaheed's name. The minister said that Rs 30 billion funds of BISP were also diverted to Ehsaas programme. She said that PPP government initiated its programme purely for the poor

segments of the society and there was no political intention and all the stakeholders were taken on board. She said that United Nations had also applauded and appreciated this programme. Shazia Marri said that during last four years, a successful conspiracy was hatched to increase inflation. She said that the present government would not discontinue a proposal of good targeted subsidy. She said that more than 850,000 people were excluded from the BISP pro-

gramme by the previous government with mollified intentions without any proper survey. The present government has received around two lac appeals of those excluded beneficiaries of BISP, she expressed. She said that PTI was playing a dirty game on a very popular programme. She said that the target subsidy of Rs. 28 billion are being paid by the present government to people earning up to Rs 40,000 per month to save them from impacts of inflation.

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

JUNE	
June 02 / Italy	National Day/ Independence Day
June 04 / Finland	Armed Forces Day
June 07 / Sweden	National Day
June 10 / Portugal	Portugal Day (National Day)
June 10 / Jordan	Arab Revolution & Army Day
June 11 / United Kingdom	Birthday of Her Majesty The Queen Elizabeth
June 12 / Philippines	Independence Day
June 12 / Russian Federation	Day of Sovereignty of the Russian Federation (National Day)
June 13 / Zambia	Armed Forces Day
June 17 / Iceland	National Day
June 18 / Seychells	National Day
June 25 / Croatia	National Day
June 25 / Mozambique	National Day
June 26 / Azerbaijan	Army Day



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& Rescue Services.....	4451122
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Potohar Town.....	9209224
Rawal Town.....	5773343

Water Tank	
Islamabad.....	0321-5474480

ICCI organizes Business Conference in Azerbaijan

Conference was attended by a large number of business community of Azerbaijan. ICCI delegation was representing various sectors including marble & granite, construction & real estate, building materials, pharmaceuticals, textiles, light engineering, IT & telecom, food, healthcare etc.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) leading a 120 member business delegation visited Azerbaijan and organized a very successful "Business Opportunities Conference" in Baku, which was attended by a large number of business community of Azerbaijan. ICCI delegation was representing various sectors including marble & granite, construction & real estate, building materials, pharmaceuticals, textiles, light engineering, IT & telecom, food, healthcare etc. Sahib Mammadov, Deputy Minister of Economy of Azerbaijan was the Chief Guest of BOC.

Speaking at the occasion, Sahib Mammadov, Deputy Minister of Economy of Azerbaijan welcomed the ICCI delegation and said that their visit would open a new window of growing trade and economic relations between Azerbaijan and Pakistan. He said that a business delegation of Azerbaijan would also visit Pakistan in coming months to further strengthen business linkages between the two countries and ICCI



should host them. He said that Azerbaijan was establishing many Special Economic Zones that offered 10-year tax holidays and invited Pakistani investors to invest in these SEZs and improve their business prospects. Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that the main purpose of organizing

them in promoting their trade and exports. He thanked the Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan, Ambassador of Pakistan to Azerbaijan and President Pak-Azerbaijan Economic Cooperation Chamber for their cooperation & support to make the visit of ICCI delegation very successful. H.E.Bilal Hayee, Ambassador of Pakistan to Azerbaijan lauded ICCI for bringing a big delegation to Azerbaijan and hoped that it would strengthen business linkages between the two countries and help improve bilateral trade ties. He said that an IT Expo of Pakistan would be organized in Baku in near future to introduce the potential of Pakistani IT companies in Azerbaijan. He said that after the start of direct flights, efforts were afoot to establish road links between Pakistan and Azerbaijan that would help in improving bilateral trade relations as well. The representatives of the Small and Medium Business Development Agency of Azerbaijan said that his country was offering good incentives to local and foreign SMEs and invited Pakistani SMEs to set up their businesses in Azerbaijan and export their products to the huge market of Central Asian States.

IWMB, CDA put out fire after 16 hrs near Monal

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (IWMB), Capital Development Authority (CDA), Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad and ICT Administration after arduous efforts of 16 hours on Thursday put out the ravaging fire in the Margalla Hills National Park. There were two fires reported Wednesday (yesterday) in the National Park at two different locations of Monal and Talhar village where the latter was put out easily after few hours fire fighting operation, told APP Director IWMB Dr Tariq Bangash while sharing updates of the repeated fire incidents in the National Park. Dr. Bangash said the fire at Monal point was reported at 10am in the morning which was first put out at 1500 hours but it rekindled due to strong winds and harsh terrain which was finally controlled at 1am in the wee hours. He mentioned the fire control room established at the IWMB office helped to report and line up coordinated efforts of CDA and IWMB and others for promptly responding to fires in an adequate and successful manner.

The IWMB Director informed that a total of 100 fire fighters took part in the effort where as many as 40 personnel of CDA and 35 of the IWMB and remaining of the MCI and ICT administration were engaged in the operation. A large area near Monal got affected due to fire whereas no life loss was reported but the ecological of flora and fauna was priceless, he added. He underlined that coordination and cooperation among civic agencies was imperative to respond challenges like forest fires and the efforts during fire operations proved it. Director Environment CDA IrfanIzazi informed that the Authority had requested for a helicopter to assist in the fire fighting efforts. A fire brigades water tender and ten bowser tanks participated in the effort. Deputy Commissioner ICT also directed to seal the road for traffic leading to Daman-e-Koh and Monal due to public safety reasons as the fire was feared to spread further due to heavy winds. – APP

Chairman NAB to be appointed by selection body

ISLAMABAD: State Minister for law and Justice Senator ShahadatAwan on Thursday said the appointment of new National Accountability Bureau (NAB)'s chairman would be made through a selection committee with the consultation of the leaders of the house and opposition.

Responding to supplementary query raised by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's Senator Azam Khan Swati, he made it clear that the appointment of NAB chairman could not be made at the whim of any individual. Assuring at the floor of the upper house of the parliament, he said whosoever would be appointed in the chair, he would be neutral, competent, and independent with a good character and he would treat all the people equally without any prejudice.

Replying to Senator Mushtaq Ahmed of Jamaat-e-Islami who pointed out the credibility and impartiality of NAB in the past, Shahadat said the aim of this institution was to remove corruption from all segments of the society but it could not perform its professional obligations in accordance with its mandate in the previous government's tenure.

He assured that in this regime, the justice would prevail and those who had misused their authority in the past would be held accountable across the board. He said the legislation would be made in the NAB ordinance with the consultation of all parliamentary parties and they would be in the larger interest of the country and the nation. The NAB reforms would be introduced in a bid to make the country corruption free, he added. – APP



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAHA) members are holding a protest rally against sweet drinks outside National Press Club. – APP

Over Rs9 trillion budget to be presented today

ISLAMABAD: The incumbent coalition government is all set to present the federal budget for the fiscal year 2022-23, with an estimated outlay of over Rs9 trillion, on June 10 (Friday). The National Assembly is already in session where the budget for the fiscal year 2022-23 would be presented by Finance Minister, Miftah Ismail official sources said. The budget had been formulated while considering the existing challenges being faced by economy at domestic and international fronts. Hence, mitigating people's sufferings, transforming agriculture sector, promoting Information Technology (IT), boosting industrial and bolstering businesses would be the main focus of the document, sources said.

The government is firmly committed to presenting a pro-people, business-friendly and progressive

Federal Budget FY 2022-23. It will pursue policies aimed at fiscal consolidation to contain budget deficit. In addition to fiscal management, revenue mobilization, measures for economic stabilization and growth, reduction in non-development expenditures; boosting exports besides job creation and people friendly policies for the socioeconomic prosperity of the country would feature in the budget. It would also focus on social sector development besides introducing reforms for improving governance and boosting private sector for investment.

On the revenue side, the government would introduce measures for bringing improvements in the system of tax collection, broadening the tax base,

and facilitation to tax payers. Keeping in view the robust growth of revenues during the current fiscal year (2021-22), the government is likely to set the revenue collection target at over Rs.7 trillion for the fiscal year 2022-23. The budget is being prepared in close coordination between all departments and ministries involved in budget related events.

Sources said the preparations for the announcement of the federal budget for fiscal year 2022-23 continued in full swing in accordance with the prescribed timeliness. The budget was being prepared in close coordination between all departments and ministries involved in budget related events including the presentation of the budget in the Parliament and launching of the Economic Survey, they added.– APP

Change in centuries old imperial law a milestone: Irfan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Senator IrfanSiddiqui on Wednesday said that the National Assembly passed a bill to amend the Criminal Code and termed the change in the centuries-old imperial law an important milestone. He said that judicial powers of district administration of Islamabad had been abolished. According

to a statement issued here, he said that the National Assembly unanimously passed a bill to amend the Criminal Code, 1898. The Senate had already passed the private member's bill introduced by Senator IrfanSiddiqui. He said that the bill would now go to the President for ratification and once ratified, it would become law.

Islamabad district administration of officers would lose judicial powers after approval of proposed amendments in various clauses of the bill, he added. He said that they (judicial magistrates) would not have the power to remand or imprison anyone. He said that a Judicial Magistrate would be answerable to the Islamabad High Court. – APP

RCCI pins high hope on budget 2022-23

DNA

Rawalpindi: The business community pins high hope on the upcoming budget 2022-23. We are hopeful that the budget will be progressive and business friendly. The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) group leader and former president Sohail Altaf and president Nadeem Rauf said in a joint statement that the business community is concerned about the current economic situation in the country. Existing taxpayers will no longer be burdened to achieve tax targets, and incentives for the textile, IT, construction, and real estate sectors will be maintained, they demanded. Sohail Altaf said that even in the pre-budget conference, the finance minister had assured that the budget would be business friendly. "Due

to the devaluation of the rupee and high inflation the tax targets will be met easily. We hope that the existing taxpayers will not be taxed," he said.

Sohail Altaf stressed that while maintaining the incentives and facilities given to the industry, the government should give a practical demonstration of the continuity of its policies. This will send a positive message, he added. A ban on the import of luxury goods is a welcome step, but the import of raw materials for the industry should be continued.

Similarly, no restrictions should be imposed on the import of CKD kits, so

that assemblers can continue their work and employment can continue. The auto sector has performed well, incentives should be continued, more incentives and facilities should be given to the auto sector so that it too becomes an export sector.

According to the Economic Survey, GDP growth has increased by 6% in the last year. In order to maintain this, it is necessary to continue the incentives given to the sectors which are performing well. This should be continued and the government is required to focus on this. The pharma and poultry sectors

are important for which concessions should also be given.

The Tax net is required to be broadened and FBR should focus on creating new taxpayers. The pharma sector is important for which concessions should also be given.

President Nadeem Rauf said that the government should focus on traditional sectors as well as non-conventional sectors like gems and jewelry, IT, marble, pharma and poultry sector.

SMEs should be promoted, special packages should be given for allied industries connected with LSM, he added. Industrial zones should be established so that local production of parts is possible and import bills are reduced. He suggested that the government should focus on renewable energy sources for affordable power supply, including solar and wind.

PM, MNAs discuss political situation

ISLAMABAD: Members of the National Assembly (MNAs) Khalid Javed, BarjeesTahir and former MNA ChaudhryAsadurRehman called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif here on Thursday. The current political situation in the country as well as the matters relating to their respective constituencies were discussed in the meeting. – APP

PPPP chief expresses grief over death of Dr Amir

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) Chairman Asif Ali Zardari on Thursday expressed deep sorrow and grief over the sad demise of Member National Assembly Dr Amir LiaquatHussain. In a condolence message issued here by the party secretariat, he said that Dr Amir Liaquat's services in the field journalism and politics would always be remembered. He prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear the loss with fortitude. – APP

PM for rewarding courageous driver for saving lives

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday directed the authorities concerned to reward the driver of the oil tanker who had risked himself to save countless lives in Balochistan. The prime minister also gave directives to invite the courageous driver to Islamabad to receive the reward.

He said the act of saving precious lives without caring for one's own life was commendable. Head of PM's Strategic Reforms Salman Sufi on the directive of the prime minister telephoned the driver and paid tribute to his courage and bravery. – APP

President, PM condole death of MNA Aamir Liaquat

ISLAMABAD: President-DrArifAlvi and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed grief and sorrow over the death of Member of National Assembly (MNA) DrAamir-LiaquatHussain. In their separate messages, the president and the prime minister prayed for the soul of AamirLiaquat to rest in peace. They also prayed for the grant of patience to his family to bear the loss. – APP

President approves national awards for slain Chinese teachers

ISLAMABAD: President-DrArifAlvi Thursday approved the conferment of Tamgha-i-Imtiaz on three Chinese teachers who were killed in a suicide blast took place in Karachi. On April 26, a female suicide bomber targeted a vehicle carrying faculty members of Karachi University's Confucius Institute, killing three Chinese nationals and their local driver. The president approved national award for Huang Guiping, Ding Mupeng and Chen Sai.

The award has been approved in recognition of their services to strengthen Pak-China ties and improvement of bilateral relations in the fields of education and culture. The awards have been approved under Article 259 of the Constitution and Decorations Act 1975. – APP

Briefs

'Pakistan set to boost exports with improved product quality'

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi Thursday said Pakistan, being a member of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF), was all set to boost its exports by improving the research and technology and enhancing the quality of products by conforming to international standards and regulatory requirements. In his message on the World Accreditation Day, he extended his felicitation to the Pakistan National Accreditation Council (PNAC) for joining IAF to celebrate World Accreditation Day on the theme "Sustainability in Economic Growth and the Environment".

President Alvi said the step would help creating awareness for laboratories, Halal certification bodies, and other certification organizations to register with PNAC. He expressed confidence that the registration would help them in improving the quality of their products and services and their acceptance in the international markets. He advised all the stakeholders to use fast-depleting natural resources by adopting internationally accepted eco-friendly norms and sustainable production practices by conforming with the proven health, and safety standards to achieve sustainability in economic growth while preserving national resources and protecting the environment. The president urged all the relevant Pakistani entities to ensure their registration with PNAC and market their accredited products in national, regional and international markets with full confidence to gain a competitive advantage over their competitors. – APP

One tested positive in Cantonment area

RAWALPINDI: One more person had tested positive for the coronavirus in the Rawalpindi Cantonment area, while no case had been reported from the other areas of the district during the last 24 hours. According to the daily situation report issued by the District Corona Management center on Thursday, as many as 6,884,489 people, including 44,791 health workers, had been vaccinated against the fatal disease since the start of vaccination drive from March 10, 2021. The report updated that 46,649 positive cases had been reported and 45,288 discharged after recovery so far. In addition, District Health Authority updated that during the last 24 hours, 1,013 samples were collected, out of which 1,012 were declared negative, while the positivity rate was recorded at 0.1 per cent. Presently, the number of active cases was 28 and quarantined in home isolation, while no patient was admitted to any health facility in the district. – APP

Abducted MSc student recovered safely

RAWALPINDI: Police have recovered abducted student of MSc and arrested five culprits during raid here on Wednesday, informed police spokesman. Police have also confiscated a vehicle and weapons used in crime. Airport police chased the vehicle, after continuous pursuit of the kidnappers' vehicle, the police arrested the main culprit Chaudhry Aqib and Aman while other accomplices included Abid, Rashid and Fahad from Hazro Attock and rescued the abductee safely. During the raid, the accused also resisted and attacked on the police party. City Police Officer CPO Syed Shehzad Nadeem Bukhari commended SP Pothohar, SDPO Civil Lines and Airport Police for the safe recovery of the abducted and arrest of the culprits. He said that incidents like violence, rape or abduction of women were not tolerated and the accused will definitely be punished. – APP

Italian envoy calls on Advisor to PM on Tourism and Sports

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Italy to Pakistan, Andreas Ferrarese called on Advisor to Prime Minister on Tourism and Sports, Awn Chaudhry and Managing Director Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), Aftab ur Rehman Rana to discuss the matters of mutual cooperation in the field of tourism. Franco Coco, Consular of Italian Embassy Islamabad was also accompanying him, said a press release. Ambassador shared the experience of growing tourism industry in Italy focusing on sustainable tourism, security and the beautiful landscapes and heritage of Italy and the flow of international tourists that increased three times by 2019.

Awn Chaudhry apprised the Ambassador about the potential of tourism in Pakistan and the steps taken by the government including the improvement of infrastructure and security matters to facilitate both the

local and international tourists. He expressed that that government of Pakistan is fully committed to make tourism sector a main segment of national economy and employment generation. Managing Director PTDC, Aftab ur Rehman Rana gave a detailed briefing on the Tourism development in Pakistan focusing on diverse landscapes, rich culture and heritage, ecological diversity, traditional sports, cuisine and crafts.

He also shared details on various projects including the development of integrated tourism zones, master planning for development of tourist sites in Punjab, Sind, Balochistan and Sind. He also highlighted the potential of Gandhara region to attract religious tourism, importance of tourism sustainable mountain tourism in Northern Pakistan and development of eco-friendly coastal tourism in Baluchistan.

Speaking on the role of PTDC in tourism promotion, MD PTDC said the establishment of National Tourism Coordination Board (NTCB), E-Visa facility, Integrated Tourism Development Program, Tourism Brand of Pakistan, National E-Portal on Tourism, privatizing of PTDC properties and publications on tourism in three different languages are the main recent initiatives to boost the tourism industry in Pakistan. Highlighting the potential areas of mutual cooperation, MD PTDC discussed the development of B2B linkages between the tour operators of Italy and Pakistan to increase flow of tourists from Italy to Pakistan, capacity building of Mountain Guides and Adventure Tour Guides by organizing training programs, exchange program for tourism professionals to learn from the best practices in tourism and hospitality sectors and support for

Community Based Sustainable Ecotourism Projects and various tourism promotional activities through Italian Agency for Development Cooperation.

Ambassador of Italy to Pakistan, Andreas Ferrarese highly appreciated the efforts of government of Pakistan to promote tourism and also shared his views to further improve the facilitation for tourist from European countries.

He also assured full support and cooperation of Italian government to work with PTDC on the areas of cooperation highlighted in the presentation of MD PTDC. Awn Chaudhry thanked the Ambassador for taking time out of his busy schedule to visit PTDC Head Office and for extending his support for the sustainable development of tourism in Pakistan. On this occasion Chaudhry also presented a souvenir of coffee table pictorial book on Pakistan to the Ambassador of Italy. – APP

VC AIUO for welfare, facilitation of employees

ISLAMABAD: Vice-Chancellor, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIUO), Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum has said that the welfare of the employees and provision of a conducive environment to the faculty members were top priorities of the organization. While addressing the General Body meeting of the newly elected Academic Staff Association (ASA), the Vice-Chancellor said that policy was being considered to increase the medical allowance while ODL is being made conditional on performance. He said that a uniform policy was also being formulated to address the issues and legitimate demands of the employees and teachers. All the steps have been taken following the rules and regulations of the university. Faculty members have been provided with a conducive environment for teaching and learning due to which 29 faculty members have completed their Ph.D. in the last three years and they deserve appreciation for this achievement. President, ASA, Dr. Shah Moinuddin Hashmi said that AIUO stood out across the globe after its digitization. – APP

DG PDMA advises citizens to stay safe, hydrated

ISLAMABAD: Director General Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) on Thursday warned the citizens that they should avoid direct exposure to sun, intake plenty of water and use umbrella to save them from the heat stroke. Talking to PTV News here, DG Faisal Fareed advised the citizens that they should avoid taking food and junk food items from outside and should use boiled drinking water, clean utensils and must wash hands before taking the meal and keep their kitchens clean. "Public must leave their homes for pressing tasks only and should try to take a shady path and avoid staying too long under the sun, he said, adding, those labors spending time outdoors under the sun for necessary work must cover their heads with a cap or wet handkerchief. said that citizens should use homemade fresh cooked food comprised of balance diet and should prefer consumption of vegetables, pulses, fruits and milk. "Awareness to the public about prevention, identification and management of heat exhaustion and strokes is also very crucial, he added. – APP



RAWALPINDI: Nomad women along with their camels sitting on a roadside waiting for customers to sell camel milk at Saddar. – APP

NUST takes a giant leap to be ranked 334th in the world

ISLAMABAD: National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), Pakistan has earned yet another crowning achievement by ascending an astounding 24 positions to stand 334th amongst higher education institutions worldwide. NUST has accomplished this feat as per the World University Rankings 2023 announced on June 8 by Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) – a prestigious UK-based ranking agency.

As many as 2462 universities from around the globe were considered for ranking this year, out of which 1422 were ranked as compared to the last year, wherein 1300 made it to the ranking table. Despite a significant

increase in the number of participating universities in the new rankings, NUST has managed to stride into the top 24 percent of global higher education institutions.

Meanwhile, NUST has also maintained #1 position in Pakistan for the third consecutive year. A total of 13 universities from Pakistan are ranked in the latest edition of QS rankings. In addition, NUST has retained the honour of being #1 in Pakistan both in the World and Asian Rankings, and the only Pakistani university in the top 340 global and 100 Asian universities. QS university rankings are centred around a few Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), including Academic Reputation, Em-

ployer Reputation, Citation per Faculty, Faculty-Student Ratio, and International Faculty/Students. In the KPIs of Employer Reputation and Faculty-Student ratio, NUST is now proudly positioned at #104 and #154, respectively.

Reflecting on this meritorious accomplishment, Lt Gen (Retd) Javed Mahmood Bukhari, Rector NUST, said that it is indeed a proud moment for NUST and the whole nation. It is for the first time that any Pakistani university made it to the league of world's top 340 universities. He attributed this monumental stride forward, for a university that is barely 30 years old, to farsightedness of its founding and successive leadership, and value-addition and rigorous contributions of NUST's faculty, researchers, innovators and students in transforming NUST into a force to be reckoned with in the global academia. – APP



Celebs shower wishes as Pakistan Television launches PTV Films

ISLAMABAD: Since Pakistan Television inaugurated its new venture named 'PTV Films Division' on Wednesday, celebs from all around poured their wishes and support for the new initiative. With this new project PTV will be focused to engage the youngsters in film-making via their own productions and will also be able to promote unique, fresh and quality content.

As soon as the project was launched, ce-

lebrities started to show their immense support and happiness over this great step. Senior actor, film maker and actor Sangeeta said in a video note, "We congratulate PTV for the establishment of PTV Films Division and hope that our films will get a lot of progress in this program." Sharing a congratulatory message via video post actress Sana Fakhar said, "I would like to congratulate PTV on the establishment of films

division and I wish that this department will continue to do more for the growth and prosperity of the organization." Famous film producer and screen writer Fizza Ali Meerza also shared her two cents stating, "I would like to congratulate PTV films for their beautiful initiative due to which the future of films in Pakistan is now looking very bright. My many good wishes and prayers are with PTV films." – APP

Pak-China cross-border logistics brings employment

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pak-China cross-border logistics brings employment and technologies to Pakistan, says a report published by China Economic Net (CEN) on Thursday. In recent years, with increasing mobile phone users and young population, online shopping is emerging in this country. "To support logistics demand from local online consumption and cross-border trade, we rolled out nationwide logistics services in Pakistan last November, and our business has increased 15-fold", Mr. Sun Chao, head of Speed-af Express Pakistan told CEN. Up to now, except the remote and sparsely-populated Quetta city, the company has established delivery stations in 75% of the areas in Pakistan, covering over 80% of the population. Rapidly expanding business has brought multiple employment opportunities. Currently, the company is hiring hundreds of Pakistani staff, about 60% of them being deliverymen. This

is just the beginning. At the end of last month, the company launched weekly China-Pakistan cargo charter flights between Macau International Airport (MFM) and Jinnah International Airport Karachi (KHI) for the transport of 3C electronic goods, e-commerce goods, and other goods that require prompt transportation.

"We are developing more flight routes between Pakistan and China which will be launched this year before air cargo peak season. In the future, we will also provide shipping service between these two countries", informed Mr. Sun. With the thriving industry comes modern logistics technologies. On the employees' side, they are exposed to efficient logistics tools such as PDA scanners, electronic waybills, conveyer belts, etc. On the customers' side, they can track where their parcels are and complete the payment online. The report added, the pressure on cross-border transport has been persisting since the outbreak of the pandemic. "We have set up high-standard warehouses with a total area of over

7000 square meters in Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, and Multan.

By providing full-chain, door-to-door logistics services, we hope to ease the shortage of international transport capacity", Mr. Sun added.

According to the report, as usual, Syed Taha, 22, an express courier, arrived at a warehouse on the outskirts of Lahore, Pakistan at 10 am to check the parcels that needed to be delivered today. About three months ago, intrigued by the express delivery lockers around his residence, which is a "last mile delivery" facility that stores packages near customers' addresses before they take their parcels out with passcode, he joined his current company, Speed-af Express Pakistan, a Pakistan-China cross-border logistics provider. Before that, he was a motorcycle driver with an unstable income that seldom surpassed \$ 300 a month and could hardly support his family. "Now my salary is similar to that of white-collars in Pakistan", he said. Syed Taha is one of those who are riding the tide of the booming logistics industry in Pakistan.



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Global food crisis

Over the last few months, the world has witnessed a sharp spike in food prices and shortages of wheat supplies. The crisis can be attributed to a host of reasons, ranging from geopolitical to economic but the Covid pandemic has certainly accentuated the scale of this catastrophe.

Kristalina Georgieva, managing director of IMF, recently noted that “the anxiety about access to food at a reasonable price globally is hitting the roof” as food prices continue “to go up”.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has already warned the world of “the spectre of a global food shortage in the coming months” if no urgent international action is taken. Since last year, global food prices have risen by almost one-third, fertiliser by more than half and oil prices by almost two-thirds, as per the UN.

As the world was scrambling to take its first steps post the worst phase of the pandemic, the crisis in Ukraine came as a double whammy – disrupting food supply chains and wheat exports.

Facing a fresh spike in Covid-19 cases, it is again the world’s most vulnerable who stand to lose the most.

Add to that reduced household incomes as the pandemic continues to create devastating effects on global hunger and poverty – especially on the poorest populations.

The number of severely food-insecure people has doubled from before the pandemic to 276 million people. By the end of 2022, the World Food Programme (WFP) estimates this number to rise to 323 million people. UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) says that at least 132 million people have been plunged into chronic hunger since the start of the pandemic, with up to 14 per cent of food lost along the supply chain before it reaches consumers, with entire regions facing acute water stress.

As populations find staples like wheat and vegetable oils hit hardest by skyrocketing prices, import-dependent countries could soon reach a breaking point. In the Middle East, already the cost of minimum monthly food requirement is up by a whopping 351 per cent in Lebanon, 97 per cent in Syria, and 81 per cent in Yemen.

The situation is not different elsewhere. Millions of children in East Africa are facing high levels of malnutrition, due to the impact of the pandemic. With compromised immunity levels, these societies are vulnerable if a new wave of Covid-19 hits.

It becomes both a social as well a moral obligation of the world to ensure that the most vulnerable have access to food supplies.

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

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Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad



Saving Indus Water Treaty

The historic Indus Water Treaty is often celebrated as a diplomatic miracle for surviving the harshest of weathers in the last six decades despite the estranged cousins repeatedly lockin their horns. However, the latest to add to their agenda of grievances is water, which has even made waves in Washington. A report before the White House lamented the increasing frequency of water disputes in South Asia and further sounded the alarm over the pressures on the validity of the agreement in the light of “disagreement over hydropower use.” Going by the heated buzz over plans to conserve water in our neighbourhood, Pakistan appears to have not made any headway as far as restoring the sanctity of the clauses is concerned. While India should be commended for paying heed to the precarious climatic situation and getting down to business before it runs out of time, fighting the onslaught of climate change should not mean tearing apart an internationally-recognised covenant. Pakistan is among the three most water-stressed countries around the world and is well on its way to bidding adieu to its natural resources by 2025. The emergency underway in Sindh has not just hit farmers downstream but disrupted the entire water table. Amid news of canal irrigation being rationed to serve the needs of both Punjab and farming communities in the south, cracking the disastrous implications for crop yield is not an arduous task. An overwhelming decrease of 26 per cent in the snowfall as well as the wrath of the usually kind Tibetan glaciers are just a foreword of the horror story that is about to unravel.

There has never been a far urgent need for Pakistan and India to sit together and deliberate upon the best possible way to step out of this seemingly never-ending tunnel. Let’s build dams together and plan out a mutually-beneficial line of action. Of course, acknowledging the existence of Muslims as equal partners would be excruciatingly painful for the bigoted premiership perched atop New Delhi. But if the common man walking on Indian streets wishes for the sprinkles of life to reach his children, he would be wise enough to force his government to rise above petty sloganeering. The same holds true for Islamabad because failure to set egos aside would only paint a landscape where everyone—young or old—walks around spitting feathers, canvas buckets in hand, looking for a drop of water everywhere.

World’s new focus on Saudi Arabia vindicates Kingdom’s priorities

Ishtiaq Ahmed



Consider these facts and figures against the backdrop of deliberate attempts to sabotage progress toward Vision 2030, such as the unprecedented threat posed to the Kingdom by Iran and its militant proxies like the Houthis in Yemen.

The Biden administration has also accentuated this danger by appeasing the aggressors and isolating a traditional ally

The global energy crisis caused by the war in Ukraine and Western sanctions on Russia has brought Saudi Arabia into the global limelight. Is it merely because the Kingdom is reaping the reward of the recent increase in oil prices? Or does it have something to do with its leadership’s persistent pursuit of Vision 2030 in recent years?

The price of Brent crude oil has surged above \$120 per barrel, from the record low figure of \$20

per barrel just two years ago. Saudi Arabia is the world’s largest oil producer and hence a key beneficiary of the oil boom. It is reportedly on course to earn \$250 billion in oil revenue in 2022. And the International Monetary Fund forecasts that Saudi Arabia’s gross domestic product will grow by almost 8 percent this year.

Given its historic role as a swing producer, Saudi Arabia is also the last refuge for the world during an energy crisis. On many occasions, it has obliged the US by slashing or raising its oil production to stabilize the global energy markets. Since the Kingdom leads the OPEC+ group, along with Russia, the US seeks its urgent help with an increase in oil quotas. Saudi Arabia was also the most sought-after nation at the recently held World Economic Forum in Davos. As one Western media outlet reported, it is “one of the few bright spots in an otherwise shaky global economy.” That is why West-

ern financiers are keen to invest in its Vision 2030 giga-infrastructure and tourism projects and why government delegates from around the world want a fair share of the Public Investment Fund, the Saudi sovereign wealth fund that is currently valued at \$620 billion.

With growing demand for oil from turmoil-ridden Europe and economically vibrant Asia, Saudi Arabia’s petrodollar power will only grow. This means the PIF, which is the main driver of Vision 2030, may expand further. This will only expedite progress in ambitious development projects such as the futuristic \$500 billion NEOM city and \$10 billion tourism resort on the Red Sea.

The PIF has also, over time, diversified its international portfolio by investing in a range of strategic sectors across various continents, especially North America, Europe and Asia. By 2025, the PIF hopes to expand its asset base to \$1.1 trillion, which is possible if oil rewards and investment returns continue to accumulate. The creditworthiness of the fund is already certified by Moody’s and Fitch. The world’s capital flows where the prospects of making money are brightest. The scale and scope of Vision 2030 is such that the Kingdom will remain the most lucrative place to invest in the coming decade.

This formidable strategic plan to wean the economy off its dependence on oil – and simultaneously empower the youthful Saudi society – was unveiled by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in 2016. The following year, the Future Investment Initiative was launched.

The signature annual event, dubbed “Davos in the Desert,” helped to increase net foreign direct investment inflows by 257 percent in 2021.

The prospects of FDI hitting its target of 5.7 percent of GDP by 2030 also look bright, given the expected rush to invest in Vision 2030 projects by Western financiers, China’s expansive investment under its Belt and Road Initiative, and the mandatory requirement for multinational corporations to relocate their regional headquarters to Riyadh by the end of 2023. The vision’s performance has also been impressive when measured against the odds constraining its implementation, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which stalled the Saudi economy for almost two years. It caused the National Transformation Program 2020 to fall short of various targets. For example, the share of GDP taken up by non-oil exports was still as low as 18 percent in 2020, as against the planned figure of 50 percent by 2030. The good news is that it has grown by more than 29 percent since last year.

In fact, some of the targets set for 2030, such as the 33 percent share of women in the workforce, have been achieved ahead of time. Progress in women’s empowerment in the social sphere has been revolutionary. Youth employment is another priority, which is to be achieved largely by increasing small and medium-sized enterprises’ contribution to GDP from 22 percent currently to 35 percent by 2030. The target set for the private sector’s share in GDP is 65 percent – it has already reached 51 percent. Well over \$1.5 trillion is earmarked for the tourism

sector to generate 1 million jobs and 100 million leisure tourists, both domestic and foreign, by 2030. Saudi Arabia has already become a thriving destination for tourism and entertainment, which is why the WEF’s Travel and Tourism Development Index last month ranked it 33rd globally, up 10 spots since 2019.

Consider these facts and figures against the backdrop of deliberate attempts to sabotage progress toward Vision 2030, such as the unprecedented threat posed to the Kingdom by Iran and its militant proxies like the Houthis in Yemen. The Biden administration has also accentuated this danger by appeasing the aggressors and isolating a traditional ally. The Saudi leadership has made a goodwill gesture toward the US and Europe by persuading OPEC+ to increase oil production by 50 percent in July and August. Since Russian oil exports to Europe are declining due to sanctions, the Kingdom will have to pump the bulk of this crude. The Kingdom’s leadership has deep faith in the historic value of Saudi Arabia’s partnership with America and the wider West, which is based on mutual respect and dignity. That is the way forward. One thing that cannot be compromised is Vision 2030 – Saudi Arabia’s journey into a reimagined future. If the US leadership also comes on board, for whatever reason, all the better. If not, it does not matter.

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

Pakistan’s dairy animals’ productivity

Abdus Sattar

More than 38 million dairy animals in Pakistan produced 61 million tonnes of milk in 2020, with buffalos and cows the critical drivers in milk production. The share of buffalo and cow milk was 60 per cent and 37 per cent, respectively, while combined dairy animals (goat, sheep, and camel milk) were 3 per cent

Global milk production was about 887 million tonnes in 2020. The share of cow and buffalo milk was 81 per cent and 15 per cent, respectively, while combined dairy animals (goat, sheep, and camel milk) were 4 per cent. It grew by 1.4 per cent in 2020, projected at 1.7 per cent per annum, producing 1020 million tonnes of milk by 2030. India was the largest milk producer producing 184 million tonnes, while the USA and Pakistan produced 101 million tonnes and 61 million tonnes

respectively, while cow milk production was 718 million tonnes. The dairy population and yield were 70 million and 1.9 tonnes, respectively, while buffalo milk production was 134 million. The combined population of dairy animals (goat, sheep, and camel) of 486 million produced 34 million tonnes of milk, yielding 0.07 tonnes in 2020. It projected that the average world growth of dairy animals and yield will augment 1.1 per cent and 0.7 per cent per annum, respectively, by 2030.

Global (cow’s) population and yield persisted 3.8 times and one and half times higher than buffalo population and yield. In comparison, cow milk production increased five times higher than buffalo milk production in 2020. Israel, KSA, Estonia and Denmark have the maximum cow milk yield between 10 tonnes to 13 tonnes, with the dairy cow population ranging between 0.1 million to 0.6 million. But the USA has the maximum number of 9.3 million dairy cows with maximum yields of 11 tonnes in 2020. India has the largest dairy animal population with the lowest milk yield globally. Buffalos and cows are significant milk-producing animals. The dairy cow population and yield were 52 million and 1.7 tonnes, respectively, while the dairy buffalo population and yield were 44 million and 2 tonnes, respectively, in 2020.

More than 38 million dairy animals in Pakistan produced 61 million tonnes of milk in 2020, with buffalos and cows the critical drivers in milk production. The share of buffalo and cow milk was 60 per cent and 37 per cent, respectively, while combined dairy animals (goat, sheep, and camel milk) were 3 per cent.

During the last six decades in Pakistan, the dairy buffalo’s population grew from 2.6 million to 15.40 million, while yield increased from 1.6

tonnes to 2.4 tonnes. Buffalo milk production increased from 4 million tonnes to 37 million tonnes during the same period. The number of dairy cows also rose, from 1.9 million to 14.64 million, and their yield increased from 0.9 tonnes to 1.5 tonnes. Cows’ milk production increased from 1.7 million tonnes to 23 million tonnes. The dairy buffaloes’ population and yield mounted 6 times and 1.5 times, respectively, while the dairy cow population and yield increased eight times and 1.7 times, respectively.

Despite this, Pakistan’s cow milk yield is still 6-8 times less than the yields of Israel, Saudi Arabia, Estonia and Denmark. Pakistan’s dairy cows and buffalo population growth remained at 3.8 per cent and 3.1 per cent, while cow and buffalo milk yield growth was 1.07 per cent and 0.76 per cent, respectively. Cow milk production growth was 4.9 per cent, while buffalo milk production growth remained at 3.8 per cent from 1960 to 2020. So keeping in view cow productivity, pure buffalo dairy farms are dwindling while mix (buffaloes and cows) and only cow dairy farms are on the rise because the dairy farms housing buffalos only are registering losses in Pakistan. This is due to the increasing cost of

feed and fodder and the static farm gate price of milk. Multiple factors, including the low genetic potential of buffalo and cow, lack of health-care facilities, insufficient/improper feeding, and lack of research and development (R&D), are responsible. The dairy sector should be transformed through R&D in the latest modern dairy technology. Genetic advancement in cross-breeding cows with high yielding breeds provides a tremendous long-term potential of raising milk yields by three to four times at the farm level. The small-dairy farmers should start switching to cows as dairy animals rather than focusing only on buffalo. They should be financially supported in the short and long term interest-free loans and cow insurance through banking and non-banking channels for purchasing high milking yield cows, fodder production, and animal treatment.

The private sector can also play a decisive role by importing high milk yield cows, Super Bulls and Holstein Friesian cow semen doses from the USA, Netherlands, New Zealand and Australia. The progressive dairy farmers can also import high milk yield dairy cows.

Abdus Sattar is a Staff Economist at the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), Islamabad.

Briefs

GDP growth at 6%; above targeted 4.8%

FROM PAGE 01
the annual targets for the upcoming fiscal year 2022-23, including the economic growth target set at 5%, along with the commitment to make efforts to raise it to 6%. He said that historically, Pakistan's economy had shown periodic boom-bust growth cycles. And the reasons for such volatile growth cycles included wide-ranging economic challenges like shrinking fiscal space, exchange rate pressure, mounting current account deficit, and inflation, among others. "The same has happened this time as well. The recent 5.97% growth recorded during the outgoing fiscal year 2021-22, according to the new estimates, has pushed Pakistan towards the balance of payments and current account deficit crises," the finance minister lamented. He further highlighted imports have increased by 48%, as compared to the last fiscal year, while exports have also moved up, adding that the trade deficit stood at \$45 billion.

PM calls for collective...

FROM PAGE 01
"sorry" for the ongoing electricity load-shedding in the country and vowed to fix the issue in the coming days. In a press conference flanked by federal ministers, Abbasi said the government needed time to rectify power shortage as the country was producing 21,000 megawatts and there was a shortfall of 4,000 megawatts.

Turkey to promote...

FROM PAGE 01
Pakistan in various fields, including education. The Turkish Ambassador expressed these views while inaugurating the Incubation Center at the National Institute of Management Sciences of Quaid-e-Azam University, Scanning Center at the University Central Library and Computer Labs at Boys and Girls Hostels. Addressing the participants, the Ambassador said that he was happy that Turkey is investing in the education sector as this investment is for the future of Pakistan. He said that cooperation between the two countries is continuing in various fields and Turkey would further enhance it. On this occasion, Vice Chancellor Quaid-e-Azam University, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Ali said that Pakistan enjoys special relations with all Islamic countries and major Islamic countries were cooperating with Pakistan in various fields. The people of Pakistan have special love for Turkey, he added. He said that facilities provided by Turkey to the university in the form of incubation center, scanning center and computer labs would further boost education and strengthened the relationship between the two countries. He especially thanked the Turkish Ambassador for the assistance provided by Turkey. He said that Turkish embassy staff and their children who want to study at Quaid-e-Azam University would be given special admission facility and if any student from Turkey wanted to be admitted here, the university would allocate special seats for them. On this occasion, a commemorative shield was presented to the Turkish Ambassador by the University.

Maryam blames PTI...

FROM PAGE 01
night to end the economic crisis. Speaking about Imran Khan's statement that he knew about his ouster for four months, the PML-N vice president said that if he had known then why did the PTI spokesperson make false claims of a foreign conspiracy against him. She said that the former premier had damaged Pakistan's relations with friendly countries but the incumbent government was making an effort to mend relations. Maryam said that Imran Khan was spreading anarchy and chaos.

Biden opens Summit of Americas, calls for unity

"Our region is large and diverse. We don't always agree on everything, but because we're democracies, we work through our disagreements with mutual respect and dialogue"

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden kicked off the Summit of the Americas in Los Angeles, California on Wednesday, calling for unity among the countries of the region despite disagreements. "As we meet again today, in a moment when democracy is under assault around the world, let us unite again and renew our conviction that democracy is not only the defining feature of American histories but the essential ingredient to (the) Americas' futures," said Biden. He was speaking at the opening ceremony of the summit, which runs through Friday. Absent from the summit are the leaders of three nations - Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua - who were excluded after the Biden administration



decided against inviting them. Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador is one of the leaders that is not attending the summit, sending his minister of foreign affairs on his behalf. "Our region is large and diverse. We don't always agree on

everything, but because we're democracies, we work through our disagreements with mutual respect and dialogue," said Biden. He said that during the summit, the nations of the Americas have the opportunity to gather around "some bold ideas, ambitious ac-

tions" and to show "our people the incredible power of democracies to deliver concrete benefits and make life better for everyone." The president also highlighted the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. "The COVID-19 pandemic hit our region particularly hard. While we

account for just 12% of the global population, we experienced more than 40% of reported global pandemic-related deaths.

"It's an enormous tragedy that has left too many families grief-stricken," he said. "And the ensuing economic crisis, triggered by the pandemic, ravaged economies throughout the hemisphere, wiping out much of the hard-earned progress we had made." The president also touched on the migration issue, saying safe and orderly migration is "good for all of our economies, including the United States." "It can be a catalyst for sustainable growth. But unlawful migration is not acceptable. And we will enforce our borders, including through innovative, coordinated action with our regional partners," he added.

Ms Marvel: Critics praise first Muslim superhero story



MONITORING DESK

NEW YORK: Critics have hailed the release of Ms Marvel, Disney's first on-screen Muslim superhero story, as a "joyful" slice of "pop culture history". The show centres around geeky teenager and Avengers comic book fangirl Kamala Khan, played by Pakistani-Canadian newcomer Iman Vellani. She struggles to fit in until she gains superpowers, becoming Ms Marvel. In a five-star review, The Guardian said: "She's funny, charming and effortlessly bats off preconceptions."

The paper's TV critic Lucy

Mangan wrote: "Normally, you would fear for a young actor, but Vellani seems so born to the purple [the colour of her powers] that you almost have to shrug and say, as an elder might to a nascent superhero in - oh, I don't know, the MCU [Marvel Cinematic Universe] perhaps - that it is her destiny." Mangan said the two available episodes of the six-part Disney+ series were "full of charm, wit, warmth, brio and truth". Marvel superheroes have been leaping off the pages of comic books and onto TV and film screens since the 1970s, but more recently there have been attempts made to diversify its char-

acters. Early in the new series, Khan notes the lack of superheroes that look like her. "It's not the brown girls from Jersey City who save the world," she sighs, focusing her attentions on being an artist, vlogger and Avengers superfan instead. However, that that soon changes when she happens upon an old bracelet that belonged to her reputedly mystical great-grandmother. "The bangle allows her powers to be tied to Kamala's Pakistani heritage and the trauma of Partition in particular," Mangan continued. In a four-star review, the Financial Times said Vellani's on-screen debut "charms"

in "an adventure story as much about heritage as battling evil". Journalist Dan Einar described the series, which depicts the Khans as an ordinary family, as "a small yet significant piece of pop culture history". He wrote: "That Kamala is a practising Muslim of Pakistani origin isn't treated as incidental. "Like the recent Pixar film Turning Red (and everything from Bend It Like Beckham to The Big Sick), the series humorously and sensitively reflects on the cultural gulf between parents rooted to tradition and children caught between their sense of identity and the desire to assimilate."

Mohammad Hasnain's action declared legal

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board today announced that fast bowler Mohammad Hasnain's bowling action has been found to be legal after the amount of elbow extension in the reassessment was within the 15-degree level of tolerance permitted under the ICC Illegal Bowling Regulations. As such, he can now resume bowling in all forms of cricket, which includes domestic cricket worldwide.

Hasnain was suspended from bowling following tests conducted on his bowling action at the ICC's accredited testing centre in Lahore on 21 January. The test report, which was reviewed and verified by the Cricket Australia's independent expert, had found his bowling action to be illegal. Hasnain underwent reassessment of his bowling action on 21 May at the ICC's accredited testing centre in Lahore and the report was again verified by the Cricket Australia's independent experts, as required under the ICC regulations. Hasnain was reported for a suspect bowling action in January during Cricket Australia's domestic cricket competition.

Alcaraz to miss Wimbledon tune-up event

LONDON: Spain's Carlos Alcaraz will miss next week's Wimbledon tune-up event at Queen's Club in London due to a slight elbow issue, the 19-year-old said on Wednesday. Alcaraz, who has taken the tennis world by storm this year, reached the quarter-finals at the French Open last month, becoming the youngest player in 29 years to reach two Grand Slam quarter-finals after also making the U.S. Open last eight. "As u all know, I was super excited to play at @Queens Tennis but a slight elbow issue means I can't! I hope to be there in 2023... see u all in the UK in a few days!" the world number seven tweeted. The teenager, who won back-to-back titles in Barcelona and Madrid on clay, will look to continue his good form on grass ahead of Wimbledon which begins on June 27. - DNA

Wimbledon announces record prize money of £40.3 million

Quad wheelchair tennis also saw a huge bump in pay for its two draws: a 60 percent increase on 2021

WEB DESK

LONDON: Wimbledon is set to return with a full capacity crowd for the first time since 2019, and with it, is offering a record total purse to its competitors. At this year's event, the All England Club will pay out

£40,350,000 in prize money, a 5.4 percent increase from the last comparable staging three years ago and up 11.1 percent on its modified 2021 edition following the cancellation of the 2020 tournament due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The two singles champions will take home £2,000,000 each. "From the first round of the Qualifying Competition to the Champions being crowned, this year's prize money distribution aims to reflect just how important the players are to The Championships as we look to continue to deliver one of the world's leading sporting events,

and with a particularly special tournament ahead of us as we celebrate 100 years of Centre Court on Church Road," said Ian Hewitt, Chairman of the All England Club. Among the most notable raises in the released chart come at the front end of the singles events. One highlight is the qualifying competition, where those players who do not manage to progress into the main draw will still benefit from a 26 percent increase on 2021 and 48.1 percent increase on 2019. By appearing in the main draw of singles, men's and women's competitors are guar-

anteed no less than a pre-tax payday of £50,000 (4.2 percent increase on 2021 and 11.1 increase on 2019). Quad wheelchair tennis also saw a huge bump in pay for its two draws: a 60 percent increase on 2021 and 135.3 percent increase on 2019 for singles, plus a 53.3 percent increase on 2021 and 119 percent increase on 2019 for doubles. The grass-court major is also set to play through the entire fortnight, ending its long-standing tradition of no play on Middle Sunday. With this permanent schedule change, the singles rounds of 16 will be split up by beginning on July 3.

Ukraine beat Ireland after WC heartbreak

"Those Ukrainians in the stand just wanted to see some positivity from the team but they are really longing to go home to Ukraine"

SPORTS DESK

DUBLIN: Viktor Tsygankov lifted Ukraine's spirits after their painful failure to qualify for the World Cup as the midfielder clinched a 1-0 Nations League victory over the Republic of Ireland on Wednesday. Tsygankov struck with a fine free-kick early in the second at Dublin's Aviva Stadium. Ukraine held on to that slender lead as they bounced back from the 1-0 defeat against Wales on Sunday that ended the war-torn nation's bid to qualify for this year's World Cup. While Ukraine won't be going to Qatar for the World Cup, their impressive response to such a devastating loss epitomised the spirit in Oleksandr Petrakov's side. Of course Petrakov's players have far greater concerns as the Russian invasion continues in their homeland. The Irish FA had handed out 3,500 tickets to Ukrainian refugees and there were other pockets of blue and yellow around the Aviva Stadium. "This is a very difficult time. The Ukrainians who came to see us play in

Ireland were accepted by the incredible Irish hospitality and people," Petrakov said. "You took our women and children who were basically risking their lives back in Ukraine. I want to thank the whole island. "Those Ukrainians in the stand just wanted to see

some positivity from the team but they are really longing to go home to Ukraine. "We made them a little bit happier tonight. That is the major achievement in my view." Petrakov had admitted the emotional and physical impact of the events in Cardiff



combined with the ongoing war had taken its toll on his players. He made 10 changes after the Wales game and the understudies were good enough to extend Ireland's winless run in the Nations League to 12 games. "Overall I'm happy with the result and with the attitude and performance. It is a very positive thing for the team especially after such a bitter result in Wales. We turn the page and we look forward to our future," Petrakov said. Ireland's hopes of winning the Nations League B group already look forlorn ahead of Scotland's visit to Dublin on Saturday following successive defeats by Armenia and Ukraine. Vitaliy Mykolenko drilled an early attempt wide as playmaker Mykola Shaparenko started to make his influence felt. As the tempo settled, so too did Ukraine and Shane Duffy had to throw himself into the path of Serhiy Sydorchuk's drive before Caoimhin Kelleher dealt ably with Oleksandr Zubkov's well-struck effort. Ireland were spared with eight minutes of the half remaining when Taras Kacharaba's strike was ruled out for offside during the build-up following a VAR review.

PM for meeting Pak-Iran...

FROM PAGE 01

He also emphasized that in view of the historic relations, the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations this year, should be celebrated by both countries in a most befitting manner. In the regional context, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif conveyed gratitude for Iran's consistent support on the issue of Kashmir, especially by the Iran's Supreme Leader. He expressed the hope that with the continued support of the international community, the people of Kashmir would achieve their right to self-determination, in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions, and their own wishes. Highlighting the precarious humanitarian and economic situation in Afghanistan, the prime minister underlined that the people of Afghanistan should be provided access to the frozen assets. He appreciated the close coordination between the two countries on the situation in Afghanistan. Ambassador of Iran, Seyed Ali Mohammad Hossenei reiterated felicitations from the Iranian leadership to the prime minister on assumption of office and reaffirmed commitment to enhance bilateral cooperation in all areas of mutual interest. He also highlighted close consultations between the two countries on important regional and international issues, including Afghanistan. While emphasizing the importance of high-level exchanges, the prime minister renewed his invitation to the Iranian leadership to visit Pakistan, at an early date.

Economic survey...

FORM PAGE 01

the country was heading towards a positive trajectory. He said that the Economic Survey report endorsed that Pakistan's GDP was 5.74pc during the third year of PTI's government, adding that FBR collected a record tax of Rs6,100, while the exports that were frozen when PTI came into power, touched the \$32 billion level. Moreover, Imran Khan revealed that the foreign remittances witnessed a record increase due to trust in the PTI government by overseas Pakistanis. Recalling the achievement of his government in the agriculture field, Imran Khan said agriculture production witnessed a 4.4pc surge, while the price of the crops of farmers was provided to them on time ever first time. Responding to debt rhetoric of opponents, he said PML-N left the GDP to debt ratio at 64% and PTI maintained it despite paying interest double than it was during PML-N's government. Lashing out at the imported government, PTI Chairman said that there was a record inflation since the incumbent government came into power. Talking about PTI policy during deadly coronavirus, Imran Khan said that he was pressured greatly to lockdown the whole country, but his government's smart lockdown policy got world-wide recognition, as Pakistan outshone other countries in the subcontinent in employment opportunities despite the Covid-19 pandemic. Imran Khan said they did not succumb to the pressure of International Monetary Fund (IMF) and kept the interest of the people above everything and provide them maximum relief. He disclosed that PTI government was also asked by the IMF to jack up fuel and electricity prices, but we refused the harsh conditions of the financial bodies because it was tantamount to overburden the masses. PTI Chairman went on to say that during the whole PTI tenure, the petrol was jacked up by mere Rs55 per litre, but the 'imported government' raised its prices by Rs60 in just 15 days. He regretted that Pakistan is unable to get foreign loans due to the incompetence of the government. "WAPDA's credit rating has been also downgraded." Imran Khan said NAB and FIA were virtually abolished, the thieves have been made the guardians so now the corrupt people would plunder the country's wealth with great liberty, asking the Supreme Court if the amendments in NAB law go with the spirit of the Constitution.

Briefs

Azerbaijani
MFA
summons
Indian envoy

MONITORING DESK

BAKU: Indian Ambassador to Azerbaijan Bavitlung Vanlalavanna was summoned to the country's Foreign Ministry on June 9, 2022, the ministry told Trend. According to the ministry, at the meeting, the inadmissibility of the use of insulting statements against Islam and Prophet Muhammad by representatives of the ruling party of India was brought to the attention of Vanlalavanna. The Azerbaijani side notified the diplomat that the Islamophobic position displayed by some Indian officials affects Muslims around the world, and that such actions are condemned in Azerbaijan. During the meeting the Azerbaijani side also emphasized detriment of the actions to the peaceful coexistence of people of different faiths, adding that Azerbaijan expects the Indian government to take strict measures against those who made the anti-Islamic statements.

NATO chief
cancels visit
to Germany,
Romania

AGENCIES

BRUSSELS: The NATO chief has canceled his visits to Germany and Romania due to illness, an official said on Thursday. Jens Stoltenberg "has been diagnosed with shingles, which can occur after COVID-19, and is working from home," the official told Anadolu Agency on condition of anonymity due to restrictions on speaking to the media. Stoltenberg will remotely hold talks with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Defense Minister Christine Lambrecht later on Thursday. He is also expected to participate at the Bucharest-9 Summit on Friday via video link. Stoltenberg had tested positive for COVID-19 last month. According to his office, he had mild symptoms and observed quarantine in line with the Belgian health regulation.

Slovakia's
president
tests positive
for COVID-19

NEWS DESK

BELGRADE: Slovakia's President Zuzana Caputova tested positive for coronavirus on Thursday, her spokesman confirmed. Martin Strizinec said in a statement that President Caputova's COVID-19 test was positive, and therefore her scheduled meetings were postponed. Caputova, along with Polish President Andrzej Duda, was slated to visit Italy and Portugal on Thursday to build support for quick accession path for Ukraine to the EU. Last week, Slovakia announced it will deliver eight self-propelled Zuzana 2 howitzers to Ukraine.

Navalny
scolds Google
and Meta for
helping Putin

WEB DESK

LONDON: Jailed Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny scolded Google (GOOGL) and Meta Platforms Inc (FB.O) on Thursday for shutting down advertising, a step he said had undermined the opposition and thus was a gift to President Vladimir Putin. Navalny, by far Russia's most prominent opposition leader, casts Putin's Russia as a dystopian state run by thieves and criminals where wrong is cast as right and judges are in fact representatives of a doomed lawless country. In a written address to the Copenhagen Democracy Summit, Navalny, who is currently in a Russian jail, said technology was being used by the state to arrest dissidents but that it also gave an opportunity to get to the truth.

ASEAN assembly thanks
Pakistan for S Asian perspective

DNA

Jakarta: The ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) thanked Pakistan for bringing the South-Asian Perspective to its deliberation. The ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), in collaboration with the Parliamentary Forum of Small Arms and Light Weapons (PF-SALW), is currently organizing a three-day regional seminar on "Parliamentary Action for Prevention of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)-related Violence, held in Jakarta, 8-10 June 2022. Pakistan was invited to attend the event in its capacity as an Observer with AIPA. AIPA represents the Parliaments of 10 ASEAN countries. The organization had granted observer status to the Parliament last year. It was therefore the first time that Pakistan was attending an AIPA event, as an observer. Speaking at the occasion, Ambassador of Pakistan to ASEAN H.E. Muhammad Hassan, stated that Pakistan remained committed to fighting the illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, as well as for the full implementation of the UN Programme of Action (PoA) on Small Arms. Pakistan was a party to eleven global and two regional counter-terrorism instruments. It regularly filed national implementation reports on the Programme of Action on Small Arms, outlining national measures taken over the years. At the national level, he stated, Pakistan had developed the necessary



legislative, regulatory, enforcement, and institutional mechanisms to regulate the sale, supply, and transfer of these arms. Additional measures were being taken including in the areas of enforcement, imports, and licensing. On the legislative side, Pakistan has undertaken sweeping reforms to amend Anti-Terrorism Act. Our Counter-Financing of Terrorism (CFT) legislation now fully corresponds with global standards. We have also enacted the Pakistan Arms Ordinance, Surrender of Illicit Arms Act, Terrorists Special Courts Act, Anti-Narcotics Force Act, and the Anti-Money Laundering Bill. The Ambassador further stated that the issue

of illegal arms has been a serious challenge in the South Asian region. Several factors, including geoeconomics and geopolitical developments; inter-state rivalries; internal political and socio-cultural faultlines were making the region a center of the illegal arms trade. The violence and insecurity created by this phenomenon were making a destructive impact on the region's development, affecting economic growth and often resulting in long-standing grievances that can last for generations. For years, Pakistan had been fighting an unrelenting war against terrorism. In this war, it had lost more than 80,000 precious lives and incurred financial losses exceeding USD 100 billion. Denied economic and invest-

ment opportunities have been much more. He, therefore, called for a comprehensive, integrated, and multi-dimensional approach that addressed all aspects of the problem. He stressed the need to focus on both supply and demand sides of the problem, including resolving festering disputes, addressing the root causes of conflicts, and the factors leading to public unrest including the use of state machinery to suppress legitimate demands of the people. He stressed that the causes of conflict were even more important to address than the instruments of conflict. That would require adopting more strategic and innovative approaches to ensure conflict prevention and resolution.

Erdogan calls
on Greece to
stop militarizing
Aegean islands

NEWS DESK

ISTANBUL: The Turkish president on Thursday called on Greece to stop the illegal militarization of "(Aegean) islands with non-military status" and to act "in line with international agreements." Speaking at a ceremony in Türkiye's Aegean province of Izmir during the EFES-2022 military exercise, one of the largest planned drills of the Turkish army, Recep Tayyip Erdogan said, "Greece is acting like it's making touristic stops on Aegean islands," and warned Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis that such moves "will get you nowhere." "Some Greek politicians are trying to remain relevant with words and actions that are divorced from reality, contrary to logic and the law," said Erdogan. "Those who waste their country's resources, energies, and time with dreams that they can never afford will surely be held accountable before history," he said, touching on Türkiye branding Athens' arm buildup a waste of resource the Greeks can ill afford. "On this occasion, we once again call on Greece to stop militarization of the (Aegean) islands with non-military status and to act in line with international agreements," he said, underlining the point: "I'm not kidding, I'm serious." "Türkiye will not relinquish its rights in the Aegean Sea, nor will hesitate to use its powers stemming from international agreements," he stressed. On Greek moves in the Aegean, Erdogan warned Athens to refrain from "dreams and actions that will result in regret, just like a century ago" - referring to the 1919-1923 Turkish War of Independence, which pushed Greek forces out of Türkiye - and to "come to its senses."

Azerbaijan,
Italy ink green
energy accord

FOREIGN DESK

BAKU: Azerbaijan's Investment Company and Italy's Technip Energies company have signed a deal on cooperation in the green energy sector, Azernews reports, citing the Energy Ministry. The document was signed during a meeting between Azerbaijan's Economy Minister Mikayil Jabbarov and representatives of Technip Energies. As part of the cooperation, it is planned to implement the "waste monetization" project. The project envisages the production of green gas from household waste with high content of plastic on the basis of thermochemical processing technology. Moreover, it is planned to expand the raw material base of the Azarkimya (Azeri chemistry) PA and obtain a green certificate for the products made while processing. Due to its high calorific value, part of the product can also be used to generate electricity in turbines. The production capacity of the plant to be built in Sumgayit will be 30,000 tons of olefin (gas mixture) and 10,000 tons of fuel gas per year. "Implementation of the project will help improve the environmental situation in the country by reducing carbon emissions, reducing the cost of recycling household waste, supporting the economy through the use of green technologies, as well as innovative and sustainable waste recycling," the ministry said. Additionally, during the meeting, the parties discussed the measures taken to diversify the country's economy and the work done to transform Azerbaijan into a place of green growth and sustainable development. The diplomatic relations between the two countries were established on May 8, 1992. Italy's first embassy in the South Caucasus was opened in Azerbaijan in 1997 and the embassy of Azerbaijan in Italy has been functioning since 2003. Azerbaijan is a major supplier of energy to Italy. In Azerbaijan, over 100 Italian companies operating in various fields are registered. At the same time, Italian firms have contracts worth more than 10 billion (\$11.8 billion) for Azerbaijani projects both inside and outside the country. Azerbaijan's total investment in the Italian economy is estimated to be around 1.7 billion (\$2 billion), with Italy investing approximately 770 million (\$910.8 million) in Azerbaijan. The two countries' trade turnover was \$9.6 billion in 2021, with Italy also being Azerbaijan's main trade partner.



OTTAWA: Pakistan High Commissioner-designate to Canada Zaheer Ahmad Janjua presents credentials to Mary J. Simon, Governor-General of Canada at Ottawa's historical Rideau Hall. - DNA

Joint training of BRI countries held

AGENCIES

BEIJING: A Joint (Online) training of BRI countries held to promote industrial decarbonisation, Gwadar Pro reported on Thursday. It was organised by Beijing Technology and Business University (BTBU) and the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECOSF). About 60 students from the Belt and Road countries participated in the training. The training includes policies and practices for low-carbon transition in the coal power, cement, steel and chemical industries and other case studies. On the occasion, Chinese experts, scholars and enterprise representatives introduced cutting-edge technologies and successful cases of carbon reduction and emission reduction in key industries to promote exchanges and mutual learning among the Belt and Road countries and jointly meet challenges. Prof. Manzoor H. Soomro, President of ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) affirmed the insights of leading Chinese experts, the success stories and the elements behind the massive technological advances that China has made in achieving its climate targets. China announced in 2020 that it would

achieve "carbon neutralization" by 2060, making outstanding contributions to the international response to climate change. The president said that more such training would be very beneficial for the participants and the formation of major partnerships and linkages of the Belt and Road countries and the ECO Member States, including Pakistan, towards green growth technologies. "Green CPEC Alliance launched early this month is indeed a meaningful initiative that will improve the environmental conditions around the projects and initiatives. This is a groundbreaking move for sustainable growth in Pakistan," he concluded. "Clean energy is critical for achieving sustainable development and is at the forefront of the global agenda. Technology plays a key role in promoting sustainability in many areas, including energy and sustainable industrial development. Accordingly, a range of challenges in obtaining, adapting and effectively using industrial technologies and building capacity of the South in our region demands prompt solution," f) highlighted on the two-day 5th BTBU-ECOSF Joint Training Program on Pathways for Industrial Decarbonization in the Belt and Road Countries (online) inaugurated today.

Prof. Manzoor believes it is very timely to discuss low carbon industrial development, as aggressive adoption of such technologies will be an essential prerequisite for Belt and Road countries to collectively move closer to the more ambitious target of reducing GHG emissions and containing the increase in temperature. The impacts of climate change that are occurring with increasing severity and frequency are well aware. All nations are vulnerable, but developing countries are generally more vulnerable and less resilient with limited resources for both mitigation and adaptation. Prof. Manzoor stated this situation requires people to invest more in technologies to promote climate-smart solutions for the planet. A successful transition towards low carbon development will depend heavily on fostering public-private partnerships that can accelerate deployment of technologies, promote research and development, and human resource skills development. Prof. Manzoor added that the critical challenge is to enable delivery of the national development visions and goals through low-carbon, climate-resilient or climate-compatible development plans and strategies, whereby the role of science and technology is overarching and gigantic.

Xi Jinping
visits
Sichuan
to oversee
farmland
development

ISLAMABAD: Chinese President Xi Jinping, also the general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, inspected the city of Meishan in southwest China's Sichuan province. He visited the village of Yongfeng and San Su Ci, the memorial temple and former residence of Su Xun and his two sons, Su Shi and Su Zhe, three literary masters of the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127), according to the CGTN. Xi learned about local efforts to advance high-standard farmland development, boost grain production, promote rural revitalization, maintain effective COVID-19 prevention and control, and protect historical and cultural heritage. Located in Southwest China, Sichuan Province covers an area of 486,000 square kilometers, ranking fifth in the country in terms of land area. In 2021, the per capita gross domestic product of the province reached 64,326 yuan (nearly \$10,000), accounting for 79.4 percent of the national average, according to the provincial government. - APP

159 Jewish
settlers
storm Al-Aqsa
Mosque

AGENCIES

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM: Dozens of Jewish settlers stormed Al-Aqsa Mosque on Thursday morning under heavy police protection. Islamic Endowments Department in Jerusalem affirmed that 159 Jewish settlers stormed the Mosque via al-Magharibah gate. During their tours at the Islamic holy site, the settlers provocatively performed Talmudic prayers. Palestinian worshippers shouted Takbeer in protest. The al-Aqsa Mosque is exposed to daily desecration by Jewish settlers and police forces in the morning and the afternoon except on Fridays and Saturdays.

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Briefs

Ahad Cheema appointed as adviser to the PM

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Arif Alvi on Thursday appointed Ahad Cheema, a former civil servant and senior bureaucrat, as Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's adviser on establishment. Cheema's was the first high profile arrest in Punjab by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) before the general elections of 2018. The bureau had arrested him on February 21, 2018, when he appeared before its investigation team in an inquiry about Ashiana-Iqbal Housing Scheme. Later, the NAB also initiated inquiries regarding the LDA City scam and assets beyond means against him. He was granted bail in all three cases in April last year. A notification issued by the Cabinet Division today, a copy of which is available with Dawn.com, states: "In exercise of the power conferred by clause (1) of Article 19 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the president, on the advice of the prime minister, has been pleased to appoint Ahad Khan Cheema, as Adviser to the Prime Minister on Establishment, with the status of federal minister, with immediate effect."

Iman Mazari's interim bail extended until June 20

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) Chief Justice Athar Minallah on Thursday extended the interim bail of advocate Iman Zainab Mazari Hazir till June 20 in a case related to abusing and defaming the senior command of the Pakistan Army. IHC CJ inquired from the lawyer of JAG Branch (Judge Advocate General) of Pakistan Armed Forces, "What has been left behind after the last hearing of the case and the answer she (Iman Mazari) submitted in the Court." The IHC CJ said that JAG Branch lawyer could see himself that whether it could be categorised as an offence. Additional Attorney General said that the reason that has been given by Ms Mazari was not in accordance with the record. Iman Mazari, daughter of former human rights minister and PTI leader Shirin Mazari, appeared before the court along with her lawyer Zainab Janjua. The IHC CJ said that her statement was on the basis of misunderstanding.

Govt revives work on CPEC with speed: Senate informed

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Senate was informed on Thursday that the Government has revived work on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor with speed and the long term plan is being translated into an implementation matrix. Responding to a question during the Question Hour in the House today, Minister for Board of Investment Chaudhry Salik said that Joint Working Groups are being convened to pave the way for 11th JCC meeting. Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar while responding to a question said that the Government is striving to appoint Chairman National Accountability Bureau as per the law and consultation in this regard will be made with all stakeholders. The Upper House passed two bills today. These include The Fiscal Responsibility and Debt Limitation (Amendment) bill, 2022 and The National Rahmatul-Lil-Aalameen Wa Khatamun Nabiyyin Authority Bill, 2022. The National Rahmatul-Lil-Aalameen Wa Khatamun Nabiyyin Authority Bill, 2022 was passed unanimously. The house has been adjourned to meet again tomorrow at 6 p.m.

Ukraine says troops take advances in Kherson

Meanwhile, Russia nears milestone victory in Sievierodonetsk

MONITORING DESK

KYIV: Ukrainian forces claimed on Thursday to have pushed forward in intense street fighting in the eastern city of Sievierodonetsk, but said their only hope to turn the tide was more artillery to offset Russia's massive firepower. In the south, Ukraine's defence ministry said it had captured new ground in a counter-attack in Kherson province, targeting the biggest swathe of territory Russia has seized since its invasion in February. The battle amid the ruins of Sievierodonetsk, a small industrial city, has become one of the war's bloodiest, with Russia concentrating its invasion force there. Both sides say they have inflicted massive casualties. Sievierodonetsk and its twin city Lysychansk on the opposite bank of the Siverskiy Donets river are the last Ukrainian-controlled parts of Luhansk province, which Moscow is determined to seize as one of its principal war objectives. Russian forces are focusing all of their might in the area, Ukraine's Security

Volodymyr Zelenskiy says millions could starve

KYIV: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy warned that millions of people could starve because of a Russian blockade of Ukraine's Black Sea ports which he said had left the world "on the brink of a terrible food crisis." Russia has seized large parts of Ukraine's coast, blocking farm exports and driving up the cost of grain. Zelenskiy said Ukraine was now unable to export large amounts of wheat, corn, vegetable oil and other products that had played a "stabilising role in the global market". Meanwhile, in a rare update from Sievierodonetsk, the commander of Ukraine's Svioboda National Guard Battalion, Petro Kussyk, said Ukrainians were drawing the Russians into street fighting to neutralise Russia's artillery advantage. "Yesterday was successful for us - we launched a counteroffensive and in some areas we managed to push them back one or two blocks. In others they pushed us back, but just by a building or two," he said in a televised interview. - Agencies

Council Secretary Oleksiy Danilov told Reuters in an interview on Thursday. "They don't spare their people, they're just sending men like cannon fodder," he said. "They are shelling our military day and night." Two Britons and a Moroccan who were captured while fighting

for Ukraine were sentenced to death on Thursday by a court in the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic (DPR), one of Russia's proxies in eastern Ukraine, Russian news agencies reported. read more In a rare update from Sievierodonetsk, the commander of Ukraine's Svioboda Na-

tional Guard Battalion, Petro Kussyk, said Ukrainians were drawing the Russians into street fighting to neutralise Russia's artillery advantage.

"Yesterday was successful for us - we launched a counteroffensive and in some areas we managed to push them back one or two blocks. In others they pushed us back, but just by a building or two," he said in a televised interview.

"Yesterday the occupiers suffered serious losses - if every day were like yesterday, this would all be over soon." But he said his forces were suffering from a "catastrophic" lack of counter-battery artillery to fire back at Russia's guns, and getting such weapons would transform the battlefield.

"Even without these systems, we are holding on fine. There is an order to hold our positions and we are holding them. It is unbelievable what the surgeons are doing without the proper equipment to save soldiers' lives." Sievierodonetsk Mayor Oleksandr Stryuk said on Thursday around 10,000 civilians were still trapped inside the city - around a tenth of its pre-war population.

Parliament approves Election Act Amendment Bill

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The Joint Sitting of Parliament on Thursday approved "The Elections (Amendment) Bill, 2022" to conduct pilot projects in bye-elections before using I-Voting and Electronic Voting Machines in general elections. It is pertinent to mention that earlier, the bill was passed by both Houses of Parliament in last month and sent to President Dr Arif Ali for his assent to make it law. But, the President returned the bill to the government, observing that the amendments were passed by parliament in haste and without due diligence. Speaking on the occasion, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi rejected President's observations and objections by terming them as baseless. Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar said legislation is sole prerogative of parliament and President cannot dictate the legislature. Joint Session of Parliament also passed "The National Accountability Bureau (Amendment) Bill, 2022" aimed at preventing misuse of law for political engineering and victimization of opponents.

Shaukat Tarin says PTI policies pushed up growth

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former finance minister and PTI leader Shaukat Tarin has said that higher growth registered in the outgoing fiscal year 2021-22 was a direct result of PTI's economic policies, which put the country on the trajectory of economic revival before Imran Khan was ousted in April. Tarin and another PTI leader Muzammil Aslam, who was the finance ministry spokesperson under the PTI rule, held a press conference on Thursday shortly before the release of Economic Survey 2021-22. Tarin said that Imran Khan went to Pakistan's friends and the IMF to rescue the country from economic woes that began before the PTI came to power. He said everyone knew how economic problems began four years ago when the agriculture sector was receiving little government spending and the energy crisis hampered industrial growth. The former finance minister said that in the fiscal year 2022-21 Pakistan surprised the world by posting a 5.75% GDP. He said PTI's policies in the past two years enabled higher growth for two consecutive years and in the current year, the country posted 4.4% growth in the agriculture sector and 7% in the industrial sector.

Russia adds \$9.5 bln to emergency reserve fund

WEB DESK

MOSCOW: The Russian government added 551.4 billion roubles (\$9.5 billion) to its emergency reserve fund on Thursday as the Kremlin steps up its stimulus package in a bid to protect the economy from the impact of Western sanctions and its actions in Ukraine. "The funds will be used in part to implement measures aimed at ensuring the stability of economic development in the conditions of external constraints," the government said in a statement announcing the cash injection. The reserves boost came from extra profits generated by Russia's vital oil and gas exports, which are bringing in hundreds of millions of dollars a day to the budget despite Western sanctions. Western countries have hit Russia with an unprecedented package of sanctions, including freezing around half - or \$300 billion - of the central bank's gold and foreign currency reserves after Moscow sent tens of thousands of troops into Ukraine on Feb. 24 in what it calls a "special military operation."



ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister Gilgit Baltistan Khalid Khursheed Khan calls on President Dr. Arif Alvi. - DNA

Pakistan rejects Indian MEA Spokesperson's remarks

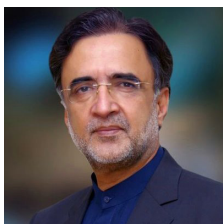
DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan rejects the remarks made by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs Spokesperson earlier today regarding the unfortunate incident that took place at a Hindu temple in Karachi. Unlike the violence against the Muslim community that is orchestrated by religious fanatics who enjoy full patronage of India's state machinery, the Government of Pakistan is seized of

this matter and action is being taken against the perpetrators. An FIR has already been registered against the assailants and efforts are underway to identify and arrest them. They will not escape justice and the Government will deal with them with the full force of law.

The Government of India would be well advised to introspect and ensure the protection of the fundamental rights, lives, and places of worship of minorities across India, particularly Muslims who are facing brutal attacks from the proponents of 'Hindutva' holding on to the reins of power in the country.

Furthermore, unequivocal condemnation by the BJP top leadership and the Indian government, as well as decisive and demonstrable action against the BJP officials responsible for making sacrilegious remarks recently would be the first step towards healing the suffering of Muslims in India and the sentiments of Muslims worldwide.



Govt to provide all possible resources to GB Council: Kaira

ISLAMABAD: Advisor to Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Qamar Zelman Kaira reiterated that Federal Government would provide all possible resources for the development and prosperity of the Gilgit-Baltistan. In a meeting with the members of Gilgit-Baltistan Council here Thursday, he said that the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan would support the GB Council at all forum. The working relationship between Federal Government and provincial governments would be made more strong, Kaira said. He said that in

2009, PPP during its democratic tenure had empowered and transfer all legal rights to the Council to address the issues of local community. He assured that all national projects in GB would be completed in stipulated time. With all stakeholders, a comprehensive policy will be formulated for the development and empowerment of the GB Council very soon and the budget would be increased as per the requirement of the Council, he expressed. Kaira also underlined that the longstanding demand of GB people of temporary status of the province to GB would be fulfilled soon. - APP

Moderna says results positive for Omicron vaccine



CALIFORNIA: US biotech company Moderna announced positive results for a new vaccine that targets both the original Covid strain and Omicron, and sees the shot as its "lead candidate" for a booster this fall. The so-called "bivalent" vaccine was tested in a trial of 814 adults and shown to produce 1.75 times more Omicron-specific neutralizing antibodies, which have the power to prevent infection, compared to Moderna's original Spikevax vaccine. All of the participants previously received three doses of Spikevax, and then slightly more than half went on to get a fourth dose of the bivalent shot while the rest got another dose of Spikevax. Antibody levels

were tested one month later. The group that got the new shot also received slightly superior protection to the ancestral strain of Covid compared to Spikevax - though original Covid has long since disappeared from circulation. "We are thrilled," said Stephane Bancel, CEO of Moderna in a statement, adding he anticipated this vaccine would be the company's lead candidate for authorization as a booster this fall. "We want to be as ready as early as August for shipping," he added to investors in a call. The results were broadly welcomed by experts, who agreed Moderna's vaccine is now the front runner as a booster, though some gave a note of caution. - DNA

Pak, Azerbaijan mark 30 years of diplomatic ties

Foreign Secretary said that Pakistan-Azerbaijan relations had evolved into a robust and multi-dimensional partnership since the formal establishment of bilateral ties in 1992

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in collaboration with the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Islamabad, organized a special event and a photo exhibition at the Foreign Office to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Azerbaijan. Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood and Ambassador Khazar Farhadov of Azerbaijan formally inaugurated the exhibition. The photographs on display had been carefully curated to showcase the rich history of leadership-level engagement between the two countries as well as important milestones in the bilateral relationship. Speaking on the occasion, the Foreign Secretary said that Pakistan-Azerbaijan relations had evolved into a robust and



multi-dimensional partnership since the formal establishment of bilateral ties in 1992. He highlighted that the two coun-

tries had a long-standing tradition of supporting each other on their issues of core interest.

The Foreign Secretary recalled Pakistan's support for Azerbaijan's position on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. He appreciated Azerbaijan's principled stance on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, noting that Azerbaijan had been a consistent advocate for the rights of the Kashmiri people as a member of the OIC Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir.

While expressing satisfaction with the state of bilateral relations, the Foreign Secretary reiterated Pakistan's resolve to further strengthen and diversify its co-operation with Azerbaijan, particularly in the economic, trade and cultural domains. Ambassadors and senior diplomats from the Central Asian States as well as Turkey participated in the event. Members of the media and representatives from the Multicultural Center of Azerbaijan, which has recently been established at the National University of Modern Languages (NUML), were also in attendance.