

Briefs Time needed to get back on feet

DNA



on its feet," Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) vice president Marvam Nawaz said Thursday. Jamiat Ahle Hadees Pakistan chief Senator Professor Sajid Mir met PML-N vice president Maryam Nawaz at Jati Umra and discussed in detail overall situation of the country. During the meeting, Professor Sajid described the meeting with PML-N leader and former PM Nawaz Sharif in London and conveyed an important message to Maryam Nawaz.

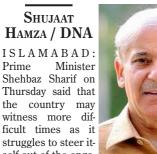
Economy is on ventilator: Sheikh

SAIFULLAH



Difficult time to stay, **PM** warns

The Premier says IMF doesn't trust govt after PTI refusad to abide by agreement



self out of the ongoing economic crisis. The coalition government has recently taken some "tough" decisions, including a massive increase on petroleum ment imposing additional taxes on inprices. PM Shehbaz Sharif, while addressing dustries and wealthy citizens. PML-N senators, said that some of his "companions" suggested making election reforms always suffered the burden of taxes," and announcing elections but the government he pointed out at a press conference plans to complete its constitutional term.

"We faced many challenges when I took oath as the prime minister," the premier said.

finalised and the deal with the Fund will unveiled for the new fiscal year. doing anything for widows and the poor".

Continued on Page 06

Poor, rich must share sacrifices: Miftah Ismail

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Miftah Ismail said on Thursday that there was nothing wrong with taxing the affluent because they were "able to pay" as he talked about the govern-

"In Pakistan, it is the poor who have in Islamabad alongside Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb. "But the Shehbaz-government has decid-He said that the former government had ed to impose taxes on the incomes struck a deal with the International Mone- of the rich. This time, we will ensure tary Fund (IMF) to pass on the internation- that the sacrifice is shared," he said, al prices of oil and gas. PM Shehbaz Sharif adding that this was evident in the said that the terms with the IMF have been "progressive" and "historic" budget

close soon, barring any other conditions "You have always seen that previous set by the global lender. Criticising the PTI governments imposed taxes on congovernment further, he said that the previ- sumption which had a disproportionate ous government "never felt strongly about impact on the poor. But we have not increased any indirect taxes or taxes on

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: The outgoing Ambassador of Turkey, Ihsan Mustafa Yurdakul called on President Dr. Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr. - DNA

Rupee makes big recovery against dollar

DNA

KARACHI: The Pakistani rupee appreciated by Rs4.7 on Thursday morning in the interbank market, a day after Finance Minister Miftah Ismail announced a \$2.3 billion loan agreement with a Chinese banks consortium. According to State Bank of Pakistan, the US dollar closed at Rs207.23 in the interbank market. The previous day's close was Rs211.93 against the greenback, according to the State

Alvi all praise for Pakistan-Turkiye brotherly ties

The president appreciates Ambassador Yurdakul's personal contribution in further strengthening bilateral relations

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Thursday said that the brotherly relations between Pakistan and Turkiye were anchored in

He said that Islamophobia was on the rise around the world, especially in India where all religious minorities, especially Muslims, were being coerced and intimidated; their homes and places of worship were destroyed, and their religious

the country is in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). The AML chief took to twitter and said that Musharraf's refusal to come back to Pakistan has blocked Nawaz's return too. The real budget is yet to be presented, which will worsen the conditions, he added. The AML head said that depriving overseas Pakistanis of their right to vote and amending the NAB laws and benefiting from them are national crimes.

'Stop fooling people,' Tareen slams Miftah

STAFF REPORT



mail should 'stop fooling people' by badmouthing out economic performance. Responding to Finance Minister Miftah Ismail's press conference on Thursday, PTI leader Shaukat Tareen said that the impression that Pakistan was near collapse when PTI left is false.

that

Is



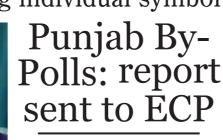
Ch Fawad urges ECP to bar PPP, PML-N from using individual symbol

Кначам ABBASI ISLAMA-BAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Senior President Vice Fawad Chaudhry

demanded that

Election the er (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja on Thursday, media reported on Thursday. said that PTI demanded to give a common Shah Mahmood Qureshi had levelled allein the by-elections. PTI Central Senior Vice government over alleged illegal actions rious multilateral crisis as a result of a dan-media that the EC Punjab levelled allega-

Continued on Page 06



DNA

LAHORE: The provincial election commis-Commission of Pakistan (ECP) should allot sioner has sent the probe report to the Elec-"Lota" as a common electoral symbol to the tion Commission of Pakistan (ECP) after Paruling parties, which were jointly contesting kistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Vice-Chairman the by-polls in Punjab. Fawad Chaudhry, in Shah Mahmood Qureshi levelled allegations his open letter to Chief Election Commission- against the election process, citing sources,

electoral symbol "lota" to the ruling parties gations against the ECP and the Punjab President said that Pakistan was facing se- ahead of Punjab by-polls. Sources told gerous external conspiracy through which tions against Qureshi for pressurising the returning officer (RO) during scrutiny of

the nomination papers in Multan.

Bank of Pakistan (SBP). After losing 5.39% in last sessions, Pakistani nine rupee recovered 2.27% dayon-day against the US dollar. Last time the rupee made highest ever recovery of Rs 4 was on June 28, 2019. The appreciation was in line with the expectations of market analysts who foresaw that the rupee would see a correction today as it was trading at 208-209.50 against the dollar in the TOM (oneday forward) market.

Heavy monsoon rains expected ISLAMABAD: Heavy show-

ers are forecast in Islamabad from July to August, according to the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD). Federal Minister for Climate Change, Sherry Rehman, announced that the extreme weather may cause flooding in Pakistan as it did in 2010. Meanwhile, the district administration claimed that they are planning to face an emergency situation. However, the encroachments on drains in Sector E-11 – which caused the death of a mother and her son - and the destruction of their property are still there. - DNA

the hearts of the people of the two countries. The president, in a meeting with the outgoing Ambassador of Turkiye to Pakistan Ihsan Mustafa Yurdakul, said both the nations enjoyed exemplary cordial ties rooted in shared social, cultural and religious values. He expressed the hope that these mutually rewarding multi-dimensional relations would go from strength to strength in future as well.

The president observed that Turkiye and Pakistan, along with other Muslim countries, advocated the need to counter Islamophobia on various fora, including the OIC and the UN General Assembly, which finally bore fruit when the United Nations designated March 15 as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia.

symbols and personalities were ridiculed and insulted with impunity. President Alvi expressed Pakistan's gratitude for Turkiye's steadfast support to Pakistan on the Kashmir dispute and appreciated Turkiye's active role in the OIC Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir.

He said that both the countries held similar views on the issue of Cyprus, the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, and the reconstitution of the United Nations.

The president also congratulated the outgoing ambassador on the successful completion of his tenure in Islamabad and appreciated his personal contribution in further strengthening Pakistan-Turkiye bilateral relations during his tenure.

US Supreme Court expands gun rights home. The court found that the law, en-

AGENCIES

stitution

WASHINGTON: The U.S. Supreme Court on Thursday declared for the first time that the U.S. Conprotects an individual's right to carry a handgun in public for self-defense, handing a landmark victory to gun rights advocates fense in a nation deeply divided over how to address firearms violence. The 6-3 ruling,

with the court's conservative justices in the majority and liberal justices in dissent, struck down New York state's limits on carrying concealed handguns outside the

acted in 1913, violated a person's right to "keep and bear arms' under the U.S. Constitution's Second Amendment. The ruling, authored by Justice Clarence Thomas, declared that the Constitution protects "an individual's right to carry a handgun for self-de-

outside the home. Thomas added: "We know of no other constitutional right that an individual may exercise only after demonstrating to government officers some special need.'

Continued on Page 06

Inside.

Pakistan wants to implement projects in Karabakh - Page 02

FPCCI, Kazakhstan agree to promote trade, direct links – Page 03

Critical, analytical thinking skills vital for students: Alvi – Page 04

Demystifying the myth of war crimes in Ukraine - Page 05

Turkey and UK agree to work together for peace in Ukraine – Page 06

President Raeisi warns against expanding NATO influence – Page 07

> Disinformation a 'global pandemic': Pakistan - Page 08

The EU welcomes Ukraine as a candidate Although the approval of the Kyiv government's application by EU leaders meeting in Brussels is just the start of what will be a years-long process, it marks a huge geopolitical shift

CENTRELINE REPORT

BRUSSELS: Ukraine has been accepted as a candidate to join the European Union on Thursday, a move that boosts the country's morale as Russian assaults wear down the defenders of two cities in the eastern Donbas region.

Although the approval of the Kyiv government's application by EU leaders meeting in Brussels is just the start of what will be a years-long process, it marks a huge geopolitical shift and will anger Russia as it struggles to impose its will on Ukraine.

The green light "is a signal to Moscow that Ukraine, and also other countries from the former Soviet Union, cannot belong to the Russian spheres of influence," Ukraine's ambassador to the EU, Vsevolod Chentsov, told Reuters.

Friday will mark four months since Russian President Vladimir Putin sent troops across the border in what he calls a "special military operation" partly necessitated by Western encroachment into what Russia considers its sphere of influence.

The conflict, which the West sees as an unjustified war of aggression by Russia, has killed thousands, displaced millions and destroyed cities as well as having ramifications across much of the world as food and energy exports have been curtailed. Russia has focused its campaign on southern and eastern Ukraine after its advance on the capital Kyiy in the early stages of the con-

Western Balkans states determined on membership

News Desk

BRUSSELS: The leaders of Albania and Serbia attended the summit after they had briefly considered not going amid disappointment over the lack of progress on milestones to becoming EU members. "We will keep going and working even harder to make Albania a nice EU member," Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama wrote on Twitter after the meeting in Brussels. Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic wrote on Twitter after the talks that his country would "fight" for an EU future for Serbia. Speaking to reporters after the summit North Macedonia's prime minister, Dimitar Kovacevski, said:

Continued on Page 06

flict was thwarted by Ukrainian resistance.

The war of attrition in the Donbas - Ukraine's industrial heartland - is most critical in the twin cities of Sievierodonetsk and Lysychansk, which sit on opposite sides of the Siverskyi Donets River in Luhansk province.

The battle there is "entering a sort of fearsome climax", said Oleksiy Arestovych, an adviser to Zelenskiy. Russian forces were trying to encircle Ukrainian troops defending Lysychansk, senior Ukrainian defence official Oleksiy Gromov said in a briefing on Thursday. Luhansk Governor Serhiy Gaidai said separately that all Lysychansk was within reach of Russian fire and the Ukrainian troops there might retreat to new positions to

avoid being trapped.

Ukrainian forces were defending Sievierodonetsk and the nearby settlements of Zolote and Vovchoyrovka, Gaidai said, but Russian troops had captured Loskutivka and Rai-Oleksandrivka to the south.

Hundreds of civilians are trapped in a chemical plant in Sievierodonetsk while Ukraine and Russia dispute who controls the bombed-out city.

Moscow says Ukrainian forces in the city are surrounded. But Gaidai said on Wednesday the Russians did not yet have full control of Sievierodonetsk.

TASS news agency quoted Russian-backed separatists as saying Lysychansk was now surrounded and cut off from supplies after a road connecting the city to the town of Sieviersk was taken.

NATIONAL

Islamabad **POST** Friday, June 24, 2022

Pakistan wants to implement projects in Karabakh

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan wants to export large quantities of mango, rice and other fruits and vegetables to Azerbaijan. President of the Islamabad Chamber of Industry and Commerce Mohammad Shakel Munir told Azerbaijani news agency. According to him, Pakistan has the potential to send large quantities of mango to Azerbaijan: "We are very interested in exporting mango to Azerbaijan. There is a demand for our product here, and we are currently studying the export potential of mango to Azerbaijan. At the same time. Pakistan has a num-

ber of fruits and vegetables that we can export to Azerbaijan. Within the framework of the Azerbaijan-Pakistan business forum held in Baku on June 7, Azerbaijan held discussions with a number of companies. In those discussions, the Azerbaijani side expressed interest in Pakistani mangoes. Munir stressed that Pakistan also wants to expand rice exports to Azerbaijan: "Pakistan rice is exported to the Azerbaijani market. However, we can ship in larger quantities. Pakistani rice is of better quality. In general, the volume of rice exported by Pakistan to Azerbaijan will increase this year.

The Chamber official stressed that more than

50 companies from Pakistan came to Baku at the business forum: "Very productive meetings were organized in Azerbaijan. We presented Pakistan's business opportunities in Azerbaijan. I think this forum is a good experience for bilateral cooperation. These companies represented the IT, food, tourism and construction sectors. In general, Pakistan-Azerbaijan relations are at a high level. We want our economic rela-

tions to further develop. We see great potential in the Azerbaijani market. " Munir said the implementation of joint projects in the field of tourism was discussed during the meetings: "There are direct flights between

Azerbaijan and Pakistan. This will contribute to the development of tourism ties. The meetings in Azerbaijan focused on the construction sector. Pakistani companies want to participate in construction projects here.

He stressed that Pakistani companies want to implement projects in the liberated areas. It should be noted that the number of Pakistani companies operating in Azerbaijan is 2,238 Pakistan has invested \$ 4.2 million in Azerbaijan's non-oil sector.

The trade turnover between Azerbaijan and Pakistan in January-May this year amounted to 12 million 889 thousand US dollars . This is 2.7 times more than in 2021.

Baluchistan seeks direct ties with Kazakhstan



DNA

QUETTA: Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Y.Kistafin made his first trip to Balochistan, visiting the provincial capital of Quetta. On the first day of

the visit, the Ambassador was received by Mr. Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali, the Acting Governor of the province - the Speaker of the Provincial Assembly, and Mr. AdulAzizomUqaili, the Chief Secretary of Balochistan. During the meetings, issues

the development of transport infrastructure for the exchange of delegations and the delivery of goods between our countries was noted.

Mr. Mir Jan Muhammad Jamali expressed his intention to send a delegation of the region from among local parliamentarians and businessmen to Kazakhstan to establish direct contacts and develop cooperation. Y.Kistafin, for his part, informed the interlocutors about the current bilateral agenda, the events held in 2021-2022, plans for the of establishing cooperation coming future, supporting between Kazakhstan and the proposals voiced by the leadership of Balochistan Balochistan in the field of trade, agriculture, extracand inviting the political tive industries, education, circles and business elite at the level of local repreof the province to take an sentative and executive auactive part in building up the bilateral Kazakh-Paki-To this end, the need for stani partnership.

PESHAWAR: Following instructions of Chief Minister, Mahmood Khan and Chief Secretary, Dr Shahzad Bangash, Minister for Relief and Rehabilitation, Iqbal Wazir Thursday handed over five truckloads of relief items to Afghan authorities. The relief items including

tents, kitchen sets and mattresses were handed over to Afghan authorities for assistance of earthquake affectees. Other relief items, medicines and medical teams would soon be dispatched to help out Afghan people. It is pertinent to mention here that the district administration is providing assistance in easy movement of pedestrians, and in shifting of the injured to DHQ Miranshah for which six ambulances have been placed at Ghulam Khan Hospital. - APP

CDA saves 3 mln gallons water during ural causes, was also nine months pregnant. Upon confirmation of the woman's death, when the nearest Rural recent rains Health Center was contacted, the lady doctor said that ISLAMABAD: Capital De velopment Authority (CDA) during recent rain spells has saved around three million gallons of rainwater through harvesting recharge wells. The CDA chairman Aamer Ali Ahmed was informed the other day during his visit at rainwater harvesting recharge well at sector I-8. He was accompanied by Chairman Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR), DG Water Management and officers of relevant departments. The authority had so far constructed forty recharge wells at various places to store rainwater, CDA spokesman told APP on Thursday. The well installed at sector I-8 has the capacity to store No compromise on water for 12 to 14 hours. The water rechargeable wells also have a special provincial rights Jhagra filtration system that keeps the water clean from contaminants. he maintained. Divulging details, he said the wells were about 150 to any discrimination and also 160 feet deep. The water is absorbed into the subsoil which helps in raising the ground water level. Flow Jhagra said that the health meters and devices were incard facility was also given to people of the opposition stalled on rechargeable wells constituency; similarly the to help measure the amount capacity of DHQs was also of water going underground, he noted. To a query, he strengthened in all districts said the complete data of rainwater storage will be reviewed at the end of the monsoon season. - APP



ISLAMABAD: FS Sohail Mahmood receives Swiss Ambassador Benedict Cerjat for a farewell call. FS termed Switzerland as an important partner; appreciated Amb. Cerjat's valuable contribution to bilateral relations. - DNA

Relief items handed over to Afghan authorities

KHAYAM ABBASI MURREE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Thursday directed the National Highway Authority to get the Murree Expressway project vetted by the Chinese experts to make it sustainable against snowfall,

land sliding, and erosion. The prime minister, in a briefing by the NHA on the rehabilitation of the Murree Expressway, pointed out the frequent damage to the road and the retaining wall. which, he said, raised questions on the design and quality of the work. Citing the quality of construction work on the Hazara Motorway as a "treat to watch", he said the NHA should consult the contractor of the said road to provide consultancy on

Murree Expressway to protect against landslides how to avoid further wastage of the public money on the project.

PM directs vetting of

The prime minister also instructed to assign an investigation to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to probe the award of the contract and fix responsibility on the people concerned for the poor quality of the work. He asked the NHA to immediately stop work on the project unless the Chinese company vetted the project and provide guidelines to move ahead. He called for replicating the Hazara Motorway model to ensure better quality of work.

The prime minister was told that a Geotech consultant had been engaged who had also been part of the Hazara Motorway project. It was informed that the project was completed with delay in 2008 owing to the acquisition of forest land and difficult terrain. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif observed that the damage to the retaining wall had become a permanent feature and reiterated his call for engaging a consultant to suggest the specifications of the road.

He said instead of allowing the mushroom growth of kiosks and restaurants, two proper rest areas should be developed at equal distances to provide quality services to the tourists.

He also directed the authorities concerned to curb the illegal construction activity in JhikaGali. It was told that the previous government had allowed vertical construction in the area like that of Lahore and that the administration had identified 575 buildings violating the bylaws.

Fazaia MC holds 1st convocation ceremony

from womb of dead woman

Birth of a baby

SAQIB MUSHTAQ

LODHRAN: Tribute to the performance of Dr. Irfan Zafar, in-charge of Rural Health Center 231 / WB District Lodhran and Dr. Saima Abdul Jabbar, Female Medical Officer on the successful operation of giving birth to a baby girl from the womb of a pregnant woman Shaukia Bibi who was brought to the health center in a dead condition. Dr. Saima, a female medical officer of Chak No. 231 WB Rural Health Center (RHC) on the outskirts of Dunyapur Tehsil of Lodhran District, has set a shining example by serving humanity.

Shaukia Bibi, a resident of Ada Zakhira village, 10 km away from the Rural Health Center, who had died of natyou should immediately bring the dead body of the dead woman to the Rural Health Center so that the baby in Shahid's womb is alive because according to medical science. After the death of a person, some parts of the body remain in motion for some time. In this context, the dead woman was brought to the hospital. C-section with limited medical & surgical instruments. Operation C-section was successful and the baby girl was handed over to her father. However, the dead woman was buried by her relatives in the graveyard after the funeral prayers.

thorities were discussed.

While on the one hand there was the grief of the death of the amateur Bibi, on the other hand the joy of the living child from the womb of the dead woman surprised everyone. Member National Assembly Muhammad ShafiqArain said that all human beings are equal but Allah Almighty for testing human beings some of them are apparently strong, some are weak, some are worldly, some are ignorant, some are healthy, some are sick, some are active. Makes someone lazy. In such a situation, a good person but a real person is one who stays away from hatred, free from arrogance and pride. Humanity is that the rich should sympathize with the poor and the wise with the ignorant and help them.

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Convocation of 1st MBBS Batch of Fazaia Medical College, Islamabad Campus was held at Main Auditorium, Air University Islamabad. Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force was the Chief Guest at the occasion. The Chief Guest awarded Gold, Silver and Bronze Medals to the students who secured 1st, 2nd, and 3rd positions respectively in their professional examinations. Students who secured the highest marks in each subject were also awarded Gold Medals, whereas Dr Saad Azhar Malik was declared as the

Best Graduate, who bagged 20 Medals in MBBS. The Air Chief congratulated the medical graduates and their parents on this significant and memorable day. He also lauded the efforts of administration and faculty of Fazaia Medical College for achieving a historic milestone. While addressing the audience, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force appreciated the standard and quality of education being imparted at Fazaia Medical College, Islamabad. He also envisioned that to stay among the group of top medical colleges, Fazaia Medical College will have to add innovative teaching and learning strategies that are helpful in clarifying complex medical concepts.

CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY Market & Road Maintenance North

INVITING TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders are hereby invited on percentage basis from the approved contractors of PEC enlisting up-to-date in

S. #	Name of Work	NIT Cost	Earnest Money / Tender Fee	Date & Time of application for Tender Docs	Tender opening date / time
01.	Cleaning of Nullahs in Sector-F Series (Rate Running Contract).	Rs.120,291,052/-	Rs.3,610,000/-	Date 14-07-2022	Date 21-07-2022 (Box closed at
			Rs. 5,000/-	(at 12:30PM)	11:30AM & opened on 12:00 Noon)
			Rs. 3.480.000/-	Date14-07-2022	Date 21-07-2022
02.	Cleaning of Nullahs in Sector-G Series (Rate Running Contract).	Rs.115,993,996/-	Rs. 5,000/-	(at 12:30PM)	(Box closed at 11:30AM & opened on 12:00 Noon)
03.	Hiring of manpower and machinery for Monsoon in	Rs. 36,160,200/-	Rs. 1,085,000/-	Date 14-07-2022	Date 21-07-2022 (Box closed at
	Sector-F & G Series (Rate Running Contract).		Rs. 5,000/-	(at 12:30PM)	11:30AM & opened on 12:00 Noon)

CONDITIONS :-

- Tender forms/documents can be purchased on cash payment (Non-refundable) for the work mentioned above from the office of the Dy. Director M&RM (North), CDA Old Naval Head Quarter Near Melody Market G-6, Islamabad as mentioned above during the working hours. No tender will be issued / sold on the date of opening
- um C-2 PEC Category firms can apply for tendering process
- iii. The participant bidder will have to provide at least 03 similar nature & complexity work orders
- The intending bidders have to provide solid proof of owner ship of Earthmoving machinery and related equipment to be used in emergency flood & disaster situation
- Tender will be issued to only those firms which are financially sound. The provision of 3 years audit report from profound audit firms is mandatory
- The bidder will have to provide valid operational Telephone/contact number of Bank Branch issuing the CDR/Bank draft for verification purpos
- The bidder will have to provide valid operational Telephone/contact number of authority/officer issuing work order for
- For Red Zone & Diplomatic Enclave & other sensitive areas work , tender will be issued only those firms having security
- The bidder must have to show solid proof of works executed showing experience of flood fighting & Fire Fighting emergency
- Tender will be issued only to those firms having sufficient team for Mules & Donkeys Operation
- The Authority may reject all bids or proposals at any time prior to acceptance of the bid or proposal. The authority shall upon request communicate to any bidder or contractor who submitted a bid o proposal, the grounds for its rejection of all bids or proposal but is no required to justify those grounds.
- Tender for work mentioned above shall be opened by the Director (M&RM) office on due date and time in presence of contractor or their representative who care to attend.
- Bid Security / Earnest Money shall be accompanied with the request in the shape of **Deposit at Call (CDR) clearly** indicating the name of firm issued by local schedule bank in favour of Dy. Director Market & Road Maint (North),CDA. CDR without indicating Name of Firm will not be accepted and no application without bid security will be accepted fo ssuance of tenders.
- In case of total bid amount is less than 10% below the NIT amount the bidder shall submit additional call deposit as performance security equal to the difference between NIT amount and total quoted amount less 10% of NIT amount the additional certormance guarantee shall be submitted alongwith the bid. Bids having rates below 10% of NIT without additional call deposit will be rejected

Detail of terms and conditions can also obtain from CDA web site www.cda.gov.pk and PPRA web site www.ppra.org.pk

Deputy Director, Market & Road Maint North, CDA

MKKSNP Plan validated by the stakeholders

MURREE: The Internation al Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Pakistan on Thursday organised a one-day workshop on Murree Kahuta Kotli Sattian (MKKS) National Parks management plan validation at Bhurban, Murree, as part of the Karot, Biodiversity Management Plan Imple-

mentation Project. Asim Jamal from IUCN Pakistan provided an update on the development of the National Park Management Plan. Dr. Z. B. Mirza presented a critical review of the drought management plan and identified areas for improvement in the management plan, said a news release. Senior Manager Environment KPCL, Mansoor Khan stated that KPCL provided assistance in developing this management plan, and mentioned that the IUCN worked very well.

General Manager, Environment and Social, CSAIL, Naeem Akhtar complemented the point and praised IUCN's work, saying that a management plan had been developed in such a short period of time, which was a significant effort.

DG Wildlife of the Government of Punjab Malik Sana Ullah Khan praised IUCN for organising this validation workshop and pledged his full support for the implementation of the Karot Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP). - APP

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Finance Taimur Saleem Jhagra on Thursday asserted that the provincial government would not compromise on the power and rights of the province and would continue fight-

ing for its rights. Responding to opposition's cut motions in the provincial assembly, he said on the directions of the Chief Minister Mahmood Khan

sue of provincial rights. He said that those who were

against the KP government should present the evidence and assured strict legal action if to be proven true.

he attended the APCC and ernment carried out devel-National Economic Council opment projects without meetings and raised the isincluded opposition members' constituencies.

leveling corruption charges He said the funds are prop-

'Road to Mecca' initiative a gift from Saudi Arabia

DNA

ISLAMABAD: 'Road to Mecca' initiative is a great gift from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the pilgrims of Hajj and in the coming years, Hajj flights under 'Road to Mecca' initiative will also be made from other cities of Pakistan, said Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, Chairman Pakistan Ulema Council, Special Aide to Prime Minister on Religious Harmony and Middle East.

Talking to media here on Thursday, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi said that on the instructions of Prime Minister MianShahbaz Sharif, Hajj arrangements made by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Pakistan are being improved and pilgrims are being facilitated with every available facility. He said that the Pakistan Ulema Council, Government of Pakistan and the people of Pakistan are grateful of the leadership of Saudi Arabia,

Khadim-e-Harmain Al-Sharifain Shah Salman bin Abdul Aziz, Crown Prince Amir Muhammad bin Salman and Interior Ministry of Saudi Arabia for including Pakistan in 'Road to Mecca' initiative and also paid tribute for providing better facilities for pilgrims. Pakistan and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are knotted in eternal relations of faith and belief, said Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi adding that 'Road to Mecca' initiative is such a great facility that this could not have

been imagined even a few years ago. Arrangements taken by Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman to facilitate pilgrims under Vision 2030 program are exemplary. Prime Minister of Pakistan MianShahbaz Sharif had met the Saudi delegation a few days back under the 'Road to Mecca' program and also thanked the Saudi delegates for their services.

The services to the pilgrims is an honor and in the last two years, the expenditures of Hajj have gone up all over the world, but the government of Pakistan have been trying its best to provide maximum facilities to the pilgrims and we pray to Allah to bless us all to serve the pilgrims of Hajj and Umrah, said Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi.

We also thanked all the institutions of Pakistan and all the institutions of Saudi Arabia and the Road to Mecca Program and the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan Nawaf Saeed Al-Maliki and the Consulate for making best arrangements for pilgrims of Hajj, said Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi. He also stated that Pakistanis residing in Saudi Arabia should not perform Hajj without specified permission from Saudi authorities adding that it is a unanimous fatwa of all scholars not to participate in any kind of political action or political debate. sloganeering or sectarian sloganeering during the days of Hajj.

PID (I) No.8990/21

erty of masses and these including Landi Kotal, Jamcould not be distributed at rud, and more funds would the wish of an individual, be released to Jamrud hospiadding that provincial govtal for its up-gradation.- APP



National Days and **Armed Forces Days** JUNE

June 02 / **Itlay** National Day/ Independence Day

June 04 / Finland Armed Forces Day

June 07 / Sweden Natioal Day June 10 / Portugal

Portugal Day (Natioal 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



Hotels & Restaurants

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



Airlines TurkishAirlines......8494949



FPCCI, Kazakhstan agree to promote trade, direct links

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Mr. Yerzhan Kistafin visited the Capital Office Islamabad of Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and industry to meet the Vice President Mr. Umar Masood Ur Rehman. During the meeting, establishing banking ties, Railway route, resume direct flights, matters of mutual interest including strengthening of cordial relations, increase in bilateral trade, and promotion of investment and frequent exchange of delegations between the two countries were discussed at length.

Umar Masood Ur Rehman said that Pakistan offers bright prospects of joint ventures and investment in the areas of textiles, marble, mining, energy, agrobased industries, etc. He said that both countries have strong diplomatic, historical, religious and political linkages but we have yet to succeed in exploiting the untapped trade potential to become key trading partners. The main items of Pakistan's exports to Kazakhstan include rice, oil seeds and fresh fruits etc. whereas the imports from Kazakhstan comprise mostly of chemicals. There is considerable potential for Pakistan to enhance its exports to Kazakhstan in areas of pharmaceuticals, value added textiles, leather items, auto parts, ceramics and furniture etc.

He further said that the businessmen of the Province of Khybar Pakhtunkhwa



are willing to invest somewhere and it is suggested to take them to Kazakhstan to explore the potential avenues. Mr. Sikandar Khan, group leader Charsada CCI, Muhammad Saleem Awan, President, Umair Khalid, Vice President, Sajid Khan, Ec member, Haripur CCI, M Zahid Patyala, Vice President, Mandi Bahudin CCI, Sheikh Abdul Waheed, Member Islamabad CCI participate on this occasion.

The participants also gave various suggestions to Excellency, regarding promotion of trade between the two countries, solutions to problems faced by the business community, Transportation, direct flight from Kazakhstan to Peshawar, extension of Kazakhstan-Iran Railway to Pakistan and banking system. Axel Change at Taftan Border is the need of hour to increase the trade with low expenditure. On the occasion the honorable Ambassador of Kazakhstan Mr. Yerzhan Kistafin said that Pakistan is a regional power and bolstering cooperation between the two countries will be helpful for the entire Central Asian Region besides jacking-up the two-way trade to the new height. Many

emplary diplomatic relations which can be extended to new areas of cooperation. Good relations between both the countries need to be reflected in bilateral trade and commercial ties. Pakistan is a very promising market due to its large population and it is attractive to foreign investors. The Ambassador said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province is geographically important and the gateway to Central Asia. He also expressed his interest to visit various Chambers of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The direct air connectivity from Peshawar to Nur Sultan is now becoming essential for both countries particularly for the benefit of the business communities.

UK MPs write to PM over unfair trial of Yasin Malik

ISLAMABAD: The Members of the United Kingdom's parliament have written a letter to British Prime Minister Boris Johnson seeking action to monitor the situation of political prisoners in India. The MPs including Tahir Ali (Birmingham Hall Green), Imran Hussain (Bradford East), Khalid Mahmood (Birmingham Perry Barr), and Mohammad Yasin (Bedford) urged the UK PM to assign a special representative to monitor the trial regarding the conviction of Kashmiri leader Yasin Malik.

The MPs pointed out that Yasin Malik was arrested under India's Public Safety Act and Unlawful Activities Prevention Act and convicted on the 19th of May 2022 on terrorism charges, which carry the maximum sentence of either life imprisonment or the death penalty. They said Malik was tried in secret and without a jury by a National Investigation Court in India, on charges that were not only spurious but at this point nearly 30 years old. The letter said the two Acts under which Yasin Malik was arrested and tried had been repeatedly used by the Indian authorities to persecute Kashmiri political activists, who oppose the military occupation of Jammu and Kashmir. "This is part of a broader escalation of a severe crackdown on the civil liberties of the Kashmiri people, as documented by numerous organisations, including Human Rights Watch," it read. The MPs stressed that Yasin Malik faced the death penalty for doing



nothing more than advocating for the freedom of the Kashmiri people. "We, therefore, urge the UK Government to

Walk to observe World Drug Day on Sunday

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Narcotics Control alongwith other stakeholders would hold a walk to observe the World Drug Day here on Sunday. According to details, the walk would be held here at Gulistan-e-Fatima Park G-7/3 adjacent to Marghalla road. The general public would also be engaged in the walk as to highlight the consequences of drug abuse under the theme of 'Addressing drug challenges in health and humanitarian crises' set by the United Nations. - APP

NUST Summer School to start from July 18

ISLAMABAD: The National University of Science and Technology (NUST) has announced its Summer School from July 18 to 29 for the students offering exciting activities. According to the university's official, the students aged between 16 to 20 years from across the country can register and join the NUST Summer School. Career Counseling, Photography Workshop, Day Excursion, Talent Hunt, Alumni Acquaintance, Practical Experience, Sports Gala, Drum Circle, Lab Demonstration, Townhall Debates, Business Case Comp and Gig Night. The intending students can register themselves through summerschool.nust.edu.pk to participate in the Summer School. – APP

Police arrest 3 gamblers; recover stake money RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi

Climate Change Ministry gets Rs 9.6b budgetary allocations

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Government scheme in the PSDP 2022-23. The ongoing has allocated Rs 9.6 billion under Public Service Development Programme (PSDP) for Climate Change Division in the fiscal year 2022-23. The allocated amount of billions of rupees in the Fiscal Year 2022-23 focused on climate change adaptation and mitigation endeavors to purge the country from adverse impacts of environmental degradation and global warming.

According to a budgetary document, the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) Planned Activities for Fiscal Year 2022-23 in Climate Change Division focused on Disaster Risk Management, Early Warning Sys

schemes include Capacity Building on Water Quality Monitoring and SDG 6 (6.1) Reporting at a cost of Rs 23 million; Climate Resilient Urban Human Settlements at Unit at an amount of Rs 19 million was earmarked.

The maximum allocations were earmarked for Upscaling of Green Pakistan Programme (Revised) at a cost of Rs 9.4 billion. An amount of Rs 100 million were allocated for the much awaited Islamabad Zoo project that would be transformed into a wildlife sanctu-

ary and animal preserve zone. In the Sectoral Plan and Strategy 2022-23,

Pakistani products such as sports goods, medicines and surgical instruments have good potential for trade in Kazakhstan. He said that Kazakhstan and Pakistan have ex-

Emergency

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



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115 PIAFlightInfo.....114 PIACargo......9280979 Railway Inquiry.....117 Railway Exchange9270831-5 WASA Rawalpindi..5555489 ..9281092 CAA.



Hospitals

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



Departments

CDA9221334-43
CDA9208301-04
Met Office9250360-6
RDA5555864
TMA5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation......9209224 Potohar Town......9209224 RawalTown.....5773343

Water Tank Islamabad.....0321-5744480

tems, Availability of clean drinking water in Pakistan, Transition towards environmentally resilient Pakistan through adaptation and mitigation targeting ecological initiatives consistent with the Pakistan's nationally determined contributions (NDCs) objectives, Attaining Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) to generate eco-system services and provide additional support to mitigation of GHG in Pakistan, Promote eco-tourism and improve the carbon sinking capacity and to establish real time monitoring of ambient air quality through establishment of monitoring stations, in periodic manner, throughout Islamabad. The amount of Rs 9.5 billion has been allocated for ongoing schemes while 100 million were earmarked for a new

the Annual Development Plan highlighted the Capacity Building on Water Quality Monitoring and SDG 6 (6.1) Reporting (USD 7.4 million), with an allocation of Rs 23 million in the PSDP 2022-23, aimed at maintaining water quality management labs (36 district labs in Punjab, 7 divisional labs in KP, One Lab in PCRWR at national level), capacity building for water policy and lab operations, knowledge and experiences sharing with Korean Government, strengthening coordination among Ministry of Climate Change and provincial governments. The PSDP 2022-23 has earmarked Rs 9,450.582 million for "Ten Billion Trees Tsunami Programme-Phase-I Upscaling of Green Pakistan Programme (Revised)" for achieving the target of planting 500 million trees. – APP

condemn the trial and conviction of Yasin Malik and demand that he is immediately released," they said.

The MPs also called on the UK Government to join the international community in challenging India's Public Safety Act which enables the detention of individuals without charge or trial for up to two years. "This law, which has been criticised by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, has been used not only against Yasin Malik but also many other Kashmiris who seek to challenge the Indian occupation," they said. The MPs demanded the UK Government to use its special relationship with India to ensure a peaceful solution to the conflict in Kashmir. - APP

Capital's air quality

consistently healthy

ISLAMABAD: The air quality of the federal capital

on Thursday was recorded healthy for the third con-

secutive day as the recent heavy rainfalls turned the

ambiance serene and pollution-free with ensuing gusty

winds during sunny weather. The air quality was

healthy as suspended particles were recorded below

permissible limits in the atmosphere along with the

pollutants' ratio due to persistent windy weather and

reduced vehicular traffic on the roads. The air quali-

ty data has been collected by Pakistan Environmental

Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) that monitors air pol-

lutants ratio for 24 hours based on three intervals of

The Pak-EPA data revealed that the air quality through-

out the three intervals of data monitoring remained low

as the pollutants were below the permissible limits of

national environmental quality standards (NEQS). The

hazardous air pollutant particulate matter of 2.5 microns

(PM2.5), which was a lethal atmospheric contaminant,

remained 12.16 micro grammes per cubic meter on aver-

age, which is lower than the NEQS of 35 mic-programmes

per cubic meter and denotes the air quality healthy. The

PM2.5 is generated through combustion of an engine,

industrial emissions, burning garbage or inflammable

material and dust blown up by fast moving cars plying on

non-cemented patches of the roads. - APP

eight hours data collection from different locations.

district Police have arrested three gamblers and recovered Rs 20,400 stake money, three mobile phones and valuables from their possession here on Thursday. According to police spokesman, Westridge police conducted a raid and arrested three gamblers namely Taj Muhammad, Sarwar and Afzal. A case has been registered against them while further investigation in under process. Superintendent of Police, Potohar, Rana Abdul Wahab said that gambling is the root cause of other evils and those involved in such crimes do not deserve any concession. - APP

AIOU expands its network to far flung areas

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is continuing its efforts to expand its educational network across Pakistan including Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan to provide educational facilities to the people of remote and backward areas. Vice Chancellor AIOU, Prof. Dr. Zia ul-Qayyum himself is overseeing this expansion process. The construction work of Gwadar, Mithi, Moro, and Sukkur Regional Campus buildings has been completed while the construction work of Sargodha, Sahiwal, Attock, Kalat, Gilgit, Sheikhupura, Rawalkot, and Hyderabad Regional Campus buildings will be started soon. It is pertinent to mention here that the Vice Chancellor is on a mission to relocate the university's regional campuses from rented accommodation to their own buildings.

VC Prof. Dr. Zia ul-Qayyum congratulated the people of the entire province especially Gwadar district on the completion of the construction of campus building which would be inaugurated soon. He said that the campus has all the facilities to meet the needs of the ever-changing dynamic and technology-oriented modern educational system. The newly constructed building has a state-of-the-art computer laboratory which is equipped with the latest technology. Moreover, it has a digital library, smart classrooms, IT lab, and a multipurpose hall. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Religious Harmony Maulana Tahir Ashrafi see off the Hajj pilgrims at Islamabad International Airport. - APP

ICCI calls for withdrawal of markets closure decision They stressed that the decision should be reviewed and the businesses should be allowed to remain open till 11 pm

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry has said that our economy is already in dire straits and the government has decided to close markets in Islamabad by 9 pm that would badly affect the business activities and thwart all efforts to improve the economic situation of the country. He called upon the government to withdraw its decision immediately and allow businesses to remain open till 11 pm in order to save the business community from further troubles. He said this while addressing a dinner reception hosted by Muhammad Naveed Malik, Secretary General, Traders Welfare Association, G-7/1

Market, Islamabad. Jamshed Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President, Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI. Muhammad Ijaz Abbasi & Basir Daud former Presidents, Muhammad Naveed Malik, Ashfaq Hussain Chatha, Najeeb Malik, Ch. Tahir, Engr. Faheem, Imran Minhas, Umer Sadiq, Shazia Rizwan, Nageena Khaleeq, Safeena Shah and others were present on the occasion.

Muhammad Shakeel Munir said that Eid ul Azha was round the corner, which is a peak season for business activities as people have to do Eid shopping along with families. However, the closure of markets by 9:00 pm would create great problems for people doing Eid shopping. He further said that in the summer season, people normally go to the markets and bazaars for shopping in the evening hours due to which business activi-

ties reach peak level from 7:00 pm to 11:00 pm. He said that closing the businesses during peak hours will not only cause problems for the customers, it will also cause losses to the business community. He suggested that instead of shutting down business at 9 pm, the government should keep power outages in markets from 9 am to 10 pm but allow business activities to run till 11:00 pm. He said that the business community is ready to cooperate with the government in steering the country out of its current predicament and make joint efforts to strengthen Pakistan's economy. However, they needed government support to run the business activities smoothly.

Speaking at the occasion, Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President and Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI

said that in the current turbulent economic situation, closing down businesses early is not good for the economy. They said that Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves have already shrunk to alarming levels while the rupee has depreciated to Rs.210 per dollar and our exports are far below the actual potential. These difficult circumstances demand that the government should focus on promoting ease of doing business so that business activities could flourish and the economy could come out of difficulties. However, instead of creating a conducive environment for businesses, the government is taking steps that will further affect business activities. They stressed that the decision should be reviewed and the businesses should be allowed to remain open till 11 pm.

TWIN CITIES



Output of LCVs surge 39.36% in 10 months

ISLAMABAD: The production of Light Commercial Vehicles (LCVs) has witnessed 39.36 percent increase during the first ten months of the fiscal year 2021-22 against the output of the same period of last fiscal year. As many as 32,443 LCVs were manufactured during July-April (2021-22) as compared to the production of 23,280 LCVs during July-April (2020-21), showing an increase of 39.36 percent, according to official data by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

During the period under review, the production of tractors also rose from 41,524 units to 47,410 units, showing an increase of 14.17 percent while the production of trucks decreased by 35.56 percent, going down from 2,593 units to 1,671 units. The production of jeeps and cars increased to 188,603 units during the period under review from 122.683 units during last year, showing growth of 53.73 percent, whereas the production of buses increased by 14.04 percent by going up from 456 units to 520 units. - APP

FTO introduced new vistas for tax payers

ISLAMABAD: Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) has introduced the best multiple initiatives, new vistas and highly simplified procedures for prompt redressal of genuine grievances of bonafide tax payers on top priority. Speaking in an awareness meeting with traders, Honorary Coordinator to FTO MeherKashifYounis here on Thursday said FTO, who is enjoying the highest degree of integrity coupled with the best standards of professional competency, is fully committed with a clear objective to eliminate corruption, maladministration, malaise and inertia in feder

Critical, analytical thinking skills vital for students: Alvi

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi Thurs day advised the students to develop critical and analytical thinking skills to overcome biases inherent in human nature to achieve the ability of judicious decision-making. The president, talking to the students of Cadet College, Murree here at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, said the youth needed to be trained to sift through the mass of information and discern misinformation and fake news from accurate information for making intelligent and informed judgments.

The president advised the students to keep the doors of knowledge open throughout their lives and learn from past experiences as well as utilise the knowledge and information made readily available to them by information technology. He also urged the students to draw inspiration from the life and conduct of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) as well as learn lessons from the lives of successful persons. This, he said, would enrich them intellectually and socially besides making them a better and more useful person for the benefit of society and the country.

President Alvi said that Quaid-e-Azam used to hold students in great esteem and encouraged them to actively participate in



Pakistan's Freedom Movement to carve a separate homeland for the Muslims of India. Replying to a question, Arif Alvi said that as the President of Pakistan, he had been working for safeguarding women's property rights, the welfare and education of differently-abled persons, and promoting the use of Information Technology in all sectors of national importance. He said that Pakistan needed to increase the number of skilled

IT human resources to fill the ever-widening gap between demand and supply of IT professionals in the country and around the world. He said that human resources in addition to natural resources were the essential ingredients for nations to make sustained and fast-track development.

He said that in the absence of skilled human resources, the natural resources remained untapped and unexploited, thus, hampering

a country's progress. President Alvi emphasized that the educational institutions should be fully geared to multiply their capacity to produce highly skilled human resources by adopting online and hybrid methods of imparting knowledge and skills to their students. This would ensure a steady supply of skilled professionals capable of effectively utilizing our unexploited natural

Tourists decry poor cleanliness arrangements at Faisal mosque

ISLAMABAD: The grandiose Faisal mosque which attracts hundreds of thousand visitors from across the country to see its picturesque architecture is giving a shabby look due to poor maintenance and bad cleanliness managed by its administration. The visitors expressed resentment over sheer negligence of the authorities concerned, urging them to take cognizance of the situation and improve cleanliness at the Mosque. "I always wanted to visit Faisal mosque since childhood, but it saddened me when I had come over here and witnessed big patches of moss at ablution area and dust stuck to the walls," a visitor UmerZaman from

Mirpur told APP on Thursday. "A number of washrooms are closed and overall situation of sanitation and lavatories is also very poor. I am very disappointed due to the clumsy ambiance of the national heritage", he expressed. Hafiz Kareem, a faithful devotee said that fountains played an important role to enhance the beauty of architecture and fountains in the main arena of mosque were dysfunctional since so long. The authorities should fix it as the Mosque was giving a rusty picture without fountains, he added. An official of Dawah Academy who looked after the matters of Faisal Mosque said that the Academy only dealt with religious activities and man-

agement. The subject of cleanliness and maintenance came under the jurisdiction of the Capital Development Authority (CDA).

"We have written many times to authorities to fix these problems, but no serious action has been taken", he said. An official of CDA from sanitation directorate passed the buck on Dawah academy by saying that civic authority has ensured cleanliness as proper dustbins were placed and janitors were deputed at the Mosque to maintain clean up. However, there were some issues that also come under the ambit of Dawah Academy which they should manage themselves as CDA alone was not responsible, he added. - APP

Four criminal gangs busted

resources. - APP

ISLAMABAD: The teams of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) police and Crime Investigation Agency (CIA) have apprehended four criminal gangs involved in series of gun point snatching, robberies and motorbike theft incidents, said a police spokesman on Thursday. He said a police team of Tarnol arrested two members of a snatchers' gang involved in numerous incidents. The accused were identified as Said Ahmed Alias Sadu and Muhammad Noor. Mobile phones, one bike and a weapon were recovered from their possession, he said, adding cases against the accused have been registered at Tarnol police station and further investigation was underway. Likewise, Lohi Bher police team has busted a gang of motorbikes' thieves. The accused have been identified as Muhammad Shoaib, Ghazanfar Hussain, Shah Zaib and Jamil Ur Rehman. Four stolen bikes and spare parts were recovered from their possession. During the preliminary investigation, he said the accused had confessed their involvement in numerous bike theft incidents in different areas of Lohi Bher police station. The spokesman said one of the police teams arrested seven accused of a notorious criminal gang known as Shal Dazz gang who were identified as Dolat alias Shal dazz, Shahid Gujjar, Muhammad Imran, Abdul Razzaq, Qari Zahid, Aziz Bacha and Qari Javed. - APP

Int'I Day of Victims of Torture on 26

Islamabad **POST**

Friday, June 24, 2022

ISLAMABAD: Day in Support of Victims of Torture will be marked on June 26(Sunday) across the globe to remind people that human torture is not only unacceptable - it is also a crime. The UN's International Day in Support of Victims of Torture serves as a reminder to people that human torture is a crime. Rehabilitation centers and human rights organizations around the world celebrate the UN's International Day in Support of Victims of Torture on June 26 each year. The day serves as a reminder to people that torture is a crime. This event gives everyone a chance to unite and voice their opinions against human torture.

Organizations, including the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims and Amnesty International, have played an active role in organizing events around the world to promote the day. Activities may include photo exhibitions; the distribution of posters and other material to boost people's awareness of issues related to human torture; and television advertisements. On June 26, 1987, the Convention against Torture came into force. It was an important step in the process of globalizing human rights and acknowledging that torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment should be universally illegal. In 1997 the United Nations General Assembly decided to mark this historic date and designated June 26 each year as the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. The first International Day in Support of Victims of Torture was held on June 26, 1998. – APP

Govt trying to put economy on right track: Aisha Ghaus

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Dr Aisha Ghaus said on Thursday the present government despite various challenges was trying

Mobile companies created 22,000 jobs in Pakistan

reserves for Pakistan, the production of local and foreign mobile companies has not only outnumbered imports of mobile devices, but also created more than 22,000 jobs for the local population, Gwadar Pro reported on Thursday. According to Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), between January and May 2022, at least 12.41 million mobile phones were assembled/manufactured in Pakistan, while only 0.94 million devices were imported. Out of them, 5.42 million are smartphones while 6.99 million are 2G phones. Chinese mobile manufacturing companies are playing a leading role in helping Pakistan increase local manufacturing against phone imports. Between January and May 2022, China's

ISLAMABAD: While saving precious forex ITEL is leading with 1.6 million devices followed by Chinese companies Vivo, VGO Tel, and Infinix with 1.32 m, 1.26m, and 1.05m respectively. China's Tecno has man

June 30 last date to apply for COMSTECH CCoE Yemen Programme

ISLAMABAD: June 30 will be the last date for

al tax machinery.

He said inter-alia other initiatives, the mechanism of informal complaint redressal has now be re-actived. He said although this provision was available but it was hardly ever tapped. He said earlier non tax bureaucrats were appointed FTO lacking judicial vision and wisdom acumen to be exercised on tax matters. MeherKashif said now FTO had directed all Advisors to make maximize use of it and started exercising this effective provision of law wherever applicable. He said resultantly, multiple cases of serious nature will be resolved amicably providing immediate relief to aggrieved tax payers.

He said Advisor Customs Dr. ArslanSubuctageen recently exercised this legal provision in Telenor Pakistan Pvt who took up matter with concerned collector customs and got their NTN unblocked within the ambit of law which he added not only restored the confidence of foreign investors but also gave a message of ease of doing business in Pakistan. He highlighted that the utilisation of this legal mechanism of informal complaint redressal has immense potential which is most appropriately being exercised by FTO Ad visors across the country to fully ensure quick relief to complainants. - APP

IRSA releases 236985 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) Thursday released 236985 cusecs water from various rim stations with an inflow of 272333 cases. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1087.55 feet, which was 37.55 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded a 64163 and 29615 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and

Sukkur was recorded as 89407 ,117711 and 61155 cases respectively. Similarly, from the Kabul River. a total of 33300 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 88370 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala. - APP

ufactured/assembled 0.71 m while Oppo has manufactured/assembled 0.72 m phones in Pakistan from January to May 2022. South Korean Samsung and Finland's Nokia have manufactured/assembled 0.94 m and 0.80m phones respectively. The data shows that in 2021, Pakistan had locally manufactured/ assembled 24.66 million phones against 10.26 million imports. Local manufacturing in 2021 surpassed the finished device import for the 1st time in the country's history. In 2020, the 24.51 million imports were well over the 13.05 million locally manufactured/ assembled phones. - APP

the Yemeni nationals to apply for the "COM-STECH-CCoE Yemen Programme" which is offering 50 fellowships to build their capacity in the fields of public health and medical technology. The programme was launched by the COMSTECH in collaboration with Embassy of the Republic of Yemen in Islamabad for the capacity building of Yemen scientists. According to an official of COMSTECH, the fellowship programme was launched after a series of meeting held between the Ambassador of Yemen, Mohammed MotaharAlashabi with the Coordinator General of COMSTECH, Dr. IqbalChoudhary to start this programme.

Under this programme, COMSTECH has initially announced 50 fellowships for Yemeni nationals of 1-12 month duration. These fellowships are being offered by International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS), University of Karachi, University of Lahore and Health Service Academy, Islamabad, the official said. The 6-12 months Research Fellowships for M.S/ PhD/ Postdoc Science and Technology are being offered at the IC-CBS. He said under this programme 50 fellowships will be given to Yemeni scientists to obtain training in public health and medical technologies. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Minister of Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb, Turkish ambassador Mustafa Yurdakul and other officials participated in the inauguration ceremony of upgradation of Urdu Department at Associated Press of Pakistan. - DNA

Bids to smuggle wheat & flour foiled

RAWALPINDI: The Food Department Rawalpindi and district police on Thursday foiled bids to smuggle wheat and flour besides seizing 2656 wheat and flour bags. According to a district administration spokesman, the authorities of the food department along with Naseerabad police confiscated five trucks loaded with 1400 flour bags and 1256 wheat bags. Five drivers namely Ibrar, Ghulam Mustafa, Riaz, Rehman Ullah and Rasool Muhammad were also sent behind the bars and police impounded five trucks, he added. The authorities concerned had been directed to strictly monitor district exit points to control wheat smuggling, he said adding, DC Rawalpindi Tahir Farooq had instructed the authorities to strictly monitor the movement of wheat and take strict action in accordance with the law against the rules violators. The spokesman said that all the exit points of Rawalpindi division were being monitored round the clock to control wheat smuggling as the administration had set up 14 check posts at exit points of the four districts of the division to check wheat smuggling. The administration in collaboration with police and special branch, was carrying out operations and a special monitoring system had also been developed particularly for exit points of Rawalpindi division to check wheat smuggling. The check posts were set up at exit points of Rawalpindi, Attock, Jhelum and Chakwal districts, he said and informed, the district administration in collaboration with the Motorway police and the food department was making

to put the economy on right track by taking necessary decisions. Talking to a private news channel, she said that due to imprudent economic policies of previous government, the country was facing current economic crisis. Aisha Ghaus criticized that previous PTI-led government has done many economic blunders, however, present government was busy talking to IMF teams to ensure macroeconomic stability for the benefit all of Pakistan's citizens.

She expressed her confidence that International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other international institutes including Asian Development Bank (ADB), World bank (WB), Chinese infrastructure bank are ready to give loans to Pakistan, adding, after these development Pakistan's rupee would stable. She said that public in next general elections should hold previous government accountable for its mismanagement and current economic crises. - APP

Flash floods and landslides lash IIOKJ

ISLAMABAD: Heavy rains lashed Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, triggering flash floods and landslides, with authorities forced to shut schools in several districts including Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban and evacuate people from low-lying areas, while the strategic Jammu-Srinagar national highway remained blocked for the second day leaving hundreds of vehicles stranded.

According to Kashmir media service, in Kashmir, the Ihelum crossed the danger mark at Sangam in Islamabad district and the water level was rising in other rivers also. A high alert has been sounded in areas close to river Chenab and its tributaries. the officials said. Snowfall in the higher reaches including the shrine of Amarnath has substantially brought down the day temperature, the officials said. Police rescued 50 passengers travelling in ten vehicles who were trapped due to snowfall and heavy rains in the high-altitude area in Kishtwar district, officials said. - APP

MNAs hold PTI govt responsible for prevailing economic crisis, inflation

Lawmaker said despite 'all favors', the PIT government during the last three and half years miserably failed to deliver and devise prudent economic policies to provide any relief to the common people

ISLAMABAD: Members of the National Assembly on Thursday held the previous government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) responsible for the current economic crisis, high inflation, increased prices of petroleum products, gas and electricity. Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) MNA Rasheed Ahmed Khan while resuming the budget 2022-23 debate said policies of the 'selected government' of PTI were the main reason behind the deteriorated economic condition and sky-rocketing inflation in the country. He said due to the PTI policies, the value of dollar had gone up from Rs 115 to Rs 190 during its tenure, whereas the prices of petroleum products, electricity and daily used items reached unaffordable levels.

The lawmaker said despite 'all favors', the PIT government during the last three and half years miserably failed to deliver and devise prudent economic policies to provide any relief to the common people. The MNA expressed the hope that the coalition government would not only steer the country out from the current economic crisis but also provide relief to people. He asked the government to conduct an inquiry into the alleged corruption committed by the PTI leadership and friends.

Pakistan People Party Parliamentarians MNA Syed Agha Rafiullah, said despite all the economic and other challenges, the coalition government had decided to take charge of the government to avoid bankruptcy. He said the coalition government was using all its energies to provide relief to common man and avert the negative impacts of the PTI's bad economic policies. Rafiullah said that PTI had inked unrealistic and unfavorable agreements with the International Monetary Fund (IMF)

by putting behind the interest of Pakistan. He also appreciated Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah for introducing the "Mazdoor Card" in the province for the poor people and requested him to include fishermen in the program. PML-N lawmaker DrDarshan while criticizing the PTI deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said policies of Imran Khan's government had made the life of common man miserable. He said the PTI government had taken record loans and allowed an increase in the prices of all items being used by the masses. He said the PTI government had politically victimized all leadership of PML-N and PPPP by framing fake cases against them. He also highlighted the issue of water shortage for irrigation purposes in the Sindh province. DrDarshan requested the Sindh and federal governments for establishing technical schools and colleges in the areas of Ghotki. PML-N MNA Dr Malik Mukhtar Ahmad stressed the need for signing the Charter of Economy for sustainable economic growth and put the country in the right direction. He asked the finance minister to focus on the industrial sector that was helping in the enhancement of the country's exports. - APP

efforts to control wheat smuggling. - APP

Afghanistan needs assistance

FGHANS, already reeling from the impact of years of conflict, economic hardship and the Covid-19 pandemic, have been struck with yet another tragedy – a powerful earthquake measuring 6.1 on the Richter scale. The quake that hit the Central Region of Afghanistan this week has left widespread death and devastation in its wake. Four districts in Patika province – Gayan, Barmala, Naka and Ziruk – as well as Spera district in the Khost province, have been badly affected. Rescue operations and humanitarian support are being carried out in the mountainous area amid unfavourable weather conditions, following rain and falling temperatures.

As Afghanistan starts to bury its more than 1,000 dead, there is also an increased realisation that the authorities in Kabul may lack the full resources and medical supplies urgently required by those worst affected. Already the government has made an appeal to the international community for immediate aid. With the country faced with US sanctions, following the Taliban takeover of Kabul in August 2021, nations around the world are treading with caution but can still consider sending urgent relief aid, classified as humanitarian relief. Already there has been a positive response. The United Nations is among those scrambling to provide emergency shelter and food aid in the worst-hit areas. The International Rescue Committee (IRC), which has a presence in Afghanistan, said that it was deploying mobile health teams and working with authorities to provide support in areas around the quake zone. In a post on Twitter, WHO stated that "within a few hours" its teams were supporting local health workers in saving lives and taking care of those affected by the disaster.

UAE President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan has ordered the start of an aid air bridge to send emergency humanitarian relief, food stuffs and medical supplies to help Afghans affected by the earthquake. The EU has offered to provide assistance to those in need while a spokesperson for the Japanese government has assured that his country is ready to send necessary aid – promptly – to Afghanistan after the earthquake. South Korea too plans to provide humanitarian assistance, per Seoul's foreign ministry. Closer home, Pakistan has rushed convoys of trucks carrying relief materials to help out its quake-struck neighbour but with the communications systems hit, a complete picture of how much assistance is reaching and what exactly are the needs of survivors is not fully clear at the moment. With the general aid effort in Afghanistan severely underfunded, it is time the international community steps in and provides Afghanistan with the required assistance to avoid further human suffering.

Islamabad POST

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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

Member APNS / ABC CertifiedVol: 02 Issue: 344Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.comPhone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad



Covid-19 on the rise

ITH as many as 113 people testing positive across Pakistan on Monday (as per the official COVID database) and the fearful spike surpassing 10 per cent in Karachi and Hyderabad, it would be rather foolish to assume we are still out of danger. The dark tunnel is upon us again, in the form of the sixth wave. While over 56 per cent of the population has been double-jabbed and the government has considerably invested in the procurement of booster shots, the public complacency cannot be ignored. The single death reported today can easily snowball into a typhoon neither our healthcare nor the crippled economy can survive.

Therefore, the best chance of survival remains by paying heed to talk of doom and gloom because the medical experts have already started ringing the bells. The new variants might appear with mild symptoms but their ultra-fast transmissibility can inflict wrath upon those whose immunity has already been compromised. A virus that a young and healthy man might take a night or two to fight off can easily leave someone struggling with heart disease, for instance, gasping for a single breath of air. Therefore, no matter what the excitement to jump back to pre-pandemic normalcy might entail, the masses need to unroll masks and put a cap on social gatherings. Trying to inculcate responsibility in societal behaviour holds the key to nipping the monstrosity in the bud because the lockdowns of the days gone by cannot, and should not be repeated in a country exasperating to make its ends meet. Another viable solution would be to make third (and fourth in the case of elderly) booster shots mandatory. There is no shortage of data to suggest the waning immunity of vaccination after the passage of six months.

A state with an eye on long-term implications would not lose a minute before investing in public awareness campaigns. The mega vaccination centres also need a slight dusting off so that an instrumental service to drive us through the curve can be made accessible again. Considering a general inclination to throw caution in the air, lacing the healthcare system with emergency arrangements (drug doses, oxygen cylinders, ventilators) is an unsaid order of the day. But until then, here's to hoping the elite limit their summer soirees and air-conditioned bonanzas so that the hapless can enjoy one more day of healthy lives.

Demystifying the myth of war crimes in Ukraine

Sabah Aslam

Access to actual information in such circumstances in becoming difficult. Why Russian news channels are blacklisted, why only Ukrainian and other foreign media outlets are into play.

USA is busy in narrative building based on fake information. USA is actually YPOCRISY – a prevalent trait of the western powers. West's policies on human rights are deluged with double standards. What is going around the world is a secondary, to themsafeguarding their interest is prime. What Indian barbaric regime is doing in India with the minorities and in Indian occupied Kashmir, Israelis in Palestine, is not enough to catch an eye, because Muslims are dying, its none of their business. Let's recap what USA did in Afghanistan and Iraq.

How war crimes done by the west in these countries can be ignored. Humanity suffered at the hands of these western states. Innocent people got killed in the drone strikes and the West called it 'Collateral Damage'. Innocent civilians suffered pain, hunger, and anguish, but West was mute. Human rights are for all without any discrimination based on religion, origin, race and colour. Unfortunately, the hypocrite USA only consider Human Rights for its allies and the holy land of USA. Clear violations of international humanitarian law are done by USA and its western allies in Afghanistan and other states. Moreover, the crime partner of USA, India is doing ferocious acts in India Occupied Kashmir, but all of them are silent. As per the standards set by USA, kill innocent people and then an apology by Central Command is enough to justify an unjust loss of human life. Yes, the world should follow this too. Why only Americans have the right to make unjust just. Who will set an example of justice, war mongers, liars and killerUSA? Oh yes, wonderful, now make big news out of nothing or yes something on Ukraine. Ukrainians are the only human left on the face of earth to get the western sympathizes. But it's important for the Ukrainian decision makers to not to be fooled by the USA. Demystifying the war crimes by Russia in Ukraine is not to support Ukraine but yes to counter Russia. The very reason why this conflict started is West itself. And then, yes USA is excellent at imposing sanctions and it did the same with Russians as well. But, literally speaking who is going to listen to USA, not even India, one of the USA's defense partners.

International Criminal Court– ICC should know its responsibility and first of all held USA accountable for the war crimes in Afghanistan and Iraq. Fake news, misinformation, mal-information, and disinformation is playing big role in manipulating the contemporary international politics. States are using this to hijack the actual information and create an environment of mistrust.

Access to actual information in such circumstances in becoming difficult. Why Russian news channels are blacklisted, why only Ukrainian and other foreign media outlets are into play. USA is busy in narrative building based on fake information. USA is actually selling the despairs of Ukrainian people. Therefore, huge responsibility also lies on journalists as well. Are we living in the stone age or in 21st century? Where is responsible journalism? The journalist and civil societies should work as pressure groups and push ICCto open investigations on unlawful killings by USA and its allies in Afghanistan. ICC also open inquires on the atrocities done by Israelis in Palestine, and Indian barbarism in Indian Occupied Kashmir. A detailed systematic investigation is need of hour. This will reveal the horrible face of these elites of international arena. The USA forces in Afghanistan have "committed acts of torture, killings, cruel treatment, outrages upon personal dignity, rape and sexual violence". Did Russian forces have created a 'secret kill team' to allegedly kill innocent Ukrainian Civilians? The answer is NO. Let's also consider 'Collateral Damage' in the case of Russia -Ukraine War. Instead of making world fool again on Ukraine, USA should remorse over its war crimes. A shameless country with no ethos is going to advocate Human Rights when its own citizens are not safe from the hate-fire it started. Humanity - a word, not known to USA. All it knows is to control other states' resources, sovereignty, and independence. Subtle interference in the other countries' internal matters, and creating fault-lines to manipulate the policy making. I doubt USA as an example of human rights and democracy. Disinformation is the new normal for USA.

Budget 2022-23 impact on the real estate sector

Muhammad Asim Saddiqi

President ICCI said that the government should review the taxes imposed on the real estate sector to avoid unemployment. Real Estate is the only industry in Pakistan linked with more

than fifty other industries. This sector is generating more than 60% of the country's wealth

EDERAL Government has presented the budget 2022-23, which has imposed new taxes on many sectors as well as Real-estate. Government imposes Rs.440 billion in new taxes focusing on Real-estate

selling the despairs of Ukrainian people. Therefore, huge responsibility also lies on journalists as well. Are we living in the stone age or in 21st century? Where is responsible journalism? The journalist and civil societies should work as pressure groups and push ICCto open investigations on unlawful killings by USA and its allies in Afghanistan

Pakistan's milk potential

Abdus Sattar

Buffalo and Cow milk had been dominating in total milk production during the last six decades in Pakistan.

Pakistan produced 55 million tonnes of buffalo and cow milk in 2020. The estimated production potential was much higher at the research station level; the estimated potential was 82 million tonnes, while the maximum breed potential was 110 million tonnes

BOUT 150 million family units are engaged in milk production around the globe. World milk production was 914 million tonnes in 2020 and is forecasted at 1020 million tonnes by 2030. The contribution of cow and buffalo milk was 81 per cent and 15 per cent, respectively while the combined share of (goat, sheep, and camel milk) was 4 per cent. India was the largest milk producer producing 198 million tonnes, while Pakistan ranked the third, milk-producing 57 million tonnes in 2020. It is also projected that India and Pakistan, being important milk producers, will contribute more than half of the growth in the world's milk production over the next decade, and will contribute more than 30 per cent of the world's milk production by 2030. India and Pakistan will also lead in milk production and consumption of fresh dairy products respectively in the world by 2030. In Pakistan, about 35-40 per cent of the income of 8 million rural families is associated with livestock, and milk is the single leading

commodity; its gross product value was Rs.2.36 trillion, which is 54.4 per cent of the total gross value of livestock and poultry products of Rs.4.34 trillion in 2018.

A working paper by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) investigated that total annual milk production jumped from 6 million tonnes in 1961 to 57 million tonnes in 2020 and is forecasted to 63 million tonnes in 2022. This translates that ten times increase, with an average growth rate of more than 3 per cent. The increasing population of buffaloes and cows are playing an imperative role in milk production. The milking buffaloes mounted from 2.6 million to 14.9 million, and their milk yield escalated from 1.6 tonnes to 2.3 tonnes. The milking cows amplified from 1.9 million to 14.1 million, and their milk yield escalated from 0.9 tonnes to 1.5 tonnes. The milking buffaloes' population and their milk yield mounted to six and 1.4 times respectively while milking cows' population and their milk yield boosted to seven and 1.6 times respectively during the last six decades. The milk composition also changed during 1961-2020. Buffalo and cow milk constituted 70 per cent and 28 per cent respectively, while the share of goat, sheep, and camel milk was 1 per cent in 1961; buffalo and cow milk compositions were 60 per cent and 37 per cent, while the share of goat, sheep, and camel milk share 3 per cent in 2020. The share of buffalo milk decreased by 10 per cent, while the share of cow milk increased by 9 per cent in total milk production during six decades. The combined share of goat, sheep, and camel milk tripled during the same period. The share of cow milk is rapidly augmenting total milk production. Because buffalo dairy farms are dwindling while mixed (buffaloes and cows) and pure cow dairy farms are becoming popular. Dairy farms hosting buffalos have become unprofitable due to the increasing cost of feed and fodder and stationary farm gate milk

Buffalo and Cow milk had been dominating in total milk production during the last six decades in Pakistan. Pakistan produced 55 million tonnes of buffalo and cow milk in 2020. The estimated production potential was much higher at the research station level; the estimated potential was 82 million tonnes, while the maximum breed potential was 110 million tonnes. The country's buffalo milk production was 34 million tonnes, while the estimated milk potential was 51 million tonnes at the research station, and the estimated breed maximum potential was 68 million tonnes. Cow milk production was 21 million tonnes at the research station, and the estimated breed maximum potential was 42 million tonnes. The milking cows' population and their milk yield growth augmented slightly higher than the milking buffaloes' population and milk yield growth. Pakistan has milk production (buffalo & cow) potential between 82 to 110 million tonnes but produced only 55 million tonnes in 2020. Multiple factors, including; low return for dairy farmers, credit constraints, the low genetic potential of milking animals, the absence of a formal milk marketing system, lack of healthcare for milking animals, insufficient/ improper feeding, and lack of research, are impinging the full milk production potential of Pakistan.

Keeping in view the importance of the dairy sector, it should be separated from agriculture, and a separate budget should be allocated to the dairy sector in which a significant chunk should be allocated to dairy research and development. In the past, milk yield augmentation had been practiced through artificial insemination, which had a very diminutive impact on milk production. Milk yield can be raised only through genetic advancement and cross-breeding of cattle with high-yielding exotic breeds. It would endow with increasing milk yield by three to four times. Government should formulate an appropriate producer milk pricing policy to stop the exploitation of milk producers. The small dairy farmers living in rural areas should be financially supported in the short and long term with interest-free loans. This should be done through banking and non-banking channels for purchasing high milking yield animals, fodder production, and animal treatment. The credit policy needs to be formulated in such a way that soft-term loans reach small farmers. This will positively impact milk production in Pakistan.

Moreover, insurance companies should launch insurance programs for valuable milking animals through insurance policies. The small dairy farmers should focus not only on the sale of milk rather they should focus on value-added items like desi ghee, yoghurt, butter, khoya, and cheese. The farmers should start switching to cow milk rather than focusing only on producing buffalo milk as raising buffaloes is more expensive than raising cows due to higher prices of feed and fodder. They should also focus on the production of green fodder because it is economical relative to other feeds. The private sector should establish more milk collection centres and cold chains in rural areas. The sector can provide high-yield milking animals in reasonable instalments to the small dairy farmers. The milk processing companies should also focus on dairy items from cows like casein, butter, cheese, skimmed milk powder, whole milk powder, and whey powder.

- Abdus Sattar is a Staff Economist at the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), Islamabad and property. The private sector is dissatisfied with the new taxes because they will increase unemployment. Last three years, the profit margin and employment rate have been increasing at a good pace, but it seems like the budget 2022-23 will badly affect the growth of the real estate sector. The Federal Board of Revenue has planned to oblige Rs.440 billion in new taxes, which contain Rs.34 billion in customs duties, Rs.90 billion in sales taxes, federal excise duty, and Rs.316 billion in income tax this year. The construction sector plays a vital role in the economy's progress, as this industry promotes businesses of over 50 allied industries.

In the new budget, the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has planned that the owners of more than one property of higher than Rs.25 million worth in Pakistan shall be considered to have established the rent equal to 5% of the equitable market value of the immovable asset and shall reimburse tax at the price of 1% of the equitable market worth. FBR had also proposed to impose a 15% tax on the capital gains of property in the case of one year holding extremely high time. For tax return filers, the advance tax on property sales and purchases has been raised from 1% to 2%. Individuals with an annual income of Rs.300 million, including companies and Associations of Persons (AoPs). are subject to a 2% tax increase. The FBR has also recommended a 1% capital value tax on international immovable properties and liquid foreign assets for Pakistanis living abroad. Authorities said we expect to collect Rs18 billion in taxes from Overseas Pakistanis.

President Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Mr. Muhammad Shakeel Munir said that the government should review the taxes imposed on the real estate sector to avoid unemployment. Real Estate is the only industry in Pakistan linked with more than fifty other industries. This sector is generating more than 60% of the country's wealth. Mr. Munir suggested the government increase taxes on non-filers and avoided imposing new taxes on the filers. In recent years, the government has exempted agriculture and agro-industries from custom duty and other new taxes.

During the tenure of PTI, the government had given real Estate and construction the status of an industry. After that, it was witnessed that many housing societies were launched at the government level. Naya Pakistan Housing Program (NPHP) is an example of a government initiative in this regard while allowing thousands of vulnerable sectors of society to build their own house.

These initiatives had built the real estate and construction sector as the strongest financial pillar of the state. According to the statistics of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), the amnesty scheme and government subsidies increased housing and construction finance by 84 per cent in FY2021, with the total outstanding to the sector reaching PKR.305 billion (US\$1.9 billion) in September 2021, up from PKR.166 billion (US\$1 billion) in September 2020. According to Pakistan Credit Rating Agency, property values in the real estate sector have risen. Residential property prices have increased by 42.7 per cent between December 2018 and December 2021, housing prices increased by 43.8 per cent, and plot prices increased by 30.2 percent.

These all statistics have cleared that Pakistan's real estate industry has witnessed a mega boom in the sector, but it seems like the upcoming year will not be the same because of new taxes imposed. The cost of construction materials is increasing rapidly, and investors cannot invest in the market because people cannot make their own houses. Pakistan's population is increasing rapidly; according to the census 2018, Pakistan has a total of 21.3 million housing units and a shortage of around 6 million units. Today, that shortage has grown to an estimated 12 million housing units, over half of which are in urban areas. Now, suppose the government will not review the budget for the Fiscal year 2022-23. In that case, this industry will be affected badly, unemployment will be increased, the shortage of housing units will get increased, and the construction cost will be much higher than expected, which will have a long-lasting impact on individuals. It is now of utmost significance that the government needs to take the required actions to provide much-needed relief to all sectors, especially Real Estate.

– The writer is a freelance journalist based in Islamabad

WORLD / SPORTS

Islamabad **POST** Friday, June 24, 2022

Briefs

Difficult time to stay, PM warns

FROM PAGE 01

"They saw their defeat in March and so they lowered fuel prices," the prime minister said, adding that they just arbitrarily made the decision. The previous government signed a petroleum levy of Rs30 with the IMF, he said. Speaking of lost opportunities, the premier said that "billions and trillions of treasures" are buried in Reko Diq "but we could not dig them out".

"This is the fault of the leadership which dealt with the matter in the wrong way," he said. The premier said that the PTI is facing scandals of gas and wheat exports. "They gave billions in subsidies, emptied the coffers, and the cartels had a field day," he said.

He went on to say that "it will no do good to look back and crv". PM Shehbaz, referring to the recently inked \$2.3bn loan agreement with a Chinese consortium of banks, said: "How long will China help us?" "China and Saudi Arabia must be wondering when Pakistan will stand on its own feet," he remarked.

Poor, rich must share sacrifices...

FROM PAGE 01 consumption in the budget this time round." The minister said the government had decided to impose additional taxes on the rich and some industries - one of them being the sugar industry. "One per cent tax will be increased on people whose annual income is over Rs150 million, 2pc more taxes for those earning over Rs200 million or more and those earning over Rs250 million will have to pay 3pc additional taxes.' He added that taxes had been increased even on companies owned by the prime minister's sons "Even my company will have to pay more taxes now," Ismail said, without elaborating further.

Turkey and UK agree to work together for peace in Ukraine

PTI for allotting 'Lota' symbol to ruling parties

FROM PAGE 01

PTI democratically elected government was ousted.

Fawad stated that on the

one hand, the economy of

the country was nose-diving

and on the other the coun-

try was facing worst consti-

tutional and political crisis.

FM Mevlüt Çavuşoglu appeared to deny Ukraine's claims of stolen grain shipments arriving in Turkey, saying Ankara had not yet seen any such cases and it had notified Kyiv of every investigation's outcome

DNA

ANKARA: Turkey is investigating allegations that Ukrainian grain has been stolen by Russia and will not allow any such grain to be brought to the country, its top diplomat said Thursday.

Kyiv's ambassador to Ankara said in early June that Turkish buyers were among those receiving grain that Russia had stolen from Ukraine, adding he had sought Turkey's help to identify and capture individuals responsible for the alleged shipments.

Russia has previously denied allegations that it has stolen Ukrainian grain. Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoglu appeared to deny Ukraine's claims of stolen grain shipments arriving in Turkey, saying Ankara had not yet seen any such cases and it had notified Kyiv of every investigation's outcome. "We took each claim seriously and carried out investigations based on these claims. We saw that the ships' port of departure and the origin of the goods is Russia on the records, based on the investigations we made after claims were made



about Turkey," Çavuşoglu told a joint news conference alongside British Foreign Minister Liz Truss in Ankara. "We notify especially the Ukrainian side of the result every time." Russia and Ukraine account for nearly a third of global wheat supplies, while Russia also heavily exports fertilizer and Ukraine corn and sunflower oil. But Ukrainian grain shipments from its Black Sea ports have stalled since Russia invaded, with some 20 million tons of grain stuck, fueling global food shortages.

Çavuşoglu said Turkey would oppose Russia or any other country taking Ukrainian grain or other goods and selling them illegitimately to international markets. "We are against Ukrainian grains or other goods being taken by Russia or any other nation and then illegitimately, illegally being sold to international markets, and we, as Turkey, will not allow these goods to come to us," he said.

Separately, the Kremlin on Thursday reiterated its assertion that Russia has not stolen any

grain from Ukraine. Asked about Çavuşoglu's comments, Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said: "You should ask the foreign ministry. Russia has not stolen any grain." The United Nations has appealed to both Russia and Ukraine, as well as maritime neighbor Turkey, to agree to a sea corridor for grains to be exported from the Black Sea. Ankara, which has backed the U.N.-led plan, has held talks with Moscow and the U.N. but says all sides need to meet for a final agreement.

'Devastating consequences' For her part, Truss said the U.K. and Turkey were working closely together to get the trapped grain out of Ukraine, also offering Britain's expertise to help resolve the situation. Hailing Turkey's "leading role" in opening a grain export corridor from Ukraine, she stressed the urgency of the crisis, adding that it will have devastating consequences if not solved within the next month.

crisis is urgent, that it needs to be solved within the next month otherwise we could see devastating consequences," Truss said.

ports must be protected, there needs to be safe passage for commercial vessels. The United Kingdom is offering our expertise on all of those fronts to make sure that we have measures in place so that grain can safely leave, but it is going to require an international effort." Truss accused Russia of "weaponizing hunger" and using food security as a "callous tool of war." Moscow denies responsibility for the food crisis and blames Western sanctions for shortages.

Swiatek seeks to dominate

Wimbledon

LONDON: A key element in the appeal of any sport is

the presence of a dominant figure -- a benchmark for

the rest to aspire to -- and in that respect women's

tennis has been blessed to have Serena Williams as its

figurehead. But with the American in her 41st year and

back at Wimbledon for a potential farewell after a year

out, the worry has been whether any player can fill her

shoes. As the All England Club prepares to open its

gates, Poland's IgaSwiatek looks as though she might just be the one to lead the women's game into the a

new era. Domination can only really be measured over

a sustained period and it is doubtful anyone will get close to the kind of statistics compiled by Williams.

Between 2010 and 2019, according to the WTA, she

won 89.3% of her matches, won 37 titles and spent 196

weeks as world number one -- more than the next two

combined - won 12 of her 23 Grand Slam titles and

reached the finals of 19 of the 33 major tournaments

she entered during that period. - DNA

He said that arch rivals political parties that contested the 2018 general elections against one another were making electoral alliances at the center as well as in the provinces against PTI. Fawad revealed that the campaign was started on March 8, 2022 when a no-confidence motion was tabled against the democratically elected prime minister. The PTI lead-"We are very clear that this grain er further said that the conspirators staged the

drama of horse trading in Sindh House in Islamabad "It's very clear that Ukrainian and later 20 such members surfaced in Punjab who offered themselves for sale, resultantly, the commission in its verdict declared the seats of these conscious sellers vacant and issued schedule for holding by-elections. It was state that in the letter said that the PML-N

and PPP, which have been promoting shameful culture of horse trading, floor crossing and lottocracy in Punjab, have announced an electoral alliance and awarded tickets to these disqualified 'Lotas'.

Fawad stated that at present, the PTI was practically fighting this multi-party alliance as the only real opposition political party He demanded that all these political parties should be considered as one electoral unit and they should be barred from using their individual symbols and be allotted a common symbol. "In our opinion, "Lota" is the most suitable election symbol for this multi-party alliance, as the "lota" mark will help the public make decisions about voting during the election.

New Yorkers slam 'stupid' gun ruling



Western Balkans states...

FROM PAGE 01 "The Russian aggression on Ukraine is a threat to all countries in the region, and in this context, European Union enlargement to the Western Balkan should be seen as a a necessity but also an investment in the security of the European EU member state Union." Bulgaria has been blocking the start of the accession talks with North Macedonia and Albania, angering the two West Balkan states.

Albanian Prime Minister Rama slammed what he called Bulgaria's "kidnapping" of the applications and "destroying" the spirit of Europe. Bulgaria has demanded that issues of "common history," language and identity be discussed with North Macedonia as a precondition for the accession talks, which North Macedonia's president, Stevo Pendarovski, said was "unacceptable."

US Supreme Court expands gun rights

FROM PAGE 01 The New York restriction is unconstitutional because it "prevents law-abiding citizens with self-defense ordinary needs from exercising their right to keep and bear arms," Thomas add ed. The justices overturned a lower court ruling throwing out a challenge to the law by two gun owners and the New York affiliate of the National Rifle Association, an influential gun rights group closely aligned with Republicans. decision repre-The sents the court's most important statement on gun rights in more than a decade. The court in 2008 recognized for the first time an individual's right to keep guns at home for self-defense in a case from the District of Columbia, and in 2010 applied that right to the states.

Wimbledon without Federer

Federer, who has won a record eight men's titles at the All England Club, said this month that he is "definitely" intending to return to top-level tennis in 2023

LONDON: Wimbledon is set to kick off without Roger Federer for the first time in over two decades next week and with the clock ticking down on the Swiss maestro's career John McEnroe said he was grateful for being able to watch him play the sport for so long. Federer, who turns 41 in August, has undergone three knee operations in the last two years and has not played a competitive match since his quarter-final defeat to Hubert Hurkacz at last year's grasscourt Grand Slam. He won the Wimbledon junior title in 1998 before turning professional the same year. Since making his debut at the grasscourt Grand Slam in 1999 Federer had not missed a single edition before the 2022 tournament. "Twenty years, you got to look at the bright side," seven-times major winner and ESPN analyst McEnroe told reporters. "You had a lot of time where you got a chance to watch this guy play and win it numerous times. So, we have to sort of hope that whatever he decides he's happy with. He's 40. He's made it this far. It's amazing." Federer, who has won a record eight men's titles at the All England Club, said this month that he is "definitely" intending to return to top-level tennis in 2023. The 20-time Grand Slam winner is expected to return to the tour in September when he teams up with Spaniard Rafa Nadal to play doubles at the Laver Cup in London before playing at the Swiss indoors tournament at home in Basel the following month. "Roger Federer is a living legend. We all know that," McEnroe added during a video conference call on Wednesday. "He's the epitome of what you would want your kid to be when they grew up. And he's the most beautiful player I've ever watched play. I idolized (Rod) Laver. He's kind of an updated Laver to me." - DNA

Aung San Suu Kyi sent to solitary confinement

AGENCIES

YANGON: Myanmar's deposed civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi has been moved from house arrest to solitary confinement in a prison in the capital Nav Pyi Taw. The Nobel laureate, 77, was arrested when the military overthrew her elected government in February 2021. For the past year she has been held at an undisclosed location in the capital. Ms Suu Kyi has already been sentenced to 11 years in jail and denies a host of charges which have been widely condemned as politically-motivated. Her move to solitary confinement makes her more isolated than ever - she became a global democracy icon during a previous period of military rule when she spent 15 years in detention, but almost all of it was under house arrest. It's thought Ms Suu Kyi, who remains highly popular in the country, will attend trial hearings from a special court set up inside prison. Sources close to the court told BBC Burmese that she had been moved on Wednesday to separate, specially-built accommodation inside the jail. Her colleague, ousted President Win Myint, is in similar solitary confinement in the jail.

According to the sources, Ms Suu Kyi is in good health, with three female

prison staff assigned to assist her. A brief statement from the military government confirmed her move to prison, saying it was in accordance with criminal laws in Myanmar, also known as Burma. Human rights groups have



condemned the secret trials as a sham. The closed-door hearings have been shut to the public and media, and Ms Suu Kyi's lawyers forbidden from speaking to journalists. It is unclear how long Ms Suu Kyi, who vanished from public view after the coup, will stay in solitary confinement. Although the location of

her house arrest was not disclosed, she is known to have had several close companions with her until now, the BBC's Jonathan Head reports. AFP news agency quoted a source saving Ms Suu Kvi's domestic staff and her dog had not accompanied her to prison.

The charges on which she has been convicted in several trials so far include incitement, corruption, breaching Covid rules and breaking a telecommunications law. More trials await and the military is accused of planning to keep her in custody for the rest of her life. If convicted on all the charges, she would face a total jail sentence of more than 190 years, by some estimates. "What we are seeing is the Myanmar

junta moving towards a much more punitive phase, towards Aung San Suu Kyi," Phil Robertson, deputy Asia director for Human Rights Watch, told AFP. "They are obviously trying to intimidate her and her supporters." The coup came months after Ms Suu

Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) won general elections by a landslide.The military alleged voter fraud, but independent election observers said the vote was largely free and fair. The coup triggered widespread demonstrations, prompting a military crackdown on pro-democracy protesters, activists and journalists

AGENCIES

NEW YORK: From the streets of New York to the corridors of Congress, Americans expressed both outrage and delight at the Supreme Court's striking down of a gun law Thursday, reflecting the country's bitter divide. New York's governor Kathy Hochul said the decision marked a "dark day," while Big Apple mayor Eric Adams said it "may have opened an additional river feeding the sea of gun violence." "It's stupid. It's just stupid," New Yorker Sushmita Peters told AFP in Hunter's Point, in the Big Apple borough of Queens.

"People look at people in power to feel safe. And that's not something you feel when they're making decisions like this," added the 23-year-old, emergencv room worker. Nearby, 38-vear-old Laurent Baud said the decision was particularly perplexing coming so soon after deadly mass shootings in Buffalo, New York and Uvalde, Texas.

"It's a little worrisome that more and more people can carry guns," he said.

Christy, a 32-year-old security guard in Manhattan who declined to give her surname, said she feared it would bring "high crime to the area." "Honestly, people are not that mentally stable out here," she told AFP.

New York officials lined up to slam the move, warning that it would undermine public safety and pledging to introduce legislation to mitigate the ruling. Governor Hochul, a Democrat, branded it "absolutely shocking," and accused the six judges whose majority ensured the ruling of acting "recklessly." "We can have restrictions on speech - you can't yell fire in a crowded theater but somehow there's no restrictions allowed on the Second Amendment," she said, referring to the constitutional amendment allowing Americans the right to bear arms. Adams, who was elected late last year on a platform to make New York City safer, said the ruling "will put New Yorkers at further risk of gun violence." He and Hochul both pledged to review their options. "We will work together to mitigate the risks this decision will create once it is implemented, as we cannot allow New York to become the Wild West," said Adams, also a Democrat.

UN Women Pakistan, foodpanda collaborate "Women's economic empowerment lies at the heart of this partnership" said Sharmeela Rassool, Country Representative, UN Women Pakistan. She added "foodpanda has caused a positive disruption in society through its dignified approach to food delivery profession

DNA

ISLAMABAD: UN Women and foodpanda Pakistan have announced a partnership on promotion of gender equality in the workplace. Under the partnership various initiatives and training will be undertaken to address and implement strategies pertaining to gender-responsiveness and creating a healthy work environment.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) in this regard was recently signed in foodpanda's office where both organisations pledged to implement capacity-building initiatives to empower women at all positions. leveraging the UN Women Empowerment Principles (WEPs). foodpanda Pakistan being the signatory of these principles has policies in place regarding the promotion of women's rights and well-being at the workplace which highlight it as an equal opportunity employer.

"Given the fast-paced world that we are living in today, it is imperative that we assimilate

in the organisation while acknowledging the rights and needs of our female counterparts and ensure an all-inclusive workplace," said MuntaqaPeracha, Managing Director, foodpanda Pakistan. "No economy can thrive without the contribution of women and here at foodpanda Pakistan, we are committed to advancing the agenda of empowering our

female stakeholders at all levels. This includes entrusting them with decision making powers, placing them in key leadership positions, and designing an environment conducive to their professional growth." "Women's economic empowerment lies at the heart of this partnership" said SharmeelaRassool, Country Representative, UN Women Pa-



kistan. She added "foodpanda has caused a positive disruption in society through its dignified approach to the food delivery profession. By creating an enabling and inclusive environment at the workplace, as well as particularly driving women inclusion as home based vendors and fleet of riders is an exemplary effort to enable them to break stereotypes at one hand and earn a respectable living at the other hand.'

The private sector has emerged as the promoter of sustainable social development while having a positive impact on communities and the society at large, thereby promoting their economic growth and prosperity. The Sustainable Development Goal 5 specific to gender equality addresses the need of ending all forms of discrimination against women and empowering them that would eventually have a multiplier effect for sustained development. The Global Goals and the WEPs aim at uniting the public and private sectors, and civil society to expedite gender equality and women's empowerment in the workplace, marketplace and community.

N7

BUSINESS / WORLD

Kazakh FM meets with **Austrian Chancellor**

VIENNA: Negotiations were held between Kazakhstan's Deputy Prime Minister. Minister of Foreign Affairs Mukhtar Tileuberdi and Federal Chancellor of Austria Karl Nehammer this week, during which the Kazakh diplomat acquainted the interlocutor with President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's ongoing political and socio-economic reforms, Kazinform cites the press service of the Kazakh Foreign Ministry

The parties noted the need for further development of the political dialogue at the highest level and exchanged views on the current state of and prospects for further development of trade, economic and investment cooperation. Special attention was paid to the issues of cooperation in the transport and logistics sector, including the development of the Trans-Caspian International Transport Corridor. The importance of interregional cooperation in the Central Asia. EU format was emphasized. The parties noted with satisfaction good results have been achieved over 30 vears of diplomatic relations between the countries, and agreed to make every effort to deepen cooperation with the active use of such mechanisms as the bilateral Intergovernmental Commission and the Business Council. - Agencies

Baku condoles with Kabul over quake

AGENCIES

BAKU: The Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry has expressed condolences to Kabul over the victims of the devastating earthquake, Azernews reports, citing the ministry's tweet. "We are deeply saddened by the tragic loss of life and destruction caused by the devastating earthquake in Afghanistan. We extend our deep condolences to the families of those who lost their lives in this disaster and wish those injured a speedy recovery,"the ministry said. At least 1,000 were killed and 1,500 others injured after a magnitude 5.9 earthquake rocked remote parts of eastern Afghanistan. It is the deadliest earthquake to strike Afghanistan in two decades. In 2015, a major earthquake that struck the country's northeast killed over 200 people in Afghanistan and neighboring northern Pakistan. A similar magnitude 6.1 earthquake in 2002 killed about 1,000 people in northern Afghanistan. And in 1998, a magnitude 6.1 earthquake and subsequent tremors in Afghanistan's remote northeast killed at least 4,500 people.

Briefs President Raeisi warns against **expanding NATO influence** He stressed importance of ending war in Ukraine as soon as possible and expressed the Islamic Republic's readiness to help find a diplomatic solution to the crisis

Turk-Azeri FMs eye cooperation

Islamabad **POST**

Friday, June 24, 2022

AGENCIES

BAKU: Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov and his Turkish counterpart Mevlut Cavusoglu discussed cooperation in a multilateral format during a phone call on June 22, Azernews reports, citing the country's Foreign Ministry. During the conversation, the ministers exchanged views on topical issues on the bilateral agenda. Further, the parties discussed the current situation in the region and stressed the need to continue efforts to ensure peace. Azerbaijan and Turkiye collaborate in a variety of economic sectors and have completed major energy and infrastructure projects such as Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, Baku-Tbilisi-Kars, and TANAP. Turkiye imports Azerbaijani natural gas through the South Caucasus Gas Pipeline (Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum) and TANAP. Azerbaijan supplies gas to Turkiye only from the Shah Deniz field. In 2021, Azerbaijan and Turkiye signed the Shusha Declaration on Allied Relations, which focuses on defense cooperation, promoting regional stability and prosperity, and establishing new transportation routes. The two countries set up a goal to bring the mutual trade turnover to \$15 billion in 2023. As of 2021, the trade turnover between the two countries amounted to \$4.6 billion. So far, Turkiye is Azerbaijan's second-largest investor followed by the UK. Additionally, Turkiye was one of the first countries that expressed its interest and readiness to participate in the restoration of Azerbaiian's liberated territories.

Germany declares gas alarm stage

WEB DESK

BERLIN: Germany triggered the "alarm stage" of its emergency gas plan on Thursday in response to falling Russian supplies but stopped short of allowing utilities to pass on soaring energy costs to customers in Europe's largest conomy. The measure is th latest escalation in a standoff between Europe and Moscow since the Russian invasion of Ukraine that has exposed the bloc's dependence on Russian gas supplies and sparked a frantic search for alternative energy sources. The decision is largely symbolic as a way of signaling to companies and households that painful cuts are on the way. But it marks a major shift for Germany, which cultivated strong energy ties with Moscow stretching back to the Cold War. Lower gas flows sparked warnings this week that Germany could fall into recession if Russian supplies halted altogether. S&P Global's flash Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) on Thursday showed the economy losing momentum in the second quarter. "We must not fool ourselves: The cut in gas supplies is an economic attack on us by (Russian President Vladimir) Putin," Economy Minister Robert Habeck said in a statement, adding Germans would have to reduce consumption.

FOREIGN DESK

TEHRAN: Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi has warned against attempts to expand the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)'s influence in different parts of the world, blaming the provocative acts of the US and the military alliance that it leads as the root cause of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. "There is no doubt that the US and NATO provocations have been the factor behind these conflicts [in Ukraine], and therefore it is necessary to be active in the face of attempts to expand NATO's influence in any part of the world, including in West Asia, the Caucasus and Central Asia," Raeisi said in a meeting with visiting Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in Tehran on Wednesday.

He stressed the importance of ending

the war in Ukraine as soon as possible imposing unprecedented sanctions on Mosand expressed the Islamic Republic's readiness to help find a diplomatic solu-

tion to the crisis. Russia launched a military operation in Ukraine in late February, following Kiev's failure to implement the terms of the Minsk agreements and Moscow's recognition of the breakaway regions of Donetsk and Luhansk. At the time, Russian President Vladimir Putin said the goals of what he called a "special military operation" were to address Russia's security concerns and to "de-Nazify" Ukraine. The war in Ukraine has inflamed tensions between Russia and the West, with the US

and its NATO allies

cow and supplying a large cache of weaponry to Ukraine. Elsewhere in his remarks, Raeisi stressed the importance of cooperation among the Caspian Sea littoral states and said foreign powers are not allowed to have a military presence in this region.

He noted that constant meetings and talks between Iranian and Russian officials indicate the two countries' firm determination to open a new chapter of fruitful and strategic cooperation, particularly in the

eco-

nomic sector. "Strengthening cooperation and coordination is an effective way to counter US sanctions and economic unilateralism against independent nations," the Iranian president said. Tehran and Moscow both have huge oil and gas reserves but are constrained by sanctions that limit their ability to export their output.

Russia was slapped with sanctions following its operation in neighboring Ukraine, while Iran's economy has been under draconian sanctions re-imposed by the US in 2018, following Washington's withdrawal from the 2015 accord with Tehran. During the meeting, Lavrov said Russia is keen to elevate cooperation with Iran to a strategic level. Pointing to the significance of Iran's membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Russian foreign minister added that his country supports Tehran's role in regional and international organizations.

UK inflation hits 40-year record, highest in G7

AGENCIES

LONDON: Soaring food prices pushed British consumer price inflation to a 40-year high of 9.1% last month, the highest rate out of the Group of Seven countries and one which underlines the severity of the country's cost-of-living crunch. The reading was up from 9.0% in April and matched the consensus of a Reuters poll of economists. Records from the Office for National Statistics show May's inflation was the highest since March 1982 - and worse is likely to come.

Sterling, one of the weakest currencies against the U.S. dollar this year, fell below \$1.22, down 0.6% on the day, before later recovering. Some investors judge Britain to be at risk of both persistently high inflation and re-

cession, reflecting its large imported energy bill and ongoing Brexit-related friction which could further hurt trade ties with the European Union.

With the economic outlook so unclear, no one knows how high inflation could go, and how long it will continue for - making fiscal and monetary policy judgements particularly tough," said lack Leslie, senior economist at the Resolution Foundation think tank.

Earlier on Wednesday the Resolution Foundation said the cost-ofliving hit for households was being compounded by Brexit, with damaging long-term implications for productivity and wages.

Average pay is not keeping up with inflation and trade unions have warned of widespread strikes in the coming months. Railway staff have already staged mass walkouts this week. Britain's headline inflation rate in May

was higher than in the United States, France, Germany and Italy. While Japan and Canada have yet to report consumer price data for May, neither are likely to come close.

The Bank of England said last week that inflation was likely to remain above 9% over the coming months before peaking at slightly above 11% in October, when regulated household energy bills are due to rise again. Financial markets show interest rates in Britain are on course to rise above 3% around the turn of the year from 1.25% now, although most economists think waning economic growth means the BoE will raise rates by less than that. Finance minister Rishi Sunak said after the data that the British government was doing all it could to combat a surge in prices and the central bank would act "forcefully" to contain inflation.

China's Xi calls for stronger Fintech oversight

FOREIGN DESK

BEIJING: A high-level Chinese government meeting led by President Xi Jinping has called for stronger oversight and better security in financial tech, state media reported, with the sector hit hard by a regulatory crackdown. The government action has pummeled some of China's biggest tech firms, wiping out hundreds of billions of dollars in market value since last year, AFP said.

But with the Chinese economy hammered by Covid lockdowns, the government has rolled out a series of support measures, including a call for "predictable" tech regulation. "Regarding large payment and fintech platform enterprises, Xi called for efforts to improve regulations, strengthen institutional weak links, ensure the security of payment and financial infrastructure, and guard against and defuse potential systemic financial risks," according to a readout of the Wednesday meeting by the official Xinhua news agency. The Chinese leader also "called for these enterprises to be better supported in serving the real economy", Xinhua said. The officials at the meeting discussed promoting the "healthy development" of fintech companies, it added, and said "China will tighten oversight" of financial holding firms and internet financial services.



DNA

BEIJING: Gansu will transfer modern Chinese agricultural science and technology particularly applicable to arid and semi-arid regions to Pakistan. This was stated during memorandum of understanding (MoU) signing ceremony between Gansu Academy of Agricultural Sciences (GAAS), China and the Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB), Pakistan held online, according to a report published by China Economic Net (CEN).

Sharing similarities in climate, crop types and environment, based on the MoU, the Chinese agricultural technologies of efficient use of water and fertilizer with drip irrigation under mulch, farmland water utilization and regulation with plastic-film mulching on dryland, green and high-yield planting of potatoes in semi-arid areas, breeding and quality control of virus-free seed potato, storage and cold chain logistics of fruit and vegetable, fruit germplasm resources in cold and arid regions, solar greenhouse and related vegetable culture, forage sorghum cultivation and feeding, highvield cultivation of melon in semi-arid areas, breeding and release of crop new cultivars of wheat, potato, rape, flakes, minor, etc. in cold and arid regions, etc. will be transferred from GAAS to IUB in the near future, which are urgently needed by Pakistan at the current stage and are expected to give new impetus to Pakistan's agricultural progress.

Hezbollah, Hamas discuss resistance against Israel

FOREIGN DESK

BEIRUT: Top leaders of Lebanon's Hezbollah and Palestine's Hamas have met in Beirut and exchanged views on ways to promote the regional axis of resistance against Israel and thwart the threats posed by the occupiers.

Hezbollah Secretary-General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah and Ismail Haniyeh, head of the Hamas political bureau, discussed the latest developments in Palestine, Lebanon, and the entire region in a meeting in the Lebanese capital, the Hezbollah public relations announced in a statement on Thursday. The two top resistance officials held talks on issues revolving around "reinforcing the axis of resistance in addition to the threats [resistance is facing], and the challenges and opportunities [they can seize]," the statement said. It added, "They stressed the need for cooperation in all areas of resistance to serve its primary purpose" of promoting the Palestinian cause against Israeli occupation, including liberation of al-Quds and Islamic sanctities.

US HIMARS arrive in Ukraine

WEB DESK

KYIV: Ukraine said on Thursday it had received US supplies of High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS), a powerful long-range weapon system that Kyiv hopes can help turn the tide on Russia's invasion. Moscow's forces are advancing in Ukraine's east in a bid to capture the industrial heartland known as the Donbas where Ukraine fears some of its troops could be encircled in a Russian pincer.

"Thank you to my US colleague and friend Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin for these powerful tools! Summer will be hot for Russian occupiers. And the last one for some of them," Ukrainian Defense Minister Oleksii Reznikov tweeted of the HIMARS delivery. He did not say how say many of the systems had arrived.



KUALA LUMPUR: Promoting interfaith harmony High Commissioner of Pakistan to Malaysia Amna Baloch hosted Chief Abbess of Fo Guang Shan at Pakistan House for lunch to discuss various aspects of their forthcoming visit to Pakistan. - DNA

Malik Sohail appointed as SG of PWCTA

ISLAMABAD: Noted business leader Malik Sohail Hussain has been appointed as Secretary-General of the Pakistan-Western Canada Trade Association (PWCTA). Bushra Rehman, President of PWCTA make this announcement in a simple but impressive ceremony held in Pakistan's Consulate General office in Vancouver which was attended by diplomats, businesses and government officials. Pakistan's Consul General in Van-

Hussain in boosting Pakistan's exports and image and bringing the business community fo the two countries closer. She said that Malik Sohail will help us boost bilateral trade as he has enabled many entrepreneurs to improve their capacity while serving in important positions in FPCCI, SAARC Chamber, UBG, IWCCI and ICCI.

We hope that he will create a business environment where partnerships can thrive, which helps Pakistani busi-

retary-General of the trade body. He said that he hopes Malik Sohail will be generating new business ideas, maximize marketing capacity, bring potential partners closer, create strategic partnerships and help businessmen make better decisions to promote the cause of Pakistan. "We have full confidence in the abilities and efforts of Malik Sohail and we can foresee that he will use all his resources and abilities to promote the cause," he added. Malik Sohail said that he feels honoured and that he will leave no stone unturned to come up to the expectations and promote Pakistani products

Assam floods claim more 12 lives

News Desk

NEW DELHI: As floods in northeastern India's Assam state have entered the 11th day on Thursday, 12 more people died in the past 24 hours, authorities said. The death toll in Assam due

to floods and landslides has now touched 100 since April 6. while over 5 million people have been affected by the devastating floods, according to the state's disaster management authority. The fresh deaths included four children and 32 districts of the state are currently hit by floods, officials said. More than 271,000 people are taking shelter in 845 relief camps, Assam's disaster management authority said in a statement. "A total of 100 people have lost their lives due to floods and landslides in this season," it added.

The Assam government on Thursday said food items and essentials were airdropped today at the flood-hit Silchar city by helicopters. "We plan to continue such air-droppings for our stranded people in the days ahead, apart from the regular relief," Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Twitter.

Chinese Buses start operation in Larkana A total of 8,000 people mainly from Chaghi and Taftan areas of Balochistan will be given employment opportunities as agreed upon by the mining company in the Reko Diq project

DNA

LARKANA: Following a successful trial, the intra-city bus service under "Peoples Bus Service" will start benefiting the residents of Larkana, Sindh from Thursday. According to a Gwadar Pro's report, the service will provide the people of Larkana with a comfortable, convenient, and affordable journey experience and will create jobs for the local community. A batch of 10 buses arrived in the city of Larkana on Monday. followed by its successful test drive the following day. Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Wednesday during his visit to the city inspected the newly arrived buses and directed authorities concerned to "start Intra-City Bus Service from June 23, so that people of Larkana City get benefited," according to an official statement.

"The Minister was delighted and congratulated the people of Larkana on modern and comfortable transport service," reads the statement. The buses are manufactured by Higer Bus Company, which is based in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province of China. These buses are fully air-conditioned and feature state-of-the-art amenities including free Wi-Fi, CCTV cameras, fire-fighting systems, emergency exits, bus stop buttons, and automatic doors. Each bus will facilitate 31 passengers including two seats for the disabled. The buses with a maximum capacity of 80 passengers are also reserved for persons with disabilities and women in buses.

he 'Peoples Bus Service' is a project of the Sindh Mass Transit Authority (SMTA). The bus will operate 8.3 kilometers from the New Bus terminal to Quaid-e-Awam UET at the Airport Road. It will cover areas like Shaikh Zayed Hospital, Sindh University campus, IBA school Sachal Colony, Chandka Medical College, High Court, SSP office, Shahnawaz Library, etc.

CPEC to enhance tax collection Finance Minister of Balochistan Province Sardar Abdur Rehman Khaitran said that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will enhance the provincial government's tax collection, says a report published by Gwadar Pro on Thursday. Speaking at a post-budget news conference here, the minister predicted that the CPEC projects and development of mining sectors would increase tax and non-tax revenue of the province in the future.

"CPEC will multiply tax collection. Billions of rupees have been allocated for plenty of mega projects to be initiated in Balochistan. The businesses (as a result of the investments) will provide tax," he maintained. He added: "These include Nag-Washuk road project, construction of small and medium dams, water solar schemes, highway security projects, provision of laptops and internship to students and dams and roads for south Balochistan." To a question, the minister mentioned that the government accorded priority to the education, employment and health sectors as 1.8 million families will be provided health cards facility. "A total of 8,000 people mainly from Chaghi and Taftan areas of Balochistan will be given employment opportunities as agreed upon by the mining company in the Reko Diq project," he contended.

Khaitran underscored that the government took serious steps for resolving the Reko Dig investment dispute and tried to bring maximum possible benefit to the province along with foreign direct investments, in addition to bringing vast economic resources and employment opportunities.

couver, Canada Janbaz Khan was also nesses succeed in the present compresent at the occasion. Speaking at petitive environment. Speaking at the occasion, Bushra Rehman said the occasion, Consult General Janbaz that the decision has been taken in Khan said that he fully supports the view of the efforts of Malik Sohail move to appoint Malik Sohail as Secin Canada. - DNA







Briefs Pervaiz Elahi announces support for PTI in by-polls

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Assem-Chaudhry Speaker blv Pervaiz Elahi on Thursday announced the backing of its party to the PTI in the upcoming by-polls, asking the PML-Q leaders to run a full-fledged campaign for the PTI candidates.

He made this announce ment during a meeting with a PML-Q delegation, led by the party's Rawalpindi President Zubair Khan, which called on him in Lahore for discussions about the political situation in the country and the party's strategy for the upcoming by-polls.

Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi, on the occasion, said those who claimed to be 'experienced' had been exposed badly in front of the people. "No good is expected from the current rulers," he maintained. "After the destruction of the economy, people are being told [by the current rulers] to be prepared for more bad news," Pervaiz Elahi flayed, adding: "These rulers cannot give relief to the people. A new tax is imposed every day." He lamented that the prices of electricity, gas and petroleum products were beyond the reach of the common man, adding: "There is a wave of anger among the people against the rulers due to the rising prices of electricity."

Turkey foiled Iranian plot to kill Israelis: FM

DNA

ANKARA: Israeli foreign minister Yair Lapid thanked Turkey on Thursday for helping foil an Iranian plot to harm Israelis in Istanbul and said the effort was still under way. Turkish authorities arrested five Iranians sus pected of planning attacks on Israelis ahead of Lapid's visit, Turkish media reports said earlier in the day. "The lives of Israeli citizens have been saved in recent weeks thanks to security and diplomatic cooperation between Israel and Turkey," Lapid said during a visit to Turkey. "These efforts are ongoing." Lapid arrived in Turkey on Thursday for talks with Turkish counterpart Mevlut Cavusoglu as the two countries press ahead with efforts to repair ties strained over Turkey's strong support for the Palestinians. Hurriyet newspaper reported Turkish authorities arrested five Iranian nationals on Wednesday suspected of involvement in an alleged plot to assassinate Israeli citizens in Istanbul. Police seized two pistols and two silencers in searches conducted in houses and hotels where the suspects were staying according to the report. No immediate response from Iran was available.

Disinformation a 'global pandemic': Pakistan

"Countering the scourge of disinformation is a shared responsibility which requires international cooperation and solidarity," he said

NEW YORK: Warning that disinformation has become a he said. "We should make a concerted effort, through co-"global pandemic", Pakistan Thursday called for international cooperation to confront, counter, and defeat this scourge which fuels hate speech. "We can succeed in doing so only through comprehensive international cooperation," Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said at the launch meeting of "Group of Friends for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms".

Established by Pakistan, the Group, which has representation from all regions of the world, seeks the implementation of the landmark General Assembly resolution 76/227 on Countering Disinformation for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which was adopted by consensus last year.

In his recorded keynote address address, FM Bilawal thanked all the countries who joined the Group and urged others to also be part of it. Utilizing this platform, we should agree on an International Plan of Action to counter disinformation, on-line and off-line, in the public and private domain," he said. "The exponential proliferation of disinformation, especially through on-line platforms and social media, has spread social discord; fostered hate speech, racism, discrimination, xenophobia, Islamophobia; and exacerbated competing nationalisms and inter-State tensions and conflict," the foreign minister warned.

"Disinformation has often justified and intensified the violations of human rights." FM Bilawal urged member states and the United Nations to enhance public awareness about disinformation through information campaigns.

We should enhance the capacity of governments and their relevant institutions to detect, analyze and expose disinformation and disinformation campaigns and networks,"

operation, to minimize the negative impact of disinformation on human rights and relations between communities and States, by building firewalls against false information, ensuring transparency, adhering to human rights principles, such as respect for personal privacy and reputation, preventing the propagation of racism, discrimination and hate speech." Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN, who moderated the virtual event, thanked the participants, saying the "Group of Friends" provides a platform for deliberations to member states to discuss means to counter disinformation and raise awareness. "Countering the scourge of disinformation is a shared responsibility which requires international cooperation and solidarity," he said.

A distinguished panel of speakers, comprising key representative and experts of UN entities, deliberated on approaches to countering disinformation.

Among them were Melissa Fleming, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications ; Ms. Nada Al-Nashif, the UN Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights; Ambassador Cristian Espinosa of Ecuador and Chairperson of the Committee on Information, and Irene Khan, the UN Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Opinion and Expression. Among the diplomats who spoke were: Zhang Jun, Permanent Representative, China; Gennady Kuzmin from Russia; Silvio Gonzato from European Union; and delegates from Permanent Mission of Morocco, UK and Syria. In his closing remarks, Ambassador Munir Akram said that today's deliberations have

provided us the basis to forge international

cooperation on countering as it affects all. We look disinformation forward to cooper-

strengthening our ation and condialogue and en-/ gagement with all stakeholders to deliberate upon developing a range of global responses to countering disinformation in accordance with international law. The event was webcast live on UN web tv. - APP

Kyiv says US precision artillery systems arrive

KYIV: Ukraine said Thursday that it had taken delivery of precision artillery systems from the United States which is the latest country to answer Kyiv's plea from allies for advanced weapons.

"Himars have arrived to Ukraine. Thank you to my colleague and friend @ SecDef Lloyd J. Austin III for these powerful tools! Summer will be hot for russian occupiers. And the last one for some of them," Ukraine Defence Minister Oleksiy Reznikov wrote on Twitter.

tinue

The United States and NATO partners are sending Ukraine heavy armament, such as howitzers and Himars rocket artillery - the latter offering greater range and precision than that offered by the Russian equivalent. While the West has sent weapons into Ukraine to help it fight the Kremlin's forces, Kyiv complains it has only received a fraction of what it needs and is clamouring for heavier weaponry. - APP

Austria to scrap mandatory Covid-19 vaccination

Agencies

VIENNA: The Austrian government said Thursday it will scrap the country's controversial policy of mandatory vaccination against the coronavirus, just months after it became law.

The measure – which was an EU first - came into legal effect at the beginning of February and the first checks had been planned for mid-March, with those refusing to get the jab facing fines of up to 3,600 euros (\$4,100). However, the measure was suspended in March before any checks took place, with the government saving such a far-reaching measure

could no longer be justified

Political crisis brewing in India's Maharashtra

News Desk

MUMBAI: India's richest state, Maharashtra, is witnessing high political drama that has put the fate of its government in jeopardy. Around 35 lawmakers - led by an influential state minister, Eknath Shinde - are holed up in a hotel in Guwahati city in the north-eastern state of Assam, thousands of kilometres away from Maharashtra.

They belong to the Shiv Sena party, which is currently governing Maharashtra as part of a coalition with the Congress party and the regional Nationalist Congress Party (NCP).

Mr Shinde - who has been part of the Shiv Sena for decades - claims that he is acting in the interests of his party. But his rebellion has brought the state's government to the brink of collapse. On Wednesday night, chief minister Uddhav Thackeray - who also heads the Shiv Sena - left his official residence after delivering an emotional speech urging the rebel lawmakers to return and speak to him.

ested in reviving the alliance with BJP, bringing it back to power in the state. If he draws support from more Shiv Sena lawmakers, the current coalition government would lose its majority.

The crisis began after Mr Shinde became "unreachable" after Monday's legislative council elections in the state.

The Shiv Sena and its allies were predicted to win six of the 10 seats, but they got only five. The BJP, which was expected to win only four, won the other five, amid reports of cross-voting by Sena rebels.

Media reports then said that Mr Shinde, accompanied by 11 other Sena lawmakers, had left for Surat city in the western state of Gujarat where a BJP government is in power.

Afghan brethren would not be left alone, says Barrister Saif

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Information and Public Relations Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif has said that on special instructions of Chief Minister Mahmood Khan, medical teams have been sent to assist the Afghan earthquake victims. He said we will not leave our Afghan brothers alone in this difficult time. These views were expressed by Special Assistant to the Chief Minister for Information and Public Relations Bar-

ern medical beds have also been provided. He said that all DHQs and civil hospitals in North Waziristan and South Waziristan have been directed to remain on high alert. DHQ Miranshah and DHQ Mir Ali in North Waziristan and DHQ Wana, Civil Hospital Shalam, Civil Hospital tway khulah in South Waziristan have been placed on high alert for the earth quake victims. In addition, Khalifa Gulnawaz Hospital Bannu has also been placed on high alert. There are also six ambulances at Zero Point Ghulam Khan Border to transport the injured to DHQ Hospitals. Another medical camp has also been set up at Alwada Mandi border along with Ghulam Khan border. He said that the Afghan government has offered accommodation to the doctors coming to Afghanistan in the general hospital of Khost province, Doctors volunteering will be sent. Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government would provide all possible facilities to the earthquake victims.

Punjab to get

more than 20

new ministers

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab cabinet is likely to see

an expansion as more than 20 MPAs and

five advisers are likely to take oath on

June 27. According to details the likely

minister Malik Nadeem Kamran, Saiful

Maluk Khokhar, Bilal Yasin, Mian Mujta-

ba Shujaur Rehman, Khawaja Imran Na-

zir, Rana Mashhood, Makhdoom Usman

SL parliament shuts early after petrol runs out

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's parliament has cancelled its remaining sittings for the week to save fuel, officials said Thursday, with a disastrous economic crisis rapidly depleting the island nation's already scarce petrol supplies. A foreign currency shortage has prevented the import of food, oil and medicines, while runaway inflation and regu lar blackouts have made life miserable for Sri Lanka's 22 million population. Parliamentary officials said lawmakers decided to cancel sessions on Thursday

and Friday to avoid unnecessary petrol use, days authorities closed after schools and some state offices for the same reason. Energy minister Kanchana Wijesekera said a gasoline shipment that was due Thursday had been delayed and urged motorists to cut down on travel. "Only limited amounts of petrol will be distributed to pumping stations today and tomorrow," he told reporters in Colombo, with motorists already waiting in line for days to

top up their tanks. - APP

Reports say that Mr Shinde is inter-

Mr Thackeray responded by removing Mr Shinde as party whip.

Mr Shinde then dropped the Shiv Sena from his Twitter profile and was seen meeting BJP leaders who later visited him at his hotel in Gujarat. Mr Shinde and his supporters flew to Guwahati city in Assam - which is also ruled by the BJP - on Tuesday night, shortly after a phone conversation with Mr Thackeray.

rister Muhammad Ali Saif in a statement issued from his office.

Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif said that 20 medical teams have been sent to Pak-Afghan border, each team consisting of orthopedic surgeons, medical officers, nurses and paramedics. Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif said that Earthquake victims are being provided complete availability of all medicines as per their requirements, 100 mod-

by the danger the coronavirus posed. Health Minister Johannes Rauch told a press conference that the measure had caused deep divisions in the country of nine million and said that the element of compulsion had even deterred some people from getting the jab. "The mandate isn't bringing

anyone to get vaccinated, he said. The Omicron variant had also "changed the rules", Rauch added, as the wave driven by that variant tended to lead to cases with milder symptoms. The mandate had applied to all over-18s except pregnant women, those who had the virus fewer than 180 days prior and those with medical exemptions. August Woeginger, head of the parliamentary grouping of the ruling People's Party (OeVP), told the same press conference he expected the law mandating compulsory vaccination to be repealed in the coming weeks.

IRGC say intelligence chief replaced

WEB DESK

TEHRAN: Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps on Thursday replaced its intelligence chief Hossein Taeb, who had held the position for more than 12 years, the Guards said in a statement. "The Guards' chief Major General Hossein Salami appointed General Mohammad Kazemi as the new head of the IRGC Intelligence Organisation," Guards spokesman Ramezan Sharif said in the statement.

Salami also appointed Taeb, who is a cleric, as his own adviser, according to the statement. The replacement of the intelligence chief comes after the killing of a number of members of the Guards. which is designated as a terrorist group by Iran's arch enemy the United States. Iran and US ally Israel have been engaged in a years-long shadow war but tensions have ratcheted up following a string of high-profile incidents Tehran has blamed on the Jewish state. On June 13, Ali Kamani, a member of the Guards' aerospace division, was killed while on a mission in Khomein in the central province of Markazi, the Guards said in a statement without elaborating.

ISLAMABAD: Outgoing Ambassador of Switzerland Benedict Cerjat speaking during a reception



BRICS push for global clout amid Ukraine war Pratyush Rao, director for South Asia at the Control Risks consultancy, says Ukraine, without a doubt, will be the elephant in the room

MONITORING DESK

BEIJING: The leaders of the Brics group of nations are meeting this year amid major shifts in the geopolitical order. The group, which owes its name to the initials of its five member states - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa - is holding its annual summit on Thursday, but without much fanfare or huge expectations. Talks will also be held in a virtual format, for the third consecutive year. The last two were held during the Covid pandemic, but it's not clear why the leaders chose to skip face-to-face meetings this year.

It's in stark contrast to the Quad - which groups India with Australia, Japan and the US - whose leaders met in person in Japan last month amid the global media glare. Some analysts say that this is also partly due to the fact that the Brics hasn't really lived up to expectations over the years. When it was formed in 2009, the group was expected to reshape the global economy and create a new financial order to help the devel-

oping world. Its success can be described at best as moderate, but its importance can't be overstated. Brics nations have a combined population of 3.23 billion and their combined GDP is more than \$23tn.

"The Brics may seem irrelevant because it hasn't really moved the needle forward on its long-standing efforts to usher in viable global economic alternatives to the US-led existing system," says Michael Kugelman, deputy director at the Wilson Center thinktank in Washington. But he adds that writing the Brics off will be a mistake because of its collective economic might, "even though it often tends to punch below its weight".

The economy has always been at the heart of the Brics but the Ukraine war is likely to loom large over the summit on Thursday. The nations may not overtly mention the war, but it will definitely be discussed when Indian PM Narendra Modi, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Chinese President Xi Jinping, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa and Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro talk to each other. Pratyush Rao, director for South Asia at the Control Risks

consultancy, says Ukraine, without a doubt, will be the elephant in the room. "A lot of people will be keeping an eye on the summit, especially on the dynamics between Russia and China over Ukraine," he says.

While China has been more open about its support for Russia, India, South Africa and Brazil have tried to walk the diplomatic tightrope over the war. They haven't openly criticised Russia but have advocated talks to end the war. But a lot has changed since the war started. The economic impact of the war and the West-led sanctions is showing across the world - inflation is up in many countries, global supply chains have been disrupted and

there are fears of food shortages. Russian commentators have been talking about the importance of the Brics nations in blunting the impact of the sanctions.

Mr Rao says some pushback against Western sanctions can be expected at the summit, and that will be comforting for Russia. "But it should not be interpreted as an endorsement of Russia's actions," he adds. However, Brics members would want to be seen as taking an initiative to help de-

veloping nations overcome the economic impact of the war. "I expect the summit to underscore the group's global importance because of its collective demographic and economic clout. I also expect it to help poorer and middle-income countries build resilience to deal with the economic impacts of the Ukraine crisis," says Mr Kugelman. But then there will be challenges within the group. Beijing and Moscow might agree on taking tougher lines against the West, but Delhi would not like the summit to be used to openly criticise the US and more broadly the West. Delhi takes pride in its "strategic autonomy" and the policy of non-alignment and has proven that it can be a significant member of even competing multilateral forums. "India has an independent strategic policy and an independent autonomous voice on the global stage and it wouldn't want to compromise on that," says Mr Rao. Both Russia and China have criticised the Quad as "Asia's Nato" but this hasn't deterred Delhi from pledging its support to the group's initiatives in the Indo-Pacific, which

Beijing considers as its area of influence.

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

Mahmood, Mehar Aijaz Chillana, Malik Ahmad Ali Olakh, Jugnoo Mohsin and Mian Yawar Zaman among others will take the oath as Punjab ministers. Punjab governor Baligh Ur Rehman is likely to administer the oath of the new minister on June 27 at Governor House. Earlier, an eight-member provincial cabinet of Punjab was sworn in during a ceremony at the Governor's House in Lahore on May 31. Punjab Governor Baligh Ur Rehman administered the oath to the new cabinet members. Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shehbaz and other highups of Punjab government he hosted to say goodbye to his friends. - DNA were present in the oath-taking ceremony.

