

Monday, June 27, 2022

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## Briefs

### Hina leads delegation at CHOGM

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar has led a delegation of Pakistan at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) held in Kigali, Rwanda on June 24-25. Themed as 'Delivering a common future: connecting, innovating, and Transforming', the summit discussed the issues concerning the Commonwealth, including post-covid economic recovery, disruptions caused by pandemic and conflict, the challenge of climate change and sustainable development, promotion of democratic values and fundamental freedoms and enhancement of trade among other matters.

### Fazl refutes conspiracy claims

DNA

ISLAMABAD: JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rahman, who is also the head of the Pakistan Democratic Movement, on Saturday said that PTI Chairman Imran Khan was not removed from power through any foreign conspiracy as he claims, but it was him who was responsible for Khan's ouster. Addressing a seminar in Islamabad, Fazl censured the former premier and said that first, he kept waving an alleged threat letter before the masses and then resorted to saying that his life was in danger.

### PTI ready to discuss next elections

DNA

LAHORE: Former federal information minister Fawad Chaudhry on Sunday said that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was ready to discuss the framework for the next general elections with the coalition government. "We need a new charter of democracy driven by a new election commission and fresh polls," he said while addressing a news conference in Lahore. The former minister said that the PTI had its right over five reserved seats of Punjab and to deny it of its right of representation is unfortunate.

# Security, defence top priority: PM

Chairs a high level meeting; decides to revive role of provinces in National Action Plan

ABID RAZA / DNA

LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday said that no compromises can be made when it comes to Pakistan's security and defence. Speaking in a meeting related to the law and order situation of the country under his chairmanship, the premier urged the law enforcement agencies (LEAs) to improve their performance and said that it was the only way to change the perception of the public. During the meeting, which was also attended by Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shehbaz, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah, Deputy Speaker of the Punjab Assembly Dost Muhammad Mazari, and other senior officials, the prime minister was apprised of the latest law and order situation in the country, while the situation in Punjab was also discussed. After being briefed about the eradication of terrorism from the country and the threats posed in this regard, the premier said that the entire nation was on the same page with the government when it came to fighting terrorism and terrorist elements. "The people of Pakistan stand by their armed forces and law enforcement agencies," PM Shehbaz said, adding that the government will continue its struggle till the complete eradication of terrorism from the country. The premier then added that when it comes to the security and defence of Pakistan, no compromises can be made. Shedding light on the role of provinces in the National Action Plan, the premier said

## 7 terrorists killed in N. Waziristan

DNA

RAWALPINDI: On 26 Jun 2022 fire exchange took place between Security Forces and terrorists in general area Ghulam Khan Kalle, North Waziristan District. Troops effectively engaged the terrorists and resultantly, 7 of them were killed. Weapons and ammunition was also recovered from the killed terrorists who remained actively involved in several terrorist activities against security forces. During intense exchange of fire, Subedar Munir Hussain (age 44 years, resident of Parachinar, Kurram) and Havildar Babu Khan (age 38 years, resident of DI Khan), having fought gallantly, embraced shahadat. Area clearance is being carried out to eliminate any other terrorists found in the vicinity.

that the participation of provinces will be restored. "Ignoring the role of provinces in the National Action Plan over the last four years has increased terrorism in the country," he said. During the meeting, PM Shehbaz directed the authorities concerned to ensure the protection of lives and property of the people across the country and also expressed concern over the increase in street crime incidents.

# Imran urges nation to reject turncoats

Asks people to vote for PTI in the by-polls



LAHORE: PTI Chairman addressing a public rally in the WAPDA Town in connection with the by-election campaign. - DNA

## Khan forgives 'spy servant'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Dr Shahbaz Gill said Sunday that a servant had been expelled from the house of Imran Khan over being used for spying on the PTI chairman. In a statement, Shahbaz Gill said that the servant was accused of installing a spy gadget in the bedroom of Imran Khan. "The 23-year-old servant, who had been a cleaner at the house of Imran Khan for the last six years, was used for spying on the PTI chief," Shahbaz Gill said. "Imran Khan has forgiven the servant. His life is in danger," he maintained. "This is the message for those, who used the servant for spying on Imran Khan, that the sanctity of houses should not be violated," Shahbaz Gill stressed. In the statement, the Islamabad Police confirmed that a man named Ashir, who is a resident of sector G-8 of the federal capital, was handed over to the law enforcement agency. He was present near the barrier set up outside the gate of the former premier's residence.

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JEDDAH: General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army staff (COAS) being conferred upon King Abdulaziz Medal of Excellence by Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. DNA

## Norway pays tribute to victims of Oslo shooting

AGENCIES

OSLO: Norway paid tribute on Sunday to the victims of a deadly shooting near a bar in the capital that shocked the normally peaceful country and led to the cancellation of a Pride march. The altar of Oslo cathedral was draped in a rainbow cloth for a service to remember the victims of the attack, attended by Crown Princess Mette-Marit. Investigators are probing the motives of the suspected gunman, who opened fire in the early hours of Saturday, killing two and wounding 21. "Oslo is in mourning. The whole country has been shaken by this attack," the Norwegian Protestant Church said. It came 11 years after right-wing extremist Anders Behring Breivik killed 77 people in a shooting spree that shook the nation to its core.

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## Sindh LG polls: First phase ends with violence

DNA

KARACHI: The voting process ended for the first phase of the local government elections in 14 districts from four divisions of Sindh being held today (Sunday) and the counting of votes is underway amid reports of violence and clashes in several districts. The polling began at 8am and continued until 5pm without any pause. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has announced extending the voting time in areas where

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# Pakistan, Saudi Arabia pledge to solidify relations

COAS was conferred upon King Abdulaziz Medal of Excellence

STAFF REPORT / DNA

JEDDAH: General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army staff (COAS) visited Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) on an official tour. During the visit, COAS called on Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, 1st Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister of KSA and General Fayyadh Bin Hamed Al-Ruwaili, Chief of General Staff (CGS) Saudi Armed Forces at Jeddah. During the meetings, matters of mutual interests, bilateral defence & security co-operation and regional peace & stability were discussed. COAS said that Pakistan values its historical and brotherly relations with the Kingdom and acknowledges its unique place in the Islamic world. Both sides agreed upon enhancing defence cooperation in the fields of Joint Training, Air Defence, Counter-terrorism and Communication / Information domain.

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## PM felicitates Army Chief

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday extended felicitation to Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa on conferment of 'King Abdulaziz Medal of Excellence' in recognition for his contributions to strengthening of defence ties between the brotherly countries of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. On his Twitter handle, the prime minister said that it was a great honour for the people and the armed forces of Pakistan. "Heartiest congratulations to Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa on conferment of King Abdulaziz Medal for his contributions to strengthening defence ties between our two brotherly countries.

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# 'Monkeypox not yet a health emergency'

NEWS DESK

LONDON: Monkeypox is not yet a global health emergency, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has ruled, although WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said he was deeply concerned about the outbreak. "I am deeply concerned about the monkeypox outbreak, this is clearly an evolving health threat that my colleagues and I in the WHO Secretariat are following extremely closely," Tedros said in a statement issued on Saturday. WHO said in a separate statement that although there were some differing views within the committee, they ultimately

agreed by consensus that at this stage the outbreak is not a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). The "global emergency" label currently only applies to the coronavirus pandemic and ongoing efforts to eradicate polio, and the UN agency has stepped back from applying it to the monkeypox outbreak after advice from a meeting of international experts. There have been more than 3,200 confirmed cases of monkeypox and one death reported in the last six weeks from 48 countries where it does not usually spread, according to WHO. So far this year almost 1,500 cases and

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Russian missiles target Kyiv as G7 leaders gather  
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# Why the govt would like to complete its term?

Comment

ANSAR M BHATTI

WHEN the coalition government took over almost three months ago, it was believed, or maybe the deal was this that the government soon after taking charge would announce early elections. The sole purpose of the then Opposition's exercise was to dislodge the PTI government spearheaded by Imran Khan. They did it successfully. But what transpired afterwards, perhaps nobody had expected that. The coalition was confident it would steer clear the country out of the mess, according to it, created by the PTI government. Before taking the charge, particularly their economic wizards including the Finance Minister Miftah Ismael were upbeat about delivering the economy from chaos and uncertainty. Things however did not go according to their



plans and hence the worst economic crisis hit hard to all and sundry. Announcement of elections soon after the fall of the Imran govt may have avoided the mess we are in these days. A caretaker government composed of the technocrats would have done much better than the ones who are calling the shots right now. Now things have reached to such a pass that it would be suicidal for the coalition parties to leave the government at this stage when their popularity graph has went down significantly. If they call it a day today then they have to suffer heavily in the coming general elections for with this baggage they will not be able to convince the voters that they are the best. Therefore, they would like to first set things in order and then think about going to the elections. After the long march fiasco, the PTI leadership would think twice before launching another march. As a face saving they have put the ball into the court of the Apex Court and linked its next long march move to the court decision. And one wonders, why the court would like to drag its feet into the fray. The Shehbaz Sharif govt believes that after

the long march 'failure' PTI has been rendered toothless so nothing to worry about it. Under this presumption, the government thinks there is no harm in completing the rest of the term. On the other hand, PTI too is not interested in a long march any time soon. The party wants to contest the Punjab by-elections with full force with a view to winning all the seats and return to the Punjab Assembly with majority. If everything goes according to PTI plans, then it can easily overthrow the Hamza government. By and large the ruling government backed candidates sail smoothly in the by-elections therefore it would be indeed a challenge for the PTI as to how it would be able to reverse this trend. The appointment of the new army chief is yet another plus point for the incumbent government that may help it stay in power. The appointment of the army chief is done by a regular government and not a caretaker one. Announcement about this appointment is likely to be made somewhere in September or October this year because the COAS retires on 29 November 2022. As per the past

practice this kind of announcement is made close to the retirement date of the outgoing army chief. The announcement regarding an extension however can be made at any time. The Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on June 24, 2022 announced to impose a super tax on the big industries. Additionally, he announced that he would impose tax on the wealthy people. The decision appears to be a smart move however the question is how will it be implemented? And how the government would ensure that those who are going to be taxed, would not increase prices of their products. If they will do this then from the face of it there is no point in taxing them because they would then recover this amount from the ordinary people. Experts rightly believe that the government needs to broaden the tax net besides plugging the loopholes in the taxation system due to which over 300 billion rupees tax is evaded every year. Then widespread corruption is yet another bane the government has to deal with. There is a huge disparity between our earnings and the level of corruption. For instance, if Pakistan's earning

is Rs 100, the corruption is Rs 110, so literally there is nothing left to run the country for which huge borrowings are made and that too on extremely high mark up. Ostensibly, under such circumstances the country would never stand on its own feet. If the corruption impact is brought down and the tax collection system is improved, for sure we don't need to hanker after the IMF or other financial institutions for support. Country's economic woes are likely to be lessened after the IMF breather, which is expected any time. The rupee is expected to gain against the dollar after the package. But it all will be a stopgap arrangement. The economy will never recover fully until and unless the key areas mentioned above are addressed effectively and immediately. The foreign aid can only give us temporary relief, therefore instead of banking on this relief, efforts have to be made for a permanent relief which would come from enhanced exports and limiting the quantum of imports. The Russian Ruble has gained a lot against the US dollar despite the fact that the country is at war, only because the Russian imports are almost zero.



# Sorry state of affairs at Pak PWD Dept

The chief engineer accused to conducting fake visits; PM, Minister asked to look into the matter

MUMTAZ AHMED BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan PWD has an important position in the construction sector. Anyone who sees roads, PCC streets, big and beautiful buildings built all over Pakistan must recognize the capabilities of Pak PWD engineers. Over the past few months, many questions have been raised about the quality of work of Pak PWD development projects. There are many complaints of substandard work on development projects in Pak PWD North Zone. Fake visits of Chief Engineer and Superintendent Engineers for inspection of development projects have also been reported. Groupings between chief engineer's favorite and disliked engineers and contractor have badly affected the working of the department.

The chief engineer has long meetings with his favorite engineers and contractors and completely avoids meetings with disliked engineers and contractors. Quality Control Material Laboratory tests are performed far below the Required number. Neither on-site laboratory nor on-site engineers are on site for any project. Labor working on any project does not have personal protective equipment (PPE). Why all the clauses in the contract are not implemented. When all the concerned officers including the Chief Engineer go for inspection of development projects, do they not see some irregularities there? Even if they see some irregularities, why no legal action is taken against the persons involved? Is the purpose of inspection of projects only to receive TADA? If look at the telephone bills of the Chief Engineer

North Zone, it seems that they are always present in the office and if look at the fuel and TADA, it seems that they are always on a visit. If there is any irregularity in a project then action is taken only against the executive engineer. Why not action is taken against all those who receive heavy TA, DA and fuel bills in the name of inspection of projects. Surprisingly, the reputation of Pak PWD is being affected and no one knows anything about it. The Prime Minister of Pakistan, the Federal Minister for Housing and Works, the Federal Secretary for Housing and Works and the DG Pak PWD should immediately conduct an inquiry and also conduct a special audit. If the allegations are substantiated after the inquiry, all those responsible will be prosecuted in accordance with the law, no matter how influential someone may be.



LALAMUSA: Prime Minister's Adviser on Gilgit Baltistan and Kashmir Affairs Qamar Zaman Kaibra meeting various delegations at his office in Lalamusa. – DNA

# PAC and ANF organized program on world Drug Day



DNA

RAWALPINDI: Punjab Arts Council in collaboration with Anti Narcotics Control Force organized a special program to mark world Drug and illegal human trafficking day. Director General Anti Narcotics Force Major General Ghulam Shabir Nareejo (H-

lale-Imtiaz Military) was the chief guest of the ceremony. The special guest of the function, Major General Ghulam Shabir Nareejo, said that on the occasion of International Day, I assure my nation and the international community that the ANF will continue to fight against drug use and trafficking with full dedication and high professionalism. The

ANF will spare no effort in carrying out its duties and will spare no effort to protect the Holy Land from the dangers of drugs.

We pledge to carry forward our Manifesto with utmost determination, sincerity and devotion, he added. He further said that we also pay tribute to our martyrs who sacrificed their "today" for the better "tomorrow" of our future generations and the sacred duty of drug free world. Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmed said that Anti-Drug Day has been observed every year since 1987 in accordance with a UN resolution. The purpose of the day is to raise awareness about the dangers of drug abuse around the world and the dangers it poses to society, especially young people.

The program featured a drug-based drama "Zehre-Qatil" Written and directed by Imran Roshdi. The versatile group from Lahore performed cultural dances of different regions and won the hearts of the audience. At the end of the program, renowned Sufi singer Sanam Marvi tied the knot by presenting a mystical speech. Dr. Mubashir and Shaan Khan also evoked the magic of sound. The event was attended by a large number of people from the twin cities.

# 1766 Corona patients died in RWP, 46,777 cases reported

RAWALPINDI: As many as 46,777 corona-virus cases having positive symptoms had been recorded, while 1766 had lost their battle of life since the pandemic from April 2020 to June 26, 2022, in the district. Chief Executive Officer(CEO) District Health Authority Dr Lubna Ishaq told APP that 13 more were diagnosed with the deadly virus during the last 24 hours. Among the new patients, eight arrived from the Potohar town, three from Rawalpindi Cantonment and two from Rawal town, she added. Presently, the number of active cases was 96 and quarantined in home isolation, while no patient was admitted to any

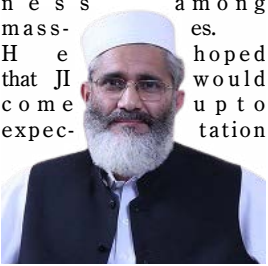
health facility in the district. She updated that 45,346 patients had been discharged after recovery. Dr Lubna informed that among people who died from this fatal disease, 1,335 were Rawalpindi's residents, while 431 belonged outside districts. In addition, the CEO told that as many as 6,913,145 people, including 44,797 health workers, had so far been vaccinated against the fatal disease since the start of the vaccination drive from March 10, 2021. During the last 24 hours, 1,013 samples were collected, out of which 1,010 were declared negative, while the positivity rate was recorded at 1.29 per cent. – APP

# Punjab CM fully aware of people's problems

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Deputy Secretary Information Punjab Imran Goraya has said that Chief Minister Shehbaz Sharif is fully aware of problems facing people of the province and he is making all-out efforts to resolve these issues on priority. In his statement issued on Sunday, he said the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government had drowned the country economically and financially. He said that now under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the coalition government had started reviving the economy. The PML-N leaders said that implementation of public welfare programmes had been started in Punjab, adding that Chief Minister Hamza Shehbaz was striving to lessen prices of daily-use items and edibles. He said the CM had also completely abolished official petrol quota of ministers. – APP

# JI struggling for delivery of rights to masses: Siraj ul Haq

MULTAN: Ameer Jamate-Islami Siraj ul Haq said on Sunday that Jamate-Islami was struggling for delivery of rights to masses. While talking to media persons, Siraj ul Haq said that he was leading train march to create awareness among masses. He hoped that JI would come up to expectation



of people by addressing their basic issues. On this occasion, leadership and JI workers were also present. – APP

# RDA inflows rise to \$4.356 billion in May

ISLAMABAD: Inflow of remittances under Roshan Digital Account (RDA) rose to US \$4.356 billion by the end of May 2022 as compared to US \$4.167 billion till end of April, according to a latest data released by the State Bank of Pakistan. The data showed that the inflows of remittances during the month of May were recorded at \$189 million as compared to \$245 million in April and \$290 million in March, 2021. Roshan Digital Account (RDA) was launched by State Bank of Pakistan in collaboration with commercial banks operating in the country. These accounts provide innovative banking solutions to millions of Non-Resident Pakistanis (NRPs), including Non-Resident Pakistan Origin Card (POC) holders, seeking to undertake banking, payment and investment activities in Pakistan. As per data, expatriate Pakistanis from 175 countries had deposited the funds to 416,837 accounts opened through RDA. The number of accounts has also been increased from 403,750 in April to 416,837 in May 2022, which means some 13,087 new accounts were opened in May. The scheme that started in September 2020 received lukewarm response from the overseas Pakistanis who deposited only \$7 million in the opening month, however with the passage of time the interest kept on increasing as the inflow reached to \$40 million in October 2020 and \$110 million in the subsequent month. – APP

# Anti-dengue campaign in full swing in RWP

RAWALPINDI: The anti-dengue awareness campaign launched by Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) was in full swing, and all-out efforts were being made to raise awareness about the lifecycle, prevalence, handling, and prevention of dengue. According to RWMC spokesman, as per instructions of the Punjab government, RWMC had cleaned all offices and provided awareness to its staff about foiling the dengue virus. He said the communication teams distributed waste bags and pamphlets in various areas of the city to

highlight the importance of cleanliness and dengue prevention. To eradicate dengue larvae, a comprehensive Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs) and an action plan were being followed, and weekly reports were being submitted to the city district government and the government of Punjab. The spokesman called upon the residents to keep an eye on junkyards, schools and under-construction buildings, which lead to the spread of dengue larvae and leave no place wet or stagnant water. – APP

# ITP expedites actions against lane discipline violators

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) Sunday intensified crackdown on heavy transport vehicles and motorbikes involved in violation of lane discipline at major thoroughfares to ensure traffic discipline in the city. Following directions of IGP Islamabad Dr. Nasir Akbar Khan, SSP (Traffic) Syed Mustafa Tanveer directed all zonal DSPs and beat inspectors to take stern action against drivers violating rules pertaining to lane usage. He asked the traffic officials to adopt decent attitude while issuing fine tickets to motorists, adding that humiliating behavior to the citizens would not be tolerated. He said inspectors and beat in-charges would be solely responsible for ensuring traffic discipline in their respective beats. He asked for taking strict departmental action against those performing negligence during duty time and rewards to the officers and 'jawns' doing their duties efficiently. Similarly, the ITP Education Wing would provide awareness to the citizens about road safety rules on various highways. The SSP (Traffic) also appealed the citizens to cooperate with ITP in ensuring safe road environment in the city. – APP

# PM Shehbaz' historic package for Mansehra to address civic issues

ABBOTTABAD: The Prime Minister's developmental package worth Rs. one billion for Mansehra would help address the lingering civic issues on priority basis. As the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) took the charge of federal government, Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif and Vice President PML-N Maryam Safdar have announced a special developmental package for the neglected district of Hazara including establishment of a medical college and various other developmental schemes of roads, hospitals, water supply etc. to resolve issues being faced by the people. The people of Mansehra have lauded the developmental projects adding that after a long time of about one decade, the PML-N government has provided relief to the masses and announced mega development schemes in the area. Talking to APP, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) General Secretary District Mansehra Niazi said that the Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) has special always focused development of the region. He said that during the last eight years of PTI government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa no single mega project was announced for Mansehra. Ex-Nazim and leader of PML-N district Mansehra Said Ghulam told the news agency that the provincial government was earning huge revenue from the tourist spots of the district but in return it did not spend in the region. He said, "You can see the deteriorated condition of the roads all across the district and shortage of clean drinking water in Mansehra city." Therefore, in some areas of the city, residents had no option but purchase water through tankers, he added. Said Ghulam said that graveyard was another major concern of the people of the city despite the fact that in 2015 during the then PML-N government Rs. 200 million were approved for the purpose. But after passing seven years, the provincial government

could not complete the project, he said. "Being a part of the committee which has prepared recommendations for the developmental schemes in Mansehra with PM's one billion rupees grant, I am sure most of the civic problems would be resolved amicably", he added. Besides Rs.1 billion funds for the resolution of Mansehra's civic problems, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has also announced the establishment of a medical college and the long-awaited Hazara Electric Supply Company (HESCO). Syed Noman Shah, a local journalist said that district Mansehra was the hub of PML-N and whenever Muslim League-N came into power they had addressed the issues of the people on priority basis. He said that the current announcement of a development package for district Mansehra would help resolve many civic issues. "During the past eight years of PTI government, no major developmental scheme was launched in Mansehra which has pushed the people of the district into backwardness." The PM's historic package would change the fate of the people, he added. While talking about the infrastructure and roads situation, he said that Mansehra was a tourist destination where roads and other facilities were important to attract the tourists. But unfortunately the KP government has not focused on road infrastructure of the district which was badly damaged. He said that the feasibility report of the developmental projects also comprised 15-20 connecting roads, two main bridges on River Kunhar and River Siran, two major water supply schemes for Mansehra city, provision of land for graveyard and others. Noman Shah said that during 2015 a three-phased program for the provision of Sui gas was chalked out where natural gas lines were installed in Mansehra city during the first phase and as the second phase was started the project was closed after the change of government in 2018. – APP

# Mayor Peshawar warmly received at Firdous Sabzi Mandi

PESHAWAR: Mayor of Peshawar Haji Zubair Ali received a warm welcome in Firdous Sabzi Mandi, as flower petals were also showered on him by the local traders here on Sunday. The Mayor of Peshawar met individual traders who informed him about their problems. Zubair Ali received a warm welcome from the business community during his visit to Firdous Sabzi Man-

di. Inspector Qaiser Bacha, President Sabi Mandi Haji Rahim Shah, Senior Vice President Haider Ali, General Secretary Shahid Khan were also present. President of the Sabzi Mandi Haji Rahim Shah apprised the Mayor about the problems being faced by the vegetable market. There are severe problems due to which traders have to

face a lot of difficulties. The sanitation situation is very bad and there are no street lights. On this occasion, the Mayor of Peshawar Haji Zubair Ali said that the business community was the backbone of the economy. He assured them that their problems would be resolved on a priority basis. On this occasion, he issued instructions to repair the road of Firdous Sabzi Mandi on emergency basis, while announcing immediate two boreholes to solve the water problem, while instructing the WSSP to immediately improve the sanitation situation. He also directed WSSP to deploy staff for cleanliness.

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National Days and  
Armed Forces Days

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



Hotels &  
Restaurants

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



Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....	8494949
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Emergency

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Islamabad  
Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....	0321-5744480
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# Women’s economic empowerment vital

Begum Alvi said that she had been playing her role along with other stakeholders in highlighting and creating awareness about the breast cancer and the issues of the people with disabilities

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: First Lady Begum Samina Alvi on Saturday underlined the need for sustained efforts for the economic empowerment of women, especially from the under privileged areas of the country, by provision of equal opportunities in different fields. Addressing an inauguration ceremony of the arts and crafts exhibition arranged by Indus Heritage Trust titled “Celebrating the creative economy through the creative industry”, Begum Alvi stressed for revival of traditional arts and crafts which could not only help in preservation of the national heritage, but also provide equal income generating opportunities to the womenfolk. Lauding the efforts of the Trust for provision of business opportunities to the women from the underprivileged parts of the country through its efforts to preserve the traditional arts and crafts, she observed that economically empowered women always contributed towards a strong and progressive society. She said such efforts could be materialized with proper training and skills development of the womenfolk in traditional arts and



ISLAMABAD: First Lady, Begum Samina Arif Alvi, viewing the handiworks of women artisans at the arts and crafts exhibition organized by the Indus Heritage Trust, in Islamabad. – DNA

crafts. The traditional method of stitching and embroidery still in practice in different parts of the country, could be encouraged like the efforts made by Turkey in preservation of its traditional skills, she added. Emphasizing upon the need

of revival of arts and artisans, she said that exchange of delegations from other countries could supplement such efforts and showcase the unique traditional arts and culture of Pakistan abroad. She said that women being a component of

about 50 per cent of the country’s population should enjoy equal rights as it was critical for the progress and development of a society. Begum Alvi said that she had been playing her role along with other stakeholders in highlighting

and creating awareness about the breast cancer and the issues of the people with disabilities. The breast cancer in Pakistan had become the fatal disease and a large number of deaths were linked with this disease due to lack of awareness, she added. Begum Alvi said that every year, October was being observed as a month for creation of awareness about the breast cancer and the message needed to be spread persistently throughout the year. “Healthy women can form a healthy and strong society,” she added. About persons with disabilities, she observed that they possessed immense talents and should be given equal opportunities in all walks of life which would further pave a way for their economic inclusiveness. Chairperson of Indus Heritage Trust Siddiq Malik highlighted the functioning of the trust and the training imparted to the women of the underprivileged areas in arts and crafts. She informed that they had so far trained 10,000 women who were able to generate a revenue of about \$75,000. Besides, the Trust also trained 5,000 Afghan refugee women in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces in traditional Afghan arts and crafts.

## CDWP approves NAVTTC project to set up 250 VTIs

ISLAMABAD: A meeting of CDWP under the chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives was held and approved the NAVTTC project for establishing and upgrading 250 Vocational Training Institutes (VTIs) across Pakistan. The Executive Director NAVTTC, Mr. Sajid Baloch, briefed the CDWP that National Vocational and Technical Training Commission project envisages to establish and upgrade 250 Vocational Training Institutes (VTIs) across Pakistan which will provide income generating and in demand skills to youth. The skilled workforce will also earn precious foreign exchange for Pakistan. National Vocational & Technical Training Commission (NAVTTC) being an apex TVET agency at federal level will be the lead executing agency. This project will be helpful in establishing state of the art labs in vocational training institutes and equipping youth with latest income generating technical skills such as Artificial Intelligence, e-commerce, robotics, graphic designing, Internet of things, cyber security, besides the conventional trades like electrician, plumber, fashion design, beauty parlour etc.

## UBG for removal of budget anomalies

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry’s United Business Group (UBG) Sunday demanded immediate removal of all anomalies in the federal budget to provide solace to already hard hit business community in the wake of rising global inflation grappling the region. Talking to a delegation of business community led by Shahryar Shahid of Nainu’s chain of pizza, chairman Shahzad Ali Malik Sitara-Imtiaz said on Sunday entire business community is worried about the glaring anomalies in the budget regarding customs duties, regulatory duties, income tax and sales tax etc. – APP

## PM abolishes OTP system use for purchases at USC

The Utility Stores Corporation is gradually increasing the number of POS counters at every supermarket store and mini market in Lahore and Islamabad on the direction of the Prime Minister

ISLAMABAD: Keeping in view the plight of the public, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has abolished the One Time Password System (OTP) used for purchases at utility stores. Original ID cards will now have to be displayed at the counter for purchasing subsidized items at utility stores, said a Press release issued by Utility Store Corporation (USC) here. The photocopy requirement has also been removed and declared to receive a confirmation SMS to the customer’s registered mobile number after purchase. The Utility Stores Corporation is pursuing a strategy of transparent transfer of federal government subsidies to the real beneficiaries. The Utility Stores Corporation is gradually increasing the number of POS counters at every supermarket store and mini market in Lahore and Islamabad on the direction of the Prime Minister. All zonal managers have been urged to contact all the Deputy Commissioners of Punjab and ICT for providing water coolers, tents, chairs, fans to the customers at the utility stores. Tent and water supply is already in place and orders have been issued to further improve it. Under the federal government subsidy, sugar is available at Rs 70 per kg, ghee at Rs 300 per kg and a 10 kg bag of flour at Rs 400 at all utility stores across the country. Rice and pulses are also being subsidized. In addition, more than 1,500 standard items are available at a much lower price than the general market. – APP



ISLAMABAD: Heavy machinery is being used to expand Expressway near PWD. – APP

## Admin directs illegal hydrants to get NoC to avoid operation

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi district administration has directed the owners of illegal hydrants to get No-Objection Certificate (NoC) from the authorities concerned otherwise they would not be allowed to operate. According to a district administration spokesman, the authorities concerned on the directives of DC Rawalpindi Tahir Farooq had launched an operation against illegal hydrants and sealed 15 in different areas. AC Sadder, Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) Rawalpindi and Municipal Corporation Rawalpindi (MCR) jointly launched an operation against illegal hydrants and conducted raids in Adiala Road, Dahlag and Gorakhpur areas. More than 15 illegal hydrants were sealed while their motors and pumps were also confiscated. He informed that the water supply to thousands of inmates in Adiala Jail and residents of aforesaid localities was also affected due to illegal hydrants. The operation was led by AC, Sadder, Abdul Rehman, while Deputy Director WASA, Rana Shams-ur-Rehman, Chaudhry Akmal and Town Officer of MCR, Rafaqat Gondal took part in the operation and the illegal hydrants were sealed with the help of police. – APP

## Growing water woes demand metering system

“The low water tariff, absence of groundwater regulatory framework and lack of crop zoning left meager water resources at disposal of less informed and imprudent agricultural practices of farmers”

ALI JABIR / APP

ISLAMABAD: After surpassing the slot of water stressed country, Pakistan is feared to touch the water scarcity barrier due to fast melting glaciers, drying rivers, depleting groundwater resource and above all the poor water management and pricing. Massive wastage in agriculture sector, commercial and domestic use as well as lack of storage capacity coupled with impacts of climate change with abnormal weather pattern would further aggravate the situation in coming years. The expert intelligentsia meticulously monitoring the water situation with its jaw dropping researches have rolled out workable solutions in the limited resources available to cope with this challenge and circumvent a major crisis. “The situation is worrisome. The time has come for prudent use of

water as well as ensuring 100% water metering in the country,” remarked Chairman Pakistan Council of Research on Water Resources (PCRWR) Dr Muhammad Ashraf. Sharing his insights on the water crisis in the country, Dr Ashraf said, “water metering in urban sector, water pricing policy, groundwater regulatory framework, and crop ecological zones as per the water availability is imperative.” He said the country’s growing water scarcity and inadequate storage capacity will be pushing Pakistan to touch water scarcity level by 2025. “If the water resources remain the same and population continues to rise at the same place, we will be in trouble within next few years.” The system efficiency of the country’s existing water reservoirs is less than 40% against overall available storage capacity. The country dumps almost 100 million acre feet (MAF) floodwater into the

Arabian Ocean annually. “The low water tariff, absence of groundwater regulatory framework and lack of crop zoning left the meager water resources at the disposal of less informed and imprudent agricultural practices of the farmers,” Dr Ashraf said. He said on the one hand floods of 2010, 2011 and 2014 incurred a loss of 90MAF to the country on the other hand millions of tones sedimentation depositing to Tarbela Dam every year was diminishing its potential to conserve water resource. Interestingly, the unique terrain of the country unveils matchless opportunities having 18 MAF hill torrent water potential that could be conserved and used for irrigation to household purposes, the PCRWR chairman said. Pakistan is the country that bears the largest aquifer (groundwater) reservoirs that are also being pulled out at an extreme pace

where the water table depletion is spiking up at a dangerous pace. “What we need, is implementation of national water policy and climate change policy in letter and spirit as well as result oriented interventions to set our direction right,” Dr Ashraf said. Citing the example of rice cultivation, he said, in the modern world even water intensive crop could be grown with minimal use of water. “Lack of knowledge on irrigation practices also causes lots of water wastage. Therefore, we need to improve governance and promote use of technology and better sowing practices.” After Ravi, Satluj, Chenab and Jehlum, the cradle of thousands of centuries old Indus River system is also dying and if timely actions are not ensured, impending water scarcity may lead to food insecurity. In this situation, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Economic Growth

and Agriculture Expert Muhammad Nawaz has recommended a holistic approach with the involvement of all stakeholders to counter this challenge. “Water governance involves all stakeholders for enhancing management and judicious use of water,” Nawaz said. “Pakistan’s water resources may decline to a drastic level in near future amid growing environmental crisis, global warming, population and absence of new reservoirs.” He said water market has vast potential in Pakistan. But, presently, the rich and landlords use major chunk of water resource on nominal charges. “Therefore, there is an urgent need to introduce water pricing to ensure water availability for underprivileged class during years ahead.” Nawaz emphasized that those owning thousands of acres of land should pay accordingly because it was them who consume massive amount of water.

## PNCA to hold art exhibition “Collective Ground”

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) is organizing an art exhibition “Collective Ground” on July 6 at National Art Gallery to showcase the sculptures of 29 prominent and imminent sculptors of Pakistan. The purpose of the exhibition is to highlight the work of Pakistani sculptors at national level and help the younger generation to understand this branch of visual arts, said an official. Divulging details of the exhibition to APP on Sunday the official said the exhibition portrayed contemporary artworks followed by traditional techniques where each artist brought a different set of skills to present his splendid works. “The exhibition will continue till Aug 10, from Monday- Friday and timings will be remained as 9:00 am till 4:00 pm”, he added. – APP

## Bugti, Hamza agree to curb drug trafficking

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Narcotics Control Nawabzada Shahzain Bugti and Chief Minister of Punjab Hamza Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday agreed for a joint strategy to curb drug trafficking and its use in the Punjab province. Minister for Narcotics Control Nawabzada Shahzain Bugti met with Chief Minister of Punjab Hamza Shehbaz Sharif and discussed domestic and political situation in the country, said a statement issued here. The minister said use of drugs in educational institutions would be discouraged while public will also be made aware of use of different types of drugs and its dangers. In the meeting, CM Punjab assured all-out cooperation for the prevention of drug trafficking. – APP

## Kyrgyz envoy hopes for completion of energy projects

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan to Pakistan Ulanbek Totuaev on Sunday hoped that the CASA-1000 projects would be completed soon to meet Pakistan’s energy needs for enhancing the bilateral cooperation in this sector. The CASA-1000 project, which was aimed to bring surplus electricity from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan hydropower stations in summer times to Pakistan through the territory of Afghanistan, Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan, Ulanbek Totuaev told APP here. The Ambassador said “This massive infrastructural project will be beneficial for all of its parties by fulfilling the energy needs and strengthening regional connectivity. He said that nowadays the governments of participating states are actively working on the completion of the project.” “Together with that, the process of building electricity lines is also going on,” he added. – APP

## Electric fan exports increases 2.33%

ISLAMABAD: The exports of electric fan from the country witnessed an increase of 2.33 percent during the eleven months of fiscal year (2021-22) as compare to the corresponding period of last fiscal year. The country exported electric fan worth US \$28.520 million during July-May (2021-22) as against the exports of US \$27.872 million during July-May (2020-21), showing growth of 2.33 percent, according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). In terms of quantity, the exports of electric fan however decreased by 10.16 percent by going down from 1,782 to 1,601 , according to the data. Meanwhile, on year-to-year basis, the exports of electric fan grew by 51.85 percent during the month of May 2022 as compared to the same month of last year. – APP



## Briefs

**Chairman  
FPCCI,  
regrets 15  
percent  
cuts on GB's  
budget**

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Federation Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), Capital office, Qurban Ali on Sunday said the government 15 percent cut on Gilgit-Baltistan's annual budget 2022-23 not a good omen for GB's economy, which is experiencing severe unrest. The local Annual Development Plan (ADP) in coming budget was also cut, which will slow down the growth process and increase unemployment in the GB, Chairman FPCCI, Qurban Ali said this while talking to the media here. He said that budget cuts in Gilgit-Baltistan would reduce employment opportunities and increase unemployment in the region. Qurban said that the suicide rate among the youth in Gilgit-Baltistan has been on the rise for the last several months, which is showing great frustration among the local youth. Chairman FPCCI said "For the last several months, the suicide rate among the youth in Ghazar district of Gilgit-Baltistan has been very high as they are fed up with unemployment and economic conditions in the region." He said that Gilgit-Baltistan had been ruled by both PML-N and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) in the past but was unexpected from both the parties. He said that during the previous government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), a lot of work was done on tourism in Gilgit-Baltistan and many infrastructure projects were launched. When the PTI was in Federal government, the number of air-flights in GB increased and at the same time Skardu Airport was approved for international flights. These major initiatives would open up vast opportunities for business, industry and tourism to flourish in the GB. He said that special economic package should be given to Gilgit-Baltistan and economic emergency should be implemented there as it is the gateway of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Chairman FPCCI said "CPEC and Gilgit-Baltistan are inseparable without which the concept of completion of the great project of CPEC would be incomplete."

He said that work on Gilgit-Baltistan Special Economic Zone (SEZs) which was included in the 9 Special Economic Zones of CPEC is still incomplete. He demanded that work on Gilgit-Baltistan, Special Economic Zone be started soon so that the industrial sector could flourish there. Qurban said that provincial autonomy to Gilgit-Baltistan was the demand of the people, there for a status of province should be met so that the people there could get their constitutional rights. — APP

**Competitive  
agriculture  
financing  
sought**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) on Sunday called upon the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) to try and restructure its agricultural finance regime, as 90 percent of farm loans were offered for production and only 6-10 percent for agricultural development. Similarly, 1.7% of the total agri credit was distributed among farmers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Azad Jammu Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan which is a worrying factor. PBF Vice President Ahmad Jawad said in a statement "Give us the competitive agri financing, we will give you growth," as the agriculture sector has the potential to reach 5 percent of the GDP target. He said that banks had no institutional means at their disposal to gather meaningful data about farms and rural businesses. The banks were not equipped to make informed investment decisions as far as Agri-financing was concerned. And without formal financing, agricultural transformation was not possible. So, the country's population would continue to face food shortage. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Sweden Henrik Persson hosted a dinner to celebrate Midsummer with Swedish alumni in Pakistan. — DNA

# Film a brilliant vehicle to tell stories: Christian Turner

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The British Council in collaboration with Patakha Pictures in Pakistan and the Scottish Documentary Institute in the UK organized a film screening event for "Pakistan Stories" at a hotel in Islamabad. Pakistan Stories seeks to support a new generation of female Pakistani documentary filmmakers to enable them to create engaging films that reflect on their society, and Pakistan's 75 years of independence. The event celebrated the journey of the ten selected filmmakers through the programme. The filmmakers worked in pairs over a period of eight weeks and were mentored by experts in Pakistan and Scotland to develop and finance their creative skills so they could produce five short documentaries in a safe environment and reach new local and international audiences through their work. Important themes the documentaries cover include: early child and forced marriages, the rights of transgenders, women and disability, women in education and the feminist movement in Pakistan. Guests at the event included the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Christian Turner, the Deputy Director of the British Council, Mark Crossey, filmmaker and

founder of Patakha Pictures, Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, the Director of the Scottish Documentary Institute, Noe Mendelle, as well as top diplomats, senior government officials, journalists, leading experts from the arts space, and young aspiring artists and filmmakers. The British High Commissioner to Paki-



stan, Christian Turner said: "Film is a brilliant vehicle for telling stories and giving women voice. With trailblazers like two-time Oscar winner Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, and by combining the best of UK and Pakistan expertise, we can unleash the potential of the next generation of female filmmakers and women and girls across Pakistan."

The Deputy Director at the British Council Pakistan, Mark Crossey said: "The British Council is delighted to have enabled this platform for emerging female Pakistani filmmakers to hone their skills and tell stories about Pakistan as we mark its 75th anniversary with our Pakistan/UK: New Perspectives programme of activity. I look forward to these films being showcased across festivals in Pakistan and the UK." The founder of Patakha Pictures and leading filmmaker, Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy said: "In the past week I have witnessed the growth of these ten filmmakers and I know that we are laying the seeds of a movement that will ensure that young women across Pakistan will be empowered to finally to tell their own stories in their own words." The Director of Scottish Documentary Institute, Noe Mendelle said: "Scottish Documentary Institute is very excited to be part of a collaboration with Patakha Pictures and British Council Pakistan, involving nurturing female filmmakers in enhancing their directorial voice in documentary. Working with reality is a humbling experience and female filmmakers are especially well equipped creatively and mentally to engage with emotional, challenging stories that need to be shared with the rest of the world."

## New electricity market regime to attract more Chinese investment

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The introduction of a wholesale electricity market in Pakistan will attract more Chinese investment in the renewable energy sector of the country, an investment expert told Gwadar Pro. National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) on June 6 awarded market operator license to Central Power Purchasing Authority-Guarantee (CPPA-G) under the Competitive Trading Bilateral Contract Market (CTBCM) initiative. The new regime allows large consumers of 1 megawatts or above to directly purchase electricity from the generation or transmission company of their

choice at mutually-agreed tariffs and terms and conditions. The new regulations will also allow the generation companies to utilise existing transmission lines to supply electricity to their clients in case of remote generation facilities. Pakistan was struggling from the last 30 years to implement this regime, NEPRA said. CTBCM will open Pakistan's power sector, especially the renewable energy market, to international investors. As Chinese renewable energy firms are already involved in several solar and wind energy projects in Pakistan, they will be able to play a lead role as they have better knowledge of the local market dynamics, an investment analyst with Dubai-based Burj Capital said.

## AIOU to hold training workshop on language documentation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A four-day international training workshop on language documentation at Allama Iqbal Open University will begin on Monday, June 27 and will continue till June 30. This workshop is being organised by the Centre for Language and Translation studies, AIOU in collaboration with the University of North Texas, USA and Englishers LLL International (Turkey). Prof. Dr. Sadaf Munshi, Director of Workshop, University of North Texas, USA, will give a detailed presentation

on language documentation along with a team of linguists. She will provide training on ways to preserve languages. Linguists from Turkish and Pakistani universities will also shed light on how to organise and archive the less described and endangered indigenous languages. The inaugural session will be chaired by Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum while Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Maryam Aurangzeb will be the chief guest. Director, Center for Language and Translation Studies, Dr. Ghulam Ali and Dr. Lubna Omar, will explain the aims and objectives of the training workshop.

## People must not throw garbage in Nullahs

RAWALPINDI: Managing Director (MD), Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) Rawalpindi Muhammad Tanveer has said that WASA was fully prepared to cope with any flood situation during Monsoon. He urged the citizens do not throw shopping bags, solid waste and garbage in Nullah Lai and other nullahs of the town. He informed that the agency on the directives of Commissioner Rawalpindi, Noor ul Amin Mengal had kicked off the cleanliness work of 15 nullahs of Rawalpindi, passing through different areas of the city. Muhammad Tanveer informed that WASA had completed dredging and de-silting work of Nullah Lai and sewerage lines across the city. The Municipal Corporation Rawal-

pindi cleans the nullahs of the city every year, but this year, due to delay in cleaning of the drains, there is a danger of urban flooding. The Commissioner Rawalpindi had ordered to immediately start cleaning work of 15 nullahs and Municipal Corporation Rawalpindi (MCR) had deposited Rs 35 million to WASA in this regard. WASA Rawalpindi had also requested the Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi to declare an emergency so that immediate action could be taken and the cleanliness work of 15 drains could be started. He further informed that there are 15 small and big nullahs in the city, most of which fall in Nullah Lai. The MD said that WASA had started the cleanliness work utilizing heavy machinery. It has also

been decided to start the cleanliness work on all the drains at the same time so that the project could be completed within shortest possible time frame, he added. The cleanliness work in Sadiqabad, Arya Mohalla, Zia Colony, Dhok Matkal and Kohati Bazaar had been started while the work on the remaining drains would be started from Monday. In view of the forecast of heavy rains in July, day and night work would be done and the project would be completed in one month, he said. Due to shortage of funds, the work would be carried out particularly under the bridges of the nullahs and at specific places so that the obstacles due to garbage in these nullahs could be removed and the flow of water would be re-

stored. "However, due to encroachments in some areas on these nullahs, access to heavy machinery is not possible and manual work would be done," the MD said. The entire process would be overseen by the district administration while a committee comprising representatives of WASA, MCR and Waste Management Company would monitor the cleanliness work. Muhammad Tanveer also urged the citizens not to throw garbage and solid waste in nullahs and dump their waste in waste bins of waste management company. However, instructions have also been issued to the police patrolling parties to take immediate action against those found dumping garbage and solid waste in nullahs, he added. — APP

## Jammu-based employees' protest enters 26th day

ISLAMABAD: In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, the ongoing protest of All Jammu Based Reserved Category Employees entered into its 26th day, today. According to Kashmir media service, the protest at Ambedkar Chowk in Jammu city is being spearheaded by All Jammu Based Reserved Category Employees Association, Kashmir. Various socio-religious organizations came forward in their support to boost their morale and assured them to take up their demands to the high ups. — APP

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) has set up a special control room to monitor the possible flood situation in nullahs during monsoon. According to RCB spokesman, the flood control room would monitor the water level in all the nullahs. In case of any emergency, the citizens could call at UAN 051-111-01-01, Additional Cantonment Executive Officer's number 0333-4599012, Complaint Unit, Muhammad Riasat 0321-5825950, Muhammad Saleem 0334-5405620, Sanitation Unit, 0321-5750321, and Medical Unit 0300-5232966. He said that the board had finalized arrangements for monsoon season including measures to avert any destruction and flooding in low-lying areas. Special teams had been formed for a quick response, relief and rescue operation in case of any emergency, he added. The spokesman said, the control room would work round the clock and the staff concerned would remain present on duty in the control room. Leaves of the staff concerned had also been cancelled, he added. Sanitary supervisors and other officials of different areas had also been directed to monitor the urban flooding situation in their respective areas, he added. The spokesman informed that Cantonment Executive Officer, Imran Gulzar had also visited control room and different areas to review the arrangements and directed the authorities to utilize all available resources to cope with an emergency situation. — APP

## Confucius Institute launches final of bridge competition

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Li Bijian, Chinese Consul General in Karachi hoped that Pakistani young students can be the inheritors of China-Pakistan friendship, the enhancers of the development of China and Pakistan, the promoters of the hearts and minds of the people of China and Pakistan, to convey the friendship of 'higher than the mountain, deeper than the sea and sweeter than honey' in Chinese language, according to a report of Gwadar Pro. During the Karachi Division Final of the 21st Chinese Bridge-Chinese Proficiency Competition for International University Students jointly launched by the Chinese Consulate General in Karachi and Confucius Institute at the University of Karachi (CIUK), the Consul General stated that the meaning of "Chinese Bridge" has gone beyond the competition itself. It is a bridge of acquaintance, friendship and cooperation. He hoped Chinese and Paki-

stani young students will jointly build a closer community with a shared future between the two countries in the new era, and contribute to the promotion of China-Pakistan cultural exchanges and the construction of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). On the occasion, Nasira Khatoun, Vice Chancellor, University of Karachi, said that the terrorist attack on April 26 saddened them in the loss of three Chinese teachers

“According to the Sindh Government's proposal, the auditorium of University of Karachi will be named after the Chinese teacher killed”

and a Pakistani driver. "According to the Sindh Government's proposal, the auditorium of University of Karachi will be named after the Chinese teacher killed. University of Karachi is actively helping the Confucius Institute resume their dai-

ly operations and will do its best to provide a safe and comfortable working environment for the Confucius Institute," the VC added. In his speech, Zhang Xiaoping, the Chinese director of CIUK mentioned that the teachers who were killed in the attack had done great work for the competition. CIUK officially resumed teaching activities on May 23. Chinese and local teachers continue to teach

Pakistani students Chinese both online and offline. Zhang Xiaoping added that Sichuan Normal University and Karachi University will continue to strengthen cooperation and promote academic exchanges between the two universities.

Zhang further expressed deep gratitude to the Consulate General of Karachi for providing safety protection for the teachers, arranging treatment for the injured teachers and fully supporting the aftermath of the Confucius Institute after the terrorist attack. Muhammad Nasiruddin Khan, the Pakistani director of CIUK, believes that with the joint efforts of both countries, CIUK will definitely achieve further glory. The final was divided into four parts: self-introduction, knowledge competition, talent show and keynote speech. During the competition, contestants shared their indissoluble bonds with the Chinese language and delivered speeches with the theme of "All under heaven are of one family". Their standard pronunciation and sincere emotion impressed the judges and the audience. Yousuf Khan, a student of the University of Karachi, won the first place in the final of the Karachi Division. He will represent Pakistan in the final of the Chinese Bridge Division in China.

## 'PAP developed to combat human Trafficking'

ISLAMABAD: Director of Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO), Syed Kausar Abbas on Sunday said that the government has constituted committees in collaboration with public private partnership in order to combat the Human Trafficking. Talking to APP, he said that comprehensive Provincial Action Plan (PAP) was developed in consultation with all the relevant stakeholders including police, FIA, labor department, home department, social welfare, media, human rights department of Punjab. He further added that with this Action Plan, an agreement was made on spreading public awareness on trafficking in person by developing awareness content with the help and collaboration of government departments and its effective dissemination with coordination and help from media houses. — APP

## MTP personnel trained to deal with emergencies

RAWALPINDI: A police spokesman on Sunday said that the personnel of Murree Tourism Police (MTP) are being trained to deal with emergencies. He informed that Rawalpindi District Police on the directives of City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Syed Shehzad Nadeem Bukhari had launched a training session for capacity building of MTP. First training session was organized in Murree Arts Council in collaboration with Punjab Emergency Service, Rescue-1122, he said. Superintendent of Police (SP) Kohsar, Haider Ali and officers of Punjab Emergency Service, Rescue-1122 delivered lectures to the officers and personnel of MTP. The training session was organized for 80 personnel of Murree Tourism Police and they were imparted training to deal with different emergencies. Practical training on first aid and emergency response was given to save lives of the citizens. SP Kohsar on the occasion said that MTP were taking all possible steps to ensure protection of the tourists and to provide them more facilities and spread awareness. — APP

## RCB sets up control room to monitor possible flood situation in drains



## The SC puts gun rights above human life

THE US Supreme Court this week embraced a vision of the Second Amendment that is profoundly at odds with precedent and the dangers that American communities face today, upending the longstanding practice of letting states decide for themselves how to regulate gun possession in public. This decision reveals the vast gulf between ideologues on the court and those Americans — ordinary people and their representatives in Congress — who want this country to be safer from guns. As the high court issued its 135-page ruling, the Senate, across the street, approved an 80-page bipartisan bill that tightens restrictions on who can possess and purchase a gun. The House of Representatives passed the bill on Friday, and President Biden signed it Saturday. This breakthrough came after decades of virtually no congressional action on gun safety and was fueled by public outrage over a series of mass shootings, including the recent massacres in Uvalde, Texas, and Buffalo.

In its 6-to-3 ruling, the supermajority of Republican-appointed justices struck down a century-old New York law that placed strict limits on handguns. But the decision will also affect similar laws in New Jersey, Massachusetts, Maryland, Hawaii and California. Many of those are states with some of the lowest rates of gun deaths in the country. Extensive research has shown that strict regulation of guns leads to fewer deaths.

New York's law requires that a person seeking a concealed carry permit for a handgun must show a good reason for doing so, known as "proper cause," which covers law enforcement officers and others who can demonstrate a reason to fear for their own safety.

"We know of no other constitutional right that an individual may exercise only after demonstrating to government officers some special need," Justice Thomas wrote. "It is not how the Second Amendment works when it comes to public carry for self-defense."

The majority left open the ability of states to ban guns from certain "sensitive" places such as schools and government buildings, but it cautioned that "there is no historical basis for New York to effectively declare the island of Manhattan a 'sensitive place.'"

The specifics of this bill matter. Of equal importance is the fact that the bipartisan legislation tackles an issue that has stymied Congress for decades. It isn't quite true, as some supporters of the new bill claim, that there hasn't been any gun control legislation passed in the past 30 years. Congress passed, and President Trump signed, a minor update to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System in 2018. But no legislation equal to the size of the problem has made it to a president's desk.

With this new law, however limited, lawmakers are at least responding to the fundamental mandate of every elected government to protect its citizens. Given the political paralysis in Congress on so many other issues, any progress on guns is progress worth making.

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## Lebanon needs a miracle

LEBANON'S caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati has been named again by parliamentary blocks to head a new government. But few expect him to succeed in forming a new government in time for next October's presidential elections amid unprecedented economic collapse and sharp political divisions. He was named by an unusually low count of 54 MPs, 20 votes fewer than the last time. The low number reflects the sharp divisions among the political parties on how to deal with the current financial meltdown, one of the world's worst economic crises since 1850, according to the World Bank.

Lebanon's GDP plunged to an estimated \$20.5 billion in 2021 from about \$55 billion in 2018, a steep decline "usually associated with wars", the World Bank noted. The Lebanese currency, the lira, has lost more than 90 per cent of its value, driving up the cost of living through the roof.

More than 80 per cent of Lebanon's population are now classified as living under the poverty line, with the majority of families not being able to afford regular meals, according to the United Nations. A severe fuel shortage means that homes in Lebanon get the equivalent of one hour of electricity a day.

The low number of votes Mikati got on Thursday also indicates that forming a new government will be virtually an impossible task. Forming a government in Lebanon usually takes long months due to the delicate sectarian structure that needs to be taken into account to allocate ministerial portfolios.

This time around, the new government is expected to be short lived even if Mikati managed somehow to form a new cabinet because of the October constitutional deadline to elect a new president by the highly fractured parliament to replace Michel Aoun. A new Prime Minister will have to be appointed then.

The political deadlock means that Lebanon's economic will only get worse as all proposed solutions will have to wait at least end of the year. And so will a proposed \$3 billion deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), widely seen as the only viable solution today to bring back the country from the brink of total collapse. It is hard to imagine what the Lebanese people are going through. And it is even harder to see how the situation can get any better in the current political conditions, dominated by Iran-backed Hezbollah, former warlords, and corrupt politicians. Lebanon truly needs a miracle. It is highly unlikely that Mikati can deliver that miracle under these circumstances.

## Saudi religious soft power diplomacy

James Dorsey

SAUDI Arabia has signaled for some time that it would like to formalize its expanding informal relations with Israel but needs a cover to do so. The kingdom has emphasized this in recent weeks as it sought Israeli acquiescence in the transfer by Egypt to Saudi Arabia of sovereignty over two islands at the top of the Red Sea and prepared for a possible visit by US President Joe Biden

GEOPOLITICS is written all over Saudi religious soft power efforts. Nowhere more so than when it comes to Israel and Jews because of the growing importance of security cooperation with the Jewish state and the influence of the Israeli lobby in the United States, the kingdom's most important yet problematic security partner. In the latest move, Saudi Arabia ensured that it would be the first stop on the first overseas trip by Deborah Lipstadt as US special envoy to combat anti-Semitism. "Lipstadt intends to build on the profoundly important Abraham Accords to advance religious tolerance, improve relations in the region, and counter misunderstanding and distrust," the State Department said in a statement. The department was referring to the accords by which the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan established diplomatic relations with Israel in the waning days of US President Donald J. Trump's administration. Ms. Lipstadt said that Saudi religious soft power diplomacy had created an atmosphere in which she could discuss with government officials and civil society leaders, who in the kingdom inevitably are likely to be linked to the government, "normalising the vision of the Jews and under-

standing of Jewish history for their population, particularly their younger population."

Saudi Arabia has had a particularly troubled attitude towards Jews even though an older generation of Saudis in regions close to Yemen recall a Jewish presence in the first half of the 20th century. Moreover, in the days when Israelis were barred from travelling to most Arab countries, Saudi Arabia also tailored its visa requirements to bar Jews. European foreign ministers planning at the time to pay official visits to the kingdom would at times confront demands that Jewish journalists be dropped from the group accompanying the official.

Some American Jews who had filled out Jewish as their religion on Saudi immigration forms would have them returned with the word Jewish replaced by the term Christian.

That began to change long before the rise of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. Mr. Bin Salman has accelerated the policy change. Earlier this month, Saudi Arabia announced that Israeli business people would be granted entry into the kingdom.

Saudi Arabia has also allowed Jacob Yisrael Herzog, a US-born rabbi resident in Israel, to visit the kingdom several times to attempt to build Jewish life publicly. Some Jewish critics have charged that his bombastic approach could backfire. Moreover, in a slow two-decade-long, tedious process, Saudi Arabia has made significant progress in scrubbing its school textbooks of anti-Semitic and other discriminatory and supremacist content.

To project Saudi Arabia as a moderate forward-looking nation and improve the kingdom's tarnished image, particularly in the United States, Mr. Bin Salman has met with American Jewish leaders. Many of those leaders are willing to give Saudi Arabia a pass on its abuse of human rights and still weak track record on religious tolerance to advance the cause of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Israel.

The crown prince has also turned the Muslim World League, once a prime vehicle for the Saudi government funding of Sunni Muslim ultra-conservatism globally, into a public relations tool for propagating Saudi religious tolerance.

The league's head, Mohammed al-Issa, a former Saudi justice minister, led a delegation of Muslim religious leaders on a ground-breaking visit in January 2020 to Auschwitz, one of Nazi Germany's foremost extermination camps for Jews. Earlier this month, he organized a Forum on Common Values among Religious

Followers in Riyadh. Participants included 47 Muslim scholars, 24 Christian leaders, 12 rabbis, and 7 Hindu and Buddhist figures.

The timing of Ms. Lipstadt's visit is significant. It comes weeks before an expected pilgrimage to Riyadh by President Joe Biden to tackle strains in the strategic relationship between the two countries.

Tensions have emerged over the degree and reliability of the US commitment to Gulf security, Saudi oil production policy in the wake of US and European sanctions against Russia for invading Ukraine, Saudi technological cooperation with China, and Mr. Biden's belief that Mr. Bin Salman was responsible for the 2018 killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. Moreover, the visits of Mr. Biden and Ms. Lipstadt come as hopes are fading that talks in Vienna between world powers and Iran will succeed in reviving the 2015 international agreement that curbed Iran's nuclear programme. A failure is likely to increase regional tension.

The spectre of a failure has driven increased regional cooperation between Gulf states, including Saudi Arabia and Israel. At the sharp end of confronting Iran, Israel unveiled its newly adopted Octopus Doctrine this month. The doctrine expands Israel's aiming at Iran's nuclear, missile and drone programmes by increasingly attacking targets in Iran rather than primarily on battlefields like Syria.

Barbara Leaf, the US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, put Ms. Lipstadt's visit in perspective when she told Congress last week that Mr. Biden hoped to achieve agreement on a roadmap for the establishment of diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Israel during his visit to the Middle East this month. US officials admit that it will be a lengthy process rather than a head-on lovey-dovey affair, as was the case between Israel and the UAE.

Saudi Arabia has signaled for some time that it would like to formalize its expanding informal relations with Israel but needs a cover to do so. The kingdom has emphasized this in recent weeks as it sought Israeli acquiescence in the transfer by Egypt to Saudi Arabia of sovereignty over two islands at the top of the Red Sea and prepared for a possible visit by US President Joe Biden.

"Saudis want to meet us, talk, and rub shoulders with us. They want to learn. I kept getting inquiries. There is incredible potential for co-operation between the Saudi people and Saudi companies and Israel," said Israeli businessman Eyal Waldheim who visited the kingdom in May travelling on a non-Israeli passport.

## Educational institutions and career building

Aqsa Ehsan

Pak is in need of Innovative, creative and smart ideas which will help Pakistan govt in stabilizing the economic crisis and different social issues of the nation including unemployment...

ACCORDING to the first-ever scientific research rating nations based on their levels of human capital, Pakistan stands 164th in the world for its contributions to education and health care as indicators of its commitment to economic progress. Any country's progress is determined by its literacy rate and educational quality. As a result, it is one of the most important national concerns. Pakistan's education system is one of the world's oldest. It still follows the same educational patterns and traditional teaching pedagogy which is insufficient to develop confidence and creative skills which are necessary for students to utilize in their professional lives and develop their own businesses which will not profit their own selves but will also be a great contribution to Pakistan's growth and industrialization in terms of opportunities. Pakistan is an underdeveloped country and hence unable to give jobs to every person according to their skills and qualification. To solve these problems, Pakistan needs young and educated people to take responsibility not for their own economic welfare but also for other unemployed populations who have not enough means to start business and are dependent on job opportunities. But educational institutions which hold the central place in this phenomenon are unable to facilitate students and hence Pakistan is still lacking in various fields of development.

The history of Pakistan shows that it has always been negligent towards major, serious and future oriented issues and this is the reason that it has lost the race of becoming an independent and developed country after a decade of independence whereas many Asian countries who focused education and industrial development by own young generation have included themselves in line of progressed and developed nation and China is the biggest example.

From 1972, the import duties were removed but private investments fell. Structural problems that arose at those times and are still existing in the modern world were not resolved. The situation will get worse and industrial progress and ration of goods production will decrease further. Although the government showed interest in Pakistan Industrial Development Corporation and its usefulness increased

in the 1960s, later on these industries started declining or minimizing the production and export rate due to limited resources and unfavorable conditions. Also, the manufactured products are not showing diversity. The major key factors behind limited industrialization include a sense of nationalization, inability to invest for technological advancement and rigid policies in the structure which doesn't allow to make a suitable environment for industrial development. The major problems behind this crisis include governmental ignorance and lack of awareness which can be fulfilled through introducing good education which include both theoretical and vocational training by both educational industry and government.

In Pakistani society, the presence of creative and innovative ideas exists among students and young graduates and if the need of educational guidance and availability of training programs are fulfilled, then these students can surely lead this country towards progress. Examples include the software industry. The software industry is accelerating and rising due to roles played by enthusiastic, professional and dedicated people of Pakistan and its output is in Billion dollars which is a meaningful addition in Pakistan's industrial growth and overall economic stability. If the same dedication, passion and hard work gets the right direction in other areas of interest of people, then surely Pakistan will grow in every industry either medicine, tourism, social and entertainment. Even the education industry needs new ideas and direction to change the pedagogy of teaching and to turn docile bodies into a useful asset of a country. Manufacturing is the third largest industry of Pakistan and lack of skills; no technological advancement and no practical teaching will not make progress in this industry and ultimately GDP will not grow. Limited number of people are working for fast and reliable production in the manufacturing industry but its ratio can increase by giving more awareness to students who are degree holders and are unable to find a job. With this practice in industry more students will get a job, more societies will grow and as a result it will create a good impact on the economy of Pakistan.

— The writer is PhD Scholar student of Department of Sociology, Quaid-I-Azam University Islamabad.

## Pak starring role in cake and carrot pomposity

Muhammad Afzal Sadaf



Pakistan always worked closely with US and strengthens its defense to cater threat from Indian side. When US accomplish his short term strategic goals, then the Pak and the US relations turntoward oscillating and mistrust. When US turn toward India, Pakistan loses his trust...

PAKISTAN-US relations always remained oscillating since the birth of Pakistan.

US focused on Pakistan and found him as trustworthy friend to achieve strategic goals in south Asian region, we witnessed that when the US involved in the war on terror in Afghanistan and that time Pakistan enjoyed the status of "Non NATO Ally".

Pakistan always worked closely with US and strengthens its defense to cater threat from Indian side. When US accomplish his short term strategic goals, then the Pakistan and the US relations turntoward oscillating and mistrust. When US turn toward India, Pakistan loses his trust on US and moved toward China for counterbalance. History shows that US never respected Pakistan's sovereignty and continue drone attacks on Pakistani soil even after parliament of Pakistan passed resolution to stop drone attacks and respect its sovereignty.

US always followed offensive realism and Pakistan persisted on defensive realism. We are witness of RemondDevis case, Abbottabad incident, Salala check post episode and drone attacks inside the Pakistani territories. Besides these bitter realities Pakistan never lose hope and try to maintain Pak-US friendship and mutual trust. Pakistan keepsaclose eye on balance relations with US and China. U.S and China have their own interest in the South Asian Region and they both found Pakistan as major player to achieve their

interests. CPEC is game changer for Pakistan and it found as backbone of Pakistan's economy. Pakistan and China committed to line up forty six Special Economic Zones (SEZs) alongside the CEPEC routes. Strengthen Pakistan is not in the interest of some international player and they did not missed any chance to sabotage it. Even after realize these things, Pakistan committed to safeguard its interests and keep balance in relations with both the major powers. A joint Navies exercise between the US and Pakistan is a sign of mutual trust and such types of exercise always shows that Pakistan and United States are working together for prosperous South Asia. Chargé Steuer said that "The military-to-military ties between the United States and Pakistan are strong and enduring".

On August, 15 Pakistan played important role when the US leaving Afghanistan and help U.S in evacuation of US nationals.

Former Prime Minister Imran khan appreciated the efforts and commitment of US support in economic dimension. Pakistan does not like to lose both US and China friendship. To strengthen its defense she need to work with both the countries to counter expected threat from India till the solution of Kashmir issue.

— The writer is PhD Scholar at Department of Political Science Islamia University Bahawalpur, Pakistan



## Briefs

## Pakistan, Saudi Arabia pledge to solidify relations

FROM PAGE 01

They also agreed to further enhance cordial relations and deep spirit of brotherhood into enduring strategic partnership, being vital players in the region with significant responsibility towards unity of Muslim Ummah. COAS was conferred upon King Abdulaziz Medal of Excellence for making significant contributions in defence cooperation between both the Countries.

## PM felicitates Army Chief

FROM PAGE 01

It is a great honour for the people and the armed forces of Pakistan," the prime minister posted a tweet. Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister, has conferred upon Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa, the King Abdulaziz Medal of Excellence, for making significant contributions in defence cooperation between the two countries. Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) in a press release on Sunday said that during an official visit to Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the COAS called on Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and Chief of General Staff (CGS) Saudi Armed Forces General Fayyadh Bin Hamed Al-Ruwaili at Jeddah.

## 'Monkeypox not yet a health emergency'

FROM PAGE 01

70 deaths in central Africa, where the disease is more common, have also been reported, chiefly in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Monkeypox, a viral illness causing flu-like symptoms and skin lesions, has been spreading largely in men who have sex with men outside the countries where it is endemic. There are vaccines and treatments available for monkeypox, although they are in limited supply. Some global health experts said WHO may be have been hesitant to make a declaration because its January 2020 declaration that the new coronavirus represented a public health emergency was largely met with scepticism around the world. But others said the outbreak met the criteria to be called an emergency. Gregg Gonslaves, an associate professor of epidemiology at Yale University who advised the committee but who is not a member of WHO, told Reuters by email on Saturday that he thought the decision was "misguided".

## Imran urges nation to reject turncoats

FROM PAGE 01

the constituency's voters to vote against the turncoat and ensure the victory of PTI candidate Malik Nawaz Awan in the PP-168 by-poll. Imran Khan claimed that police are trying to pressurize people ahead of the by-polls. He added that we have to beat the 'imported government' in the by-polls.

Earlier, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan decided to give a tough time to dissident members in the upcoming Punjab by-elections. The ECP has announced the schedule for election on 20 provincial seats vacated after defecting MPAs of the PTI were de-seated. The candidates will be announced as election symbols on June 24, while polling will be held on July 17. The ECP had de-seated 25 dissident Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) MPAs who voted for PML-N's Hamza Shahbaz Sharif in Punjab chief minister's election.



RAWALPINDI: Pakistani players take part in a practice session at Pindi Cricket Stadium for upcoming tour of Sri Lanka. – APP

## Russia to send Belarus nuclear-capable missiles

Putin has several times referred to nuclear weapons since his country invaded Ukraine on February 24 in what the West has seen as a warning not to intervene

## NEWS DESK

MOSCOW: Russia will supply Belarus with missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads after the president complained about nuclear-armed NATO flights coming close to the Belarusian border. President Vladimir Putin made the announcement on Saturday as he received Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko in Moscow. "In the coming months, we will transfer to Belarus Iskander-M tactical missile systems, which can use ballistic or cruise missiles, in their conventional and nuclear versions," Putin said in a broadcast on Russian television at the start of his meeting with Lukashenko in St Petersburg. At the meeting, Lukashenko expressed concern about the "aggressive", "confrontational", and "repulsive" policies of Belarus's neighbours Lithuania and Poland. He asked Putin to help his country mount a "symmetrical response" to what he said were nuclear-armed flights by the US-led NATO alliance near Belarus's borders. Putin offered to upgrade Belarusian warplanes to make them capable of carrying



nuclear weapons amid soaring tensions with the West over Ukraine. Last month, Lukashenko said his country had bought Iskander nuclear-capable missiles and

S-400 anti-aircraft anti-missile systems from Russia. "Many Su-25 [aircraft] are in service with the Belarusian military. They could be upgraded in an appropriate way," Putin said. "This modernisation should be carried out in aircraft factories in Russia and the training of personnel should start in accordance with this. We will agree on how to accomplish this."

Putin has several times referred to nuclear weapons since his country invaded Ukraine on February 24 in what the Moscow has alleged that NATO planned to admit Ukraine and use it as a platform to threaten Russia. Russia's move has not only triggered a barrage of Western sanctions but also prompted Sweden and Russia's northern neighbour Finland to apply to join the Western alliance.

In the past week, Lithuania in particular has infuriated Russia by blocking the transit of goods subject to European sanctions traveling across its territory from Russia, through Belarus, to Russia's Baltic exclave of Kaliningrad. Russia called it a "blockade" but Lithuania has said it affects only 1 percent of the normal goods transit on the route and passenger traffic is unaffected.

## North Korea slams US 'aggression'

PYONGYANG: North Korea on Saturday condemned "aggression moves" by Washington and Seoul, vowing to take revenge as it marked the 72nd anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War at a time of rising tension on the Korean Peninsula. Amid concerns North Korea could be preparing to conduct its first nuclear test in five years, South Korean President Yoon Sukyeol and US President Joe Biden agreed in May to deploy more US weapons if it was necessary to deter the North. – Agencies

## Saudi Crown Prince, Iraqi PM review bilateral relationship

JEDDAH: Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa Al-Kadhimi held talks in Jeddah, during which they reviewed the bilateral relations between the two brotherly countries and areas of joint cooperation, state media reported early Sunday. The two leaders also "exchanged views on a number of issues, which contribute to supporting and strengthening security and stability in the region," according to the Saudi Press Agency (SPA). Al-Kadhimi and his delegation was welcomed on their arrival at Jeddah's King Abdulaziz International Airport late on Saturday by the crown prince and other members of the Saudi delegation. Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman welcomes Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa Al-Kadhimi (L) in Jeddah on Saturday night. (SPA) The session was attended by Prince Abdullah bin Bandar, Minister of National Guard; Prince Khalid bin Salman, Dy Minister of Defense; Prince Faisal bin Farhan, Minister of Foreign Affairs; Minister of Trade Majid bin Abdullah Al-Qasabi; Chief of General Intelligence Khalid bin Ali Al-Humaidan; and Saudi Ambassador to Iraq Abdulaziz Al-Shammari. – DNA

## 'Paralympic athletes, our assets and heroes'

KARACHI: Legendry squash player and former World Champion Jahangir Khan has said that sports has the power to build a better society and the Olympic Moment can bring people and nations from diverse origins, linguistic backgrounds, cultures and faiths together in peace and harmony. The objective of the Olympic Day celebrations is to spread the message to seeking togetherness, highlighting the power that sport has to build a better world, by uniting people under one roof in sports activities. As part of this, people are encouraged to move together for peace through a range of local and international activities. He was speaking as a chief guest at a function held in connection with the second phase of World Olympic Day celebrations by Pakistan Olympic Association Environment Commission (POAEC) here the other day. – APP



NAWABSHAH: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif offering Fateha for the deceased mother of Asif Ali Zardari. – DNA

## The world reacts to US abortion ruling

## MONITORING DESK

WASHINGTON: The US Supreme Court's overturning of the constitutional right to abortion is being felt in countries across the world, where activists on both sides of the debate have been explaining what it means to them. **US touches 'raw nerve' in Italy:** In 1978, five years after Roe v Wade, Italy legalised abortion with Law 194. And while it is not the same lightning rod political issue here, the rise of a new hard-right conservative politics, ever closer to the Catholic church, has brought it back into focus - and the US Supreme Court's decision is reverberating in Italy too.

From the political left and centre, there's been a chorus of condemnation and alarm. Emma Bonino, a left-wing former foreign minister who helped pass Law 194, said it showed the risk in Italy of moving backwards and of "losing achievements that had seemed permanent." But on the right, some feel galvanised. "A great victory", declared Simone Pillon from the far-right League, adding that he hoped Italy and Europe would follow suit. **A passionate response across Ireland:** Across the island of Ireland news of the US Supreme Court ruling has triggered a swift and passionate response. The issue stirs deep emo-

tions here where abortion was only relatively recently decriminalised. Many vocal Irish campaign groups and activists still exist on both sides. "The world continues to watch America become unrecognisable," wrote Dr Jennifer Cassidy on Twitter, a university lecturer who was in Dublin in 2018 when jubilant crowds celebrated as the Republic of Ireland voted to decriminalise abortion. Many on the pro-choice side have been reliving memories of that day, now expressing their horror at what they are witnessing in the US. **Conservative groups emboldened:** Just as they felt the tide was beginning to turn on abortion in Latin America, many reproduc-

tive rights' campaigners now fear the worst following the Supreme Court ruling on Roe v Wade. "This will embolden the most conservative groups in our countries who consistently deny women rights", says Mariana Moisa, a leading pro-abortion rights' activist in El Salvador where abortion is banned in all cases including where the mother's life is endangered, rape or incest. "The denial of the human rights of women and girls being forced to bear children who are the product of abuse" already disproportionately affects the poorest in society, she says. Meanwhile, anti-abortion politicians who control El Salvador's parliament have

welcomed the move and insist that their position on abortion remains the dominant view in the Americas. **'A devastating setback':** Canada doesn't often like to butt its nose in its neighbour's - and largest trading partner's - business. But when the Supreme Court overruled Roe v Wade, Canada's progressive-leaning prime minister, Justin Trudeau, did not mince words, calling it a "devastating setback" and "horrific" for women. "Quite frankly, it's an attack on everyone's freedoms and rights," Mr Trudeau said from the Commonwealth summit in Kigali, Rwanda. **'America is a model for the world':** Gender justice activists in India have

described the ruling as "a huge step back for women's rights" and say it's guided by "Victorian morality". Dr Veena JS, activist and forensic medicine professor who teaches medical ethics to doctors, says the Roe v Wade ruling will impact women's reproductive rights not just in the US but have a cascading effect around the world too. "America is generally a model for the world and I fear, at some point, India could take a cue from them and bring in a similar legislation," she says. "And we will be forced to raise children we don't want." This, Dr Veena says, will affect the physical and mental health of women and children.

## Norway pays tribute to victims of Oslo shooting

FROM PAGE 01

"Bullets cannot kill love," said the head of the Church, Olav Fykse Tveit. The shooting occurred at around 1:00 am on Saturday (2300 GMT on Friday) near the London club in Oslo's packed nightlife district, where parties were in full swing. Two men in their 50s and 60s died. Twenty-one other people were wounded. Police quickly arrested the suspect, whom they described as a 42-year-old Norwegian man known to the nation's security services. Norwegian media named him as Zanier Matapour. The suspect "has a long history of violence and threats", PST chief Roger Berg said. He said the man had been on the PST's radar "since 2015 in connection with concerns about his radicalisation." He also had "difficulties with his mental health", Berg added. Police ordered the man to be placed under "judicial observation" to determine his mental state. He refused on Saturday to be questioned as to his motives. On Saturday, the intelligence services raised the country's threat level from moderate to "extraordinary".

## Sindh LG polls: First phase ends with violence

FROM PAGE 01

the polling was stopped due to some reason. The 14 districts of Sindh include Larkana, Kambar-Shahdadkot, Shikarpur, Jacobabad, Kashmore, Sukkur, Ghotki, Khairpur, Naushehro Feroze, Shaheed Benazirabad, Sanghar, Mirpurkhas, Umerkot, and Tharparkar. Elections in the rest of the districts of Sindh will be held on July 24, media reported. At least 21,298 candidates are in the field against 6,277 seats of 101 town committees, 23 municipal committees, 14 district councils, four municipal corporations, eleven town municipal corporations and 887 union councils and union committees.

Earlier in the day, the local body elections were postponed in a few days due to misprinting (typographical errors) of the names of candidates in the ballot papers, confirmed a spokesperson of the ECP. He maintained that the ECP will issue a new schedule for elections on the seats and added that the commission has launched an inquiry in this regard. Meanwhile, several candidates in Nawabshah staged protests over misprinting of election symbols on the ballot papers. A TLP candidate was of the view that he was allotted the symbol of a "crane" but it was printed as a "queen" in the ballot papers. However, the presiding officer stopped the voting process on the seat. Some incidents of violence, clashes, and attacks on polling officials were also reported in different areas of the province. The situation became tense when a group of armed people attacked the social security polling station in Nawabshah and held the polling staff hostage, according to the presiding officer. Later, they fled the polling station along with the election material, he added.

## Kagame defends Rwanda on rights

KIGALI: President Paul Kagame on Saturday fiercely defended Rwanda's record on human rights and political freedoms as the curtains closed on a Commonwealth summit where his country came under intense scrutiny. The Commonwealth also welcomed two new members into the fold at its summit in Kigali - the French-speaking West African states of Togo and Gabon that have no historic ties to Britain. The decision to hold the gathering in Rwanda was heavily criticised by rights watchdogs, which accused Commonwealth leaders of turning a blind eye to repression and the jailing of opponents in the host country. Kagame, who has been de facto ruler since the end of the genocide in 1994, told reporters Rwanda was proud of its record and would not be lectured by outsiders. – APP



Briefs

'Modi regime can't mislead world'

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: Mushaal Hussein Mullick, wife of jailed Kashmiri Hurriyat Leader Yasin Malik lashed out at fascist Narendra Modi Modi regime for its plan to host a G20 meeting in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) in a bid to present a false and misleading narrative on Kashmir situation, which was virtually turned into a 'slaughter house'. Mushaal, who is Chairperson of the Peace and Culture Organization said in a statement on Saturday that holding the G20 summit in IIOJK was nothing but just a façade, as its sole objective was to spread mere propaganda. She said that on the one hand brutal regime intensified the reign of terror in IIOJK to crush the Kashmiri freedom movement on the other, it announced holding the G20 summit in the world's largest torture cell occupied territory to mislead the world community about the real situation in the scenic valley. Mushaal said that if Modi regime should have the courage to allow foreign fact-finding missions including rights groups to IIOJK instead of holding the G20 summit in the territory in an attempt to give credence to its false claims of normalcy in the territory. The Hurriyat leader went on to say that the G20 summit in IIOJK, which she called a smoke-screen, aimed at diverting international attention from India's massive HR violations in Kashmir, as India wanted to distort the reality of Kashmiris' freedom struggle by holding G20 summit in the valley.

Modi grilled for using army officer to defend his policy

**DNA**

JAMMU: All India Congress Committee (AICC) leader Capt (ret'd) Ajay Yadav on Sunday hit out at the BJP-led Indian government for its "ill-conceived" Agnipath scheme and said it is not only anti-youth but also against the interests of the country. Yadav claimed that there are 62 lakh vacancies in the country in the government sector which needs to be filled. "The Agnipath scheme is not only anti-youth but against the interests of the nation. It will reduce the strength of our armed forces in the years to come even as our country is surrounded by hostile neighbours like China and India," he told reporters in Jammu.

Putin to make first foreign trip since Ukraine war

**AGENCIES**

MOSCOW: Vladimir Putin will visit two small former Soviet states in central Asia this week, Russian state television reported on Sunday, in what would be the Russian leader's first known trip abroad since ordering the invasion of Ukraine. Russia's Feb. 24 invasion has killed thousands of people, displaced millions more and led to severe financial sanctions from the West, which Putin says are a reason to build stronger trade ties with other powers such as China, India and Iran. Pavel Zarubin, the Kremlin correspondent of the Rossiya 1 state television station, said Putin would visit Tajikistan and Turkmenistan and then meet Indonesian President Joko Widodo for talks in Moscow. In Dushanbe, Putin will meet Tajik President Imomali Rakhmon, a close Russian ally and the longest-serving ruler of a former Soviet state. In Ashgabat, he will attend a summit of Caspian nations including the leaders of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Iran and Turkmenistan, Zarubin said.

# NATO summit host seeks focus on southern security

**DNA**

MADRID: Spain is lobbying for NATO to pay more attention to security threats on its southern flank when the military alliance gathers for a summit in Madrid later this week. But with the war in Ukraine entering its fifth month, the priority for Spain's NATO partners remains firmly on deterring Russian in the east. When NATO leaders convene in Madrid on June 28-30 they are due to revamp the alliance's strategic concept, which outlines its main security tasks and challenges but has not been revised since 2010. Spanish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Abares has been pushing for NATO to broaden its scope to help deal with non-military threats such as "the political use of energy resources and illegal immigration" in Africa. "The threats are as much from the southern flank as from the eastern flank," he told a Madrid news conference on Wednesday. Madrid is also concerned about lawlessness and violent Islamist movements in the Sahel region, a vast territory stretching across the south of the Sahara Desert. "We have this war in Europe, but the situation in Africa is really worrying," said Spanish Defense Minister Margarita Robles. The issue is particularly acute for Spain, a main gateway into Europe for irregular migration from Africa and a country which relies on Algeria for gas supplies. Last year Morocco allowed thousands of migrants to enter Spain's North African enclave of Ceuta during a diplomatic crisis over the disputed Western Sahara, prompting Madrid to accuse Rabat of "blackmail." Although the two countries



recently normalized their relations after Spain ended its decades-long position of neutrality over Western Sahara to publicly support Morocco's stance, the migration crisis hasn't come to an end. On Friday at dawn, around 2,000 African migrants tried to storm the border with Melilla, the other Spanish enclave on Morocco's northern coast. At least 23 died in the incursion, making it the deadliest incident to occur at the borders of the two Spanish enclaves – the only borders between the EU and Africa. And earlier this month Morocco's arch-rival Algeria suspended a co-operation treaty with Spain in response to Madrid's U-turn over Western Sahara. But with an active conflict on NATO's eastern

flank, it is going to be "an uphill struggle" to convince member states to make a commitment to the southern flank, said Sinan Ulgen, a NATO expert at the Carnegie Europe think-tank in Brussels. "The war in Ukraine has changed the equation. The threat from Russia has become the main preoccupation for almost all the countries," the former Turkish diplomat said. In Washington, US national security spokesman John Kirby said "the focus right now is on the eastern flank." "But there remains a continued effort to make sure we are also paying attention to the southern flank," he added. In an interview published Saturday by Spanish daily El Pais, NATO secretary-general Jens Stoltenberg said the Alliance would

"strengthen (its) cooperation with southern countries," mentioning Mauritania in particular. Aside from Russia, Washington's other major concern is China, which is expected to be mentioned in NATO's strategic concept for the first time. To try to convince its NATO allies, Spain has sounded the alarm over the growing presence of Russian mercenaries in African nations like Mali and the Central African Republic, arguing instability could increase African migration to Europe. Madrid has also suggested that Russia was behind Spain's recent diplomatic spat with Algeria. "Unfortunately the threats from the south are increasingly Russian threats from the south," Abares said. Ulgen said that another difficulty is that while other southern European nations want a greater NATO engagement in Africa, they have different priorities, making it hard to set a common alliance-led strategy. "Rome, Paris, Madrid, Ankara still assess the political and security challenges differently. That is the fundamental reason why there is not a stronger push for NATO to have a bigger role" in the southern flank, said Ulgen. In addition, many top US policymakers believe NATO should focus on territorial defense, not non-conventional threats, said Angel Saz, the director of the Center for Global Economy and Geopolitics at Spain's Esade business school. "And the only threat to territorial defense is Russia. The Sahel can destabilize Europe, but it will not conquer Spain or Italy," he said. Spain has "perhaps put too much emphasis" on the call for a greater NATO role in the southern flank and "it runs the risk of under accomplishing," he added.

Spain reports 1st homegrown cholera case since 1979

**AGENCIES**

OVIEDO: Spain has detected its first local case of cholera since 1979, health authorities confirmed on Wednesday. Speaking at an epidemiology conference, Madrid Public Health Director Elena Andrades confirmed that the cholera case was detected in a girl in Madrid last week. She was treated in a private hospital but has now recovered from the bacterial infection. Several Spanish media outlets reported that the infection has been traced back to tap water from a farm in the province of Toledo, which has now been sealed off. Cholera outbreaks can spread rapidly in areas with inadequate treatment of sewage and drinking water. However, epidemiologist Quique Bassat told Spanish daily El Pais that the risk for the local population is "practically nil because there would need to be a catastrophe for the sewage network in Spain, which is highly controlled, to become contaminated." The last time someone in Spain was locally infected with cholera was in the North African enclave of Melilla in July 1979. From there, it spread across the country, affecting 264 people, according to a research paper. Most people infected with cholera will have no or mild symptoms, and can be successfully treated with rehydration solutions, according to the World Health Organization.

Heavy rains affect over 2m in China's Jiangxi

**FOREIGN DESK**

NANCHANG: Nearly 2.05 million residents have been affected by heavy downpours in east China's Jiangxi Province as of 4:30 p.m. Saturday, local authorities said. The latest round of rainfall between June 16 and 21 has wreaked havoc in 74 counties of the province, forcing 302,000 residents to relocate, according to the provincial flood control and drought relief headquarters. The heavy precipitation damaged about 150,000 hectares of cropland and caused direct economic losses of 6.79 billion yuan (about 1.01 billion U.S. dollars). Authorities have distributed 71,000 pieces of relief supplies including tents, folding beds, towels and clothes to people in the affected areas.

Bankrupt Sri Lanka seeks discounted Russian oil

**AGENCIES**

COLOMBO: Cash-strapped Sri Lanka on Sunday announced sending ministers to Russia and Qatar to try and secure cheap oil a day after the government said it had all but run out of fuel. The government meanwhile extended a two-week closure of non-essential state institutions until further notice in order to save fuel, maintaining only a skeleton staff to provide minimum services. Energy Minister Kanachana Wijesekera said two ministers will travel to Russia on Monday to discuss getting more oil following last month's purchase of 90,000 tonnes of Siberian crude. That shipment was arranged through Coral Energy, a Dubai-based intermediary, but politicians have been urging the authorities to negotiate directly with President Vladimir Putin's government. "Two ministers are going to Russia and I will go to Qatar tomorrow to see if we can arrange concessionary terms," Wijesekera told reporters in Colombo. Wijesekera had announced on Saturday that Sri Lanka was virtually out of petrol and diesel after several scheduled shipments were delayed indefinitely due to "banking" reasons. Fuel reserves were sufficient to meet less than two days' demand and it was being reserved for essential services, Wijesekera said while apologizing for the situation.

## 'Pak-China can promote tea production through JV'

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China can promote tea on commercial scale through joint ventures, Gwadar Pro reported on Saturday quoting experts. As potential suitable sites and land for tea cultivation are located alongside China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), therefore, China has a big role to play in promoting tea on a commercial scale through joint ventures and technical and financial support, experts said. China from the beginning has played a crucial role in tea promotion in Pakistan. With the technical and financial assistance of China, at Shinkari in Mansehra, Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) established a tea estate of over 50 acres along with green and black tea processing units, but it is yet to be adopted by the private sector on a sustainable basis. Tea plantation and processing have already proved successful in northern Paki-

stan. However, its commercialization under the market mechanism needs decision-makers' attention. The federal government has engaged private sector companies for experimentation and commercialization of tea. However, the pace and quantum of commercialization have been very slow. According to the online data platform Observatory of Economic Complexity, Pakistan imported \$646 million worth of tea in the fiscal year 2019-20, largely from Kenya. This has listed Pakistan as the largest importer of the commodity in the world. In the 10 months of this fiscal year, tea imports have jumped by 9% to \$532.4 million, compared with \$580.5 million in the entire FY 2020-2021. In view of the growing population and increasing consumption of tea in Pakistan, the government is working out a plan to commercialize tea cultivation for curtailing the import bill to this effect. Talking to media, Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal said on Thursday that a

huge chunk of foreign exchange is spent every year on importing tea in Pakistan. If local tea production is promoted, the country's import bill could be significantly reduced. The minister visited National Tea & High Value Crops Research Institute (NTHRI) at Shinkari, Abbottabad and had a briefing on tea cultivation, its processing and commercialization in Pakistan. He said that Pakistan could not attract foreign direct investment in the tea industry despite huge domestic demand. Neither it is advanced in research & development on tea production. Earlier in his tweet the planning minister mentioned that Pakistan is the largest importer of tea in the world, racking up an import bill of whopping \$589.8 million in 2020 alone. Tea has emerged as a major import commodity and is draining huge foreign exchange every year. Local tea production is fast becoming a matter of urgency as domestic consumption of tea will increase by another 10% in the next five years, the experts added.

## PIA resumes Lahore-Kuala Lumpur flight operation

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) on Sunday resumed Lahore-Kuala Lumpur flight operation after providing the same facility in Islamabad as the coronavirus restrictions eased. "After Islamabad, the PIA has now resumed flights from Lahore to Malaysia. The first flight left Lahore for Kuala Lumpur this morning," PIA spokesman Abdullah Hafeez Khan said in a news release here. On the occasion, a simple cake-cut ceremony was held at the Lahore Airport and bouquets were presented to the passengers. The PIA, the spokesman said, was already operating two weekly flights from Islamabad to Kuala Lumpur. He said the national flag carrier was gradually increasing the number of its domestic and international flights on special instructions of Minister for Aviation Khawaja Saad Rafique. Meanwhile, the Aviation Minister said the PIA was increasing the number of flights to different tourist destinations aimed at facilitating passengers during summer vacations. "Now, the PIA is providing direct access to tourist destinations at home and abroad from Lahore," Saad Rafique said. He said flights from Lahore to Gilgit and Skardu were also being operated and "now flights to Baku and Kuala Lumpur have also been arranged." – APP

## Norwegian police arrest man charged with murder

**WEB DESK**

OSLO: A 42-year-old man has been arrested and charged with murder, attempted murder and terrorist acts after a shooting in the centre of Norway's capital, Oslo. Two people died and 21 were wounded early on Saturday in what police called an "act of Islamist terrorism". The shootings were in and near the London Pub, a popular LGBTQ+ venue, the Herr Nilsen jazz club and another pub. Norway's prime minister told the BBC the suspect was questioned in May, but was not deemed a threat at the time.

## Village life in ruins after Afghan quake

**NEWS DESK**

AKHTAR JAN: Village life has always been tough for Afghans in the rugged mountains of the east, but compared to what they are enduring today it was paradise. A 5.9-magnitude earthquake rumbled through the area last Wednesday, killing more than 1,000 people, injuring three times that many, and leaving tens of thousands homeless. "If life before was not really good – because for years there was war – the earthquake has made it even harder for us," says Malin Jan, who lost two daughters in the quake. All 14 houses in his village of Akhtar Jan were flattened, and survivors – including some from outlying hamlets – are now living in tents among the ruins. Two small makeshift camps have been set up in dusty gardens, with stunted grass grazed by three cows, a donkey, two goats and a flock of chickens. In tents pitched in a circle, about

35 families – more than 300 people including many children – are trying to survive. Living in such close proximity to non-relatives is anathema to Afghans – particularly in the conservative countryside where women rarely interact with strangers. Sanitary conditions are likely to deteriorate rapidly – there are no toilets, and people have to draw water from a well to wash. "Before the earthquake, life was nice and beautiful," says villager Abdu Rahman Abid. "We had our houses and God was good." He gives a gruesome count of those he lost in the rubble – his parents, his wife, three daughters, a son and a nephew. "The earthquake killed eight members of my family and my house is destroyed," he says, looking weary. "There is a big difference now. Before we had our own houses and everything we needed. Now we have nothing and our families are living in tents." Neighbour Malin Jan is already looking ahead, fearful of what the future holds. The harsh

winter, which lasts almost five months in this remote mid-mountain region, will arrive in September. "If our children stay in this situation their lives will be in danger because of the rain and snow," he says. Massoud Sakib, 37, who lost his wife and three daughters, also fears for the months ahead. "Even living in a house is difficult during winter, so if our houses are not rebuilt by then our lives will be in danger," he says. On Saturday, the UN's top official in the country, Ramiz Alakbarov, arrived from Kabul by helicopter to visit the region – including the village of Akhtar Jan – with representatives of each UN agency. Alakbarov was moved to tears as he met a young girl and was offered tea by a survivor, praising the "resilience and courage" of the people. But their tenacity only stretches so far. Interviewed by AFP, the Afghan minister of health, Qalandar Edad, warned of the "mental and psychological" suffering of victims.

# Chinese doctor treated Pakistani boy

**DNA**

BEIJING: A highly difficult surgery of brainstem tumor for a six-year-old Pakistani boy was successfully conducted by the Chinese doctors at Zhongnan Hospital of Wuhan University (ZHNWU), China, China Economic Net (CEN) reported. According to the report, the boy was diagnosed with brainstem tumor several months ago. He needed a surgery as soon as possible. However, brainstem tumor surgery remains the most challenging operations in neurosurgery. It demands meticulous preoperative evaluation, reasonable surgical plan and experienced surgical team. None is dispensable. However, his surgery was too complicated to be performed in Pakistan. His father Muhammad Arshad, a teacher of a university in Islamabad, Pakistan, turned his eyes to China where he had studied and got his doctoral degree on cognitive science at Tsinghua University, Beijing. Arshad knows a lot about Chinese medical and healthcare capability and believes in the Chinese doctors' techniques and skills. His two Chinese friends recommended him professor Chen Jincao, a top expert on neurosurgery and also chief physician of ZHNWU, one hospital of the first echelon in neurosurgery. Arshad soon decided to take his son and wife fly to Wuhan China, putting his hope in professor Chen. On May 11, Arshad Jr. was admitted to ZHNWU, after the quarantine due to COVID-19. Soon, Professor Chen called for a consultation with experts from about ten depart-

ments including pediatrics, oncology and chemoradiotherapy departments to discuss the best treatment plan for Arshad Jr. The test results of Arshad Jr. came out; however, it was not very good. "The tumor has invaded 80 percent of the brainstem, which is rare," said Professor Chen. "It means the following surgery will be highly difficult and it also presents a tough challenge to the medical team," Chen added. Based on the consultation and thorough argumentation, Chen and his team decided to make a "three in one" surgery for Arshad Jr., which means to perform brain-

stem lesion resection, decompressive craniectomy and lateral ventricle intraperitoneal shunt synchronously. Knowing the decision, Arshad said, "Professor Chen, I trust you completely. Just go ahead. I support the team's decision." Arshad said he once considered performing the surgery to the USA and the European countries. However, when studying in China, he observed that the Chinese doctors had a large number of outpatient patients and surgeries. So they had more practical experience than their counterparts in other countries. "I believed that the Chinese

experts would provide the most effective treatment to my son," said Arshad. Professor Chen and his teammates said they would spare no pains to cure this little patient and try to "live up to the trust" of Arshad and his wife. On May 17, Arshad Jr. underwent the "three in one" surgery, which lasted for six hours. "The surgery is successful. It not only achieves the expected goal but also lays a foundation for the following treatment," said Xu Chengshui, an associate chief physician of neurosurgery department, and a member of the medical team for Arshad Jr.





## Briefs

## ECP takes notice of riots, snatching of polling material

NAWABSHAH: The Election Commission has taken notice of rioting and snatching of polling material in District Shaheed Benazirabad. Election Commission in its letter No.536 has directed the returning officers concerned to register cases against persons involved in rioting and clashes. Meanwhile, polling was suspended in Polling Station 23 of Ward 1, Polling Station 24 of Ward 2 and Polling Station 26 of Ward 3 where, according to reports, unidentified persons tore up the ballot papers and lifted ballot boxes. In another incident, police controlled the situation when two parties clashed in Kakapota Colony of Nawabshah. — APP

## President congratulates APS survivor

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi Sunday congratulated Ahmad Nawaz, a survivor of Army Public School, Peshawar terrorist attack on being elected as President of Oxford Union. The president on his Twitter handle, said that youths were the biggest hope of Pakistan. Despite all setbacks, Pakistan would keep on shining and rising, he added. Ahmad Nawaz had lost his brother Harris in the heinous Peshawar massacre on 16th December 2014 along with other students and members of the teaching staff. "Our biggest hope are youth of Pakistan. I congratulate Ahmad Nawaz, an APS survivor who also lost his brother Harris in the heinous Peshawar massacre, on being elected as President of Oxford Union. — APP

## Russian missiles target Kyiv as G7 leaders gather

NEWS DESK

KYIV: Russian missiles hit an apartment block and kindergarten in the Ukrainian capital Kyiv on Sunday, in strikes U.S. President Joe Biden condemned as "barbarism" as world leaders gathered in Europe to discuss further sanctions against Moscow. "The Russians hit Kyiv again. Missiles damaged an apartment building and a kindergarten," said Andriy Yermak, head of the president's administration. A Reuters photographer saw a large blast crater by a playground in a kindergarten that had smashed windows. Deputy Mayor Mykola Povoroznyk said one person was killed and six wounded. He said explosions heard later in other parts of Kyiv were air defences destroying further incoming missiles. Russia has stepped up air strikes on Ukraine this week-end, which has also seen the fall of a strategic eastern city to pro-Russian forces. "It's more of their barbarism," said Biden, referring to the missile strikes on Kyiv, as leaders from the Group of Seven (G7) rich democracies gathered for a summit in Germany. Ukraine's Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said G7 countries should respond to the latest missile strikes by imposing further sanctions on Russia and providing more heavy weapons to Ukraine. As Europe's biggest land conflict



since World War Two entered its fifth month, the Western alliance supporting Kyiv was starting to show signs of strain as leaders fret about the growing economic cost. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said the West needed to maintain a united front against Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"The price of backing down, the price of allowing Putin to succeed, to hack off huge parts of Ukraine, to continue with his programme of conquest, that price will be far, far higher," he told reporters. Life had been returning to normal in Kyiv after fierce resistance held off Russian advances in the early phase of the war,

although air raid sirens regularly sound across the city. There had been no major strikes on Kyiv since early June. The city's mayor, Vitali Klitschko, said on the Telegram messaging app that some people were trapped in the rubble of a nine-storey apartment block after Sunday's strike. "They have pulled out a seven-year-old girl," Klitschko said. "She is alive. Now they're trying to rescue her mother." A Ukrainian air force spokesperson said the strike was carried out with 4-6 long-range missiles fired from Russian bombers more than 1,000 kilometres away in the southern Russian region of Astrakhan. Russian missiles also struck the central city of Cherkasy, which until now had been largely untouched by bombardment, according to regional authorities, who said one person had been killed and five others wounded. read more Ukrainian presidential adviser Oleksiy Arestovych said the attack also hit a strategic bridge linking western Ukraine and the eastern battlefields. "They are trying to limit the transfer of our reserves and Western weapons to the east," he said in a message to Reuters. Russia's defence ministry said it had used high-precision weapons to strike Ukrainian army training centres in the regions of Chernihiv, Zhytomyr and Lviv, an apparent reference to strikes reported by Ukraine on Saturday. There was no immediate comment about Sunday's strikes on Kyiv or Cherkasy.

## Pakistan observes the International Day against Drug Abuse

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan joins the international community in observing the "International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking." Pakistan itself is a poppy free country, but its population became a victim of regional opiate production and trade. Drug abuse not only undermines public health and socio-economic development, it also challenges national security and prosperity. Illicit drug production and its trafficking is a major problem in our neighbourhood and Pakistan has been at the forefront of the efforts to actively support the ongoing global and regional initiatives that aim to fight against drug production and trafficking. The observance of this day manifests Pakistan's steadfast resolve in creating a drug free society and world. Protecting the youth and the future generations from this menace is inevitable for a safe and prosperous world.

## '406 fresh Covid-19 cases reported across country'

ISLAMABAD: Health officials on Sunday said that 406 new Coronavirus cases were reported throughout the country during the last 24 hours. As per data shared by the National Institute of Health (NIH), the case positivity ratio is 2.81 percent while 94 patients were in critical condition. Two deaths were reported from the Coronavirus while 14,437 Covid-19 tests were conducted across the country. Meanwhile, a meeting was held in this regard which was chaired by Minister for National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination, Abdul Qadir Patel on the current situation of COVID-19, at NCOC, National Institutes of Health (NIH) Islamabad. Representatives from the Ministry of Interior, NDMA, DRAP, and local administration attended the meeting while pro-

vincial representatives participated virtually. National Coordinator, Maj. Gen. Aamer Ikram gave an overview regarding the current situation of COVID-19 and vaccination state in the country. The Health Minister highly appreciated the efforts of all stakeholders, healthcare staff, vaccination teams, and administration working across Pakistan despite multiple challenges. He was highly pleased with the vaccination state in the country as overall 85% eligible population is fully vaccinated and 93% are partially vaccinated. Furthermore, it is encouraging to see that 100% eligible population in Sindh is fully vaccinated. He advised all provinces and regions to administer booster doses on a priority basis to further improve protection against COVID-19 transmission. — APP

## At least 20 found dead in South Africa nightclub

NEWS DESK

LONDON: At least 20 people have been found dead in a nightclub in South Africa's East London city, officials say. Bodies were found at the Enyobeni Tavern early on Sunday, and reports say several people were injured. "The circumstances surrounding the incident are under investigation as we speak," a police spokesman told the Newzroom Africa television channel. "We do not want to make any speculations at this stage," Brigadier Tembinkosi Kinana said. A large number of emergency service personnel are on the scene in the

Eastern Cape province. Relatives of the victims have been unable to see their bodies, reports say, and locals have called for the venue to be closed. Eastern Cape Police Commissioner Nomthetheli Lilian Mene told SABC News that "there was an alleged stampede inside the tavern". The BBC has been unable to verify this and details are still emerging. Four people have been taken to hospital, SABC reports. Brigadier Kinana told reporters most of those found dead were young adults aged between 18 and 20. Eyewitnesses told the Daily Dispatch newspaper that bodies were lying inside the venue as if they had collapsed on the floor.

A spokesperson for Eastern Cape's health department told News24 the dead bodies were taken to various nearby mortuaries. Siyanda Manana added: "We are going to conduct autopsies as soon as possible to establish the probable cause of death." South Africa's Minister of Police Bheki Cele was on his way to the Eastern Cape with an additional team of experts to help with investigations, the province's premier Oscar Mabuane said. "We can't believe it... Young people who were not sick, young people who should be with their families enjoying their winter holidays - they just have lost their lives like that," he added.

## Protesters decry US SC abortion ruling

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: Hundreds of protesters descended on the U.S. Supreme Court on Saturday to denounce the justices' decision to overturn the half-century-old Roe v. Wade precedent that recognized women's constitutional right to abortion. The sweeping ruling by the court, with a 6-3 conservative majority, was set to alter American life, with nearly half the states considered certain or likely to ban abortion. Conservative Justice Clarence Thomas suggested the court's reasoning could also lead it to reconsider past rulings protecting the right to contraception, legalizing gay marriage nationwide, and invalidating state laws banning gay sex. As the day progressed, the number of demonstrators outside the Supreme Court increased substantially. The

fenced-off area in front of the high court was filled largely with those demanding abortion rights. Crowds carried posters with slogans such as "Abort SCOTUS." One protester carried a placard that said "limit guns, not women" in reference to another Supreme Court decision this week expanding gun rights. Earlier in the afternoon, a supporter of Friday's ruling said: "The thing that 'my body, my choice' advocates don't get is that the aborted baby never had a choice." The man, who identified himself as Adam John, added, "The life in the womb matters, doesn't it." President Joe Biden, who on Friday expressed his deep disappointment with the court ruling, said on Saturday that the White House will monitor how states enforce bans, with administration officials having already signaled they plan to fight attempts to prohibit a pill used for medication abortion.

## PTI's Fazl Mula wins by-poll in PK-7 Swat

DNA

SWAT: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) candidate Fazl Mula won the by-poll in PK-7 Swat, Kyber Pakhtunkhwa on Sunday, as per the unofficial results. It is pertinent to mention that the seat fell vacant after the death of ANP's Waqar Ahmed Khan while four candidates including PTI's Fazl Mula and ANP's Hussain Ahmad Khan were contested in the election. As per the unofficial results, PTI's Fazl Mula won with 18,042 votes while ANP's Hussain Ahmed came second with 14,665 votes.

## Pakistan and Kashmir inseparable: Marriyum

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Maryam Aurangzeb has said that PML-N leader Nawaz Sharif and Pakistan Prime Minister Mian Shahbaz Sharif are deeply attached to the Kashmir cause. Both the leaders discuss the Kashmir Freedom Movement at every forum. The present government will express solidarity with Kashmiris on August 5 against the Indian move. She

expressed these views while talking to senior Hurriyat leader and Chairman Jammu and Kashmir Salvation Movement President Altaf Ahmed Bhat. She further said that, In this regard, embassies around the world are being instructed to expose the Indian initiative. PML-N has not forgotten the brothers of occupied Kashmir even for a moment. The present government continues to provide moral, political and diplomatic support to Kashmiris in line with Nawaz Sharif's vision. She added that the steps taken by India on August 5 have not

been recognized by the government of Pakistan before or now. Kashmir is a disputed territory whose future remains to be decided. And it can only be solved by giving the Kashmiri people to decide on their future vis-a-vis the referendum. Kashmiris are fighting for their birthright, which has been recognized by the United Nations (UN). The United Nations should implement its resolutions on Kashmir and give Kashmiris their birthright.

A day earlier, Kashmiri Hurriyat Leader and Chairman of Jammu and Kashmir Salvation Movement (J&KSM) Altaf Ahmed Buha called on the Federal Minister of Information and Broadcasting at her residence and congratulated her on assuming the portfolio of Information Ministry. Former Mayor Rawalpindi Sardar Naseem Khan and Tahira Aurangzeb, mother of the Federal Minister were also present on occasion. Federal Minister for Information Maryam Aurangzeb said that Kashmir and Pakistan are inseparable and cannot be separated from each other. Leaders of Hurriyat and Kashmiri people have made immense sacrifices for their freedom which cannot be ignored. Talking on the occasion, Chairman J&KSM Altaf Ahmed Bhat said that the measures taken on August 5 were illegal, unconstitutional and immoral. India has been busy and brought Israeli-style demographic changes in IIOJ&K. And so far more than four million hardcore Hindus have been issued Kashmiri residency certificates which is totally illegal and unconstitutional.



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