



Islamabad POST

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Prince Charles expresses personal sorrow over slavery

Detailed News On Page-07

German FM warns of global hunger crisis

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Imran Khan cuts off contact with me: Ramiz Raja

Detailed News On Page-06



Tax on cigarettes; auto industry

Super tax imposed on the rich elite

PM Shehbaz hopes Pakistan will get IMF program soon; says it is not acceptable that the rich enjoy luxurious lives while the poor continue to suffer

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: In an unprecedented move, the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced Friday that the coalition government plans to impose a 10% super tax on large-scale industries, and that "tough decisions" have been taken to protect the economy on budget 2022-23. This is for the first time that a government has imposed taxes on the rich people. Analysts believe, the decision comes in the wake of IMF pressure to tax the big-wig of the country. The government however has to make sure that these big-wig do not penalize the poor in the shape of increasing prices of the products they are producing. Addressing the nation, after a meeting with his economic team, the premier said that the coalition government has taken some "tough decisions" regarding the federal budget for the next fiscal year 2022-23. "I want to brief the people about those decisions and the actual [economic] situation of the country," he said, highlighting the two major reasons behind these decisions. "Our first motive is to provide relief to the masses and to reduce the burden of inflation on the people and facilitate them," he elaborated. "Our second motive is to protect the country from going bankrupt," he said, adding that it has been devastated due to the "incompetency and corruption" of the previous Imran Khan-led government. The decisions taken now will save the

Stock market plunges

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) Friday witnessed a bloodbath immediately after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced "tough decisions" taken by the government in the federal budget for the upcoming fiscal year 2022-23. The benchmark KSE-100 index opened in the green in line with its positive trend a day earlier; however, it soon plunged a massive 2,053.35 points or 4.81%. The market was trading at 40,663.62 points as of 12pm. In his address to the nation, the premier announced that a 10% super tax would be imposed on large-scale industries

including cement, steel, sugar, oil and gas, fertiliser, banking, textile, chemical, beverage, and automobile sectors. Speaking to Geo.tv, Arif Habib Limited Head of Research Tahir Abbas said the market is reacting to the news of the imposition of super tax on large-scale industries. "A 10% super tax on large-scale industries is on the higher side and the market didn't expect this, therefore the reaction is intense," he said. The analyst was of the view the market will now stay under pressure in the days to come until budget 2022-23 is passed in the National Assembly and the finance act is released, which will reveal the exact details of the "tough" decision taken by the government.

country from bankruptcy, he vowed. Meanwhile, PM Shehbaz further added that other motives included stabilization of the economy and prosperity of the country. "These aren't just words, this is the voice of my heart and Insha'Allah we will be able to achieve all these targets," he maintained. Regarding the International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme, he said: "If the IMF doesn't put forward any other conditions, I am hopeful that we will be able to reach a staff-level agreement with them soon." He further added that the coalition government has taken some "daring" decisions after mutual consultations to provide relief to the people; how-

ever, the premier admitted the nation will witness difficulties in the short-run. "We will steer out of the economic crisis because of these decisions and step onto the path envisioned by Quaid-e-Azam," he said, adding that after coming into power, the coalition government had two options; to call elections afresh or to protect the "devastating economy" of the country by taking some tough decisions. "The first way out was easy; however, our [coalition government] conscience did not allow us to do something which would impact the country as the time was to protect the state and not politics," he stated.



GWADAR: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif arrives at Gwadar Business Centre during his one day visit. - DNA

PM greets Bangladesh PM Hasina

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister of Pakistan, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has felicitated Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina and the people of Bangladesh on the completion of Padma Bridge and termed the inauguration as an important landmark in the development journey of fraternal Bangladesh.

PTI slams govt over 'economy rattling decisions'

'You can clearly figure out from this how fatal the budget is for the economy'

SHUJAAT HAMZA

'Threat of default over'

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: PTI Secretary General Asad Umar on Friday excoriated the coalition government for imposing a "super tax" on large-scale industries, saying that the measure would "rattle the economy", increase unemployment and inflation, shoot up imports and push Pakistan further into economic crisis. "This is a huge blow to the growing industries," he said at a press conference in Islamabad. In an address to the nation, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced a 10 per cent levy on sectors including sugar, oil and gas, cement, steel, airlines, fertilisers, LNG terminals, textile, banking, automobile, cigarettes, beverages, and chemicals. PTI, which was the largest party in the National Assembly before its members resigned en masse from the Lower House in April, disagreed with the premier's assessment, claiming that the

ISLAMABAD: Winding up the debate of budget session 2022-23 in the National Assembly, Finance Minister Miftah Ismail emphasised that Pakistan, the country of 220 million people, was not going to default in any shape, adding that it would rather head towards progress and development by the grace of Allah Almighty. Speaking on the floor of the House, the finance minister said, "When we came, there were huge subsidies

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SBP receives \$2.3bn from Chinese banks

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Miftah Ismail Friday announced that a Chinese consortium loan of RMB 15 billion (roughly \$2.3 billion) has been credited into the State Bank of Pakistan's (SBP) account, increasing Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves. Earlier, Pakistan had signed a loan facility agreement with a Chinese consortium of banks to aid the depleting foreign exchange reserves and depreciation of the local currency. "We thank the Chinese government for facilitating this transaction," the finance minister wrote in a tweet after the signing of the agreement. The agreement with Chinese banks is expected to bolster the country's reserves and enable it to make import payments while lending some support to the rupee as well which has lost over 34% since the start of the outgoing fiscal year 2021-22. The development came as

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US SC strikes down right to abortion

WASHINGTON: The US Supreme Court on Friday ended the right to abortion in a seismic ruling that shreds half a century of constitutional protections on one of the most divisive and bitterly fought issues in American political life. The conservative-dominated court overturned the landmark 1973 "Roe v Wade" decision that enshrined a woman's right to an abortion, saying that individual states can now permit or restrict the procedure themselves. "The Constitution does not confer a right to abortion; Roe and Casey are overruled; and the authority to regu-

late abortion is returned to the people and their elected representatives," the court said. In the majority opinion, Justice Samuel Alito said "abortion presents a profound moral issue on which Americans hold sharply conflicting views." "The Constitution does not prohibit the citizens of each State from regulating or prohibiting abortion," he said. Dissenting were the three liberals on the court. The ruling will likely set into motion a cascade of new laws in roughly half of the 50 US states

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Briefs

US Supreme Court ruling 'horrific'

OTTAWA: Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said on Friday that a US Supreme Court ruling overturning the landmark 1973 Roe v. Wade abortion rights decision was "horrific" and he sympathized with women "set to lose their legal right to an abortion." "The news coming out of the United States is horrific. My heart goes out to the millions of American women who are now set to lose their legal right to an abortion," Trudeau said on Twitter. Advertisement - Scroll to continue "No government, politician, or man should tell a woman what she can and cannot do with her body," he said. - Agencies

Pak Navy lives up to nation's expectations

Army Chief was addressing the participants of 51st PN Staff Course at Pakistan Navy War College

KHAYAM ABBASI

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa Friday addressed the participants of 51st PN Staff Course at Pakistan Navy War College (PNWC), Lahore, said a statement issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR). According to the military's media wing, upon arrival at Pakistan Navy War College, the Army Chief was received by Commandant Pakistan Navy War College Rear Admiral Shifaat Ali Khan. COAS laid floral wreath at Shaheed Monument to pay homage to martyrs of Pakistan. While addressing the participants, General Qamar Javed Bajwa dilated on geostrategic environment, national security challenges and response measures. COAS exalted the role of armed forces in tackling the national security challenges proficiently. COAS underscored that Pakistan Navy's history is studded with glorious traditions of valour and sacrifices. He emphasized that Pakistan

2 terrorists killed

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Fire exchange took place between security forces and terrorists in general area Kulachi, Dera Ismail Khan District. According to Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), during exchange of fire, two terrorists got killed. Weapons and ammunition was also recovered from the killed terrorists. The killed terrorists remained actively involved in terrorist activities against security forces.

Navy is a formidable force defending the maritime frontiers of the country and has always lived up to the expectations of the nation. COAS appreciated the quality training imparted by the Pakistan Navy War College to the officers of Pakistan Armed Forces and friendly countries.

Banned TTP threatens resuming of violent acts

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Banned Tehrik Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has shown sever resentment over Interior Minister Rana Sana Ullah's latest statement pertained to dialogues taking place in Kabul and Taliban's conditions. Banned TTP in its statement issued to media by its spokesman threatened resuming of deadly violent acts and attacks in case of dialogues termination without reaching to any conclusion. However, Taliban said nothing about the ongoing ceasefire, continued since May 1st last. Through a statement the banned TTP spokesman said, "We have no any desire for talks or truce with Pakistan government as the talks commenced on Pakistan army request." In the light of talks, Taliban declared ceasefire for three times but the action against Taliban by what he called "enemy" is continued." Through this statement, the banned TTP reaffirmed its stance on reversal of FATA status to tribal districts and evacuation of troops from tribal areas." The banned TTP in its statement reaffirmed its stance/opposition to parliament and constitution of Pakistan, terming it what banned TTP "Unislamic". Similarly, TTP also used negative words for the armed forces of Pakistan, terming it

Afghan Consul General's appeal to world community

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Amidst increasing strength of earthquake victims in border provinces of Afghanistan, the Peshawar based Consul General has requested global community to help the Emirate Islami at this crucial stage as it is natural disaster. "The earthquake caused lives to over one thousands and injuries to around two thousands others," Hafiz Mohib Ullah remarked in a brief emergency press conference here at Peshawar on Thursday afternoon. Flanked by other fellow diplomats, the Afghan Consul General said that thousands of homes razed to the grounds, making shelterless thousands of families. The earthquake victims are in dire needs of shelter, food items and medicines, he added. Hafiz Mohib Ullah in re-

sponse to a question said, "we are hopeful that world community would extend not only emergency pledges to the Emirate Islami but will also go for a durable help for the earth quake victims. Elaborating his point of view, Hafiz Mohib Ullah said that almost victims are poor's and living in mud or Katcha houses, therefore, global community and individual philanthropists needs to help in construction of new safe houses for these people from most poor, backward and remote areas of Afghanistan. Answering to another question, Hafiz Mohib Ullah said, "we believe that all sort of relief goods, pledges and cash donations for the well to do of earthquake victims should be ensured to diplomatic missions of Afghanistan. In this respect, special bank accounts are

Continued on Page 06

far no any reaction made public by government against the recent statement of banned TTP. Talks for patch up between government of Pakistan and banned TTP commenced soon after empowering of Taliban at Kabul in mid of August 2021 last. As a result of dialogues, brokered by Haqqani network headed by Interior Minister Siraj Ud Din Haqqani, Taliban

declared ceasefire for one month from November 1st 2021 last. However, TTP declared "end to cease fire from December 1st 2021, accusing government/armed forces for violation or failure in its commitments, regarding release of prisoners. The second phase of dialogues between the two sides was commenced in end of April through a traditional Jirga

of South Waziristan. Besides others the Jirga members were included ex-Senator and JUI(F) leader Maulana Saleh Shah and Ikram Ud Din Mehsud, father in law of the then TTP chief Bait Ullah Mehsud. As a result, ceasefire was declared from May 1st, which was twice extended before landing of over 50 member jirga from all over Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. During this period, Corps Commander Peshawar and ex-ISI chief Lt. Gen. Faiz Hameed flown to Kabul on May 16th last and held two rounds of face to face talks with banned TTP commanders at Hotel Inter Continental and Hotel Serena simultaneously. During talks, Taliban besides others demanded reversal of FATA status to tribal districts, evacuation of armed forces from tribal areas and declaring a free or peace zone for them along with Pak Afghan border. Almost leading political parties including ruling Pakistan Muslim League (N) and opposition's Pakistan Tehrik Insaf remained mum over TTP demands. Only Pakistan People's Party and Awami National Party while showing reservations, demanded tabling details of heals and deals before parliament. And in accordingly Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif summoned and chaired high level body National Security Council meeting, which has rejected three major demands of banned TTP.

No desire to harm anyone

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League N a w a z (P M L - N) Vice President Maryam Nawaz Sharif has said she does not want malice against anyone even former premier Imran Khan. According to a private news channel, the PML-N vice president in a tweet message on Friday explained that she has no desire to harm someone She hinted that though she has no malice against anyone.

Holiday Notice

The offices of daily Islamabad POST shall remain closed on Saturday on account of weekly off therefore there will be no newspaper on Sunday. - Editor

CM KP, Jhagra kick off June round of anti-polio drive

Over 2.5 m kids to be immunized in June campaign in KP

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Mahmood Khan along with Minister for Health, Taimur Saleem Jhagra administered polio drops to children here Friday at Police Services Hospital to kick off June round of anti-polio drive in the province. Secretary Health KP Amer Sultan Tareen, Additional Secretary Health (polio) & Coordinator EOC, Asif Raheem, Team Lead N Stop, Dr Hafezullah Khan, Team Lead UNICEF, Dr Andrew, Technical Focal Person EOC, Dr Imtiaz Ali Shah, Team Lead WHO, Waheed Kamran and relevant officials of health department were also present on the occasion. Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Mahmood Khan said that polio eradication is on top agenda of the provincial government and any negligence in this regard will not be tolerated as it was a matter of our children and national pride. He appealed to parents to help the government in stamping out the crip-

pling virus from the region and vaccinate children in every campaign when the teams visit their house. Secretary Health Amer Sultan Tareen said that the recent polio cases from North Waziristan are tragic for the children and their families, but not a setback for global polio eradication efforts as other countries, including Nigeria – the last country to become polio-free – have seen wild polio surface after 30 months of zero cases. These cases emerged after a long gap of 21 months in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, indicating all the hard work and efforts that went into keeping it polio free for such a long time. He said that we are working tirelessly to contain the virus in the southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with emergency vaccination campaigns and ring-fencing around the southern districts, namely Bannu, Tank, DI Khan, Lakki Marwat and North and South Waziristan. Tareen said that great gains have been made in the fight against polio and every effort will be made by the government to sustain those gains by

fixing the remaining gaps. Earlier, sharing details with media, Additional Secretary Health (Polio) and Coordinator EOC, Asif Raheem said that more than 2.58 million children will be vaccinated in 25 districts of the province in this campaign starting from June 27, 2022. "The campaign will be conducted in complete districts of Bannu, Lakki Marwat, North Waziristan, Tank, D. I. Khan, South Waziristan, Peshawar, Khyber while partial campaign will be carried out in Nowshera, Mardan, Charsadda, Mohmand, Buner, Swabi, Kurram Central, Lower and Upper, Mohmand, Bajor, Hangu, Haripur, mansehra, Malakand, Dir Lower, Dir Upper, Chitral Lower & Upper having Afghan Refugees Camps and bordering Union Councils with Afghanistan", he added. He said that a total of 11473 teams have been constituted for the campaign out of which 10176 are mobile teams, 669 fixed teams, 558 transit teams and 70 roaming teams. Likewise, he said that 2815 Area In-charges will be deployed to ensure quality of the campaign.



QUETTA: On the second day of his stay in Quetta, Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan visited the University of Balochistan and the Baloch State University of Information Technology, Engineering Sciences and Management. – DNA

HEC increased budget reflects govt commitment

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Rana Tanveer Hussain on Friday said that increased budgetary allocations for Higher Education Commission (HEC) were evident of the present government's commitment towards education. The minister was speaking to a delegation of World Bank led by Country Director Mr. Najib Benhassine. Operations Manager Mr. Gailius Draugelis, Senior Economist Mr. Juan Baron, Ms. Inga Afanasieva, Senior Education Specialist Ms. Izza Farrakh and Operations Officer Ms. Elena Roseo were part of the delegation. The meeting was attended by senior ministry officials as well. Speaking on the occasion, the federal minister said that Pakistan faces steep challenges such as Out of School Children (OOSC), lack of accurate data and inadequate training of teachers. He said that critical projects were underway in collaboration with the World Bank that needs to be expedited on an emergency basis. Rana Tanveer said that the issue of Out of School Children was a top priority that needs urgent focus. – APP

Govt's ban on import items to be lifted on Karachi port shipments

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: The Federal government is likely to lift the ban on shipments that have already arrived at Karachi port before its decision regarding ban on import of certain luxury and non-essential items. In this regard, an assurance was given by Federal Minister for Commerce, Syed Naveed Qamar during meeting of a high-level delegation of businessmen from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Islamabad that was led by Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Hasnain Khurshid Ahmad, according to a press release issued here on Friday. It is noted to mention the government had imposed a ban on import of certain luxury and non-essential items through notification: SRO/598 (1) 2022, issued on May 19, 2022. Members of the delegation included former FPCCI president Ghazanfar Bilour, former president SCCI's Zahidullah Shinwari, Faiz Muhammad Faizi and Industrialists Association

Hayatabad Peshawar President Malik Imran Ishaq. According to the statement, a formal announcement is likely to be made by the government regarding lifting the ban on shipments of imported items, which already arrived at Karachi port before the issuance of the notification. A three points agenda has been discussed during the meeting with minister Syed Naveed Qamar, that were included imposition of ban on import items at Karachi port that were arrived before the issuance of government's notification/decision on May 19, 2022, collection of infrastructure cess by Sindh government and hurdles in way of Pak-Afghan bilateral and transit trade. On the occasion, Ghazanfar Bilour raised the issues of collecting infrastructure cess by the Sindh government, while transporting shipments from Karachi port to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. After which, the federal minister assured him that the issue would be taken up with the Sindh government and resolved amicably.

The delegation informed the minister Syed Naveed Qamar about a ban on shipments on Karachi port that have already arrived before notification regarding ban on import of certain luxury and non-essential items, because of which shipments stopped at the port. Members of the delegation requested the federal government to lift the ban on those imported items/shipments that have been reached at Karachi port, orders/materials in pipeline before the issuance of the notification. On which, the federal minister Syed Naveed Qamar revealed that the government is going to make an important announcement on June 27, 2022 (Monday), through which, a ban on shipments already arrived at Karachi port to be lifted. The SCCI delegation urged the federal government to take pragmatic steps to remove hurdles in the way of Pak-Afghan bilateral trade and transit trade that would help to boost the local economy and create more employment opportunities in the country.



LAHORE: Team Haier Pakistan poses for a group photo after starting home appliances exports to Yemen, CEO Javed Afridi applauded his team and willingness to make Pakistan a household name in the export market. – DNA

Govt urged to exploit renewable energy

ISLAMABAD: The experts in two different researches have urged the government to exploit the untapped potential of renewable and eco-friendly energy solutions to manage its growing energy crisis. As Pakistan was facing severe natural gas shortage for the last couple of years, it has started relying on liquefied natural gas (LNG), however, the government needed to explore other energy sources to save environment. There are other green energy options like solar and wind that can provide cheap environment-friendly energy sources and the country needs go for these options. This was the crux of one of the two reports "Gas Monitor - Pakistan" & "Taber LNG Terminal, Socio-Economic & Environmental Analysis" launched by the Indus Consortium held about the gas provision as an energy source in the country at a ceremony here on Friday, said a news release. – APP

KMU to establish off-Shore campus at Kabul

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Medical University (KMU) Peshawar is eager to establish an offshore campus in the Afghan capital Kabul. This was stated by Prof. Dr. Zia ulHaq vice chancellor KMU while talking to various Afghan officials in response to the offer made by the Afghan government to open a sub-campus in Kabul during his recent visit to Afghanistan. The KMU delegation led by vice chancellor Prof. Dr. Zia ulHaq and comprising Pro vice chancellor Prof. Dr. Lal Muhammad Khattak, renowned surgeon Dr. Mushtaq, Dr. Waqar and deputy director Media & Protocol Alamgir Afridi. It is worth mentioning that the KMU delegation recently participated in an international seminar on the role of neighboring countries in peace in Afghanistan jointly organized by the Center for Strategic and Regional Studies Kabul and the Institute of Regional Studies Peshawar at the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul. In

addition to attending the seminar and chairing the health working session, the KMU vice chancellor Prof. Dr. Zia ulHaq along with his team met Dr. Qalandar Ibad, Minister of Health of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, Hafiz Muhammad Haseeb, Deputy Minister of Higher Education, Dr. FazlurRehman Rahmani, vice chancellor Kabul Medical University and Masood Ahmad Khan, Ambassador of Pakistan in Kabul. Issues were discussed during these meetings in which senior Afghan officials expressed special interest in proposing the establishment of a KMU campus in Kabul. According to the details, KMU will set up a campus in the light of the Higher Education Commission Islamabad's offshore campus establishment policy and guidelines with the approval of HEC and Foreign Ministry for which the building was provided by the Afghan government, whereas KMU will provide teaching and administrative support. As per preliminary information, KMU has submitted a

three-tier plan for the establishment of the proposed campus to the Afghan government through the Embassy of Pakistan at Kabul, which will be implemented gradually. The first phase of the project will consist of BS programs in 12 disciplines of Allied Health Sciences besides Nursing, Physiotherapy, Public Health, Vision Sciences, Nutrition and Pharmacy programs. MS, MD and clinical diploma courses will be started in the second phase while the third phase will consist of MBBS, BDS and various diploma and short course programs. It is essential to share that the purpose of establishing KMU Kabul campus is to provide opportunities for Afghan students to pursue higher education and training in various fields of medical education at their doorstep. This idea was came on surface some two month back during a meeting between the KMU vice chancellor and Afghan Council General at Peshawar Hafiz Mohibullah on the issues of Afghan students.

Zero tolerance policy on irregularities

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Medical Commission (PMC) has adopted a zero tolerance policy on any irregularity in medical and dental education system in the country to ensure a bright future of students. According to a spokesperson of PMC, the commission is the sole healthcare education regulator of the country that envisions improving standards of healthcare delivery and healthcare education in Pakistan. He said that the PMC is working tirelessly to ensure compliance with medical and dental rules and regulations. He added, the Medical and Dental Council upon the recommendations of the disciplinary committee approved the closure of Muhammad College of Medicine Peshawar due to repeated cases of illegal admissions and demanding donations from the students. In addition to this, the college was caught red-handed by the authority for demanding donations for admissions, he added. – APP

Turkish Professors, academicians visit AIOU

ISLAMABAD: A 15-member delegation of professors and academicians from six Turkish universities visited Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) today. The delegation was warmly received by the Registrar AIOU, Raja Umar Younis and the Director, Department of International Collaboration and Exchange, Dr. Zahid Majeed. A special session was organized with the delegation to discuss different academic opportunities and venues. Dean, Faculty of Sciences, Prof. Dr. Irshad Ahmad Arshad presided over the session. All the Principal Officers of AIOU were also present. The registrar introduced the Principal Officers while Dr. Zahid Majeed gave a detailed briefing on the profile of AIOU and recent initiatives. He briefed that AIOU is already collaborating with three Turkish universities and we are planning to ink MoUs with more universities. Professors from Turkish universities discussed plans for collaboration with Allama Iqbal Open University. Leading the delegation, Dr. Mehmet Bulut, Professor of Istanbul Sahabat Zaim University, said that we must use our resources and capabilities together to improve the condition of Islamic civilization and culture so that the future of the Islamic world can be bright. He added that four countries including Pakistan, Turkey, Indonesia and Nigeria have the potential to change the fate of the Islamic world. Dr. Waqar Badshah, a professor at Ibn Khaldun University, said that Muslim society is going through a difficult period. Universities, especially the intelligentsia, should move forward to play a role in building a reforming society. Dean Faculty of Sciences, Prof. Dr. Irshad Ahmad Arshad said that the Vice Chancellor, Allama Iqbal Open University, Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum has laid special focus on enhancing the quality of education. – APP

One more case of wild polio in N.Waziristan

ISLAMABAD: One more wild polio case has been confirmed from North Waziristan, leaving a child paralyzed, the spokesperson of the Ministry of Health confirmed on Friday. "So far 11 polio cases have been reported and all children confirmed with wild polio this year belong to North Waziristan, where more cases are expected due to high refusal rates during vaccination drives," he added. He said that the eight-month child belonged to Mir Ali's union council seven. A total of eight polio cases have been reported from Mir Ali. "Pakistan has made tremendous success against polio over the past few years, and we are taking all steps to protect the gains made by the programme," said Federal Minister for Health, Abdul Qadir Patel. The minister added that it was crucial for parents to vaccinate their children every time as every dose of the polio vaccine further builds immunity. – APP

Mushaal lauds UK MPs, MAPIM for raising voices against Yasin's unfair trial

ISLAMABAD: Mushaal Hussein Mullick, wife of jailed Kashmiri Hurriyat Leader Yasin Malik lauded members of the British parliament and the Malaysian Consultative Council of Islamic Organisations (MAPIM), for demanding immediate intervention to check the travesty of justice and unfair trial against Yasin Malik and condemned Narendra Modi for turning India into a state terrorist. Mushaal, who is Chairperson of Peace and Culture Organization, said in a statement on Friday that Indian Illegal Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) had been under siege for the last seven-decade, where all civil liberty and human dignity have been trampled with impunity by fascist Indian forces, said a press release here on Friday. She said that it was encouraging that the world gradually realised the gravity of the situation and voices

were being raised from various parts of the world from time to time against the unabated brutality and state terrorism by Indian occupation authorities in the valley. Mushaal said that the letter by British members of Parliament Tahir Ali, Imran Hussain, Khalid Mahmood and Mohammad Yasin to Prime Minister Boris Johnson and MAPIM's public statement regarding the continued bloodbath in IIOJK and the unfair and biased trial of Yasin was praiseworthy. She lamented that Kashmir has been turned into a garrison city and a living hell for the people, as Indian state terrorism has rendered 22,944 Kashmiri women widowed from January 1989 to 31 May 2022. The hurriyat leader stated that the world must not forget the trauma Kashmiri widows and half-widows were enduring. She said that the fascist

government trumpeted the mantra of normalcy in the valley; however, the gravity of the situation could be judged that 11 youth were gunned down during the last three days. The chairperson said that the blood of innocent Kashmiris has been flowing continuously for the last over seven-decade but unfortunately, the world at large observed criminal silence in this regard. It is pertinent to mention here that British MPs in their joint letter demanded that the UK government should use its special relationship with India to ensure a peaceful solution to the Kashmir conflict, besides advocating for fair treatment of Yasin Malik and others' prisoners. Separately, Mohd Azmi Abdul Hamid, President MAPIM in a public statement demanded the release of Yasin Malik and the imposition of sanctions against India. – APP

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

JUNE

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



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Serena Hotel.....	111 133 133
Marriott.....	051- 2826121
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Airlines

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Emergency

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

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RGH.....	9290301-7
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Shifa International.....	4603666



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Cantonment Board.....	9270151-3

Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....	0321-5744480
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ISLAMABAD: DHM Mr. Alberto Groff is proud to join forces with HelvetasP and MOCC Pak at Workshop on 'Climate Smart Rice Production. He is handing over Digital Server to the Additional Secretary Ministry of Climate Change Joadat Ayaz. – DNA

Alvi for encouraging women choose diplomatic career

I am happy to note that Pakistani women diplomats are and have been serving in various capacities from foreign ministers to foreign secretaries and at many Ambassadorial positions in our embassies abroad," he remarked

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi Friday stressed the need to tackle the obstacles for encouraging the women to choose diplomacy as a career and provide them a conducive working environment. The president, in his message on 1st International Day of Women in Diplomacy observed on June 24, said it was also essential to create enabling conditions to help them alleviate to higher decision-making positions. He said such enabling conditions could be ensured by overcoming deep-rooted legacies of gender bias which still hindered the professional advancement of women.

He said the first International Day of Women in Diplomacy was aimed at celebrating the achievements of women in diplomacy, recognize and applaud their outstanding services. The Day is also meant for making a pledge to promote the full and equal participation of women at all levels of diplomacy. The president said it is indeed encouraging that the number of women ambassadors worldwide was increasing with the share of women ambassadors going from 16% in 2018 to an approximate 22% in 2022. "I am happy to note that Pakistani wom-

en diplomats are and have been serving in various capacities from foreign ministers to foreign secretaries and at many Ambassadorial positions in our embassies abroad," he remarked. President Alvi believed that the Day would accelerate the pace to achieve sustainable development and peace and democracy in Pakistan and around the world. "I am confident that with the right encouragement and provision of a conducive environment we will be able to further improve women's participation and representation in diplomacy," he added. – APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Spain to Pakistan Manuel Duran gestures during a painting exhibition of different artists at gallery-6. – DNA

Expediting work on Karachi Circular Railway project discussed

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Railways and Aviation, Khawaja Saad Rafique in a meeting with Chief Minister Sindh, Syed Murad Ali Shah held on Friday agreed to expedite the work on Karachi Circular Railway (KCR) project under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). It was briefed during the meeting that the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Railway Minister, Khawaja Saad Rafique would soon visit China to discuss KCR project. Syed Murad Ali Shah was accompanied by Sindh Information and Transport Minister Sharjeel Memon; Legal Adviser, Murtaza Wahab; Chairman Planning and Development, Hassan Naqvi; Senior Member Board Revenue, Commissioner Karachi and Secretary Energy during the meeting. While the minister was accompanied by a delegation including Railway CEO Farrukh Taimur Gilzai, Additional General Manager, Railways Amir Baloch, CEO Railways Nisar Memon, DS Kashif Yousafani, Project Director, KCR Amir Daudputo and Director General Aviation, Khaqan Murtaza. The meeting discussed the agendas including depot issues for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Red Line project, Thar Coal, Karachi Circular Railway (KCR) and aviation. The Sindh Chief Minister nominated Chairman Planning and Development, Secretary Transport for the committee on behalf of the Sindh government. – APP

Govt urged to minimize reliance on LNG import

Mitsubishi Corporation can invest in renewables, instead of pushing forward on LNG, which is no longer economically viable as a supplier and buyer

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Globally, Pakistan is at the 29th position on the basis of natural gas reserves. The total extractable potential is reported around 24 TCF, however, 4 billion cubic feet (BCFT) is the daily gas production. Sindh has 124 gas fields and accounts for 63%. The biggest field of natural gas is in the Sui region of Balochistan accounting for 6%. Country has proven reserves equivalent to 12.0 times its annual consumption. This means it has about 12 years of gas left. As Pakistan is facing severe natural gas shortage for the last couple of years, it has started relying heavily on Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), however, the government needs to explore other energy sources to save the environment as well as financial spending on the LNG import. It was revealed during the findings of a gas monitor report presented by Dr. Amanullah Mahar, Director, and Center for Environmental Sciences, University of Sindh, Jamshoro. The alarming situation for the country is that the supply of natural gas is declining day by day from domestic sources as the

consumer need is continuously increasing. Since last decade the consumption of natural gas has increased resulting in the import of LNG. The biggest consumer of natural gas is the power sector followed by residential. There are some gas losses between 11% - 14% due to illegal theft and other reasons. Initially, LNG was introduced to meet the supply gap but now it has a share of 25% of gas supply for LNG power plants in Pakistan. The spot prices have affected the purchasing strategy of LNG which is left up to 40% of supply, said by Dr Mahar while presenting his findings of the report. He added that, "LNG, Fossil gas is a very high carbon intensive fuel and cannot be called "transition" fuel source to a cleaner energy system. Fossil gas (methane) can be leaked from the regasification, transport, and consumption and processing of it. After carbon dioxide (CO2), methane is the second most abundant anthropogenic greenhouse gas and responsible for 20% of worldwide atmospheric emissions. The methane is 25 times more potent than CO2 at absorbing atmospheric heat. In addition, installation of gas pipelines and during the

construction of gas infrastructure may leak methane gas into water supplies and the environment. While presenting findings of another report on "Tabeer LNG Terminal: Socio-Economic & Environmental Analysis", an independent environmental researcher Ms. Fatima Fasih presented her findings: It has been almost 4 years since the ESIA of the Project was conducted, but in recent years, several environmental, social and economic conditions of the area have changed and the results of this report can no longer be considered relevant to the current time. She added, "To continue with its current plans for establishing an end-to-end LNG Terminal, Tabeer Energy (Private) Limited must prepare an updated ESIA to take in consideration the changes in the environmental, social and economic conditions of the area. This updated ESIA should include an estimate of the expected GHG emissions (Scope 1, Scope 2, and Scope 3) for the company to accurately evaluate its carbon footprint and environmental impact." Ms. Fatima Fasih also added that: "Keeping the global LNG markets and their volatility

in consideration, it is clear that LNG is no longer a financially-viable source of fuel. Instead of focusing on short-term monetary gains and quick gains in energy for the economy, public and private institutions should focus on building stronger energy security within Pakistan and developing a greener economy through a just and equitable energy transition towards renewable energy." She added that "At present, solar and wind power have shown remarkable success in Pakistan from an economic perspective and should be invested in, to increase their ratios within the country's energy mix and help the country transition towards a just and sustainable energy transition. Thus far, the low contribution of renewables to Pakistan's energy mix is due to a chronic lack of investment over time and policy-wise emphasis on developing coal and gas infrastructure from both public and private finance. The current energy crisis proves that this should change. The Mitsubishi Corporation can invest in renewables, instead of pushing forward on LNG, which is no longer economically viable as a supplier and buyer."

NA expresses grief over Afghanistan earthquake

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly on Friday expressed grief and sorrow over the loss of precious human lives in Afghanistan caused by a high-magnitude earthquake a couple of days back. "Pakistan stands with Afghan brothers and sisters in this difficult time and it will provide all possible assistance to them," Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf observed. On the request of Speaker, Moulana Abdul Akbar Chitrali offered Fateha for the eternal peace of the departed souls and prayed for early recovery of the injured. – APP

NHMP returns lost valuables to owner

ISLAMABAD: The National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP) have returned lost valuables including hand-bag and a mobile phone to the owner. According to NHMP, one passenger who was traveling from Swat to Multan with his family via motorway, made a stopover at KallarKhar Service area where the family forgot valuables. Later, the family at Salt Range after knowing that they have left valuables, informed the NHMP officers. Soon afterwards, NHMP officers reached the service area and found the lost hand bag and a mobile. Later, the hand bag and a mobile phone were handed over to the passenger. – APP

Top global varsities urge PM to raise tax on sugary drinks

ISLAMABAD: A letter signed by forty top health experts around the world has been sent to the Prime Minister urging him to raise federal excise duty on sugary drinks to minimum of 20%. The experts warned in the letter that sugary drinks having liquid sugar are among the major reasons of the growing obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and many types of cancers, said a news release. The group represented by Prof. Berry M Popkin based at the University of North Carolina have sent a letter to Pakistani Prime Minister Mian Shabbaz Sharif, in which he warned about the increasing weight and obesity of children in Pakistan. The group warned that if immediate action is not taken to prevent cases of overweight and obesity in Pakistan, their number is likely to double by 2025. The group also referred a 2020 meta-analysis in their letter conducted by the World Bank and the Saudi government using global data, which has shown that obesity increases the risk of COVID-19 by 46%, for COVID-19 hospitalization by 113%, of ICU admission by 74%, and of dying from COVID-19 by 48%. – APP

Football exports witnesses 44.53pc increase

ISLAMABAD: Football exports during the first eleven months of fiscal year of 2021-22 grew up by 44.53 percent as compared to the exports of the commodity during the corresponding period of last year. During the period from July-May 2021-22, footballs worth US \$169,635 were exported as compared to the exports of US \$ 117,373 during the same period of last year. According to the data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the exports of sports goods increased by 32.37 percent, worth US \$ 328,631 as compared to exports of \$248,262 during the same period of last year. During the period under review, others exports increased by 37.15 percent, worth US\$ 98,239 in current fiscal year, as compared to the exports of valuing US\$ 65,067 of the same period of last year. – APP

Briefs

K-Electric delegation apprises PM of issues

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of K-Electric led by Sheikh Abdulaziz Hamad Aljomaiah called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif here on Thursday. During the meeting, the prime minister was apprised of the K-Electric's longstanding resolvable issues relating to the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA), which were not only causing huge financial losses to the K-Electric and the Government of Pakistan but also affecting the supply of electricity to the consumers in Karachi on cheaper tariff. The prime minister, while regretting the severe negligence and lethargy, directed for constituting a committee of the relevant officials led by Member of the National Assembly (MNA) Shahid Khaqan Abbasi to find a solution of the issues, acceptable to all parties, within the next three months. The meeting was attended by MNA Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Finance Minister Miftah Ismail, Advisor to the PM Ahad Cheema, Minister of State for Petroleum Dr Musadik Malik, Minister of State for Finance Dr Aisha Ghaus Pasha and senior officials concerned. - APP

Formation of province as per constitution: Law Minister

ISLAMABAD: Leader of the House in Senate Azam Nazeer Tarar on Thursday said the government was considering on the establishment of a new province as per South Punjab people's desire. Azam Nazeer Tarar, who is also the federal minister of law & justice, speaking on a point of public importance raised by Senator Rana Mahmoodul Hassan, said the decision to form a new province would be made in the light of the Constitution and after taking the parliament on board on the subject. Tarar said it was another positive proposal to establish a special economic zone in South Punjab. He said South Punjab was an arable land and there should be agro-based industries for adding value to the products in a bid to increase the exports of Pakistan in the International market. He further said there was a lot of potential particularly in the sector of floating fish farming, adding that it should also be promoted in the area on the scientific lines, he added. The minister lamented that the dual educational system had produced two types of generation in the society, one which was getting education from private institutions and the second from regular conventional educational system. He expressed his fear that if we kept on privatizing this sector, almost 70 per cent population of the country would be deprived from the education. He said he would take up this issue in the federal cabinet meeting as it was the responsibility of the state to provide education and right to education. Meanwhile, Senator Irfan Ul Siddiqui of PML-N, responding to Senator Mushtaq Ahmad Khan's query about the talks with Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, said they were started by the previous government.

Minister directs to address problems in PRHS

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Housing and Works Maulana Abdul Wasay on Thursday directed to early address the problems related to the project of Park Road Housing Scheme (Park Road Housing Scheme). A delegation of Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) headed by its President Ahsan Bhoon held a meeting with the minister. The delegation briefed the minister regarding the problems related to the SCBA's project Park Road Housing Scheme. The minister said that he was aware about the problems and he had issued directives to resolve them as soon as possible on priority basis. He said that he was monitoring the matter by himself. The minister said that the legal fraternity had an important role in our society and provision of justice to the public. - APP

Concerted efforts required to fight terrorism: Kaleem Imam

Imam emphasized both hard and soft interventions for countering terrorism in Pakistan. In terms of soft responses, he called for participative political processes, dialogue, socio-economic development, and reform for countering terrorism

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former Inspector General of Police Dr Kaleem Imam called for concerted efforts to fight terrorism in Pakistan. He was speaking at an event titled 'Terrorism and State Response' organized by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) here on Friday. Imam termed maintenance of law and order, prevention and detection of crime, provision of security, prosecution of criminals, and countering organized crime as essential in a state's response to terrorism. He shared that between 2017 and 2020, the law enforcement agencies (LEAs) in Pakistan had conducted 375,000 intelligence-based operations (IBOs). Listing the achievements of Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad in

2020, Imam shared that it had resulted in the freezing of assets and check on the movement of members of 78 terrorist organizations and killing of 353 terrorists. He added that Pakistan had come down from 6th in the Crime Index Ranking to 106th as a result of all the successes of the government against terrorism. He also listed the signing of the Paigham-i-Pakistan edict by 1,800 religious scholars as a success in countering religious extremism and promoting tolerance. Imam emphasized both hard and soft interventions for countering terrorism in Pakistan. In terms of soft responses, he called for participative political processes, dialogue, socio-economic development, and reform for countering terrorism and extremism. In terms of hard responses, he



emphasized the importance of modernization of the LEAs, formation of a rapid response force, and formulation of a counter-terrorism department. Commenting on the legal developments related to terrorism, Imam mentioned the Suppression of Terrorists Act 1975, the Anti Terrorism Act 1997, the

Regulations Action in Aid of Civil Powers 2011, the Fair Trial Act 2013, the Punjab Protection of Vulnerable Persons Rules 2015, and the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act 2016. Highlighting the importance of police action against terrorist organizations, Imam cited the findings of a study conducted by the US Rand

Corporation. He shared that the study had found out that 40% of terrorist groups had ended through joint police/intelligence operations. Reiterating some of the key points of the NISP 2022-26, Imam shared that the NISP 2022-26 asserted that the security of Pakistan rested in the security of its citizens. Therefore, it prioritized national cohesion and prosperity of people, stressed upon guaranteeing fundamental rights and social justice without discrimination, and called for promoting delivery-based good governance through strengthening of institutions, rule of law, transparency, accountability, and openness. He added that economic security was at the core of security. He stressed that a sincere and robust approach was needed to sustain our past efforts and respond to tackle upcoming

challenges. Commenting on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey-listing, Imam said that after complying with the 34-point action plan proposed by the FATF, Pakistan was on the way out of its grey list. He added, however, that the grey-listing of Pakistan had cost the country \$10.3 billion each year. In his concluding remarks, President IRS Ambassador Nadeem Riyaz called for improving governance, establishing rule of law and social justice, and ensuring the economic security of the general public to prevent extremist ideologies from taking hold in the society. He added that addressing the social, economic, ideological, and psychological causes were as important as the law enforcement responses.

Govt to import wheat from Russia, says Dastgir

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Energy, Khurram Dastgir Khan Thursday said, the government is negotiating with Russia to import wheat as the US and EU sanctions against Moscow were not applicable on food items. Talking to a private news channel, he said it was Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) government which signed agreement in defense sector to conduct mutual military exercises with Russia. Khuram Dastgir claimed that there was no record of Russia's offer to provide oil on 30 percent cheaper rate as compared to international market which was the claim of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leadership. He said the coalition government would follow any agreement signed by the previous government for purchasing oil from Russia, in the best national interest. The minister said that during the PML-N's previous tenure, the government successfully put country's economy on the path of sustainable and balanced growth and increased per capita income. He said that IMF had not restricted any condition to hike oil prices but wanted to sell oil on its purchasing price to provide relief to the poor masses. - APP

CPPA seeks Rs7.96 per unit power tariff increase for May

ISLAMABAD: Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA-G) has sought Rs7.96 per unit increase in power tariff for May under monthly Fuel Cost Adjustment (FCA) mechanism. According to the petition submitted to National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA), the CPPA-G maintained that actual cost remained Rs13.8969 per unit against the reference fuel charges of Rs5.9322 per unit during April. A total of 14,656 GWh electricity was generated worth Rs192.784 billion during the said period while 14,264.95 GWh net electricity was supplied to the power distribution companies (DISCOs).

Out of total generation, as many as 24.50 per cent electricity was generated from hydel, 13.77 per cent Coal, 8.80 per cent furnace oil, 9.9 per cent local gas, 22.89 per cent RLNG, 12.90 per cent nuclear and 5.32 per cent Wind. The regulator will hold public hearing on June 27. The impact of proposed increase will be passed on all categories of consumers except lifeline. - APP

Pakistan Post organizes 'Khuli Katchery'

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Post has organized an online court (KhuliKatchery) on the directives of Minister for Communications and Postal Services Asad Mahmood. During open court, Director General Pakistan Post Hassan Akhtar listened to the complaints through online zoom meetings of the postal clients and issued orders to the concerned for redressal. The open court was also joined by senior management and assured the customers to resolve their complaints at the earliest. The customers highly praised the initiative and thanked high ups of Pakistan Post in this regard. Director General Pakistan Post directed to take steps for resolving customers complaints and providing all possible facilities to them. - APP



RAWALPINDI: President RCCI Nadeem Rauf presenting chamber memento to Sahebzada A. Khan, ambassador of Pakistan to Thailand. - DNA

China always helped Pakistan at crucial time: Minister

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Miftah Ismail said that a loan of \$2.3 billion from China was expected to be transferred by June 27 and China had also rolled the safe deposits that were due in June and July. China always supported Pakistan at a crucial time, "he maintained, according to China Economic Net (CEN). "It is our responsibility to save Pakistan from default. And Pakistan has been saved from default," the minister remarked. He claimed the government had saved the country from bankruptcy by increasing diesel and petrol prices and by remaining continuously engaged with International Monetary Fund (IMF). He mentioned that the decision to increase petroleum products' prices was not easy but the government had to take it to save the country. He observed that Pakistan was now returning to better financial position citing the increasing valuation of rupee against dollar and performance of Pakistan Stock Exchange as examples of the progress. Earlier in the day on Thursday, Miftah Ismail held a meeting with Pang Chunxue, Charge d'affaires of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan, who called on him here. During the meeting, Ismail contended that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would play an important role in taking Pakistan's economy forward as well as cementing the bilateral relationship between China and Pakistan. He highlighted the deep-rooted friendship and brotherly relations between Pakistan and China. The minister affirmed full support and cooperation to Chinese investors and businessmen. The Chinese Charge d'affaires assured full support and cooperation of Chinese government and said that China was committed to developing the CPEC projects under the vision of shared prosperity and it would further strengthen and expand economic cooperation between the two countries.

We did it and can say now that Pakistan has been saved from default," the minister remarked. He claimed the government had saved the country from bankruptcy by increasing diesel and petrol prices and by remaining continuously engaged with International Monetary Fund (IMF). He mentioned that the decision to increase petroleum products' prices was not easy but the government had to take it to save the country. He observed that Pakistan was now returning to better financial position citing the increasing valuation of rupee against dollar and performance of Pakistan Stock Exchange as examples of the progress. Earlier in the day on Thursday, Miftah Ismail held a meeting with Pang Chunxue, Charge d'affaires of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan, who called on him here. During the meeting, Ismail contended that China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would play an important role in taking Pakistan's economy forward as well as cementing the bilateral relationship between China and Pakistan. He highlighted the deep-rooted friendship and brotherly relations between Pakistan and China. The minister affirmed full support and cooperation to Chinese investors and businessmen. The Chinese Charge d'affaires assured full support and cooperation of Chinese government and said that China was committed to developing the CPEC projects under the vision of shared prosperity and it would further strengthen and expand economic cooperation between the two countries.

ICCI asks PM Shahbaz to lead Productivity Movement for making Pakistan Competitive

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) in collaboration with National Productivity Organization (NPO) organized an awareness session for the business community on "Productivity & Quality", which was a part of 1st Productivity Movement of Pakistan. The event was attended by a large number of stakeholders. A productivity walk was also organized on the occasion. In his welcome address, Muhammad ShakeelMunir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry appealed to the Prime Minister of Pakistan to lead the Productivity Movement in the country in order to make Pakistan a competitive market. He stressed that the business community should focus on productivity and quality to achieve better growth. He said that in this age of competitive business environment, it is very important for businesses to improve productivity of their operations and quality of their products if they have to capture better share in local and international markets.

He said that the government should provide support to the private sector in such initiatives and introduce productivity-based incentives that would make the private sector more competitive. He appreciated the initiatives of NPO for promoting quality and productivity and added that these efforts will play a positive role in spreading better awareness towards these concepts. He stressed that the private sector should fully participate in the productivity movement of NPO to enhance productivity & quality in order to compete in the world market. Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Alamgir Chaudhry, CEO NPO said

that Singapore's labour productivity was USD 153,000 compared to Pakistan's USD 15,000, which showed that Pakistan was way behind in improving its competitiveness. He stressed that there is a need to inculcate the nation about the importance of productivity and quality to make Pakistan a more competitive market. He said that the major reasons behind Pakistan's slow growth rates of output are lack of innovation, low level of investment, technological inefficiencies and limited R&D resulting in lower productivity and non-competitiveness. He said that the Government of Pakistan is very much committed towards improving

the economic landscape of Pakistan through focusing on sustainable development approaches. This could be achieved by increasing business competitiveness, investment facilitation, value addition, export promotion and import substitution. He said that NPO is going to launch a structured Productivity Movement in Pakistan for positioning it as a competitive market through enhanced productivity. Dr. Kamran Moosa, Chief Executive, Pakistan Institute of Quality Control (PIQC) gave a presentation to the audience on different dimensions of P&Q and gave an overview of various tools and techniques. Ismat Gul Khattak, DG, PNAC highlighted the role of accreditations for businesses to remain relevant in the competitive global market. Jamshaid Akhter Sheikh, Senior Vice President and Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI thanked NPO for arranging such a use session on quality and productivity and reiterated that ICCI would work closely with NPO to organize programs that would help improve the competitiveness of private sector.



Implementation Problems to Child-Labour Laws in Pakistan

NOOR FATIMA AND SALSABILA RASHID

CHILD-LABOUR is detrimental to the health of children. According to ILO, the term "child labour" is defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. It compromises the education of children, restricts their rights and limits their future opportunities. Although the Government of Pakistan has established laws and regulations related to child-labour, gaps exist in Pakistan to adequately protect children from engaging in labour. The latest global estimates by ILO/UNICEF indicate that the number of children in child labour has risen to 160 million worldwide in 2020. The report warns that 9 million additional children are at risk of being pushed into child labour worldwide by the end of 2022 as a result of Covid-19 pandemic. According to a recent risk analysis report by Ma-

plecroft, Pakistan is among the top 10 places where child labor is most prevalent. Despite the minimum legal working-age being 15 years in Punjab and 14 years in the rest of the provinces, Balochistan has the highest child-labour reported at 6.13 percent, followed by KPK and Punjab at 5 percent and Sindh at 3.97 percent. The overall child-labour rate is at 4.9 percent in Pakistan where rural areas have a higher involvement of children than urban (Labour Force Survey, 2021). Based on the definition by Decent Work Country Profile (DWCP), children who work long hours (over 42 hours per week) are considered to be engaged in hazardous work. Between 2 and 3 per cent of children aged 10 to 14 were involved in hazardous work in the 2009-2018 period in Pakistan. When it comes to combating child labour in the South-Asian region, Sri Lanka is a success story. According to the Bureau of International Labour Affairs, in 2020, Sri Lanka has made plausible efforts to reduce child labour. Although higher than

many developed countries, its child-labour rates are far below than Pakistan. According to the Child Activity Survey (2016), in Sri Lanka, 2.3 per cent of children aged 5-17 years are engaged in some kind of economic activity. There is a stark comparison since the child labour in Pakistan (aged 10-14 years) was more than twice the rate of Sri Lanka in 2016. The report stated that in Sri Lanka, hazardous form of child labour, was as low as 0.9% in 2016 whereas in Pakistan the rates were as high as 3 percent in 2019. Although the laws prohibiting child-labour in Pakistan and Sri Lanka are similar, Pakistan lags comparatively far behind in its implementation. Interestingly, Sri Lanka's child-labour laws have lenient penalties than Pakistan, yet Sri Lanka was able to bring down its child-labour rate to a great extent when compared to Pakistan. Assessing the full extent of child labour in Pakistan is not currently possible since the Labour Force Survey only collects data on the labour force participation of persons over the age of 10 even though

there are reported incidences on child work even lower than 10 years. There is no dedicated child labour survey that has been conducted in Pakistan since 1996. Therefore, the actual child-labour rate today would be even higher if the age cohort of 5-9 years is included. Pakistan's first child labour survey in two decades is currently underway, by the Government of Pakistan and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The Government of Pakistan must establish sufficient laws to end police corruption, particularly the taking of bribes from suspected perpetrators to ignore alleged crimes; create a centralized repository of labor law enforcement data and a regular mechanism for reporting it to the federal government, and make the data publicly available; ensure that all factories/industries are registered, do not employ child labor, and fully compensate all workers and provide the funding necessary to adequately hire, train, equip, and cover the cost of transportation for inspectors to enforce child labor laws in all provinces.

West's summits promise more world woes

US President Joe Biden looks set to take full advantage of next week's two important summit meetings with the leaders of the other Western countries to forge a more cohesive stance against Russia and China. According to media reports, apart from exerting more pressure on Russia over the Ukraine crisis, both the upcoming G7 Summit and the NATO Summit will have a special focus on China. The Joe Biden administration seems to be eager to co-opt the two organizations within the framework of its ideological foreign policy, on the premise that the United States and its Western allies have shared "values". At the G7 summit, scheduled to be held from Sunday to Tuesday in Germany, Biden is expected to launch a global infrastructure initiative, which will mark the group's latest efforts to counter the growing influence of the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative. NATO, the world's largest military alliance, is then due to adopt its new Strategic Concept at its summit in Madrid in the latter part of the week. The transatlantic alliance's revamped strategy highlights its intention to become stronger militarily, get more politically involved in strategic issues and pursue a more global approach. In other words, it is planning to indulge its predatoriness in the Asia-Pacific as well as Europe. The confrontational messages that seem certain to be sent from the summits offer little hope that there will be a reset in world affairs. The US has demonstrated no willingness to try and improve ties with China, let alone adopt a conciliatory stance toward Russia. The outcomes of the two summits therefore are likely to be toxic. For the world, which is in dire need of solidarity and unity to give impetus to a reluctant post-pandemic recovery and to end the ongoing Ukraine crisis, attempts to create more divisions and confrontations are a grim prospect. The world today is clearly in dire need of multilateralism and cooperation more than ever to address its many woes. It doesn't need the Western leaders reviving a colonialist mentality that seeks to subjugate, manipulate and exploit the non-Western world. The adversarial stance that the two summits seem set to propagate shows the US and its Western allies are still far from recognizing that times have changed, and this is no longer the era in which they could intimidate others with their gunboats. The Cold War too is over. But having donned the armor of self-righteousness, the next-generation warriors in Washington are lost in Hollywood make-believe. Which is fine for a screen, but ruinous in the real world as the Ukraine conflict shows.



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Leaders of tomorrow

MUHAMMAD OMAR IFTIKHAR

The competition among students and graduates in the near future will be intense, to say the least. The corporate world is witnessing a rise in the number of graduates that the universities and the business schools are producing. While this signals the growth of a learned workforce for Pakistan, it also suggests that not every graduate will secure a job. Skills development, therefore, should be the core focus for universities and especially business schools. In a worst-case scenario, if graduates are unable to find a job or they land a job that is irrelevant to their character, education, and skills, they can always begin a freelance job or a side business to make their ends meet. This will require them to plan their time accordingly. Moreover, there is a trend observed among students who are in their A-levels and Intermediate second-year classes.

They are opting for BS Entrepreneurship instead of choosing BBA, as was the previous trend. This reveals that students – especially the millennials – are more interested to explore their professional domains as an entrepreneur than to pursue a nine-to-five job as employees. Business schools must capitalize on this trend by introducing practical and relevant courses in their BS Entrepreneurship degree programs. Such programs will help students to learn the basics of establishing a business, completing its legalities, designing a business plan, communicating the plan with stakeholders, etc. The course should be a harmonious blend between concepts, theories, and practices. It should enable students to learn and implement their classroom learning into a profitable business model. Scalability must be a part of this model so the business can expand within the city and across cities. Business schools have the resources to produce the next leaders for Pakistan. They should work on it for a progressive Pakistan.

Indonesia's collective wisdom

Dr M Ali Hamza



Besides all unusual situations, Indonesia's economy performed very well in last two decades. You can imagine the growth by knowing that Indonesia is the only G20 member state in Southeast Asia, and the country has the largest economy in the region so to be classified as a newly industrialised country. Indonesia is the world's 17th largest economy by nominal GDP and 7th in terms of GDP at (Purchasing Power parity), estimated to be 1.289 trillion and 3.995 trillion US\$, respectively

It is an established history of last few decades that Pakistan remained west dependent for her financial and political survival. The dependence of west is not limited to Pakistan but the major parts of eastern hemisphere were and somehow still look forward to the west.

Shahbaz Sharif, Minister for Industries and Production Makhdoom Syed Murtaza Mahmud led a delegation to Jakarta this month. The main purpose of the visit was to negotiate on the recent decision of the Government of Indonesia to ban export of Palm

The reason is simple, and the reason is financial, scientific, and system design supremacy of the west. Specially, in post USSR era, the supremacy became unchallenged and resultantly exploitative. The challenge for eastern nations was multifaceted. First, they had to neutralize the impacts of colonialism imprinted on social, cultural, political, and cognitive fabric. Some had to break the shackles of monarch. Indeed, reaching to break-even was itself unmatched challenge. The progress begins afterwards. So naturally it was not an easy journey, but going through thick and thin few eastern nations proved to be resilient and progressive. In this context one of the least recognized nations in Pakistan is Indonesia.

It was a good surprise that on the instruction of PM

oil to Pakistan; due to the shortage of inhouse stock to meet domestic needs. The dialogue went well and 10 of palm oil shipments are expected to reach Karachi before the end of this month. To understand the importance of Indonesian palm oil we must know that Pakistan is the third largest importer of Indonesian palm oil. We import 80% of palm oil from Indonesia and rest 20% from Malaysia. More than 55% of Pakistan's population: 220 million, depends on Indonesia for its edible oil. Already the loss of sunflower oil supplies from Russia and Ukraine have also affected Pakistan's edible oil inventory. During these circumstances the Indonesian government's ban on the export in April this year was a big blow. You can imagine that prices of branded edible oil in Pakistan rose by 6% per liter within few hours of Indonesia's announcement. The ban affected Pakistan's ghee and cooking oil supply and resulted in price hike as industry faced cancellations by suppliers under force majeure. Pakistan has Preferential Trade Agreement with Indonesia and could get exemption from Indonesian government export ban on palm oil. Surely as India has already approached Indonesia under the same agreement, might be Pakistan used the same approach. Anyhow, a friend in need is friend indeed. Besides this progressive meet-up there are plenty of other areas where both Muslim countries can extend support for mutual benefits. Pakistan and Indonesia share many commonalities, even in the history of last 70 years. Let us have a quick scan of post-colonial Indonesian history and where does it stand today. Present Indonesia resisted the invasion of Japanese, and took independence from the clutches of Dutch colonialists in 1945. The Republic of Indonesia was established and President Sukarno ruled under the new constitution. Then US fear of Indonesia's leftward drift happened. United States tried to weaken Sukarno presidency by providing military aid to some rebellions, positioning anti-Communist camps within the Indonesian army through continued

military education and equipment sales, and supporting anti-communism and pro-religious groups. This forced President Sukarno to dissolve the elected Assembly and replace it with an appointed one: a presidential system which he believed would make it easier to implement the principles of 'Guided Democracy'. This was a short authoritarian regime, where government control of the media, and sending opponents into exile was assured. This initiated a political and economic instability. Food shortages, poverty and separatist sentiment sparked rebellions. Then the regime changed and Mr. Suharto, one of the General in Indonesian army took over the capital and finally took charge as a president of Indonesia. Violence sweeps throughout the country. More than 1 million communists were arrested or killed. Communism was eradicated, and US intention for global political monopoly started growing roots. President Suharto enacted "New Order" to focus economic development. It was indirectly a military control regime, running on the advice from American-educated Indonesian economic experts, known as 'Berkeley Mafia'. Relief aid, military training and arms sales flow exponentially increased from the United States, Britain and Australia. The poverty level came down, and Indonesia kept growing. But in 1980s an issue erupted in East Timor, Aceh; part of the province of Sumatra. The issue was based on Indonesia's agreement to let US oil, gas and mining companies exploit Aceh's rich natural resources. Free Aceh Movement started demanding independence. Prolonged fighting ensues, and in 1990 President Suharto declares martial law. Later on, a political settlement to an armed separatist conflict in Aceh was achieved in 2005 following the 2004 tsunami that killed 130,000 Indonesians, including a huge majority of the people of East Timor. In 1992, under President Bill Clin-

ton, the US cited human rights abuses in East Timor and cuts off military training and restricts sales of military equipment to Indonesia. The reason was obvious; Cold War ended, communism declined globally, US hegemony got established and the importance of Indonesia for the US was over. Civil unrest increased as the Asian financial crisis of 1997 coincides with falling oil and gas prices and the worst drought in 50 years. Then 9/11 happens. Indonesia faced severe ripple of terrorism. Terrorist attacks in Bali in 2002 & 20025 and Jakarta in 2003, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of tourists and foreign students, demonstrated the existence of jihadi groups in Indonesia.

Besides all unusual situations, Indonesia's economy performed very well in last two decades. You can imagine the growth by knowing that Indonesia is the only G20 member state in Southeast Asia, and the country has the largest economy in the region so to be classified as a newly industrialised country. Indonesia is the world's 17th largest economy by nominal GDP and 7th in terms of GDP at (Purchasing Power parity), estimated to be 1.289 trillion and 3.995 trillion US\$, respectively. Pakistan needs to realize this phenomenal growth.

The 70 years of Indonesian history resembles a lot to the history of Pakistan. Same foreign interferences particularly US, military intrusions in civil matters, political upheavals etc. But one thing is quite opposite. Indonesian economy grew significantly in last 20 years, and we as Pakistan deteriorated severely in almost all fronts; economy, society, politics, professionalism and the list goes on. Why? How and what to be done? No country other than Indonesia can actually help us know to figure it out and work it out. We need to take few more steps to get closer to Indonesia and benefit from their collective wisdom.

The need for convergence in cultural diplomacy between Iran and Pakistan

Abed Akbari

As leader of the PPP, Benazir Bhutto had a charismatic personality and ran the party as the representative of democratic ideals. Ms Bhutto was elected twice as the PPP leader and prime minister of Pakistan. She was ousted from power both times and spent many years in exile

Tehran, IRNA – Cultural diplomacy is the most important tool which can be used to expand soft power and, as a result, expand ties between Iran and its neighboring countries, including Pakistan. Promoting the level of cooperation with regional countries will, subsequently, provide more room for convergence in foreign policy. As reported by the Foreign Policy Department of IRNA, the Managing Director of Tehran International Studies & Research Institute (TISRI), Abed Akbari, has highlighted the importance of cultural diplomacy between Iran and Pakistan for regional convergence by proposing the making a film on the

life of the prominent Pakistani politician, "Benazir Bhutto". The complete text of the note is as follows: Apart from being neighbors, Iran and Pakistan have always maintained a level of historical, cultural, political, and economic ties under any and all circumstances. Be that as it may, the ties between the two countries have somewhat lagged given their reciprocal relations and ample capacities. In the meantime, by putting all the diplomatic capacities to work, particularly in cultural diplomacy by virtue of public diplomacy, ties between the two countries can become an essential factor not to be discounted. The ever-expanding communication technologies, importance of public opinion, soft power replacing hard power, and diplomatic upheavals from traditional to modern, have given rise to the concept of public diplomacy for governments to attain their objectives abroad. Currently, governments are making efforts to converge the three

parts of cultural exchanges, cultural diplomacy, and media broadcast as part of public diplomacy to align public opinion for a better achievement of their political goals.

Public diplomacy is the interaction of politics and culture at different levels. In other words, public diplomacy is a cultural aspect of politics. For this reason, culture as an important factor of soft diplomacy forms the basis of public diplomacy. As an element of public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy involves the cinema, theater, literature, and music to project a positive image of a country and its people among its foreign audiences worldwide. Throughout the 20th century and beyond, the silver screen has been a most influential and accessible media in cultural diplomacy, with a singular aptitude to influence the masses across the world. Some films in particular have not only entertained their audiences, they have also succeeded in promoting cultural diplomacy through education, strengthening ties, overcoming clichés, and going beyond borders at various levels.

Hence, public diplomacy and therefore cultural diplomacy are the most important tools which can be used to expand soft power and promote ties between Iran and its neighboring countries, including Pakistan. As levels of cooperation grow among regional

countries, convergence in foreign policy can grow by the same token.

To achieve this, the idea of making a film or television series as a joint venture between Iran and Pakistan about the life of "Benazir Bhutto", who was a prominent Pakistani politician and the first woman in history to become the prime minister of an Islamic country, can be of significant value. Especially as the peaks and troughs of her life have a great potential for a film project. The life of Ms Bhutto can be portrayed as an amalgamation of an exiled princess, political prisoner, and most importantly as the first woman to head a government in a Muslim country. Benazir Bhutto was assassinated at the age of 54. She was the fourth member of her family who was murdered on the stage of political struggles in Pakistan. Her father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, was the President of Pakistan (1971-1973) and subsequently the Prime Minister of his country (1971-1977). He was the founder of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), but was removed in a coup by his appointee as the Chief of Army Staff, General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, and hanged in 1979. Heryoungest brother, Shah Nawaz, died mysteriously of poisoning in 1985. Her other brother, Morteza, was also killed under suspicious circumstances in 1996. As leader of the PPP, Benazir Bhutto had a charismatic personality and ran the party as the representative of democratic ideals. Ms Bhutto was elected

twice as the PPP leader and prime minister of Pakistan. She was ousted from power both times and spent many years in exile. Bhutto's view on Islam as an open, pluralistic, and tolerant religion was quite evident. She believed that not only Islam, but also other Abrahamic religions such as Judaism and Christianity have been abused by extremists and fanatics. The making of a movie on the life of Ms Bhutto as a joint venture can provide a benchmark for her views and provide an opportunity for Iran and Pakistan to cooperate closely in a cultural project.

Following the recent crisis in Pakistan in particular, leading to a vote of no confidence for Imran Khan in the Pakistani Parliament on 9 April 2022, Shahbaz Sharif was selected as the 23rd Prime Minister of Pakistan by Parliament. He proceeded to appoint Bilawal Bhutto Zardari as his Foreign Minister. Many believe that this appointment can serve as the last step for him to reach the highest position in the country. At the age of 33, Bhutto is the youngest foreign minister in the world, the son of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and former President Asif Ali Zardari, and the grandson of former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. This can be considered as another factor in facilitating the progress of the above-mentioned project.

Briefs

SBP receives \$2.3bn...

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a massive relief to economic policymakers after foreign exchange reserves held by the SBP fell below \$9 billion as of June 10, with the level staying at less than six weeks of import cover. On Thursday, the data from the central bank showed that Pakistan's total liquid foreign exchange reserves clocked in at \$14,210.4 million, down from \$14,943 million last week. The total liquid foreign exchange reserves are at their lowest since January 18, 2019. The breakup showed that the foreign reserves held by the SBP are at \$8,237.7 million. The SBP had said that the decline of \$748 million in its foreign reserves in the outgoing week was due to external debt repayments. The SBP reserves are the lowest since October 25, 2019, which means that Pakistan has an import cover of only 1.21 months. Meanwhile, the net foreign reserves held by commercial banks stood at \$5,972.7 million.

US SC strikes down right...

FROM PAGE 01

that will severely restrict or outright ban and criminalize abortions, forcing women to travel long distances to states that still permit the procedure. The opinion shredded the 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling by the nation's highest court that said women had the right to abortion based on the constitutional right to privacy over their own bodies. Alito's opinion largely mirrors his draft opinion that was the subject of an extraordinary leak in early May, sparking demonstrations around the country and tightened security at the court in downtown Washington. Barricades have been erected around the court to keep back the protesters gathered outside - after an armed man was arrested on June 8 near the home of conservative justice Brett Kavanaugh. The court's ruling goes against an international trend of easing abortion laws, including in such countries as Ireland, Argentina, Mexico and Colombia where the Catholic Church continues to wield considerable influence.

PTI slams govt over...

FROM PAGE 01

measures would instead further burden the public in the form of higher prices. In his presser, Umar said: "This [super tax] is an attack on those sectors of the economy that have the potential of growth [...] that can increase production and livelihood [...] and this is the reason why the market lost 2,000 points during Shehbaz Sharif's speech. "You can clearly figure out from this how dangerous and fatal the budget is for the economy," the former federal minister pointed out. For the past 20 years, he continued, Pakistan had a policy of gradually decreasing taxes on industries. "But they have ruined it all now." He further stated that even now, despite increasing prices of every commodity - diesel, petrol, gas, and food items - the PM said the deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) will only be signed if the fund doesn't make more demands. "This is a joke with the public," he said. "And then you ask people to be thankful? Mian sahib, you had a choice between protecting the public and hiding your corruption and you have chosen the latter," the former minister added. He also claimed that the government didn't care about the public because it knew the public never chose it. "All they care about are the people who brought them. How will America be happy? Will it be happy by recognising Israel? By extending ties with India or by giving bases [to the US]?" Meanwhile, countering the prime minister's remarks on PTI leading the country towards a default, Umar said that when the Imran-led government was "ousted", the foreign exchange reserves in the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) were \$16.4 billion. "In the last three months, they have come down exactly by half.

Pakistan celebrates International Olympic Day

'This day is one of the key events of our annual calendar where we engage with partners for the promotion of Olympism in our community'

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Olympic Association (POA) held an Olympic Day event to celebrate the International Olympic Day 2022 in collaboration with DHA Lahore. Chaudhry Muhammad Yaqoob, vice-president Pakistan Olympic Association was the chief guest on the occasion while Secretary General Pakistan Olympic Association Muhammad Khalid Mehmood, Presidents / Secretaries General of affiliated Units of POA, national medalist of various sports, civil society dignitaries and residents of DHA were also participated in the event. On the eve to celebrate Olympic Day a walk from DHA head office to the sports complex was held and an exhibition match of hockey between Olympians and youngsters was also held. The message of Thomas Bach, IOC President and Lt Gen (R) Syed Arif Hasan, President NOC Pakistan were also presented to the audience followed by "Digital Olympic Quiz". During celebrations Col (R) Mudassar Asghar, Touqeer Dar, Dr. Tariq Aziz, Manzoor Ul Hasan Senior and. Qasim Khan also participated in the event and shared their success stories with children and students. It said that the Olympic Day is celebrated worldwide on June 23 of each year to com-



memorate the birth of the Modern Olympics Games that were held in Paris back in June, 1894. "This day is one of the key events of our annual calendar where we engage with

partners for the promotion of Olympism in our community. Thousands of people of all ages participate in sporting and cultural activities, such as fun runs, exhibitions,

music, tree plantation, beach cleaning and educational seminars. Pakistan Olympic Association (POA) also regularly celebrates the Olympic Day every year," the POA said.

already opened by Afghanistan Embassy in Islamabad and Consulate Generals in Peshawar, Quetta and Karachi." He suggested the individuals and office holders of different politico-religious groups to desist themselves of arranging donations and relief camps. Meanwhile, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has confirmed tribesmen displaced to Afghanistan in June 2014 amongst the victims of earthquake which shattered Afghanistan on mid night between Tuesday and Wednesday. Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif, advisor to Chief Minister said, "our people who living as Displaced Persons across the border in Khost persons also affected by Earthquake. So far there is no exact data of casualties as the rescue activities are still in progress but around 30 dead bodies have been arrived in Data Khel tehsil through Ghulam Khan border." He also confirmed that one personnel killed and several other injured when a Post razed to the grounds as a result of earthquake in North Waziristan. On the other hand, Army Medical Corps and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government's Rescue 1122 opened a medical camp just on Ghulam Khan of North Waziristan and Angor Adda of South Waziristan crossing points for medical relief and assistance of earthquake victims of Khost, Paktya and Paktika provinces of Afghanistan.

Threat of default...

FROM PAGE 01

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Afghan Consul...

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Thousands rally in Georgia for EU

TBILISI: Tens of thousands of Georgians staged a fresh rally on Friday in favour of EU membership, a day after the bloc's leaders deferred Tbilisi's candidacy, demanding widespread political reforms. Georgia applied for EU membership together with Ukraine and Moldova, days after Russia launched an all-out war on Ukraine. The EU anthem, the Ode to Joy, was performed outside the Georgian parliament where tens of thousands of demonstrators gathered on Friday evening, waving Georgian and EU flags. Organised by Georgia's leading pro-democracy groups and opposition forces, the rally was held amid growing anger against the government over the failure to secure EU candidate status and damaging ties with Brussels. "Whatever promises the Georgian government makes, we do not believe it would respect its own words," rally organisers said on Facebook. "We, the Georgian people, must assume responsibility for implementing the required reforms. The Georgian people have to defend their European choice." The European Council has however "recognised Georgia's European perspective" - in a move President Salome Zurbishvili hailed as "historic." Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili said his government was "mobilised" to meet EU requirements on time "so that we get the candidate's status as soon as possible." In a statement issued Friday, the ruling Georgian Dream party defended its democratic record and accused the opposition of "plans to overthrow the authorities by organising anti-government rallies". In what was the biggest demonstration in decades, at least 120,000 Georgians took to the streets Monday in support of the country's EU membership bid. The rally organisers announced at the time the launch of a "new popular movement" that will include opposition parties but will be dominated by civil activists. - Agencies

Imran Khan cuts off contact with me: Ramiz

DNA

LAHORE: PCB chairman Ramiz Raja seeks good relations with Prime Minister Shahbaz after former premier Imran Khan 'cut off contact with him'. In a press briefing here on Friday, Raja disclosed that Khan cut off contact with him soon after he was removed from the premiership. "Imran Bhai cut off contact with me. I haven't talked to him for long time now," Raja responded to a query about his relations with his former captain. However, Raja showed respect to the current PCB's patron-in-chief and emphasized building relations with him despite speculations of his removal from the PCB office. "We can't live around speculations. I believe there is a need for continuity apart from political differences," he said. "See, our prime minister is our patron-in-chief, we have requested his time and if he meets us, we will tell him about our

work. I think there is no need for ego here as, in the end, we all want upliftment of cricket," the ex-cricketer said. "If there is anything in the constitution about the removal of PCB chairman every time, go ahead with it. Otherwise, fulfilling individual desires won't work in favor of the game,

"The ball is in the court of him [PM Shahbaz]," the PCB boss concluded. It must be noted here that PM Shahbaz had met former PCB chairman Khalid Mahmood a couple of days ago. Reportedly, PCB chairmanship was on top of the discussion during their meeting.



Djokovic eyes redemption at Wimbledon

LONDON: The season has not panned out as Novak Djokovic would have envisaged back in January but the former world number one will hope to find redemption at Wimbledon as he looks to defend his crown and close in on Rafael Nadal's 22 Grand Slam titles. The 35-year-old Serb has won the last three editions of Wimbledon in 2018, 2019 and last year, with the 2020 tournament cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. He was also on track for a rare calendar-year Grand Slam in 2021 after winning the first three majors, before losing to Russia's Daniil Medvedev in the US Open final. Any hopes of a repeat performance this season were quickly dashed with his high-profile detention and deportation ahead of the Australian Open in January due to his refusal to be vaccinated against Covid-19. He then missed a string of US tournaments for the same reason and only got serious match practice once the claycourt season got under way in Europe. Winning in Rome was a much-needed confidence boost ahead of the French Open but he lost in the quarter-finals in Paris to subsequent winner Nadal. Djokovic, the favourite for Wimbledon, has 20 Grand Slam titles to his name, as many as Roger Federer, while Nadal, who went on to win his 14th title at Roland Garros, moved two ahead of them. Wimbledon has been extremely fertile hunting ground for Djokovic, who has won the title six times, second only to Federer (8) and Pete Sampras (7) for most wins there in the Open era. - Agencies

Kvitova to face Ostapenko in final

WEB DESK

EASTBOURNE: Two-time Wimbledon winner Petra Kvitova will play defending champion Jelena Ostapenko in the Eastbourne final following a straight-set victory over Brazilian Beatriz Haddad Maia. The Czech, 32, won 7-6 (7-5) 6-4 to end Haddad Maia's 12-match winning streak. Last year's winner Ostapenko, of Latvia, beat Italian Camila Giorgi 6-2 6-2 to reach Saturday's final. Britain's Jack Draper contests his first ATP Tour semi-final in the men's event later on Friday. World number 108 Draper, 20, meets American Maxime Cressy for a place in the final at the pre-Wimbledon tournament, with third seed Taylor Fritz and sixth seed Alex de Minaur contesting the other semi-final. Kvitova, ranked 31st in the world, was in fine form as she ended 26-year-old Haddad Maia's hopes of winning a third successive tournament on grass before Wimbledon. The Brazilian world number 29 triumphed at Birmingham and Nottingham earlier this month and received a quarter-final walkover against Lesia Tsurenko. But Kvitova, who reached the Eastbourne final in 2011 before going on to win her first Wimbledon title, captured the crucial points - edging a tie-break before recording the only break of serve of the contest in the opening game of the second set. Former French Open champion Ostapenko became only the third wildcard to win the Eastbourne title last year. Seeded eighth this time around, the Latvian 25-year-old overpowered Giorgi, winning four straight games to seal the first set. A second break of serve in the second set booked Ostapenko's return to the final without dropping a set on the south coast. Kvitova and Ostapenko each have four wins from their previous eight meetings, with Ostapenko winning in three sets in their only match on grass in 2016.

Raducanu, and Serena learn first-round opponents

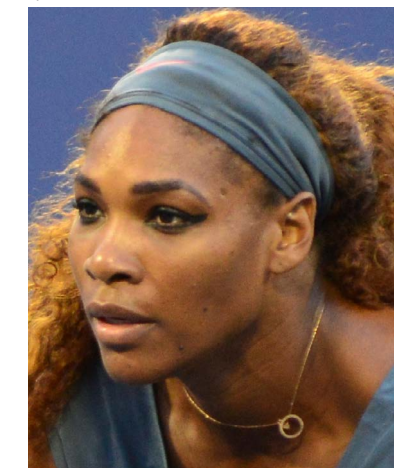
SPORTS DESK

LONDON: British number one Emma Raducanu has been drawn against Belgium's Alison Van Uytvanck in the Wimbledon first round. Two-time champion Andy Murray, who is trying to overcome an abdominal injury, faces Australia's James Duckworth. Serena Williams starts her return to singles action after a year out against French debutant Harmony Tan. The 40-year-old American made her comeback in the Eastbourne doubles this week but has not played singles since she was injured at Wimbledon last year. Top seed Iga Swiatek plays Croatian qualifier Jana Fett as she aims to continue her dominance of the WTA Tour. The world number one has won her past six tournaments, including the recent French Open. The 21-year-old from Poland is aiming for a 36th straight win and could face British wildcard Sonay Kartal, who starts against Montenegro's Danka Kovinic, in the second round. Tunisian third seed Ons Jabeur, who played with Williams at Eastbourne before pulling out with a knee injury, faces Swedish qualifier Mirjam Bjorklund. Romanian 16th seed Simona Halep, who has not played at Wimbledon since winning the

2019 title, has a tough opener against Czech Karolina Muchova.

Raducanu is set for her first Wimbledon since winning the US Open, but has seen her preparations hampered by a side injury in recent weeks. The 19-year-old, who is seeded 10th, has won eight of the 19 matches she has played so far this season and experienced a string of minor injuries. World number 46 Van Uytvanck has won two grass-court titles already this month and is one of the toughest opponents Raducanu could have drawn. Raducanu could face another British player, wildcard Yuriko Mi-

yazaki, in the second round, with Katie Swan also drawn in the same section. American 19th seed Madison Keys is a potential third-round opponent. Unseeded Murray, 35, avoided a seeded player in the first round and will meet Duckworth for a second time in his opening match at a major after beating him in the 2018 US Open. He could face big-serving American John Isner in the second round, with Italian 10th seed Jannik Sinner - who faces Swiss wildcard Stan Wawrinka in a far-from-ideal opener - potentially waiting in round three.



Germany warns of global hunger crisis

Germany has promised medical aid to the people of Afghanistan, the foreign minister stressed that at times like this the only thing that counts is humanity

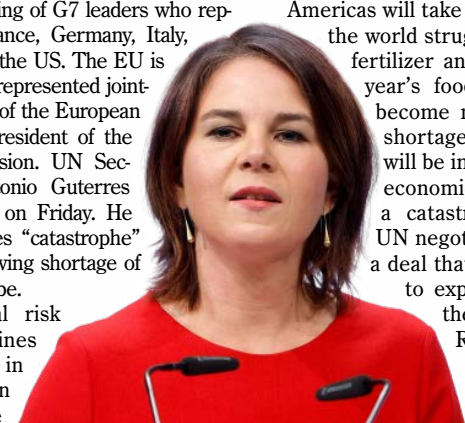
FOREIGN DESK

BERLIN: The world is facing a hunger crisis - that's the message coming from Germany, which is hosting a key G7 summit in the Bavarian Alps this weekend - and from the UN Secretary-General. Ukraine's war complicates how the G7 and other world leaders will respond. Around 20 million tonnes of grain remain stuck inside Ukraine and that, along with high global energy prices, has escalated global food prices. "It is a hunger crisis that is looming before us like a life-threatening wave. Some of the reasons are not new: regional conflicts, especially in Afghanistan, Taliban rule, droughts, the consequences of the climate crisis and also the aftermath of Covid-19, but it was Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine that turned a wave into a tsunami," Germany's foreign minister Annalena Baerbock said on Friday. The question is whether the seven richest countries in the world, and other states, will

now commit to paying for enough food aid to keep the poorest people in the world alive. Baerbock has said that Moscow's claim that Western sanctions imposed over Russia's invasion of Ukraine were to blame for food shortages was "completely untenable". Both the war and the hunger crisis will be discussed at the meeting of G7 leaders who represent Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK and the US. The EU is also a guest and is represented jointly by the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres went even further on Friday. He said the world faces "catastrophe" because of the growing shortage of food around the globe. "There is a real risk that multiple famines will be declared in 2022," he said in a video message

to the officials from dozens of rich and developing countries gathered in Berlin. "And 2023 could be even worse." The UN's food agency the World Food Programme tweeted what it's asking world leaders, including the G7, to do. Guterres noted that harvests across Asia, Africa and the Americas will take a hit as farmers around the world struggle to cope with rising fertilizer and energy prices. "This year's food access issues could become next year's global food shortage," he said. "No country will be immune to the social and economic repercussions of such a catastrophe." Guterres said UN negotiators were working on a deal that would enable Ukraine to export food, including via the Black Sea, and let Russia bring food and fertilizer to world markets without restrictions.

He also called for debt relief for poor countries to help keep their economies afloat and for the private sector to help stabilise global food markets. Germany has promised medical aid to the people of Afghanistan, the foreign minister stressed that at times like this the only thing that counts is humanity "We are planning to increase the funding for them further. And we will provide more aid in the coming days. Not through the Taliban, but with our partners and aid agencies like UNICEF and WHO, who can reach people directly on the ground," said Annalena Baerbock. "Even though other crises have greater media attention, we have not forgotten the people in Afghanistan and we know about our special responsibility." The country's official news agency says an estimated 1,500 people were injured in the magnitude 6 earthquake. However, millions of people in Afghanistan are already on the brink of starvation, while the economy and the health system have both crumbled since the Taliban retook power last August.



Briefs

China-Pakistan to cooperate on pest control

DNA

BEIJING: The cooperation between China and Pakistan in the agriculture sector, particularly in the fields of de-desertification, biodiversity conservation and pest control can help modernize this sector, said Pakistani Ambassador to China Moinul Haque.

According to Gwadar Pro, Ambassador Moinul Haque received Dr. Zhou Jinfeng, Secretary-General of China Biodiversity Conservation and Green Development Foundation (CBCGDF) at the Embassy of Pakistan in Beijing and discussed different projects. The Ambassador underlined the increasing importance attached by the Government of Pakistan to environmental protection and combatting climate change, highlighting various initiatives taken by Pakistan in these areas. Noting the growing cooperation between China and Pakistan in the agriculture sector, he sought CBCGDF's support and solicited concrete project proposals.

Dr. Zhou briefed the Ambassador on the functioning of CBCGDF and invited him to visit the sites of various projects undertaken by the organization. Acknowledging Pakistan's strong credentials in agriculture and the need for climate action, he listed areas of potential collaboration. CBCGDF is a leading environmental NGO in China, having around 30 years of experience in biodiversity conservation and institutional linkages within China and with various multilateral organizations.

Sweden ends probe against YPG/PKK

DNA

STOCKHOLM: Swedish authorities ended their probe into social media posts showing photos of the YPG/PKK terrorist group's so-called flag and its imprisoned ringleader Abdullah Öcalan, that were projected on public buildings in the country's capital. According to state radio, police claimed there is a lack of evidence to proceed with the investigation. Last week, social media accounts linked to the PKK, and its Syrian offshoot YPG, shared images showing the organization's so-called flag and its leader's picture projected on the historic City Hall and GlobenAvicii Arena Sports Hall.

Following reactions by Turkey's Ambassador to Sweden Hakki Emre Yunt and others to the propaganda activities of the terrorists, Stockholm Municipality had filed a criminal complaint. Finland and Sweden applied for NATO membership in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. But the bids have faced opposition from Turkey, which has been angered by what it says is Helsinki and Stockholm's support for terrorist groups and arms embargoes on Ankara.

Anomalies Committee meets

DNA

KARACHI: An Anomaly Committee constituted by the Ministry of Finance under the Chairmanship of Zubair Motiwala held its meeting in Islamabad which was attended by Member (Customs-Policy) FBR Ms. Surriya Ahmed Butt and Member (IR-Policy) FBR Afaq Ahmed Qureshi along with Chairman Businessmen Panel Mian Anjum Nisar, President KCCI Muhammad Idrees, President Islamabad Chamber Shakeel Muneer, President Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce & Industry (OICCI) Ghayas Khan, CEO Pakistan Business Council Ehsan A Malik, Vice President Quetta Chamber Amjad Siddiqui, Secretary General OICCI Abdul Aleem, Syed Asad Ali Shah, who represented Mutual Funds & Insurance Sector, representatives of Marbles Association and others while rest of the Anomaly Committee Members also joined the meeting via Zoom. The committee discussed threadbare all the anomalies arising out of recently announced Federal Budget.

EU, NATO gathering countries 'for war' with Russia: FM

"This meeting was agreed (to take place) in Moscow, and we are currently selecting dates that would be convenient for both sides," he said

NEWS DESK

BAKU: The EU and NATO are gathering a coalition for war with Moscow, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Friday, commenting on the granting of EU candidacy status to Ukraine and Moldova. Speaking at a news conference in Baku following a meeting with his Azerbaijani counterpart Jeyhun-Bayramov, Lavrov said the situation reminds the state of affairs before World War II when Hitler united most of the European countries for a war against the Soviet Union.

"When the Second World War was about to start, Hitler gathered most of the European countries under his banners. Now the EU and NATO are also gathering the same modern coalition for the fight, and by and large, for war with the Russian Federation. We will look at all this very carefully," he said. Lavrov then announced the second bilateral meeting on the border delimitation between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which will take place in Moscow.

Both sides confirmed their willingness to work on the issue, con-



sidering it very significant for the current stage of the settlement, he noted. "This meeting was agreed (to take place) in Moscow, and we are currently selecting dates that would be convenient for both sides," he said.

Lavrov also reiterated Russia's readiness to contribute to signing a peace treaty between Baku and Yerevan and supported the idea of cooperation in a 3+3 format in

the South Caucasus, comprising Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia and their three "neighbors" - Russia, Türkiye, and Iran.

Asked about granting Ukraine and Moldova a candidate status to the EU, Lavrov said that, unlike NATO, the EU is not a military organization and so membership in this structure does not pose threats to Russia. But Lavrov also noted that Moscow has been fol-

lowing the steps of the EU and doubts that the bloc's "Russophobic policy" will soon dissipate. For his part, Bayramov said Baku's priority is normalization and the long-term peace in the region, and this process cannot be "held hostage" to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group on Karabakh, which does not currently exist. The Minsk Group, a

body under the OSCE was tasked around three decades ago to solve the Karabakh dispute, but it had achieved no results in nearly three decades, he stressed.

The OSCE Minsk Group, co-chaired by France, Russia, and the US, was formed on March 24, 1992 to find a peaceful solution to the conflict, but to no avail. The co-chairs of the Minsk Group, who visited both countries periodically and met with the authorities, did nothing more than issuing warnings to the parties to abide by the cease-fire each time.

Bayramov noted that it was Azerbaijan that laid out basic principles of establishing interstate relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan in February of 2022. These principles have been welcomed both by the Armenian political leadership and the whole world.

The countries advanced the most in opening communications in terms of normalizing Armenia-Azerbaijan ties. So, it was Azerbaijan, represented by President Ilham Aliyev, who insisted on including the paragraph related to opening communications in the trilateral statement, thus restoring economic ties," the minister stated.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Turkey to Pakistan, Ihsan Mustafa Yurdakul pays his farewell call on Minister for Interior Rana Sana Ullah. - DNA

Iran dismisses Israeli allegations as 'baseless'

FOREIGN DESK

TEHRAN: Iran has dismissed as "baseless" allegations of Israeli foreign minister YairLapid that settlers could become the target of Iranian attacks in Turkey, saying such claims are part of the regime's attempts to deflect public opinion from its terrorist acts in Palestine. In a statement on Friday, Iran's foreign ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said the allegations fall within the framework of a plot orchestrated by the child-murdering and rogue regime aimed at sowing discord between the two neighboring Muslim countries. "Unfortunately, a psychological operation started nearly a week ago to pre-

occupy media outlets with fictitious scenarios, using erroneous and biased information. It sought to prepare the ground for the Israeli foreign minister's projective scenario," Khatibzadeh stated. "Turkey is well aware of the baseless nature of claims made by the representative of the deceitful [Israeli] regime and Zionist terrorists. It is expected not to remain silent in the face of these divisive comments. The regime has repeatedly shown how unreliable it is."

Khatibzadeh went on to assert that the Islamic Republic of Iran determinedly and strongly responds to any Israeli act of terror and sabotage without threatening ordinary citizens and the national security of other countries. - Agencies

Prince Charles expresses 'personal sorrow' over slavery

LONDON: Britain's Prince Charles expressed his "personal sorrow" over the suffering of slavery and its "enduring impact" on Friday. Speaking at the opening of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Kigali, Rwanda, the Prince of Wales, who is representing Queen Elizabeth II, said the past faults should be acknowledged for a common future. "To unlock the power of our common future, we must also acknowledge the wrongs which have shaped our past," he said. "Many of those wrongs belong to an earlier age with different, and in some ways, lesser values." The prince said he wants to acknowledge "that the roots of our contemporary association run deep into the most painful period of our history." "I cannot describe the depths of my personal sorrow at the suffering of so many, as I continue to deepen my own understanding of slavery's enduring impact," he added. During the historic Transatlantic Slave Trade, British merchant supported by the state transported and enslaved more than 3 million people from Africa, a policy which had not been abolished until 1807. Speaking on the commonwealth countries' relationship with the UK's monarchy, the prince said their constitutional link with the Buckingham Palace is "a matter for each member country to decide." He said: "The Commonwealth contains within it countries that have had constitutional re-

lationships with my family, some that continue to do so, and increasingly those that have had none. "I want to say clearly, as I have said before, that each member's constitutional arrangement, as republic or monarchy, is purely a matter for each member country to decide. The benefit of long life brings me the experience that arrangements such as these can change, calmly and without rancor. "As I said in Barbados last November, we should never forget the things which do not change: the close and trusted partnership between Commonwealth members; our common values and shared goals; and, perhaps most importantly, the strong and enduring connections between the peoples of the Commonwealth which strengthen us all." - Agencies



Borell heads to Iran to 'reverse tensions'

The negotiations stalled in March amid differences between Tehran and Washington, most notably due to a demand by Iran to remove its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps from a U.S. terror list. Amir-Abdollahian on Thursday stressed Iran was "serious" about reaching an agreement

WEB DESK

TEHRAN: European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell is set to travel to the Iranian capital Tehran on Friday for a surprise visit that could breathe new life into stalled talks to revive the 2015 nuclear deal. Borrell was due to arrive in the Iranian capital at night to meet Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and other officials, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Saeed Khatibzadeh said. "Diplomacy is the only way to go back to full implementation of the deal and to reverse current tensions," Borrell tweeted as the European Union confirmed his two-day trip in a statement. News of his previously unannounced visit comes after Amir-Abdollahian said last week that Iran still believed the negotiations could succeed. The landmark deal has been hanging by a thread since 2018 when then former U.S. Pres-

ident Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew from the accord and began imposing crippling economic sanctions on America's arch-enemy. The administration of incumbent U.S. President Joe Biden has sought to return to the agreement, saying it would be the best path with the Islamic republic.

The talks in Vienna, which began in April last year, aim to return the United States to the deal, including through the lifting of its sanctions on Iran while ensuring Tehran's full compliance with its nuclear commitments.

The negotiations stalled in March amid differences between Tehran and Washington, most notably due to a demand by Iran to remove its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps from a U.S. terror list. Amir-Abdollahian on Thursday stressed Iran was "serious" about reaching an agreement.

"I hope we can reach the final point of the agreement in the near future with realism from the American

side," he said, adding that "the nuclear negotiations train has reached difficult stops as they near the end." On Thursday, Enrique Mora, the EU coordinator for the talks, tweeted a picture of himself dining together with Borrell and U.S. negotiator Robert Malley at a restaurant in Brussels.

"In depth conversation about #JCPOA and regional perspectives



in the wider Middle East. Malley reiterated firm US commitment to come back to the deal," he wrote, referring to the accord by its formal name, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. The agreement reached between Iran and six major powers - Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and the U.S. - gave the Islamic republic relief from sanctions in return for guarantees it could not develop an atomic weapon. Iran has always denied wanting a nuclear arsenal. In April, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the United States still believed a return to the accord was "the best way to address the nuclear challenge posed by Iran." Blinken warned at the time that the "breakout time" for Iran to develop a nuclear bomb if it so chooses was "down to a matter of weeks" after the deal pushed it beyond a year. The International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) board of governors adopted a resolution this

month censuring Iran for failing to adequately explain the previous discovery of traces of enriched uranium at three sites that Tehran had not declared as having hosted nuclear activities.

On the same day, June 8, Tehran said it had disconnected a number of IAEA cameras that had been monitoring its nuclear sites. IAEA chief Rafael Grossi later confirmed that 27 cameras had been disconnected, leaving about 40 still in place. The move by Iran, he warned, could deal a "fatal blow" to the negotiations unless the U.N. nuclear watchdog's inspectors were given access within three to four weeks.

The visit by Borrell, however, could be a determining factor in the fate of the deal. During the talks in Vienna aimed at reviving the accord, Iran has repeatedly called for guarantees from the Biden administration that there will be no repeat of Trump's pullout.

Croatia to officially join eurozone

AGENCIES

BRUSSELS: European leaders reconvened on Friday for the second day of their summit dedicated to the economy after making the "historic" decision the day before to grant Ukraine and Moldova candidate status. The cost of living crisis, soaring inflation and food security will be top of the agenda for EU leaders who will be joined in their discussion by European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde and Eurogroup chief Pascal Donohoe. The energy crisis, although not formally on the agenda, is bound to also be discussed. We understand Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi has asked for another Council summit to take place in July to delve more into the bloc's economic situation so a decision on this may well be announced today as well.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said that the EU had not made as much progress as they'd like on enlargement. "We need to be capable to absorb new members. We need institutional reforms that are urgently necessary," the German Chancellor said at a briefing following the summit, including majority voting (instead of unanimity) to "make sure that the rules of democracy and the rule of law are applied."

He also said that the size of the Commission would need to be dealt with after new accessions. "It cannot be that the Commission enlarges as the European Union enlarges, I don't think that makes sense," he said.

Canada to end Covid vaccine mandate for travel

DNA

OTTAWA: The Canadian government is expected to finally announce an end to the COVID-19 vaccine mandates for domestic flights and trains and outgoing international travel, public broadcaster CBC reported, citing unidentified sources.

The government, which has faced criticism over ongoing pandemic restrictions, may bring back the vaccine mandate if a new variant of the virus is discovered, the report added.

Canada's federal COVID-19 curbs have included barring unvaccinated people from traveling on airplanes and vaccine mandates for federal civil servants. Last week the country suspended random COVID-19 testing at all its airports for the rest of June to ease the long waiting times that travelers have been facing.

2,000 Ukrainian troops besieged in Luhansk

FOREIGN DESK

MOSCOW: Some 2,000 Ukrainian troops are besieged in the country's Luhansk region, Russia's Defense Ministry said Friday.

The troops, including servicemen, mercenaries and fighters of the far-right group Right Sector, are stranded between the Zolote and Hirske settlements, said Igor Konashenkov, the Defense Ministry spokesman, at a press briefing in Moscow. Over the past day, 41 soldiers surrendered as communication with the higher command cut off along with other supplies, the spokesman said. The Ukrainian troops were also laying down their arms in other parts of the country, said Konashenkov, adding that the Ukrainian military chiefs were now recruiting untrained, conscripted citizens.

Giving details of targets hit, he said Russian jets destroyed military equipment at 367 spots, five ammunition depots, and several artillery and mortar units. Also, an S-300 air defense system near Odesa was struck with missiles, he added. "In total, since the beginning of the special military operation, 213 aircraft, 132 helicopters, 1,334 unmanned aerial vehicles, 350 air defense systems, 3,769 tanks and other armored combat vehicles, 659 multiple rocket launcher combat vehicles, 3,002 field artillery and mortar guns, as well as 3,835 units of special military vehicles have been destroyed," he said.

Briefs

Court grants interim bail to Imran Khan till July 6

DNA

ISLAMABAD: PTI Chief and former Prime Minister Imran Khan has got big relief as a sessions court in Islamabad has accepted his interim bail till July 6 in 15 cases of vandalism during his long march call on May 25, besides restraining police from arresting him. The PTI chairman on Friday came to attend the hearing of his bail applications seeking interim bails in 15 cases registered against him on the charges of damaging public properties and arson incidents during the PTI long march last month. He came to the court along with his lawyer Babar Awan. District and sessions judge Kamran Basharat Mufti after hearing arguments of the lawyers granted bail to Imran Khan in 10 cases registered in Bahara Kaho, Sahala, Koral, and Loi Bhair police stations. The judges also granted interim bail to the PTI chairman in five cases of vandalism registered in Bahara Kaho, Sahala, Koral, and Loi Bhair police stations. The judge directed the former premier to submit surety bonds worth Rs5,000 in every case. He also sought record of all 15 cases from the police and restrained them from arresting Imran.

KSA allows only Hajj pilgrims to perform Umrah

ISLAMABAD: Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Hajj and Umrah announced on Friday that only Hajj pilgrims will be allowed to perform Umrah between June 24 and July 19. A total of 172,562 pilgrims arrived in the Kingdom by Tuesday ahead of this year's Hajj season, Al-Arabiya reported. Hajj is usually one of the world's largest religious gatherings, with about 2.5 million people performing the ritual in 2019. However, due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Kingdom had sharply decreased the number of pilgrims allowed to perform the ritual. - APP

Tarin says Super Tax to destroy economy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former finance minister Shaukat Tarin has hit hard at incumbent rulers for levying 10% Super Tax on industry warning that it will trigger an avalanche of inflation and all small factories will be shut down. Addressing a presser on Friday, the former finance minister lashed out at the government for putting 10% levy saying it would result in closure of many industrial units. He was of the view that the tax would destroy small trader and it would unleash a storm of inflation in the country. He was of the view that if the government imposed fixed tax, then the big fish would have dodged it. He lamented that the government had put Rs43 million data in the dustbin saying that it was not the previous regime but the new rulers were taking the country towards bankruptcy. Tarin said if the PTI were in power, they would have got oil from Russia at cheap rates. PTI Secretary General and former development minister Asad Umar also lambasted the coalition government for levying Super Tax saying that it would crush the economy, exacerbate inflation and joblessness in the country, besides increasing imports and sliding the country into economic disaster.

Ukraine set to withdraw from Sievierodonetsk

Moscow said it had encircled about 2,000 Ukrainian troops in the area. Reuters could not independently verify any of the battlefield accounts

NEWS DESK

KYIV: Ukraine was set to pull its troops from the ruined city of Sievierodonetsk after weeks of street fighting and bombardment, the regional governor said, in what would be a significant gain for Russia as it grinds out its offensive in the east. Russian troops also fully occupied a town about 10 km (6 miles) further south, Ukrainian officials said on Friday, as Moscow closed in on the last slivers of Ukrainian-held territory in the industrial region of Luhansk. Moscow said it had encircled about 2,000 Ukrainian troops in the area. Reuters could not independently verify any of the battlefield accounts. The reports came four months to the day since Russian President Vladimir Putin sent tens of thousands of troops over the border, unleashing a conflict that has killed thousands, uprooted millions and reduced whole cities to rubble.

The latest Russian advances appeared to bring the Kremlin closer to taking full control of Luhansk, one of Moscow's stated war objectives, and set the stage for Sievierodonetsk's twin city of Lysychansk to become the next main focus of fighting. Luhansk regional governor Serhiy Gaidai said troops in Sievierodonetsk had already received the order to move to new positions. "Remaining in positions smashed to pieces over many months just for the sake of staying there does not make sense," Gaidai said on Ukrainian television. Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24, but abandoned an early advance on the capital Kyiv in the face of fierce resistance bolstered by Western arms. Since then Moscow and its proxies have been focused on battles along the front line in Ukraine's south and in Donbas, an eastern territory made up of Luhansk and its neighbour Donetsk. Ukrainian forces held out for weeks against an onslaught in Sievierodonetsk, trying to wear down Rus-

sian troops through attrition and buy time for the arrival of heavy weapons supplies. "Our forces had to withdraw and conduct a tactical retreat because there was essentially nothing left there to defend. There was no city left there and, secondly, we could not allow them to be encircled," Oleksandr Musiyenko, a Kyiv-based military analyst, said. Ukraine's Defence Ministry said the Russians were trying to surround Lysychansk and mounting assaults on Sievierodonetsk to win full control. But spokesperson Oleksandr Motuzanyk declined to comment on Gaidai's remarks about a withdrawal. South of Lysychansk, Russian troops had entered the town of Hirske and fully occupied the district on Friday, municipal head Oleksiy Babchenko said. "There is a red flag flying over the municipal administration (in Hirske)," a spokesperson for the regional administration told Reuters by telephone. Russia's defence ministry said it had encircled up to 2,000 Ukrainian

troops, including 80 foreign fighters, at Hirske. Russian control of the Donbas region through proxy separatists would allow it to link up with Crimea to the south, which Moscow annexed from Ukraine in 2014. But Ukraine's foreign minister played down the significance of the possible loss of more territory in the Donbas. "Putin wanted to occupy the Donbas by May 9. We are (there) on June 24 and still fighting. Retreating from a few battles does not mean losing the war at all," Dmytro Kuleba said in an interview with the Italian newspaper Corriere della Sera. He sounded pessimistic about the prospects of any peace talks soon. "Only our military victory will convince Russia to engage in serious peace negotiations. Weapons will secure the diplomatic route," Kuleba said. A senior U.S. defence official said Russia had been unable to stop Western weapons flowing into Ukraine, including longer-range systems that Kyiv hopes will still be decisive on the battlefield.

Airlines strikes disrupt Europe air travel

MADRID: Strikes by staff at Ryanair and Brussels Airlines over pay and working conditions on Friday forced the cancellation of dozens of flights in Europe as the busy summer travel season gets underway. The strikes are adding more headaches to passengers and the aviation sector, which has struggled with staff shortages as it struggle to recruit people after massive layoffs during the Covid pandemic. Ryanair cabin crew unions in Spain, Portugal and Belgium called a three-day strike starting on Friday, and in Italy and France on Saturday. The biggest impact was felt in Belgium, where the work stoppage led Europe's biggest budget airline to cancel 127 flights to and from Charleroi airport near Brussels between Friday and Sunday. Ryanair could only guarantee 30-40 percent of its scheduled flights at the airport, said a spokeswoman for Brussels South Charleroi Airport. The situation in Belgium was further complicated by a three-day strike by staff at Brussels Airlines, a unit of German airline Lufthansa, which began on Thursday. The company has cancelled 315 flights to and from Brussels' international airport during the three-day strike. The impact of the Ryanair strike was more limited in Portugal, where only two flights were cancelled on Friday morning, according to the SNPVAC union behind the walkout in the country. It expects the strike to gain force later in the day. In Spain, where Ryanair employs 1,900 people, no flights were cancelled except those heading to Belgium. - APP

Report sheds light on IIOJK kids

DNA

NEW DELHI: The repeal of Article 370 has contributed to structural and social changes that have perhaps been most keenly felt by children - a section that has the least amount of wherewithal to respond and protect itself, a report by the Forum for Human Rights in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) has noted. In its Special Report 2022, the Forum comprising Justice A.P. Shah, former Chief Justice of the Madras and Delhi high courts, Gopal Pillai, former government of India home secretary and many other judges, activists and lawyers has highlighted violations of human and child rights in the occupied territory with special attention to the latter. The Forum is an independent initiative that tries to train focus on continuing human rights violations in the region. The report cites real-life case studies of teenagers and minors whose lives are marked by strife and lack of opportunities. An alarming deficiency in the distribution of critical resources including a protective justice delivery system and an environment that promotes mental health has taken away the joys of childhood from many a young child in Jammu and Kashmir, the report notes.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Tanvir Ilyas Khan calls on PTI Chairman Imran Khan. - DNA

EU mission, APTMA discuss GSP Plus

LAHORE: European Union's (EU) Generalized System of Preferences plus (GSP Plus) Monitoring Mission discussed in detail the developments and progress made on implementation of 27 International Conventions concerning GSP Plus with the All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (APTMA) leadership here on Friday. The Monitoring Mission including Guido Dolara, DG Trade Service, Guus Houthin, External Action Service, Andreas Striegnitz, External Action Service and Srefan Schroerer, Employment Service visited APTMA House where it was received by Chairman APTMA Abdul Rahim Nasir, Chairman North Hamid Zaman, Senior Vice Chairman Kamran Arshad, Amir Fayyaz, former Chairman, senior textile leaders and Secretary General Raza Baqir were present in the meeting. Head of the EU delegation informed APTMA members that the European Commission has published the legislation for GSP scheme (2024-34) on September 22, 2021 for new GSP Scheme (2024-34). He said the EU had added six new conventions along with assessing the situation of human rights, press freedom, gender equality and child labour related issues last year while extending the GSP plus status for Pakistan. Members of the visiting delegation informed APTMA members that the newly proposed scheme aims to improve key features of the scheme to better respond to the evolving needs and challenges of GSP countries, as well as, reinforce the scheme's social, labour, environmental and climate dimensions. It will be in place for ten years. There is an expansion in the list of International Conventions from 27 to 32 that beneficiary countries will have to ratify and implement, he added. Speaking on the occasion, Chairman APTMA Rahim Nasir said since the grant of GSP Plus status to Pakistan, country's textile and clothing exports to the European Union have increased by 63 percent while the overall exports have increased by 45 percent. He said the government has already approved the Textiles and Apparel Policy (TAP) 2020-25 to double Pakistan's export target up to US \$ 42 billion. Textile Policy approved by the cabinet contemplated three years target as textile exports will be jacked up to US \$ 27 billion in the fiscal year 2022-23, \$34 billion in 2023-24, and US \$ 42 billion in the fiscal year 2024-25. He said the textile sector alone represents 46 percent of total manufacturing sector and around 40 percent of total labour force. He informed that textile exports of US \$ 15.4 billion registered in FY21 are expected to fetch US \$ 20 billion by close of the current financial year. He added that performance of textile exports during May this year was highly commendable recording upsurge of 50 percent over the last year and it was encouraging to note that the value added sector in textile has shown unprecedented growth. Chairman APTMA North Mr. Zaman highlighting the effects of GSP Plus on Pakistan, he said the GSP plus has boosted Pakistan's competitiveness and provides edge to Pakistani exports over regional competitors besides increase in employment, investment and up-gradation of technology, enhanced foreign investment and opened window for Pakistani exports. - APP

CM Hamza blames Pervaiz Elahi, PTI for Punjab crisis

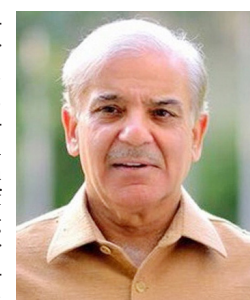
LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister (CM) Hamza Shehbaz on Friday said that the constitutional crisis that was created in the province was unprecedented. Speaking at Aiwan-i-Iqbal in Lahore, he accused Punjab Assembly (PA) Speaker Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi and main opposition party in the assembly Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) of trampling upon the constitution. "The speaker kept convening and kept adjourning assembly sessions; thus wasting public money," he added. Hamza said that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) had come to power to serve masses. He claimed that the PTI government had even snatched from people the provision of medicines for free. "But now people of the province will be able to purchase medicines at all Punjab hospitals free of cost from July 1, 2022," he announced. The CM also said that more facilities would be offered to the people under the health card. He was of the view that PTI leaders had talked of 'bloody march' only to save their political image. "Despite Supreme Court (SC) orders, PTI workers damaged public properties inside the Red Zone," he said. - DNA

PM Shahbaz pays one-day visit to Gwadar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif paid one-day visit to Gwadar seaport on Friday. Acting Governor Balochistan Jan Muhammad Jamali and Chief Minister Balochistan Abdul Qaddos Bazejo along with provincial ministers gave a warm welcome to the Prime Minister. After visiting Gwadar Port, the Prime Minister

met local fishermen at Gwadar Business Center. At the ceremony, the Prime Minister witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Gwadar Development Authority and Indus Hospital. The Prime Minister also addressed the gathering. A delegation of Federal Ministers, Ministers of State and Special Assistants accompanied the Prime Minister, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro.



Japanese Navy Ship conducts naval drills with PN

DNA

KARACHI: Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) Ship HARRUSAME visited Karachi port. Upon arrival the ship was received by officials of Pakistan Navy. Pakistan Navy and JMSDF are partners in peace and striving to achieve safe and secure maritime milieu in the region. The visit of Japanese ship includes naval drills at sea to further hone professional skills and enhance interoperability. The Japanese Mission Commander onboard JMSDF ship called on Commander Pakistan Fleet. During the call on matters of mutual interest were discussed and enhancement of bilateral ties in all spheres was re-affirmed. Pakistan Navy in line with Government policies has always contributed significantly towards safety, security and freedom of navigation at high seas. Japanese Navy Ship visit to Karachi and participation in bilateral joint drills is a testimony of PN resolve to work towards regional peace and it will further strengthen mutual collaboration between the two navies.

UN says Israeli fire killed Al Jazeera journalist

"All information we have gathered... is consistent with the finding that the shots that killed Abu Akleh and injured her colleague Ali Sammoudi came from Israeli security forces and not from indiscriminate firing by armed Palestinians, as initially claimed by Israeli authorities"

GENEVA: The United Nations said Friday it found that Israeli forces fired the shot that killed Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, with Israel swiftly branding the UN's findings unfounded. The Palestinian-American TV reporter, who was wearing a vest marked "Press" and a helmet, was killed on May 11 while covering an Israeli army operation in Jenin camp in the northern West Bank. "We find that the shots that killed Abu Akleh came from Israeli security forces," UN Human Rights Office spokeswoman Ravina Shamdasani told reporters in Geneva. "It is deeply disturbing that Israeli authorities have not conducted a criminal investigation." She said the Human Rights Office had concluded its own independent monitoring into the incident. "All information we have gathered... is consistent with the finding that the shots that killed Abu Akleh and injured her colleague Ali Sammoudi came from Israeli security forces and not from indiscriminate firing by armed Palestinians, as initially claimed by Israeli au-

thorities," she said. "We have found no information suggesting that there was activity by armed Palestinians in the immediate vicinity of the journalists." In line with its human rights monitoring methodology, the UN rights office inspected photo, video and audio material, visited the scene, consulted experts, reviewed official communications and interviewed witnesses. The probe included information from the Israeli military and the Palestinian attorney general. The UN rights office found that seven journalists arrived at the western entrance of the Jenin camp soon after 6:00 am. At around 6:30 am, as four of the journalists turned into a particular street, "several single, seemingly well-aimed bullets were fired towards them from the direction of the Is-



raeli security forces. "One single bullet injured Ali Sammoudi in the shoulder; another single bullet hit Abu Akleh in the head and killed her instantly." Several further single bullets were fired as an unarmed man attempted to approach Abu Akleh's body and another uninjured journalist sheltering behind a tree, said Shamdasani. Shots continued to be fired as this individual eventually managed to carry away Abu Akleh's body, she added. In response, Israel's army said it was "not possible" to determine how Abu Akleh was killed. "The IDF (Israel Defence Forces) investigation clearly concludes that Ms. Abu Akleh was not intentionally shot by an IDF soldier and that it is not possible to deter-

mine whether she was killed by a Palestinian gunman shooting indiscriminately... or inadvertently by an IDF soldier," the military said. Israel's Defence Minister Benny Gantz said IDF troops "came under heavy gunfire during the events that led to Shireen's death, and responded accordingly." "We may only uncover the truth by conducting a thorough ballistic, forensic investigation and not through unfounded investigations," he added. The official Palestinian investigation found that the Qatari television channel's star reporter was killed after being hit by a bullet just below her helmet. Their report said Abu Akleh was killed with a 5.56 millimetre armour piercing round fired from a Ruger Mini-14 rifle. Israel's mission in Geneva said the UN finding "deplorably fails to mention the main obstacle to establishing the truth in this tragic incident: the Palestinian Authority's refusal to conduct a joint investigation and hand over the bullet". - APP

16 trucks of relief goods dispatched for Afghan victims

PESHAWAR: On the instructions of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan, a consignment of 16 trucks loaded with relief goods was dispatched to North Waziristan for Afghan victims of earthquake. Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) in an official communique issued here on Friday said that the relief items were included 500 tents, 500 kitchen sets, 500 hygiene sets, 500 mattresses and 200 tarpaulins. It said that all the teams of the relief department were also present in North Waziristan for the help and assistance of earthquake victims. - APP