



Islamabad POST

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Suk-yeol directs military to 'punish' N. Korea if attacked

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EU warns of full halt in Russian gas

Detailed News On Page-07



Pak, Iran mull co-op in trade, education

Detailed News On Page-08



Briefs

Balochistan prosperity govt mission

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif says turning Balochistan's backwardness into prosperity is our collective responsibility and the government's mission. In a tweet on Wednesday, the Prime Minister said he has ordered inquiry into criminal delay in Gwadar Breakwater project by the previous government of PTI. He lamented how PTI government ignored it despite availability of 445 million dollars grant, 484 million dollars soft loan and feasibility. The Prime Minister said from energy to infrastructure, every project under PTI suffered costly delays.

Marriyum lobbying for her husband

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Fawad Chaudhry on Wednesday accused Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader and Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb of lobbying for her husband and paving the path for him in making crores of rupees. Addressing a press conference, the former Federal Minister said that no PTI minister has been accused of corruption. The PTI leader said the aforementioned said the representatives of the incumbent government for corruption.

Govt to be sent packing in few days

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Former Federal Minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Murad Saeed claimed that the incumbent government would be sent packing in few days. Talking to journalists during a protest against journalist Imran Riaz Khan's arrest, Murad Saeed said that the regime was changed due to an American conspiracy. "Cases were registered against journalists for raising questions against the conspiracy," he added.

TTP talks in 'pre-dialogue' stage: Sana

Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah says that all the negotiations would be conditional upon the Parliament's approval

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah said Wednesday that the government's talks with the outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) were at a "pre-dialogue" after political parties approved negotiations with the militants. In a press conference, the interior minister said the military leadership suggested forming a committee comprising all political parties — a proposal that was accepted by the Parliament as well as the parties. The development comes after the Parliamentary Committee on National Security (PCNS) received a briefing from the military leadership on TTP, where the committee gave formal approval to the government for holding talks with the banned outfit. The interior minister said the dialogue process with the TTP will be taken forward under the supervision of the Parliament, terming the briefing provided to the committee a "comprehensive one".

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Bilawal talks to US counterpart

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari Wednesday said that he had spoken to US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and they reaffirmed their mutual desire to further strengthen bilateral ties between Pakistan and the United States by expanding engagements in different sectors. On his Twitter handle, the foreign minister while referring to 75 years of Pak-US relationship, stressed that they must increase people-to-people and business to business contacts. "Spoke to Sec Blinken today. We reaffirmed our mutual desire to further strengthen bilateral ties by expanding our engagement in trade, energy, health & security marking 75 years of our relationship. We must increase people-to-people & business-to-business contacts," the foreign minister posted a tweet. — APP

At least 77 dead in monsoon rains

Sherry terms the deaths a "national tragedy"

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Climate Change Sherry Rehman on Wednesday said that the current spell of monsoon rains has claimed 77 lives, 37 of which have been in Balochistan, making the province the most affected region of the country. Calling the deaths a "national tragedy", the minister said it was "no small figure" and called on the nation to take matters "seriously". The country is currently experiencing monsoon and pre-monsoon rains, however, the minister said that the severity of the spells has been unusual. She added

that "this is happening because of climate change and global warming". Rehman added that dams were under stress as the country has received 87 per cent more rain than expected. She elaborated that Azad Kashmir received 49 per cent additional rainfall for the month, Balochistan received 274 per cent of the monthly average and Sindh received 262 per cent more rainfall since the first monsoon spell began on June 28. She further informed the media that this year, there had been 16 incidents of glacial lake outburst floods (GLOF), when the annual average is five instances of GLOF and added that heatwaves this year had caused devastating forest fires. "Pakistan is the sixth-most affected country in the world."

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Hina Rabbani Khar exchanging views with Ambassador of Türkiye Mehmet Pacaci at the Foreign Office. — DNA

US, Pakistan vow to deepen ties

US Ambassador David Blome meets Hina Rabbani Khar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: US Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome called on Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar on Wednesday. Both the leaders reiterated their commitment to widen and deepen their longstanding ties. According to the Foreign Office, State Minister Hina Rabbani Khar congratulated Mr Blome on his appointment as US ambassador to Pakistan. During their meeting, both the leaders reiterated their commitment to widen and deepen longstanding Pak-US ties. They also reaffirmed engagement in trade, investment, energy and health sectors. Both underlined importance of people-to-people ties and Congressional engagement. The United States (US) government on Wednesday

Continued on Page 06

ECP notifies PTI candidates on reserved seats

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) Wednesday notified PTI members on five reserved seats in Punjab in line with the directions of the Lahore High Court (LHC). "The ECP is pleased to declare — Habkook Rafiq Babbu and Samuel Yaqoob — as returned candidates on seats reserved for non-Muslims in the provincial assembly of Punjab, which fell vacant due to de-notification of Ijaz Masih and Haroon Imran Gill vide ECP's Notification No. F. 17(2)/2022-Cord. (3) dated May 23, 2022," the statement read.

Thieves cannot win even with umpires' support

PTI Chairman addresses public gathering in Sahiwal, slams coalition government



'Imran trying to ruin state institutions'

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb Wednesday said Imran Khan was desperate to cling to power which eventually ruined the national economy and state institutions. His (Imran) desperation for remaining into the power also wreaked havoc with the lives of masses who were misled by building a false narrative on the so-called regime change foreign conspiracy, the minister said while addressing a news conference. She said Imran Khan, who claimed himself "Sadiq aur Ameen" (honest and righteous), made billions by doing "business of diamonds" and selling gifts from Tosha Khana. Marriyum said Imran Khan had nothing to do with the country's foreign policy, economy,

OUR CORRESPONDENT

SAHIWAL: Former prime minister and PTI chairman Imran Khan on Wednesday said 'even with the support of the umpires thieves cannot win Punjab by-polls', scheduled to take place on July 17, media reported. Addressing a public gathering in Sahiwal, Imran Khan thanked participants for coming in large numbers to the public gathering despite heavy rain and accumulated water in the jalsagah. The former prime minister said the politics of turncoats has been exposed, adding that 'looties' have joined Asif Ali Zardari and Sharifs for the lust for power. Lashing out at

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China lauds Pakistan for arresting key suspect

BEIJING: China on Wednesday appreciated arrest of key suspect involved in the terrorist attack on the Confucius Institute at the University of Karachi (CIUK) by Pakistani authorities and expressed to continue its firm support for Pakistan's counter-terrorism efforts. "The Chinese side pays close attention to the progress of the Pakistani side's investigation into the terrorist attack on the Confucius Institute at the University of Karachi, and appreciates the Pakistani side's positive efforts," Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian said during his regular briefing held here.

He said that at the same time, the Chinese side noted that further investigation was still underway. "It is hoped that the Pakistani side will continue to make every effort to find out the truth, severely punish the perpetrators, resolutely crack down on terrorist organizations involved in the case, and ensure the safety of Chinese projects, personnel and institutions in Pakistan," he added. Zhao Lijian said that the Chinese side would continue to firmly support Pakistan's counter-terrorism efforts and provide a more secure environment for China-Pakistan cooperation. — DNA

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Increasingly isolated, Boris Johnson pledges to fight on

CENTRELINE REPORT



LONDON: Britain's Boris Johnson defiantly vowed on Wednesday to fight on against growing calls for him to resign as prime minister, but his pledge to keep going was met with scornful laughter at a parliamentary appearance. Badly wounded by the resignations of a stream of senior colleagues and junior ministers who said he was not fit to govern, Johnson sought to come out fighting at parliament's weekly prime minister's questions session. "The job of a prime minister in difficult circumstances," is to keep going," Johnson said. "And that's what I'm going to do." Earlier, he tried to reassert his authority by quickly appointing Nadhim Zahawi, a rising star in the Conservative Party

Boris Johnson's many scandals

LONDON: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who is haemorrhaging support within his ruling Conservatives, has been beset by scandals since winning a landslide election victory in 2019. Brexit figurehead Johnson, 58, joined other Tory MPs in ousting predecessor Theresa May in mid-2019. After taking over in an internal leadership contest, he won voters' overwhelming backing that December on a pledge to "get Brexit done". Controversy soon followed but initially did little to dent his popularity. After dramatically surviving a near-fatal bout of Covid-19, then spearheading the world's first mass vaccine rollout, his poll ratings were buoyant. Early last year, his Conservatives swept to an unprecedented victory in Hartlepool, northeast England, once again plundering votes in

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LARGEST CIRCULATED DIPLOMATIC MAGAZINE

Briefs

CTP finalizes traffic plan for Murree

RAWALPINDI: City Traffic Police (CTP) Rawalpindi has chalked out a comprehensive plan for Murree under which over 360 Wardens and Traffic officers would be deployed in Murree on Eid ul Azha aimed at avoiding traffic mess. According to Chief Traffic Officer, Rawalpindi Naveed Irshad, the CTP had finalized all the arrangements besides setting up a control room to facilitate the tourists and monitor the situation.

He told that all out efforts were being made by Rawalpindi Traffic Police to facilitate the tourists adding, in view of the security of the visitors, special traffic arrangements had been made. Traffic wardens had also been directed to work with dedication and commitment and ensure the traffic flow so that traffic mess particularly on congested roads could be averted and the citizens could be provided relief, he said and informed that CTP would utilize all available resources to ensure smooth flow of traffic in Murree. The CTO said that Murree has parking capacity of 3500 vehicles and as per the directives of the district administration, maximum 8000 vehicles would be allowed to enter into Murree. Special counting and checking pickets would also be set up at entry and exit points of Murree, he added. One-wheelers and the car-skaters would be dealt in accordance with the law and the rules violators would be sent behind the bars, he said adding that traffic wardens had been directed to impound motorcycles of one-wheelers in respective police stations. - APP

Foolproof security plan for by-elections finalized

LAHORE: Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Lahore Bilal Siddique Kamyana on Wednesday said that a comprehensive security plan has been finalized for the by-elections. Special security measures would be taken to provide security for peaceful conduct of by-elections and protection of voters, supporters and candidates. More than 7,000 police officers and officials including SPs, SDPOs, SHOs and subordinate officers would be deputed for security of election process. The CCPO said this while reviewing security measures for by-election preparations during a meeting here. Bilal Siddique Kamyana directed supervisory police officers to ensure law and order, security and logistical arrangements including visit of polling station buildings, surrounding areas, returning officers camp offices and duty points so as to complete all necessary arrangements ahead of time in wake of the sensitivity of the forthcoming by-elections. - APP

SBBWUP holds a day-long seminar

PESHAWAR: The Office of Research, Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC) at the Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University, Peshawar (SBBWUP) on Wednesday arranged a day-long interactive session on "Knowledge for Economic Growth" for research students of various departments. Spouse of Egyptian Ambassador Aalia Sarwat El Sarafi was the guest speaker who talked about "Knowledge based Economy: Competitiveness, Innovation & Entrepreneurship." said that Muslim countries share culture similarity and they should unite and collectively take part in progress and advancement of each other which was only possible with knowledge sharing. She said that Sheheed Benazir Bhutto being the first woman leader among Muslim world was a role model women with progressive mindset. She stated that Egypt was also progressing very fast and added that both the countries should create mutual platforms to exchange knowledge. She also emphasized on entrepreneurial awareness as the emerging youth must be self-sufficient to provide for themselves. Vice Chancellor SBBWUP Dr. Safia Ahmed said that university students were very energetic and curious to attain new knowledge. - APP

Third Quetta Literary Festival draws huge interest

Serena Hotels under its Cultural Diplomacy initiative partnered with BUIITEMS for this event



DNA

QUETTA: Serena Hotels under its Cultural Diplomacy initiative partnered with BUIITEMS in achieving yet another milestone, the 3rd Quetta Literary Festival has proved to be the real hope in restoration of art and literature. The 3rd QLF was inaugurated by the GoC 41 Division Maj. General Salman Moin (HI Military) in the presence of Ex-Governor Balochistan Justice © Amanullah Yasinza. The collaborated efforts of Quetta Serena Hotel & BUIITEMS continue to support traditional identities, literature, local languages, art, music, reading, and other ac-

tivities by bringing in prominent thinkers, poets, political and economic experts, and emerging book authors.

This year's theme - Culture Yesterday & Today - featured renowned intellectuals in the different fields of art, writing, politics, environmental conservation, and academia. More than 45 different discussions were held during the two-day festival sponsored by Serena Hotels and some other International Agencies including European Union, and UNDP in this initiative of Balochistan University of Information Technology & Management Sciences (BUIITEMS) and nine book launches on different topics including poetry in Urdu, Pashto, Balochi, Brahvi and Haz-

aragi languages were held at the festival. The discussions covered the challenges faced in Balochistan such as the water crisis, issues of massive urbanization, Balochistan's history of colonialism, stories of courage and inventions based on real life and many more. Dialogues included Urdu, Brahvi, and Pashto literature, a standardised national curriculum, the role of educational institutions in encouraging local languages, and cultural tourism in the province.

More than 200 Authors, Moderators & Speakers participated in the various activities happening across the University in these two days. To name a few participants with international fame were Dr. Syeda Arifa

Zehra, Amjad Islam Amjad, Anwar Maqsood, Ex-senator Javed Jabbar, Dr Kaiser Bengali, Dr Jaffar Rizvi, Dr Asim Sajjad, Dr Qurat-ulain Bakhtari, and many more who gave their valuable input during the discussions. The BUIITEMS Vice Chancellor Mr. Farooq Bazai was the chief guest at the closing ceremony of the event who presented a memento of appreciation to General Manager Quetta Serena Mr. Rashid Uddin for an everlasting partnership in the cause of QLF. Serena Hotels' Cultural Diplomacy initiatives staunchly support events like Quetta Literary Festival that promote education, dialogue, culture and highlight the soft image and importance of Balochistan in the world.

PNCA holds sculpture exhibition "Collective Ground"

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) hosted a splendid new art exhibition, "Collective Ground" a fantastic Sculpture Exhibition at the National Art Gallery by 30 prominent and imminent sculptors across Pakistan on Wednesday 6th July, 2022 at 04:00pm.

Mr. Syed Asif Hyder Shah, Secretary Climate Change kindly consented to inaugurate the exhibition. The opening ceremony was visited by dignitaries, VIPs, Ambassadors and students across Islamabad. Each Artist brought a different set of skills to the show along with their splendid works, in addition to showcasing their abilities in exploring various mediums. Each artist has a different practice and media along with their distinct visual language, projected in their work. This exhibition portrays exciting and contemporary artworks followed by traditional techniques. Collective Ground is about playing with the gallery space (indoor and outdoor) and providing an opportunity to the sculptors of Pakistan to amalgamate various concepts and materials.

Tree plantation drive starts at IIUI

ISLAMABAD: A tree plantation campaign commenced at the news campus of International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIUI) on Wednesday to plant 15000 saplings. The campaign was inaugurated by Vice President Administration and Finance, Prof. Dr. N.B. Jumani by planting a sapling. As many as 15000 plant saplings of indigenous fruit trees, flowering trees and other plants of medicinal and economic value will be planted in the new campus. IIU Clean and Green Program was initiated by Ecology and Biodiversity Laboratory of Department of Environmental Science, Faculty of Basic and Applied Sciences (FBAS) along with IIU Horticulture Section in collaboration and sponsorship by Environment and Mangrove Protection "SEMP" and Standard Chartered Bank "SCB". On the occasion, Dr. N.B. Jumani said there is a dire need to address the environment related issues and we must be among the forward ranks to plant sapling to save nature. - APP

Dutch envoy discusses promotion of trade with CM

LAHORE: Ambassador of the Netherlands to Pakistan Wouter Plomp met Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shahbaz Sharif at his office on Wednesday and discussed matters of mutual interest including the promotion of bilateral trade and investment. The situation arising in the wake of climate change and GSP Plus conventions also came under discussion during the meeting as it was agreed to enhance cooperation in agriculture, food security, food processing, environment and other fields. Talking on the occasion, Chief Minister Hamza Shahbaz noted that good friendly relations exists between Pakistan and the Netherlands. He thanked the Netherlands for its support of GPS Plus status and pointed out that Punjab has ample opportunities for investment in agriculture, food processing, food security, environment and other sectors. The Netherlands has special expertise in the fields of agriculture, food processing and water management, he remarked and added that Punjab is an agricultural province and the development of the agrarian economy is a priority.

The CM said that the technical assistance of the Netherlands in the agricultural sector would benefit the farmers of Punjab. Climate change is a daunting challenge for the whole world and Pakistan is also facing it, he mentioned and emphasised that the United Nations needs to take urgent joint action to address this challenge. Wouter Plomp said that there are many opportunities for cooperation in the agricultural sector of Punjab and expressed the desire to promote partnership with the Punjab government. Economic Consul of the Netherlands Paul Ederer, Honorary Consul of the Netherlands in Lahore Asma Hamid, chairman planning & development, secretaries of agriculture and information departments, chairman Punjab Board of Investment & Trade and others were also present. - APP

VP PAJCCI welcomes improvement in Pak-Afghan trade

Zia-ul-Haq said improvement of trade is of prime importance in creation of job opportunities in a region which is already faced with poverty and deprivation

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: Vice President Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi has welcomed improvement in trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan as around 817 trucks passed on both sides of the border in 24 hours on Tuesday (July 5). In a press statement issued here on Wednesday, Zia Sar-



hadi congratulated Zubair Motiwala, Chairman PAJCCI, Co-Chairman, Khan Jan Alokozai and other stakeholders for their sincere efforts aimed at promotion of trade in region in general and in Pakistan and Afghanistan in particular. Sharing details of trucks passage through Torkhem during the last 24 hours, Zia Sarhadi said around 382 were carrying export goods from Pakistan to Afghanistan, while 435 brought goods from Afghanistan, making a total of 817. He also commended co-operation and support extended by departments concerned including FBR, Customs, NLC and others in expediting clearance of goods laden trucks paving way for increase in trade. Zia said improvement of trade is of prime importance in creation of job opportunities in a region which is already faced with poverty and deprivation. Pak-Afghan trade is a poten-

tial source for creation of livelihood for thousands of people and can bring prosperity in the region badly impacted by terrorism and militancy, Zia added. Zia said role of PAJCCI in promotion of Pak-Afghan trade would be remembered in the region and will benefit hundreds of thousands of people across the border. He also expressed the hope that after completion of PAJCCI's sponsored meetings of stakeholders of Pak-Afghan trade will bear more fruits in removal of hurdles and improvement of bilateral trade between the two countries. In this connection he also gave a mention of recent meetings of stakeholders in Peshawar and Chaman (Baluchistan) for holding discussion in regard with barter trade and for recommending a viable policy to both the governments.



LAHORE: Ambassador of the Netherlands to Pakistan Wouter Plomp meets Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shahbaz. - DNA

KP has potential of 11.20 million tonnes annual carbon sequestration

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: Secretary to Forestry Environment & Wildlife Department KP Muhammad Abid Majeed while addressing to "Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Working Group on Voluntary Carbon Market" forum held here in Peshawar, that 45% of the country's forest cover is in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and 51% of the country's forest carbon stocks are present in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He said in detail that, the most carbon dense forests of the country are temperate forests of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa which contain about 170-ton Carbon per hectare. Avoiding one

ha deforestation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa means emission reduction of 367 tonnes of carbon dioxide. There is a sequential protection of Carbon stocks exist in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Through natural forests and recent plantation in 2,048-hectare area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa made under Billion Tree Tsunami Project a potential of annual carbon Sequestration i.e., 11.20 million tonnes and gets stock of 194.31 million tonnes, which includes 67.60 million tonnes in Hazara division, 73.25 million tonnes in Malakand Division, 3.87 million tonnes in Southern belt of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and 49.60 million tonnes carbon in newly merged tribal districts.

Cleanliness strategy finalized for Eid ul Azha

The Commissioner said special control rooms would work at divisional and District level to supervise the cleanliness operation in Faisalabad division and public complaints in this regard would be redressed immediately

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: On the directions of CM Punjab Hamza Shahbaz, comprehensive strategy has been evolved for cleanliness operations during Eid ul Azha in the four districts of Faisalabad Division in order to prompt lifting and disposal of sacrificial wastes. This was informed by Divisional Commissioner Zahid Hussain during the media briefing here on Wednesday at his office committee room. CEO Faisalabad Waste Management Company Bilal Feroz Joya, Senior Manager Operation Muhammad Ejaz Badesha and other officers were also present on the occasion. The Divisional Commissioner told that the Faisalabad Waste Management Company, Metropolitan Cor-

poration and Municipal Committees in Faisalabad division had been mobilized for Eid cleanliness operations and citizens would be provided pollution free environment during the Eid days by successful implementation of the cleanliness plan. He said that strict monitoring system would be placed for regular supervision of cleanliness operations and citizens would see practical positive change with regard to disposal of the sacrificial animal wastes without any delay. The Commissioner said the special control rooms would work at divisional and District level to supervise the cleanliness operation in Faisalabad division and public complaints in this regard would be redressed immediately. He cleared that no lethargy or carelessness would be tolerated relating to the cleanliness operation and

action would taken against the defaulters, however, the staff showing best performance would be rewarded for their encouragement and recognition of their best services. He appealed to citizens to follow the corona SoPs as well. He also told that monsoon season was also started and teams are ready to tackle the situation on Eid. Giving details about the Eid ul Azha cleanliness operation, CEO FWMC informed that the leaves of all staffs and management had been cancelled to make the cleanliness operation success. He said that more than 4000 waste workers would perform duties during the Eid Cleanliness operation while machinery would be utilized for collecting and disposal of animal waste. He informed that two tranches had been arranged outside the city to dump the offals and other waste of

the sacrificial animal waste. Adding he said that 40 awareness camps would be set up at the different localities of the city for information of the public and 55000 bio degradable bags would be distributed among the citizens at these awareness camps. He maintained that helpline would work with increasing the telephone lines for receiving the public complaints and their prompt disposal. He said that special health care could be done for the sanitary workers and they would be provided face masks, gloves and sanitizer lotion. He vowed that the FWMC was very much committed for quality cleanliness during the Eid ul Azha, whereas, special cleanliness would be made at the sites of Eid congregations and city would be washed after the Eid ul Azha for the elimination of bad smell due to sacrificial animal.

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

JULY

July 01 / Japan	Self Defence Day
July 01 / Singapore	Armed Forces Day
July 01 / Canada	National Day
July 01 / Somalia	Independence Day (National Day)
July 04 / USA	Independence Day
July 05 / Algeria	Independence Day
July 09 / Argentine	Independence Day
July 09 / Mongolia	Revolution Day
July 14 / France	National Day
July 15 / Brunei	Sultan's Birthday
July 20 / TRNC	Independence Day
July 21 / Belgium	National Day
July 23 / Egypt	National Day
July 26 / Cuba	National Day
July 26 / Liberia	National Day
July 30 / Morocco	National Day



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Monal.....	0334-5421812



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Turkish Airlines.....	8494949
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Potohar Town.....	9209224
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Water Tank

Islamabad.....	0321-5744480
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UK wants to take trade up to £7bn with Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: UK is the third largest global trading partner of Pakistan and is keen to double its bilateral trade up to £7 billion with Pakistan in a few years to achieve mutual prosperity for both countries. This was said by Mahesh Mishra, Counsellor and Group Head (Economic and Trade), British High Commission while addressing the business community during his visit to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI).

The Commercial Counsellor said that the UK was uniquely placed to support Pakistan in transforming its economy. He said that the UK is also 3rd largest investor in Pakistan and more investors want to explore Pakistan for JVs and investment. He said that around 1.6 million Pakistanis living in the UK are sending remittances of about USD 4.5 billion and providing important support to Pakistan's economy. He said that the UK has placed Pakistan in the "Enhanced Framework" to provide the same level of market access (preferential tariffs) for exports to the UK as were available to it under the EU's GSP Plus scheme. He highlighted the UK's development support to Pakistan in cooperation with the World Bank Group and Asian Development Bank for its economic reform programmes. He said that he



would love to work with the private sector of Pakistan to further promote bilateral trade ties between the two countries. Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that given the strength of Pakistan and UK, their bilateral trade is still below their actual potential which can be improved with strong mutual efforts of private sectors of both countries. He said that Pakistan is an attractive market for business & investment and stressed that the investors of the UK should come to Pa-

kistan with technology transfer to capitalize on these opportunities. He emphasized frequent exchange of trade delegations and participation in each other's exhibitions to explore new areas of mutual cooperation between Pakistan and UK. He said that both countries are doing trade in limited items and they should focus on diversification of trade to achieve better results. He also highlighted the opportunities of JVs and investment in CPEC projects for UK investors. Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President, Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice Pres-

ident ICCI, Mian Shaukat Masud, Zafar Bakhtawari & Shaban Khalid former Presidents ICCI, Aamir Hussain, Ashraf Farzand, Hamayun Kabir, Sheikh Muhammad Ejaz & Akhtar Hussain, Executive Members ICCI also spoke at the occasion and offered useful suggestions to improve bilateral trade and economic relations between Pakistan and UK. They urged for enhancing cooperation in marble & granite, pharmaceutical, steel, textiles, tourism, aviation and other sectors to further strengthen economic ties between the two countries.



RAWALPINDI: RCCI President Ch. Nadeem A Rauf presenting chamber memento to Muhammad Naseer DG TDAP Islamabad during his visit to RCCI. - DNA

Growing Indo-Israel cyber cooperation concerning

Pakistan and Iran can explore areas of mutual cooperation in cyber security, information technology and telecom industries

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is concerned about the growing India-Israel cooperation in the cyber domain because it is one of the ten most targeted countries in the world from cyber attacks. This was stated by Syed Muhammad Ali, an international security expert while delivering a talk on 'Iran's Cyber Security Challenges and Response' at the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) on Tuesday. He said that data has become the most valuable asset in the fourth industrial revolution, which is primarily driven by information technology. Therefore, responsible and transparent use and equitable sharing of cyber space and relevant technologies is critical to ensure that its benefits are fairly shared between the devel-

oped and developing countries for the common pursuit of progress, prosperity and peace.

Iran, due to its geopolitical and geo-strategic significance, is a significant player in the regional and global politics, including in the cyber domain. Tehran's nuclear program, economy, oil and steel sectors have been targets of regional and global cyber warfare. Therefore, Iran has made significant investments in its cyber capabilities as a national security priority. Pakistan and Iran can explore areas of mutual cooperation in cyber security, information technology and telecom industries, not only to benefit from each other's experiences but also to provide more opportunities to their youth and encourage greater investment in the information technology to facilitate economic growth. Mr Ali further stated that the devel-

oping world must support Pakistan's recently proposed elaborate plan of action to counter disinformation, Islamophobia and fake news, on both online and offline forums, by establishing an inter-agency task force and appointment of a focal person under the UN Secretary General. He also stressed that adequate and timely investment in human resource, IT infrastructure, legal framework and international diplomacy were integral to evolve an equitable, fair & transparent global cyber governance regime that can ensure that the values and interests of both the developed and developing world are protected in the cyber domain. The event was moderated by Mr. Fraz Naqvi of the Institute of Regional Studies. The lecture was followed by a vibrant and extensive question and answer session.

Dastgir takes notice of electric shock incident

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Power Khurram Dastgir Khan on Wednesday took notice of the tragic incident of alleged electric shock at Gujranwala Nursery Chowk and sought inquiry report from the Gujranwala Electric Power Supply Company (GEPCO) Chief within 24 hours. The minister directed the GEPCO Chief for taking stern action against the responsible officials, said a statement issued here.

The minister also expressed deep sorrow over the loss of precious lives in the incident and offered condolence to the bereaved family. Meanwhile, the GEPCO Chief issued instruction to the filed staff to improve safety measures during the rains in order to prevent such incidents in the future. He also suspended SDO and line superintendent.

Pilgrims under govt scheme getting excellent facilities

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Mufti Abdul Shakoor Wednesday said that all intended pilgrims under government hajj schemes were being provided excellent facilities including food, residence, transportation and special gifts of luxury Ka'aba patterned prayer rugs in Makkah. In an exclusive talk with PTV news channel from Makkah, he said that this year's hajj was a big challenge for government, adding, Pakistan's hajj subsidy package was still cheaper than other countries where Mulana Fazl u Rehman and PM Shahbaz Sharif had paid special attention to facilitate hajjaj. Pakistani government with the help of Saudi administration had made remarkable arrangements and provide every possible facility to intending pilgrims, he said adding that due to previous government's immature policies the hajj rate was high. He said that within short span of time present government under the strict directions of PM Shehbaz Sharif had made arrangements and brought down hajj cost for pilgrims. He added that the pilgrims in Makkah had also expressed their satisfaction over the arrangements of government.

The minister said that a comprehensive and affordable package was introduced for hajjaj and Zam Zam water was being distributed among pilgrims. Replying to a question about fake news propaganda on social media, he replied that opponents and extremist should stop their negative agenda and respect the state and its institutions. He further said that every citizen should show maturity while using social media platforms and be sensible citizens and not to politicize Hajj. He further said that people who are performing hajj should pray for the lasting peace, prosperity and well being of people of Jammu and Kashmir and also for people of Pakistan. - APP

IESCO extends outstanding bills date

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) has extended date for payment of outstanding bills due to Eid holidays. "Due to Eid holidays, customers of Batch No. 8 whose electricity bills were due on 08.07.2022 have been extended till 13.07.2022. Now Batch No. 8 customers can deposit their electricity bills till 13.07.2022 without any Late Payment Surcharge," said a press release. Necessary instructions have been issued to all banks, post offices and other formations. - APP

AIOU postpones exams of July 08

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has postponed its exams of MA, M.Sc and Postgraduate Diploma (ODL) programs for the Semester Autumn 2021 scheduled to take place on July 08 due to Eid-ul-Azha public holidays from July 8 to 12. According to a notification issued here by the Department of Examinations, the papers scheduled for July 08 will now be held on July 19.

The timing of the rescheduled exams will be the same, as per the date-sheet issued earlier. The roll no slips will be valid for the new date as well. The students have been conveyed the same through SMS's messages, Controller Examination Dr. Muhammad Ajmal Chaudhary said.

CDA demolishes encroachment at G-11

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) Wednesday demolished several structures, disrupting movement of residents in front of over 350 residential houses at sector G-11/2. The CDA's enforcement directorate conducted the anti-encroachment drive, following residents' complaints to demolish the structure constructed beyond the plot lines, the spokesman told APP on Wednesday. Heavy machinery was used to dismantle the establishments during the drive carried out with the assistance of district administration and Islamabad police. Several car sheds, fences and entrances gates built on government land were demolished in 22 streets of the sector. After the operation, footpaths and streets were opened for pedestrian movement and traffic. It may be mentioned that for the last several months, the CDA had been conducting continuous operations against encroachments and illegal constructions in the Federal Capital, which had resulted in the retrieved of billions of rupees of government land. - APP

Traders demand security as Eid shopping picks up

RAWALPINDI: Trade bodies of the city have demanded the Rawalpindi district administration to upsurge security around all market areas as Eid shopping was gaining momentum with each passing day. Expressing dissatisfaction over the security arrangements made for shopping areas, they said the deployment of police personnel was insufficient compared to the great hustle and bustle of visitors there. President Markazi Anjuman-e-Tajran Sharjeel Mir said police officers in plain clothes should be in susceptible areas and ready to respond with a single whistle in an emergency. Besides, he said many beggars seemingly seek money but were also involved in criminal activities like pick-pocketing and snatching different items from the people visiting the markets. - APP

PPP announces support to PML-N in by-polls

Qamar Zaman Kaira said the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leadership, after thorough analysis and discussions within the party, concluded that the PML-N as their ally could end the evil spread by the previous Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan, Qamar Zaman Kaira announced to extend PPP's unconditional support for Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) in by-elections of the Punjab Assembly. In a joint press conference flanked by Federal Minister for Railways and Aviation Khawaja Saad Rafique, the Prime Minister's aide made announcement of unconditional support of his party. Kaira said the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leadership, after thorough analysis and discussions within the party, concluded that the PML-N as their ally could end the evil spread by the previous Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government. He said, "We want to end the scourge of PTI government's vicious propaganda that created unwanted polarisation in the

society." Kaira said that the people completely rejected the policies of PTI and entrusted full confidence in the PPP leadership. Criticising the PTI's previous policies, the Adviser said the PPP and the coalition government did not believe in benefiting through subsidies to elite like PTI government, however, it encouraged to introduce targeted subsidies only for the lowest income class. Federal Minister for Railways Khawaja Saad Rafique said that the coalition government's tough decisions have saved the country from bankruptcy. Khawaja said that the country was on verge of bankruptcy but the coalition government took difficult decisions by putting their politics at stake and saved the country from default. Taking a dig at PTI chairman, Khawaja said that Imran Khan's purpose behind introducing the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) was to give him a two-thirds majority in the House, adding that Imran



Khan was planning a dictatorial style of government by repealing the 73rd constitution. While

speaking about the Eidul Azha relief package to Railways passengers, he said that the

fares of all classes of all trains are being reduced by 30% on all three days of Eid.

Briefs

PNCA art exhibition 'Collective Ground' starts

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Council of the Arts organized an art exhibition "Collective Ground" at the National Art Gallery on Wednesday to showcase sculptures of 29 prominent and imminent sculptors of Pakistan. According to an official of PNCA, the objective of the exhibition is to highlight work of Pakistani sculptors at national level and help the younger generation to understand this branch of visual arts, Radio Pakistan reported. Giving details of the exhibition to APP the official said the exhibition portrayed contemporary artworks followed by traditional techniques where each artist brought a different set of skills to present his splendid works. "The exhibition will continue till August 10, from Monday to Friday and timings will be remained as 9:00 a.m till 4:00 p.m," the official said. - APP

Monsoon emergency helpline 16 becomes functional

ISLAMABAD: An emergency helpline number '16' has become functional and section 144 is being imposed near rivers and dams during the current spell of monsoon, said Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) on Wednesday. "All authorities concerned are advised to remain vigilant and take precautionary measures during the forecast period", said PMD Director Dr Zaheer Ahmad Baber while talking to a private news channel. "The caller will only have to dial 16 and it will be routed to the flood emergency response department concerned", he added. Under the influence of this weather system, a rain-wind-storm and thundershowers are expected in Islamabad, Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, Swat, Masehra, Kohistan, Abbottabad, Haripur, Peshawar, Mardan, Swabi, Nowshera, Rawalpindi, Murree, Attock, Chakwal, Jhelum, Sargodha, Hafizabad, M. B Din, Sialkot, Narowal, Lahore, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Sheikhupura, Faisalabad, Jhang, Okara, Sahiwal and Bahawalnagar. He advised travelers and tourists to remain extra cautious during the forecast period. Pakistan Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) had already directed all relevant departments to spread awareness among the public about urban flooding and how to prevent it. We all were fully prepared to deal with any kind of emergency, he added. Replaying a question, he said that people living close to river plains and water-courses had been issued timely alerts and all provincial health departments had also been advised to ensure placement of necessary staff and medicines where required. A comprehensive action plan for preventing flood in Nullah Lai and other drains of the city had been devised to mitigate flood and damages from it, the PMD Director concluded. - APP

NBP to launch online system for government payments

ISLAMABAD: On the directive of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) will launch online system for citizens to make government payments without additional charges. The system will start working soon after Eid-ul-Azha, Head of PM's Strategic Reforms Salman Sufi said Wednesday. Sufi said efforts were afoot to transfer all government payments to the online system within six months, for which instruction had been given to the president of NBP. He said an efficient online system, which has no additional charges on consumers, was significant for cashless economy. He said the step would prove a milestone in promoting cashless economy. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Jordan Ibrahim Almadani hosted dinner for the outgoing DHM Dr. Maen, at his residence. Ambassador of Palestine Ahmed Rabei and others attended the dinner. - DNA

IIDA to launch 'Free Yasin Campaign' in Korea, globally

The IIDA Pakistan President in Korea Sooba Khan and IIDA Standing Advisor Um, Jung Sup were also present on the occasion

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of International Interchange Development Association (IIDA), led by its president Mun Yong-Jo on Wednesday met with Mushaal Hussein Mullick and assured to raise voice globally to free the incarcerated Hurriyat leader Yasin Malik. Talking to the delegation, Mushaal, wife of jailed Kashmiri Hurriyat leader Yasin Malik, thanked the IIDA president for the support and stated that the fascist Narendra Modi Modi regime was scared of Yasin's rising popularity and that was why they were using brutal tactics to silence him, said a press release. She said that Yasin was the most effective and powerful voice of the Kashmir freedom

struggle therefore he was implicated in various concocted and fabricated cases to dampen his courage. Mushaal stated that her husband was kept in death cell, neither his family nor his counsel were allowed to meet him, adding that the level of barbarity could be judged from the fact that the occupation authorities even did not allow him much-needed medicines despite his fast deteriorating health. The chairperson expressed her apprehension that since dozens of hurriyat leaders were tortured to death; therefore, she was worried about her husband because the fascist regime could go to any length to muzzle the voice of lion of Kashmir since he categorically stated that

he could not compromise on the birth right of Kashmiris' right to self-determination. Mushaal informed the delegation that despite using all brutal tactics, the fascist government could not shake his resolve, as he conveyed the Kashmiri people that he would fight for their rights till last drop of his blood. She told the delegation that they should play their role to ensure his release because his sole crime was to raise peaceful voice for the right of Kashmiri people who have been living under the unconstitutional and unlawful subjugation of Indian government. The IIDA Pakistan President in Korea Sooba Khan and IIDA Standing Advisor Um, Jung Sup were also present on

the occasion. The delegation extended unconditional support for Kashmir cause and expressed deep concerns over the incarceration of Yasin Malik, his health and security. They pledged that they would raise voice for him all over the world especially launching a Free Yasin Malik Campaign in South Korea and all over the world. The delegation showed keen interest in Kashmir issue and assured they would stand by the Kashmiri people. Mushaal said that the world community, human right organizations and UN bodies should play their role to pressurize India to release Yasin Malik and resolve the long-standing Kashmir dispute as per the UN agreed formula. - APP

109 suspects held during search operation

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police on Wednesday conducted search operation in areas of Ramana police station and held 109 suspects t besides impounding 31 bikes having no documents. According to police spokesman, officials of Islamabad Police conducted search operation in various areas of Ramana police station under supervision of Superintendent of Police. The search operation was also participated by police commandos, lady commandos and staff of Bomb Disposal squad. They screened 293 houses, 71 shops, 105 vehicles and checked more than 557 persons. As many as 109 suspects were shifted to police station while 31 bikes without documents were also impounded. Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan has said the purpose of this search operation and high vigilance is to ensure fool proof security in the city. He has also appealed the citizens to remain vigilant and inform police in case of any suspicious activity around them. - APP

Four integrated tourism zones being established

ISLAMABAD: Under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Integrated Tourism Development Project-KITE Project, 4 Integrated Tourism Zones are being established in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including Thandiani (Abbottabad), Mankyal (Swat), Ghanol (Mansehra) and Madakalash (Chitral). Final draft of Management Plan and Investment Plan of these projects has also been submitted to relevant forum for approval, said a statement. A full-fledged Tourist Facilitation Hub and 24/7 Helpline (1422) has been operationalized since March 2021. Moreover, 150 prefabricated wash rooms were being installed at the different tourism areas in the province out of which installation of 35 units has been completed so far. Similarly, under the project to extend support of Rescue Service 1122 to the tourist sites, 2 Ambulances and one fire fighting vehicle have been provided to each tourist centre. In order to ensure easy access to the tourist destinations of the province, work is under way on the construction of various access roads which would be completed at an estimated cost of Rs 13 billion. Similarly, under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Integrated Tourism Development Project - KITE, two important projects including Mankyal to Bada Sehri road and Thandiani road were also in progress which would be implemented at an estimated cost of Rs.4631 million and Rs.3182 million respectively. - APP

Govt notifies transfer, posting of officers

ISLAMABAD: Federal government on Wednesday notified the transfer and posting of high ranking of officers. According to a notification of Establishment Division, a BS-22 officer of Pakistan Administrative Service Group, Iftikhar Ali Shallwani, presently posted as Special Secretary, National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination Division, is transferred and posted as Secretary, Housing and Works Division, with immediate effect and until further orders. While, Fayyaz Ahmad Dev, has assumed the charge of the post of Officer on Special Duty (BS-21/PSP) in this Division. - APP

Workshop on space science for students of merged tribal districts

ISLAMABAD: National Center of GIS and Space Applications, Institute of Space Technology has conducted a specialized workshop for the high school and college level students of Newly Merged Tribal Districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on the theme of Space Science, Technology and its applications in societal life. More than 200 students along with 15 faculty members from the Districts of Kurram, Khyber, Mohmand and Frontier Region Peshawar attended the workshop. The workshop was a part of an ongoing STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts Mathematics) drive, jointly organized by Directorate General of Science and Technology, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Iqra National University, Peshawar under the initiative of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Science Agenda 2022 and Popularization of Science, Technology and Innovation. The five hours' journey of space knowledge

covered the topics of Earth, Atmosphere, Aviation, Rocketry and Satellite Technology and concluded with an exciting session on Astronomy & Astrophysics. The participating students were engaged in a structured process of brainstorming and information exchange through interactive hands-on activities. The students also got firsthand experimental experience on especially designed space technology kits, including telescopes, small satellites, quadcopters, water rockets, and navigation receivers. The workshop was aimed at familiarizing the youth of these districts with the latest techniques and modern trends of space science and technology. The initiative was designed to incorporate this distinct segment of the society towards harnessing the potential of space science and technology for the socio-economic development of Pakistan. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Saudi Arabia Nawaf Bin Said Al-Malki calls on State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hina Rabbani Khar. - DNA

USA provides 4 mobile labs to boost corona testing

The ceremony was held at the NIH and attended by US Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome, and officials from the Ministry of Health and the NIH

ISLAMABAD: The United States government on Wednesday donated four mobile laboratories to the National Institute of Health (NIH) to diagnose COVID-19 and other communicable diseases, especially in remote locations with limited access to testing. The mobile laboratories, provided through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) were formally received by Federal Minister for Health Abdul Qadir Patel. The ceremony was held at the NIH and attended by US Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome, and officials from the Ministry of Health and the NIH. It was told that the modern facilities would improve

the accuracy of diagnoses, reduce the testing turnaround time, and better protect healthcare workers. It was further mentioned that USAID funded a global health chain supply programme while implementing parameters of Chemicon International Inc. Ambassador Blome commended Pakistan's effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic and highlighted its successful vaccination campaigns to quickly inoculate its citizens. He commented on the success of the Pakistan-US collaboration to strengthen healthcare systems as part of the 75 years of bilateral relations. Today's donation supported this partnership by providing Pakistan with

new tools to respond quickly to future threats, he said. "These mobile laboratories will strengthen the diagnostic capacity of the provincial health departments," the ambassador said. "They will enable the government to respond quickly and effectively in hard-to-reach remote areas during emergencies, or an outbreak and epidemic." The minister expressed gratitude for the US government's support to improve health services in Pakistan as a reflection of the strong relations between the two countries. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, USAID has worked to save lives and contain the deadly disease

in more than 120 countries, including Pakistan. Its ongoing assistance provides emergency relief, strengthens health systems, supports vaccine readiness and distribution, improves public health education, and protects healthcare workers and facilities. According to the details, the United States has provided nearly 61.6 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines to Pakistan, one million COVID-19 rapid diagnostic test kits, and critical health supplies and training to health workers. These efforts are part of the nearly \$70 million in direct support and \$9.2 million of in-kind support that the U.S. government has donated to assist the Pakistani people. - APP

President gives assent to Institute of Science, Arts, & Tech bill 2022

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has signed the International Institute of Science, Arts and Technology Bill 2022 into law, the President House said Wednesday. The purpose of the bill is to establish an institute of such kind in the private sector. The president gave approval to the bill in line with Article 75 of the Constitution. - APP

Syed Jibran, Neelam give sneak peek of upcoming Eid Telefilm

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani heartthrob Syed Jibran and the gorgeous Neelam Muneer are all set to amuse fans with their upcoming horror-comedy telefilm 'Bhoot Bakra', releasing on Eid-ul-Azha and netizens can't get enough of it. With Eid-ul-Azha just around the corner, celebrities are gearing up to make the Eid holidays momentous with a burgeoning list of dramas and Eid telefilms in the pipeline. Recently, the reel life couple Neelam and Jibran treated fans with first glimpse of their Eid telefilm 'Bhoot Bakra' on their social media handles and also shared behind the scene videos and pictures of their much-anticipated collaboration. Shortly after, the Instagram reels garnered fans as well as celebrities attention. Fans showered the starlets with adoration and best wishes for their new release. Produced under the banner of Big Bang Entertainment, Bhoot Bakra is co-written by Ali Abbas Naqvi and Basit Naqvi while Bilal Atif Khan has directed the much-talked-about telefilm. - APP

NHMP advises commuters to avoid reckless driving

ISLAMABAD: National Highways and Motorway Police (NH&MP) on Wednesday advised the commuters to avoid reckless driving on national highways and motorways during Eid-ul-Adha while traveling to hometowns. According to NHMP, a strategy was devised for the smooth traffic flow keeping in view the rush on Eid days. The rush on motorways and national highways increased due to transportation of sacrificial animal and traveling of citizens to their native towns and cities to celebrate Eid with their loved ones. Overloading by public transporters and the overcharging was being strictly checked and legal action being taken against such vehicles to ensure the flow of traffic on motorways, as per the directions of Inspector General NHMP Khalid Mahmood. The operations have been intensified with the help of newly deployed 'spotter' against vehicles with tinted windows and fancy number plates. NHMP is trying its best to make the journey of commuters safer. On the occasion of Eid-ul-Adha special measures have been taken for commuters to ensure their safety, timely assistance, convenience and uninterrupted flow of traffic. - APP

IRSA releases 306576 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 306576 cusecs water from various rim stations with an inflow of 445498 cases. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1113.70 feet, which was 63.07 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded a 45722 and 15000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 160166 ,121315 and 54035 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from the Kabul River, a total of 50300 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 91276 cusecs released from the Chenab River at Marala.

Another wave of Covid-19

Pakistan is witnessing another Covid-19 wave as the number of daily cases are increasing with each passing day. According to the stats released by the National Institute of Health, Islamabad (NIH), the number of new COVID-19 cases in Pakistan surpassed the 800-mark yet again, as the infection spreads with each passing day. The last time the number of new COVID-19 cases grew this high was on July 2, when the country logged 818 new cases. On Wednesday, however, Pakistan's coronavirus positivity ratio is slightly higher, at 4.69 percent, the highest in the last four and a half months. The most recent high was on February 18, when the country had a positivity rate of 4.92 percent. According to the most recent statistics, 805 out of 17,150 COVID-19 diagnostic tests were positive. Meanwhile, one patient died as a result of the virus, while 168 others are being treated in critical care units across the country. Experts attribute the rise in COVID-19 cases in Pakistan to two sub-variants of the Omicron variant, BA.4 and BA.5, which have escape mutations that give them an advantage. They claim that the sub-variants have also infected people who have already been vaccinated or infected with COVID-19, but there is no evidence that they are causing severe disease in the vaccinated people. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Health on Saturday issued new SOPs considering the surge in corona cases across the country and urged to maintain social distance everywhere, including offices. According to a spokesman for the Ministry of Health, the National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) has issued Corona SOPs for government offices, under which social distance should be ensured even during worship and prayers. It should also be made sure to provide hand sanitizers in office entrances and washrooms. It further added that the temperature of the people should be checked at the entrances of all offices and buildings. People with Corona signs should not be allowed to enter offices and buildings and in case of cold, flu and difficulty in breathing, the PCR or antigen tests should be done to diagnose corona. However, following the lifting of restrictions in Punjab, the Government of Sindh also decided to revert the notification issued regarding time limitations for businesses on account of Eid ul Adha. According to a notification issued by the province's home department, the restriction will come into effect once again from July 11. Earlier in June, the Government of Sindh directed all markets across the province to close at 9pm in order to save electricity as the country was witnessing constant power outages. The overall situation requires close monitoring and adherence to the SOPs to avoid this surge become another deadly Covid wave.

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Boris' cabinet resignations

The prime minister's dissembling, his taste for obfuscation and self-serving half-truths, and his willingness to mislead are by now sadly familiar. To that extent, it came as no surprise on Tuesday to learn that Boris Johnson had indeed – despite multiple assertions to the contrary – been told of specific sexual misconduct allegations prior to appointing Chris Pincher as deputy chief whip. But sooner or later a tipping point was coming for ministers obliged to trash their own reputations to defend a dishonest, delinquent prime minister. On Tuesday night it came. The seemingly coordinated resignations of the chancellor, Rishi Sunak, and the health secretary, Sajid Javid, surely signal that the waters are closing over Mr Johnson's premiership. It had already become clear that a succession of scandals – and above all the prime ministerial contempt for the public demonstrated by Partygate – had done irreparable damage to Mr Johnson's standing. But it took Tuesday's extraordinary, devastating intervention by Simon McDonald, a former top civil servant at the Foreign Office, to convince Mr Sunak and Mr Javid to act. Lord McDonald has spent a distinguished career exercising discreet influence at the top of government, advising foreign secretaries and prime ministers. His decision to publicly refute Mr Johnson's version of events in relation to Mr Pincher was a highly unusual move made in exceptional circumstances. Exasperated by a prime minister whose claims he knew from direct experience not to be true, Lord McDonald decided to dispense with etiquette and demolish Downing Street's defence of Mr Pincher's appointment. In doing so, he starkly confronted Mr Johnson's cabinet with its own complicity in propping up a premiership that has plumbed the depths of impropriety. Over the past five days, hapless ministers have once again been sent to television studios to defend the indefensible and made to look like fools. A majority of Conservative backbenchers believe he should go, judging by the recent confidence vote that Mr Johnson won only with the help of those on the government payroll. Britain deserves better than a prime minister who has become a laughing stock, presiding over a rudderless administration at a time of economic crisis. In the interests of preserving their own self-respect, other members of Mr Johnson's cabinet must now follow the example of Mr Sunak and Mr Javid. The prime minister needs to be confronted with the truth: his time is up.

Why migrants face the risks of treacherous journeys

Kerry Boyd Anderson

Migration is a global phenomenon. After the Mediterranean, Africa is the second-deadliest region for migration, followed by the Americas, Asia, Western Asia and Europe, according to the Missing Migrants Project. After the central Mediterranean, some of the other most dangerous routes include the US-Mexico border crossing, the Sahara and other water crossings

Recent weeks have highlighted the dangers that migrants face when attempting to travel across borders without legal documentation. In Texas last week, at least 53 people died in a tractor-trailer that lacked a functioning cooling unit – the worst known case of deaths from a single human trafficking incident in modern US history. Also last week, at least 30 migrants were left dead or missing after Doctors Without Borders rescued others from a sinking boat in the Mediterranean Sea. Around the same time, Libyan officials found 20 migrants who had died of dehydration in the desert near the border with Chad. The deaths in Texas and the Mediterranean included men, women and children. Around the world, millions of people migrate within and between countries. Even those who do so with legal documentation face some risks, including potential exploitation. Those who migrate without legal permission face far more risks, but they continue to attempt journeys anyway. Some countries have tried to harden borders and take other measures to stop irregular migration, but many migrants are not deterred.

The International Organization for Migration's Missing Migrants Project has recorded 49,353 migrant deaths and disappearances since 2014, though the actual number could be much higher. The top cause of death is drowning, followed by environmental exposure, violence, sickness and transportation accidents. The central Mediterranean route, moving people from North Africa to Italy or Malta, is the most dangerous in the world; combined with the eastern and western Mediterranean routes, this sea alone accounts for more than 24,000 deaths and disappearances since 2014. Migration is a global phenomenon. After the Mediterranean, Africa is the second-deadliest region for migration, followed by the Americas, Asia, Western Asia and Europe, according to the Missing Migrants Project. After the central Mediterranean, some of the other most dangerous routes include the US-Mexico border crossing, the Sahara and other water crossings.

Migrants face multiple extreme risks. Many die from drowning, violence, exposure, sickness and vehicle accidents. The migrants who died in Texas were not the first to die of suffocation, heat or cold in sealed trucks; within the last 15 years, migrants have died in such situations in the US, the UK, Austria, Libya and Thailand. Many women and girls suffer from sexual violence while migrating, at the hands of traffickers as well as security officials and other migrants. Many migrants experience beatings, torture and other violence from traffickers and border guards. Traffickers sometimes hold and abuse migrants while demanding more funds from their families and some migrants are forced to work for no pay. Many migrants exhaust all their savings or their families' savings to pay human traffickers to help them reach their destination. Despite these sums, some fail to reach their destination. If they succeed, they face the threat of deportation if discovered. Irregular migration seldom results in a stable and secure life. So why do millions of people still attempt irregular migration, all around the world, despite the costs and risks? Some potential migrants may

not be fully aware of the risks. However, in today's globalized world, with access to information and personal networks that often include people who have migrated before them, many migrants know the risks and choose to continue anyway. Many experts who work with migrants say they are at least generally aware of the risks, and some migrants repeat journeys they have previously undertaken. The reality is that the risks of the journey are often equal to or less than the risks that migrants face at home. For example, many of the migrants attempting to cross from Mexico into the US – including some of those who died in the tractor-trailer – are from Central American countries with extremely high rates of homicide and violence. At home, many face death threats, violence, sexual violence, racketeering and being forced to join gangs. For many children and adults, these threats at home are certain risks; in comparison, the risks of migration are no worse, and a new country at least offers some hope. Many migrants are fleeing war, persecution and extreme violence; therefore, violence on the journey seems comparatively manageable. Many migrants who have attempted dangerous sea crossings say they knew that they might die onboard overly packed, small boats in large seas, but they also knew they might die at home. At least they saw hope for a better life if they reached their destination.

Other migrants travel in search of opportunity more than escape. These economic migrants are likely to have a lower tolerance for potential death and violence. However, many young people around the world see no opportunity to provide for their families or buy a car or house – let alone to achieve larger aspirations – if they remain at home. Even those who do not face extreme risks at home will often embrace the risks of migration in the hope of a better life for themselves and their families. Countries that try to put up barriers and raise the risks will mostly fail to deter migrants who are fleeing far worse situations at home. Many people do not want to leave their homes and families but see no other choice. Any effective solution to the problems of migration will have to accept that reality, as well as the global nature of migration. Helping people to find security and opportunity at home should be the ultimate goal.

Courtesy: Arab News

Abuse of political power

Samra Athar Kakakhel



This is the worst part of the system. Politics is never a profession or a firm, but in Pakistan, it has become the most lucrative, successful, and profitable venture as well as a profession

Politics is usually described as strong, feisty, controversial, debatable, provocative, aggressive, and all of the above. It all depends on where we are on the scale, and there is always a perspective. Politics and governance are often confused. That is not the case. Politics is for creating good change. Governance is for administrators and bureaucracies; politics is for people's representatives. People don't really engage in politics; they engage in making political choices and forming groups that agree with them in order to elect the leader of their choice. Politics is what leaders accomplish before and after being elected. The problem is not power abuse; it is the power to abuse. This is what is happening in our country.

The majority of citizens are aware that politicians' true passion is constant lying. A politician's mind is set on building a bridge even if there is no river. Politicians are renowned for their ability to deceive, exaggerate, twist, and indulge in highly emotional or dramatic attention-getting. Political debates and publications are mainly explanations of what is wrong. As a consequence, the political activity must rely heavily on understatement, nagging questions, and foggy misunderstandings. Politics is involved in making lies appear truthful. This is what we see, hear, and read in the news every day. This is the smart way to mislead people and change their minds. Extreme lying, such as extreme narcissism, may reveal a fundamental moral failing. So, these crooked politicians have mental disorders. Let's say politicians aren't strange in this manner, and that they're just normal individuals living in a world that encourages lying. Is there any way to keep them sincere? Most of the politicians are corrupt. Just look at our politicians to see how many of them know the idea of economics. This is the worst part of the system. Politics is never a profession or a firm, but in Pakistan, it has become the most lucrative, successful, and profitable venture as well as a profession.

In fact, much of their arrogant attitude and aggressive behavior from their oversized ego, which comes from their political tenure. Politicians were elected primarily to serve themselves, and they are capable of doing so almost constantly. The idiom "promises are meant to be broken" is mainly relevant to them. It's now become a joke that the fervent promises politicians make on the public stage show just a close resemblance to what they do while in power. The ability to convince voters that they might best represent their interests defines a voter's success. In short, their campaigns assess how well they can fool the public instead of how well they will carry out their responsibilities once declared won. When will the Pakistani realize that most politicians serve no other purpose than polished gangsters who are seeing government as a fiercely guarded monopoly on all kinds of violence and bribery to be carried out in a particular specific region? Why do we believe that, despite all the good discourse, the largest amounts of 'foreign aid' collected from unsuspecting diplomats of wealthier countries eventually wind up in those politicians' pockets, Swiss bank accounts, or offshore companies? One of these politicians' main qualities is their extreme lack of dignity. That's not surprising that so many politicians believe they 'deserve' to rig the system. They sometimes used to refer to it as their right. This is what is going on in our country. The lottery is an example. Pakistan has massive resources and an excellent geopolitics position, but we remain far behind many developing countries. The reason is our political elite's lobby groups. Amendments to the constitution should be based on the following guidelines: no businessman can be a politician, only one person from one family can participate in politics, lotocracy must be banned by law, and state money should be under the control of institutions rather than the authority of only elected members, a political figure can only participate in elections twice in his entire life, 80 percent participation in upper and lower house must be obliged otherwise they must pay heavy fines. Politicians must be well educated, people-pleasers, planners, and have a good knowledge of what is happening in the country. They must be well educated, good communicators, and strategists, and have a good understanding of what goes on in the world.

The system is trying to eject Boris Johnson, but will he go?

David Allen Green

The prominence of the position comes from the interplay of two constitutional sources. The first is the power of patronage which derives from the royal prerogative, and this enables a prime minister to hire and fire cabinet ministers and to set the agenda for the government. The second is what flows from having a majority in the House of Commons, which ensures control over law-making and raising finance

Resignations are a feature of the constitution of the United Kingdom, and not a bug. When a minister resigns, a noise is made that usually catches the attention of others, even if just for a moment. A red light flashes on the dashboard of the British state. In the last day or so, there have been several resigna-

tions, including of the chancellor of the exchequer and other senior ministers. At other times, just one of these resignations would be newsworthy. But taken together, it shows a political meltdown. A political crisis is not necessarily a constitutional crisis, and it is normal for politicians to come and go. Yet the current drama could test the limits of the British constitution, as we are faced with a prime minister whom the political system is seeking to eject from office but who is refusing to go. The prime minister of the United Kingdom has surprisingly few formal powers. The role is not defined in law, and it is only mentioned in a few statutes.

The prominence of the position comes from the interplay of two constitutional sources. The first is the power of patronage which derives from the royal prerogative, and this enables a prime minister to hire and fire cabinet ministers and to set the agenda for the government. The second is what flows from having a majority in the House of Commons, which ensures control over law-making and raising finance. But when a prime minister loses either the confidence of their cabinet or of their parliamentary majority, they are in political trouble. And current Prime Minister Boris Johnson appears to have lost the confidence of both. Constitutionally a prime minister stands on a plank between two stools, and now both those stools are tottering. Usually, a prime minister in this predicament would resign. Johnson, however, is not one for resignation. So we are about to see what happens in a system that works well when a prime minister resigns when



they should when he refuses to do so. How will political pushing convert into constitutional shoving? The constitution of the UK is used to prime ministers being got rid of between general elections. Since 1974, each prime minister has lost or taken power between general elections (and in one case both). A prime minister being forced from office between general elections is not new or unusual. A prime minister refusing to do so when the foundations of their political power are collapsing is not that common, and nobody can predict what will be the result.

The dashboard is now ablaze with red flashing lights. What is missing is the soothing green light of a change of prime minister. We just do not know when – or if – that will happen.

Courtesy: Al Jazeera

Briefs

TTP talks in 'pre-dialogue' stage: Sana

FROM PAGE 01
Sanaullah said that all the negotiations would be conditional upon the Parliament's approval. Responding to questions, the minister said that former prime minister Imran Khan cannot scare anybody through his threats, blackmailing, and conspiracy narrative. Sanaullah also said that any recording – either audio or video – made to expose a crime is not a crime unless it is done to blackmail someone. The interior minister made these remarks when he was asked to comment on the alleged audio of Bushra Bibi in which she could be heard directing the PTI social media head to run trends against party rivals and declare them traitors. The audio has sparked a debate over privacy issues, while the PTI has demanded the top court take notice of the leaked audio. There are reports that alleged audio of former prime minister Imran Khan talking to his principal secretary Azam Khan may also be released.

At least 77 dead in monsoon...

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The minister added that while Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has directed the government to pay special attention to climate change, "the country needs long-term planning". Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman is addressing a press conference at PID on July 06, 2022. PHOTO: APP
If provinces require assistance from the federal government during the monsoon season, she said, then they will have to "carry out assessments of the aid they require". Rehman further said provinces posting advisories and "taking institutional warnings seriously can reduce deaths". "Karachi did not see the number of storms as it was expected to," said the minister while referring to the port city. Earlier in June, the minister had directed the concerned departments to take all necessary preemptive precautionary measures and to pursue a coordinated strategy to cope with the possible disastrous impact of monsoon rains.

Increasingly isolated...

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widely credited for the successful rollout of COVID-19 vaccines, as finance minister. But Johnson's performance encountered a brutal response. Underlining the tenuous position he is in, some colleagues in his cabinet team of top ministers struggled to contain their laughter as the opposition Labour leader poked fun at his cabinet for being in the "charge of the lightweight brigade". Three members of Johnson's own party asked whether he would resign. To one, he replied: "There is a very simple reason why they want me out and that is they know otherwise we are going to get on and deliver our mandate and win another general election." "Clearly, if there were circumstances in which I felt it was impossible for the government to go on and discharge the mandate that we've been given, or if I felt, for instance, that we were being frustrated in our desire to support the Ukrainian people... then I would," Johnson said.

'Imran trying to...

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power generation and creation of employment opportunities. In his four years rule, he robbed the masses and did corruption in every sector of the country, she added. "Only agenda of Imran Khan was to turn Bani Gala into money-gala," she stressed. Marriyum said since the corruption of his wife Bushra Bibi and her friend Farah Gogi had been surfaced, Imran Khan now started threatening the state institutions. "Make no mistake Imran Sahib as you will have to be answerable for your corruption," she added.



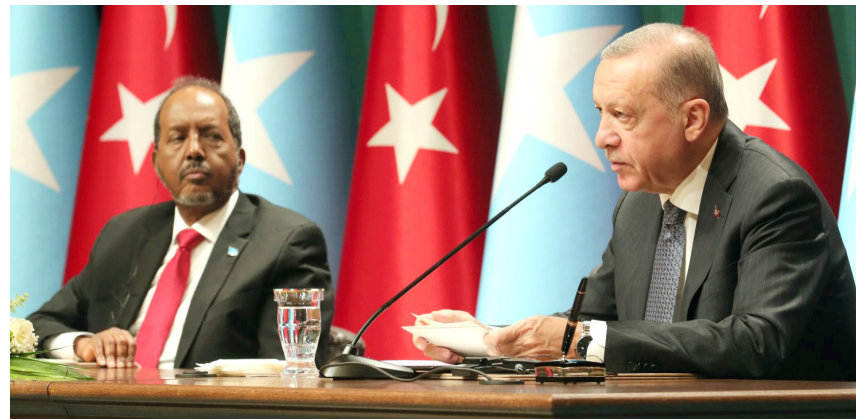
LAHORE: Senor Hockey player Khawaja Junaid and others presenting a hockey stick to the Ambassador of the Netherlands during latter's visit to Lahore. The Dutch ambassador is leaving Pakistan after completing his tenure. – DNA

Relations with Somalia prove Africa's importance for Turkiye

Prior to his Ankara visit, the Somali president met with Somali soldiers receiving commando training in the western Turkish province of Isparta

DNA

ANKARA: Somalia is the main example that shows the importance Turkey attaches to the economic development, social peace and stability of the African continent, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Wednesday. Speaking at a joint press conference with his Somali counterpart Hassan Sheikh Mohamud in the capital Ankara, Erdogan said that Turkey has provided more than \$1 billion worth of humanitarian aid to Somalia in the last 10 years. Turkey's joint steps taken with the Mogadishu government in 2011 have helped Somalia revitalize, as the country was on the brink of collapse, Erdogan also said. "In 2011, Somalia was on the brink of collapse as the international community articulated. So in 2011, we paid an official visit to Somalia with a large delegation to extend a message to the world that we are standing with our Somali brothers and sisters," he added. Noting that the joint steps taken with Somalia have aided the country to revitalize and develop even further, Erdogan said the bilateral trade volume reached \$363 million last year, which was only \$2 million in 2013. Turkey's largest embassy building in the



world is located in the Somali capital Mogadishu, Erdogan said, adding that his country is proud of it. For his part, Mohamud thanked the Turkish nation for its investments in Somalia, expressing appreciation to Turkey and its people for the endeavor and efforts about the humanitarian situation his country has been facing. Erdogan welcomed Mohamud, who was on a four-day official visit to Turkey, with an official ceremony at the Presidential Complex. The leaders held one-on-one talks before

delegation-level meetings followed by a signing ceremony and a joint news conference. Earlier in the day, Mohamud visited Anitkabir, the mausoleum of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, founder of the Turkish republic, and laid a wreath at his gravesite.

Paying tributes to Atatürk, Mohamud wrote in the visitors' book: "Being a supreme commander leading the Turkish nation in the difficult days of history has made you a torch for the Turkish nation on this path to peace." Prior to his Ankara visit, the Somali president met with Somali soldiers receiving commando training in the western Turkish province of Isparta. "I visited our brave soldiers undergoing commando training in Isparta, Turkey, with the assistance of the Turkish government," he wrote on Twitter. "I met some great future Somali military officers & leaders & I am proud of them all. We are grateful to Turkey for this valuable security assistance," he added. Bilateral relations and steps to enhance cooperation were mainly discussed in depth during the visit. This was Mohamud's first official visit to Turkey at the presidential level after taking office in May. He also served as Somalia's president between 2012 and 2017. Turkey's engagement with the African continent has been gaining pace over the years. Since taking office nearly two decades ago, first serving as prime minister, Erdogan has been fostering ties with Africa, presenting Turkey as a fairer player than the continent's former colonial powers. Ankara has been stressing the desire to advance relations with the continent on the basis of a win-win relationship and equal partnership while observing mutual respect.

IPC, PSB deny media reports about benefits' discontinuation

ISLAMABAD: The Minister for IPC/President, Pakistan Sports Board Mr. Ehsan ur Rehman Mazari and DG PSB outrightly denied the media reports about discontinuation of benefits to retired PSB employees. Minister assured that all allied benefits will continue to be paid to the employees of PSB and no one will be ousted from the service. Furthermore, the terms & conditions of the employment of existing employees cannot be changed during service as has already been decided by the honourable courts in a number of judgments as pointed out by one of the Board Members Maj.Gen. (Retd) Muhammad Akram Sahi. It was decided unanimously that the terms & conditions of the employees of PSB shall not be changed. It was also decided that the observation shall be made part of the minutes of previous 24th Board meeting. It's also decided that 14th South Asian Games will be held in November 2023. However, input from the National Sports Federations regarding venue of different competitions of the said games may be sought. As per government's policy, PSB will sponsor the athletes having medal potential and excellent performance. However, the POA may like to sponsor more players for forthcoming Commonwealth and Islamic Solidarity Games. If any of them get laurel for the nation, the government/PSB will not only reimburse the participating expenditures but lucrative cash incentives will be given as well. The board approved the enhancement of rates of boarding and pocket allowance for the camp trainees and fixation of rates of special/extra diet to the potential athletes. – DNA

Halep beats Anisimova to reach semi-finals

DNA

LONDON: Former champion Simona Halep's revival continued as she reached the Wimbledon semi-finals with another rapid win over American Amanda Anisimova. Romania's Halep, seeded 16th, was close to quitting the sport last year because of injury but the 2019 champion is now one more win from another SW19 final. Halep, 30, beat 20th seed Anisimova 6-2 6-4 in one hour and three minutes. The two-time Grand Slam champion will play Kazakhstan's Elena Rybakina, who beat Australia's Ajla Tomljanovic. "It's great to be back in the semi-finals, I'm very emotional right now," said Halep. "I'm playing the best tennis since I won here. I'm building that confidence back and it is good right now."

Halep, who won her first major title at the 2018 French Open, has breezed through her opening five matches at the All England Club, not dropping a set and spending less than six hours on court. A routine victory was stalled when Anisimova, who looked despondent from the early stages and was given sympathetic backing on Centre Court, claimed one of two breaks back for 5-3 in the second set.

After holding serve, the 20-year-old then had three more break points at 0-40 before mistakes started to creep back into her game. Halep eventually took care of her service game to reach her first major semi-final since the 2020 Australian Open. "At love-40 I needed my serve and everything was good as it finished well," she added. Elena Rybakina recovered from a shaky start to overwhelm Australian Ajla Tomljanovic 4-6 6-2 6-3 on Wednesday and set up a Wimbledon semi-final with Simona Halep, becoming the first Kazakhstan player to reach the last four of a Grand Slam. Rybakina, the 17th seed, struggled in the first set but then started finding her serving range, at one point taking seven games in a row to secure the second set and put her in control of the third. The 23-year-old, who would not have been allowed to play at this year's Wimbledon had she not switched allegiance from Russia four years ago, finished the match with an ace - her 15th of the match. "It's amazing and I'm really happy that I got through after a really tough match," she said. Explaining a final set wobble after serving for it at 5-1, she added: "Maybe I was nervous. She played really well, was defending really well. I just tried to focus on my-

self to find way and then I found Rybakina struggled to reproduce serving and accuracy that had been her mark of march into the last eight, failing to land almost her first deliveries in the set. She broke early in the second and though Tomljanovic's athletic court coverage enabled her straight back, the tall Kazakhstani took mental command before winning set on the back of 11 straight points.



SC rejects RO objections on Khan's petition

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) on Wednesday rejected the Registrar Office's objections on Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan's petition against the recent amendments in the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) laws. Justice Ijaz Ul Ahsan conducted the in-chamber hearing of the PTI chairman's appeal against the objections. Imran's counsel Khawaja Haris counsel appeared before the court. Justice Ijaz set aside the objections after hearing the arguments, and ordered to number the petition and fix it for hearing in open court. The Supreme Court's Registrar Office had raised five objections over the PTI chief's petition and stated that the petitioner had not highlighted what matters of public importance were involved in the enforcement of fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution so as to directly invoke the apex court's jurisdiction under Article 184(3). Subsequently, Imran filed an appeal in the chamber against the office's objections. – APP

Boris Johnson's many...

FROM PAGE 01
the main opposition Labour party's heartlands. But things soon began to sour. In June 2021, the Tories suffered a major upset and lost the Chesham and Amersham by-election to the Liberal Democrats, appearing to have lost touch with their own heartland voters. Several months later, Johnson suffered a backlash when he tried to change parliament's disciplinary rules to save an ally, former Tory lawmaker Owen Paterson, from suspension. The highly damaging "Partygate" scandal then blew up and in April, Johnson became the first prime minister found to have broken the law while in office. Several other missteps since appear to have now doomed his political career. Other controversies that have dogged Johnson include questions over who paid for a lavish makeover of his Downing Street flat and an expensive holiday to a private Caribbean island. – APP

Thieves cannot win even with...

FROM PAGE 01
his political opponents, Khan said Asif Ali Zardari and the Sharif family are only concerned with their wealth they have no sympathy for the general public. He also reiterated his claim that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) is trying to ensure the victory of the 'imported govt'. "Even if empires are with you, we will defeat you," Imran Khan said in his message to the political opponents. Imran Khan asked the masses to check voter lists before Punjab by-polls on 20 seats. He vowed to win all 20 seats on July 17. Paying rich tributes to the journalists for standing with truth, he said the government is pressuring the journalists and those who are raising their voice for the country are being booked in cases.

US, Pakistan vow to deepen ties

FROM PAGE 01
handed over four mobile laboratories to Pakistan for diagnosing diseases. While addressing the laboratories handover ceremony at the National Institute of Health (NIH) in Islamabad, US Ambassador Donald Blome said that the ministry of health and the NIH deserved tribute and congratulations for controlling the coronavirus pandemic in Pakistan. "The US government has been working with Pakistan on health issues for the past 60 years," he said. "During the coronavirus epidemic, the US worked to make health professionals and institutions more effective in many countries around the world, including Pakistan," he added. "The global coronavirus pandemic is not over yet. Work to control the disease is still underway," he stated.

'Punishing' Moscow could trigger nuclear war

"We discussed Mr Kishida's proposal yesterday and have said that this is only an initiative announced, there were no consolidated decisions taken," Peskov said. "It is doubtful whether such decisions could be taken, frankly speaking"

DNA

MOSCOW: Former Russian president Dmitry Medvedev has strongly warned the Western states against attempts at "punishing" the country over its ongoing military operation in neighboring Ukraine. "The idea to punish a country that has the largest nuclear arsenal is absurd in and of itself," Medvedev said on the Telegram messaging app on Wednesday. The remarks were made in reference to a bid by the International Criminal Court

(ICC) to punish Moscow over what the tribunal alleges to be potential crimes in the former Soviet republic. The move to penalize Russia "potentially creates a threat to the existence of mankind," Medvedev warned, pointing to the likelihood of a nuclear conflict. Russia launched a military operation in Ukraine in late February, following Kiev's failure to implement the terms of the Minsk agreements and Moscow's recognition of Donetsk and Luhansk. At the time, Russian President Vladimir Putin said one of

the goals of what he called a "special military operation" was to "de-Nazify" Ukraine. Presently serving as the deputy head of Russia's Security Council, Medvedev blasted the United States for seeking to put Moscow in front of international tribunals, while evading punishment for its own wars which, according to him, have caused 20 million deaths worldwide. "The whole of American history, starting from the suppression of the Indians, is bloody wars of annihilation," said the 56-year-old ally of Putin. Earlier in the

day, Medvedev denounced reported comments by Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, who has proposed capping the price of Russian oil at around half its current level. The global oil prices might exceed \$300-\$400 per barrel if the price cap proposals were to be implemented, he said. Medvedev also cautioned that Russia might start denying Japan its energy exports and stop cooperating with Tokyo on a joint oil and gas project, which is under way on the Sakhalin Island, located off Russia's eastern coastline. Japan "would have neither

oil nor gas from Russia, as well as no participation in the Sakhalin-2 LNG project" as a result of such a cap, pressuring the shares of Mitsui & Co and Mitsubishi Corp, Medvedev said, pointing to the Japanese corporations that are involved in the project. Also on Wednesday, the Kremlin likewise reprimanded Japan over what it called a "very unfriendly position" towards Russia, saying this hampered the development of economic relations, including in the energy sphere. Japan has joined its Western allies in slapping sweep-

ing economic sanctions on Russia over the operation in Ukraine. "Japan is taking a very unfriendly position towards Russia. In any case, such an unfriendly stance does not help to facilitate relations on trade and the economy, including the energy dialogue," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters. "We discussed Mr Kishida's proposal yesterday and have said that this is only an initiative announced, there were no consolidated decisions taken," Peskov said. "It is doubtful whether such decisions could be taken, frankly speaking."

Briefs

Suk-yeol orders military to 'punish' N.Korea

NEWS DESK

SEOUL: The South Korean president on Wednesday ordered the country's military to "swiftly and firmly punish" North Korea if it carries out any provocation, local media reported. Speaking to his military commanders of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps at the Gyeongdong military headquarters, Yoon Suk-yeol said it is the military's mission to defend its country. "(The president) ordered our military to swiftly and firmly punish North Korea in the event that it carries out a provocation," Yonhap News Agency cited a statement issued from his office after he presided over the first meeting of top commanders since taking office in May.

Since last year, tensions have soared on the Korean Peninsula as both Seoul and Pyongyang have ramped up drills to show off their military might. Last month, the US, South Korea, and Japan announced plans to bolster security ties and agreed to jointly counter threats from North Korea if Pyongyang carries out another nuclear test. The US and South Korea extended several offers of dialogue to North Korea to ease current tensions in the Korean Peninsula but North Korea did not respond to the offers.

Cambodian premier urges citizens to 'save energy'

FOREIGN DESK

PHNOM PENH: The sanctions on Russia, one of the major global energy suppliers, due to its ongoing war on Ukraine, have triggered calls for "saving energy" in Cambodia. Urging over 17 million citizens to "save" energy "as much as possible," Prime Minister Hun Sen on Wednesday said the country's energy authority Electricite du Cambodge (EDC) has been "impacted by the war in Ukraine (that started on Feb. 24) and sanctions on Russia."

He added that the EDC, a state-owned company, has incurred a loss of \$100 million, so far. Russia is currently the world's most sanctioned nation. Western nations are mulling blocking energy supplies from Russia but it has already triggered rises in energy prices. Sen noted that the public, "especially the state institutions," should save electricity as the government "is giving subsidies to stabilize the prices," the state-run AKP news reported. "Without the government's subsidization, the electricity prices in Cambodia would already rise doubly," he underlined.

Government can "generate enough energy to supply the local demand but the production cost is high," the prime minister added. The Southeast Asian nation generates most of its own electricity from hydroelectric dams and coal-fired power plants. Cambodia also imports electricity from Vietnam, Thailand, and Laos. Many Cambodians are reliant on car batteries, wood, and other traditional fuels to meet their energy needs.

Blinken to travel to Bali to attend G20 meeting

JAKARTA: The US Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken will travel to Bali, Indonesia, to attend the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting scheduled on July 6-9, 2022. "Secretary Blinken will first travel to Bali, Indonesia, to attend the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting, and then Bangkok, Thailand, from July 6 to July 11, 2022," US Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Ned Price noted in a press statement issued by the US Embassy here on Wednesday.

At the G20 meeting in Bali, Blinken will reinforce US' commitment to working with international partners to confront global challenges, including food and energy insecurity and the threat of Russia's continued war against Ukraine, according to the statement. - ANTARA



PARIS: Fashion students and young designers from Pakistani universities visited the embassy and interacted with the Cd'A. They discussed their experience of a Brand Building Summer Course organised by L'adresse Paris. - DNA

First PIA flight arrives in Chengdu, China

The first flight of the national flag carrier left Islamabad this morning and arrived at Chengdu Shuangliu International airport around 4.00 pm local time

BEIJING: Pakistan International Airline (PIA) flight PK-870 with 209 passengers including 8 children onboard arrived in Chengdu, capital city of China's Sichuan province here on Wednesday. The first flight of the national flag carrier left Islamabad this morning and arrived at Chengdu Shuangliu International airport around 4.00 pm local time. PIA has started direct weekly passenger flights between Islamabad and Chengdu from today following the formal approval of the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC) to operate its weekly flights on Islamabad-Chengdu route, according to official sources.

Chengdu is the third destination other than Beijing for the national flag carrier. In March, PIA was allowed to operate flights for Chinese cities of Xian and Guangzhou from Pakistan. Previously, the state-run

airline was allowed to conduct flight operations for Beijing only. According to the schedule, PK-870, will take off from Islamabad Int'l Airport at 8 am every Wednesday,

which will arrive at Chengdu Shuangliu Int'l Airport at 4 pm local time after a flight duration of approximately 4 hours and 40 minutes. The same day, PK-871 will depart

from Chengdu at 6 pm local time and will reach Islamabad at 8:20 pm local time after a flight of 5 hours and 20 minutes.

All the passengers underwent the strict Covid-19 prevention and control measures before boarding the plane. They will be quarantined in Chengdu as per arrangements made by the Chinese local administration before leaving for their respective destinations in China. PIA has already resumed its weekly passenger flights on between Islamabad and Xian. The new direct flights are expected to enhance trade and education cooperation between Pakistan and Sichuan, which already have multiple linkages. A number of Pakistani passengers who will join their families in China have expressed their pleasure over the launch of flights on Islamabad-Chengdu route. - APP



Kazakhstan celebrates Day of Capital City

NEWS DESK

NUR-SULTAN: Every year, on July 6, the people of Kazakhstan celebrate the Day of the Capital City. This date was determined as per a decree of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan on transfer of the capital city from Almaty to Astana. The idea on the transfer of the capital was initiated by the First President of the country Nursultan Nazarbayev. An appropriate resolution of the Government was signed on July 6, 1996. On December 10, 1997, Astana was declared the capital city of Kazakhstan. In less than a year Astana was renamed as Astana

and in 2019 the city was renamed as Nur-Sultan, in honor of the First President of Kazakhstan.

The transfer of the capital city became a turning point in the history of sovereign Kazakhstan. «Our capital city is a bright embodiment of Kazakhstan's achievements. The landmark decision of the First President Nursultan Nazarbayev on the transfer of the capital city is of great historical importance for our nation. Thanks to his will and determination, a large political, economic, cultural and educational centre appeared in the heart of Eurasia.» Kassym-Jomart Tokayev said congratulating Kazakhstan in 2019, the year of his election to the post of the country's President. The

need to move the capital of Kazakhstan is explained by a whole range of geopolitical, economic, social and other reasons. As the First President noted, the regional center Astana was well located in the very center of the Eurasian continent, at the crossroads of the East and West, South and North.

Railroads and highways from Siberia to Central Asia, from China to Europe passed through Astana. It is no coincidence that the young capital of Kazakhstan so quickly turned into a major regional political, economic, cultural, educational and medical center, and also became the venue for major international forums, including the Summit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Immediately after the transfer of the capital, huge work began on the reconstruction of the existing buildings and construction of new ones. Together with the revival of economy as a result of increased hydrocarbon production, the construction of a new capital gave a powerful impetus to the development of the construction industry, enabled to create new jobs and improve the lives of people not only in the capital, but throughout the country. Kazakhstan made great efforts to solve an ambitious task - to create a new, world-class city, capable of becoming both an engine in the country's economic development and a symbol of aspiration for success.

In 1999, the city was awarded the medal and the title of the City of Peace by UNESCO. On this day, various cultural events, sports competitions are organized, videos and films about the capital of Kazakhstan are shot.

Indonesia holds G20 meeting of chief scientists

BADUNG: The Ministry of Agriculture is holding the 11th meeting of agricultural chief scientists (MACS) as part of the G20 agenda in Kuta, Badung District, Bali, from July 5-7, 2022. The meeting is a part of the Agriculture Working Group (AWG), whose members comprise experts from G20 members. "The MACS activity carries the theme of 'Sustainable Intensification to Meet Food Security and Environmental Objectives.' It is the first G20 AWG activity to be held offline," head of the Agricultural Research and Development Agency and chair of G20 MACS, Fadry Djufry, said on Wednesday.

AWG is one of the working groups of the G20 that focuses on agricultural development. During the meeting, experts from G20 member countries, guest countries, and several international institutions discussed four priority global agricultural issues proposed by Indonesia, Djufry informed. The issues were food security policies after the COVID-19 pandemic, climate-resilient agriculture, food loss and waste (FLW), and agriculture and digital traceability. "The agricultural sector has been able to respond to the crisis that occurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but we still need to discuss and design optimal supply chains, both on a local and global scale," Djufry said.

The G20 MACS annual meeting is part of an initiative by the agriculture ministers of G20 countries to address specific issues and priority questions regarding agriculture and nutrition, which are considered too big to be resolved by one country. In addition, the meeting is expected to coordinate agricultural research systems in G20 countries and implement joint solution strategies. G20 members realize that agricultural research, technology, and innovation play an important role in supporting food productivity, nutrition, and the environment, Djufry said. "So, every success in the agricultural approach and implementation of each country needs to be shared among G20 members as a common solution," he added. The adoption of digital agriculture is also needed to improve the framework of the food system. Digital agriculture has the potential to increase agricultural productivity, cost efficiency, market expansion, and provide environmental benefits through the optimized use of resources. - ANTARA



EU warns of full halt in Russian gas

Energy, and the prospect of a winter without enough heating for homes or power to keep factories going, could now pose a similar challenge to EU solidarity and a source for populist-spawned division

NEWS DESK

BRUSSELS: The 27-nation European Union needs to make emergency plans to prepare for a complete cut-off of Russian gas in the wake of the Kremlin's war in Ukraine, European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen warned Wednesday. "It is obvious: (Russian President Vladimir) Putin continues to use energy as a weapon. This is why the Commission is working on a European emergency plan," she told legislators in Strasbourg, France. The EU has already imposed sanctions on Russia, including on some energy supplies, and is steering away from Kremlin-controlled deliveries. But the head of the EU's executive branch said the bloc needed to be ready for shock disruptions coming from Moscow, and said the first plans would be presented by the middle of the month. "If worst comes to worst, then we have to be prepared," she said, hoping to avoid the

chaotic scenes, and the my-country-first attitude that some member states showed early on in the COVID-19 pandemic response. Energy, and the prospect of a winter without enough heating for homes or power to keep factories going, could now pose a similar challenge to EU solidarity and a source for populist-spawned division. "It is very important to have a European overview and a coordinated approach to a potential complete cut-off of Russian gas," von der Leyen said. A dozen members have already been hit by reductions or full cuts in gas supplies as the political standoff with Moscow over the Ukraine invasion intensifies. "It is obvious: Putin continues to use energy as a weapon. This is why the Commission is working on a European emergency plan," she said. "We need to make sure that in case of full disruption, the gas flows towards where it is most needed. We have to provide for European solidarity." Highlighting the potential challenges ahead, Germany said last week it suspects that Russia may not resume

natural gas deliveries to Europe through the Nord Stream 1 pipeline after planned maintenance work in July, complicating the outlook for this winter. Russian state-owned energy giant Gazprom blamed a technical problem for the reduction in gas flowing through Nord Stream 1, which runs under the Baltic Sea from Russia to Germany. The company said equipment maintenance was affected by Western sanctions. European Union countries already agreed last month that all natural gas storage in the 27-nation bloc should be topped up to at least 80% capacity for next winter to avoid shortages during the cold season. The new regulation also says underground gas storage on EU soil will need to be filled to 90% capacity before the 2023-24 winter. Von der Leyen said that the storage stood at 55% a week ago, adding that liquefied natural gas (LNG) deliveries from the United States had already tripled. The war in Ukraine has prompted the 27-na-

tion bloc to rethink its energy policies and sever ties with Russian fossil fuels. Member countries have agreed to ban 90% of Russian oil by year-end in addition to a ban on imports of Russian coal that will start in August. The EU has not included gas - a fuel used to power factories and generate electricity - in its own sanctions for fear of seriously harming the European economy. Before the war in Ukraine, it relied on Russia for 25% of its oil and 40% of its natural gas. In the meantime, the average monthly import of Russian pipeline gas is declining by 33% compared with last year, von der Leyen said as she called for a speedy transition toward renewable sources of energy. "Some say, in the new security environment after Russia's aggression, we have to slow down the green transition. This transition would come at the 'cost of basic security,' they say. The opposite is true. If we all do nothing but compete about limited fossil fuels, the prices will further explode and fill Putin's war chest," she said.

Canada to throw out 13.6M coronavirus vaccine doses

FOREIGN DESK

OTTAWA: Canadian health authorities have said about 13.6 million expired Oxford-AstraZeneca COVID-19 doses will be thrown out. According to a statement by the Health Ministry, more than half of the vaccine doses have expired due to low demand both within and outside the country. Although Canada has donated nearly 9 million doses to 21 different countries around the world, 13.6 million Oxford-AstraZeneca COVID-19 doses will be discarded since there was not enough demand before the expiry, the Canadian Press reported on Tuesday.

Canada has also donated more than 6.1 million Moderna vaccine doses, but the country has also thrown out 1.2 million doses of the vaccine, the report said. Canada has so far reported 3.94 million coronavirus cases with over 42,000 deaths, according to the US-based Johns Hopkins University. While more than 31 million people in Canada have received two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine.

OPEC SG Barkindo dies at 63

WEB DESK

ABUJA: The Secretary General of the OPEC oil cartel, Nigeria's Mohammad Barkindo, has died unexpectedly at the age of 63. "We lost our esteemed Dr (Mohammad) Sanusi Barkindo. He died at about 11:00 pm yesterday 5th July 2022," Mele Kyari, the chief executive for Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, tweeted on Wednesday, without providing any further details about the circumstances of Barkindo's death. "Certainly a great loss to his immediate family, the NNPC, our country Nigeria, the OPEC and the global energy community. Burial arrangements will be announced shortly," Kyari wrote. "This tragedy is a shock to the OPEC Family," the Vienna-based Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries tweeted. "We express our sorrow and deep gratitude for the over 40 years of selfless service that... Barkindo gave to OPEC. His dedication and leadership will inspire OPEC for many years to come." Only a few hours earlier, Barkindo had met Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari in Abuja, where Buhari praised Barkindo's "distinguished achievements at OPEC. "You were able to successfully navigate the organization through turbulent challenges," the president said.

Terrorists raid Nigeria prison, free hundreds

AGENCIES

ABUJA: Terrorists using guns and explosives smashed their way into a prison near the Nigerian capital, freeing hundreds of inmates in an operation to release jailed comrades, the government said on Wednesday. The brazen attack on the outskirts of Abuja came hours after an ambush on a presidential security convoy in the northwest, in a fresh illustration of Nigeria's security crisis. Residents reported loud explosions and gunfire late Tuesday near the Kuje medium-security prison just outside the capital. Security forces cordoned off streets in the area early Wednesday. Outside the jail, the burned-out wreckage of a bus and cars marked the scene of the attack, and yellow police tape was stretched across a destroyed part of the prison perimeter. "We understand they are Boko Haram, they came specifically for their co-conspirators," senior interior ministry official Shuaibu Belgore told reporters on a visit to the prison. "Right now we have retrieved about 300 out of about 600 who got out of the jail cells." One security official was killed when the gunman breached the jail using high-grade explosives. "We heard shooting on my street. We thought it was armed robbers," a local resident said.

Briefs

APNS announces Eid holidays

BUREAU REPORT

KARACHI: The All Pakistan Newspapers Society has announced that the member publications of the APNS will observe two closed holidays on account of EID-UL-AZHA on Sunday, July 10, 2022 and Monday, July 11, 2022. Consequently, there will be no morning newspapers on Monday, July 11, 2022 and Tuesday, July 12, 2022 and will publish their normal editions on Wednesday, July 13, 2022. Whereas the evening newspapers not appearing on Sunday July 10, 2022 and Monday, July 11, 2022, may bring out their issues on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, if they so desire.

Covid, weather advisory issued for Eid holidays

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Health Services Abdul Qadir Patel has said that the steps are being taken to prevent the spread of coronavirus through an integrated strategy. Citing the heightened risk of Covid-19 outbreak in crowded places, the federal minister asked tourists visiting the mountainous regions during the Eidul Azha to adhere to safety guidelines in the wake of the sixth wave of the pandemic. "Use masks and sanitizers, maintain social distance, and ensure full vaccination against coronavirus," Patel reminded people planning to go on a vacation. The travel advisory was issued in the backdrop of the upcoming Eidul Azha holidays during which people set out to enjoy across the country, particularly in northern areas. Patel also requested that fully vaccinated persons receive a booster dose in case their vaccination was done more than six months ago. Meanwhile, National Institute of Health (NIH) Executive Director Dr Aamer Ikram urged tourists to check credible sources for information regarding weather conditions before embarking on a journey. "Especially the forecast regarding rain, hail, and strong winds," he added. The executive director also said that during the sudden influx of tourists, accommodation and food facilities in hotels and restaurants become inadequate. He asked people to make sure there is an abundant supply of food and drinks, as well as proper accommodation available at an adequate cost, at the places tourists are planning to enjoy their holidays.

Rupee closes at 207.99 against US dollar

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Pakistani rupee Wednesday continued to lose value as it shed Rs1.05 against the US dollar in the interbank market as demand for the greenback increased ahead of the Eid ul Adha holidays. According to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), the local currency closed at Rs207.99 against the US dollar in the interbank market after losing 0.50% of its value compared to last day's close of Rs206.94. Moreover, the rupee-dollar parity was buffeted by concerns of a delay in the revival of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan programme. The market players fear the Punjab government's provision of power subsidies to the poor consumers could jeopardise Islamabad's progress made towards unlocking the suspended bailout. Currency dealers believe the rupee erased previous sessions' gains by tracking the importers' dollar demand due to the long holidays for Eid. All financial markets will remain closed from Friday to Tuesday for Eid ul Adha.

Ukraine says its inflicting major casualties on Russia

Ukraine needs weapons support: Hayday called for additional supplies of Western weapons to help balance the fight. "When there is more long-range weapons, the advantage of the enemy in personnel will be leveled," he said

NEWS DESK

KYIV: Ukraine says its military is putting up fierce resistance to Russian forces trying to advance through the eastern Donbas region, inflicting significant losses on Moscow's armies. The head of the Luhansk region military administration, Serhiy Hayday, says Ukrainian fighters are putting up stiff resistance. "We restrain the enemy on the border of Luhansk region and Donetsk region — the occupiers are suffering significant losses, as they themselves admit," Hayday said. "Every day, the Russians receive an order to advance further, but they do not always carry it out, because the losses in personnel are very significant. "During the assault of Lysychansk alone, the enemy lost thousands of dead and wounded. Yes, they have more forces and means, but the Ukrainian army is better prepared and motivated." The Russian Ministry of Defense does not regularly report the number of dead and injured among its

Russia likely to attack Sloviansk, official says

KYIV: Russia is likely to try and mount an offensive towards Sloviansk, the head of the city's military administration, Vadym Liakh said, adding that Ukrainian forces are currently holding Moscow's armies on the Siverskiy Donets river. "Probably, they will [attack Sloviansk]. Probably, that is why the incoming hits have become more frequent," Liakh said Wednesday. "I think that as soon as the enemy is able to carry out assault operations, it will begin the destruction of the infrastructure and the city itself." Liakh gave an update, saying that the frontline is now along the Siverskiy Donets river, a "natural obstacle" that Russia has already failed to surpass. He added that many fortifications were built near Sloviansk and Kramatorsk, making it possible for Ukrainian troops "to restrain the enemy for 4 months." So far, Russian forces have been stationed by the Siverskiy Donets river for a month, which he thinks "will continue to be this way. But, unfortunately, the civilian population will be shelled more and more often." Liakh also explained that the situation inside the city is "tense," given the intensified shelling in the past few weeks, with several killed and wounded. "Critical infrastructure is operating, but there has been no centralized water supply for more than a month," he said. "There are also problems with electricity, about a third of the population periodically remains without electricity. We restore it, but the enemy destroys it again." — Agencies

forces and CNN could not independently verify Hayday's claims about Russian casualties. However, independent analysts and observers, including some pro-Russian bloggers, have criticized the effort made by Moscow to capture the city of Lysychansk, saying it was too costly. Ukraine needs weapons support: Hayday called for additional supplies of Western weapons to help balance the fight. "When there is more long-range weapons, the advantage of the enemy in personnel will be leveled," he said. Russian forces now occupy most of the Luhansk region, barring a few pockets of resistance, and are pressing toward the Donetsk cities of Kramatorsk and Sloviansk. Pushback against Russia: Russian shelling targeted Ukrainian military positions in Luhansk "near Lysychansk in the direction of Bakhmut," according to the Ukrainian military General Staff. In the neighboring Donetsk region, "the entire territory of the region," was targeted, including Sloviansk, killing six civilians and wounding 21, the General Staff added.

Indian troops launch CASOs in IIOJK

DNA

SRINAGAR: In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, Indian troops launched cordon and search operations in different areas of the territory. The troops and paramilitary personnel harassed people and arrested two youth during a cordon and search operation in Hadigam area of Kulgam district. The troops were also carrying out cordon and search operations in different areas of Srinagar, Ganderbal, Baramulla, Pulwama, Islamabad, Shopian and on Srinagar-Jammu highway. The troops during these operations were thoroughly checking the vehicles and frisking passengers and even pedestrians, causing immense inconvenience to them.

805 fresh Covid-19 cases reported: NIH

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The health officials on Wednesday said that 805 new Coronavirus cases were reported throughout the country during the last 24 hours. As per data shared by the National Institute of Health (NIH), the case positivity ratio is 4.69 percent while 168 patients were in critical condition. One death was reported from the Coronavirus in the last 24 hours while 17,150 Covid-19 tests were conducted across the country. Meanwhile, Minister for National Health Abdul Qadir Patel appreciated the efforts of all stakeholders, healthcare staff, vaccination teams, and administration working across Pakistan despite multiple challenges. He advised all provinces and regions to administer booster doses on a priority basis to further improve protection against COVID-19 transmission. He said that in view of the global pandemic situation the Central Health Establishment (CHE) should stringently monitor the health status of incoming passengers at points of entry. He added that CHE would be strengthened to enhance its functionality. The minister emphasized the importance of precautions including social distancing and mask-wearing, especially in crowded places. He also highlighted the need to strictly follow the guidelines for the management of markets for Eid-ul-Azha.

IHC directs to approach LHC over arrest of journalist

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday directed the counsel of Imran Riaz Khan to approach Lahore High Court (LHC) over arrest of the journalist. Chief Justice of IHC Athar Minallah, while conducting hearing on contempt of court plea over the arrest, remarked that the journalist was taken into custody from Attock which does not fall under jurisdiction of this court. The court further remarked that LHC is the appropriate forum to raise the matter of arrest of Imran Riaz Khan. It merits mention that the petition stated that Imran Riaz was arrested despite clear orders of the Islamabad High Court. The court had directed the authorities concerned across the country not to arrest him. The petitioner has taken a stand that contempt of court action should be taken against the violators of court order. IG Islamabad, IG Punjab and DC Islamabad were made parties in the petition. It may be recalled that Attock police had arrested journalist Imran Riaz Khan on Tuesday night.

Court extends Imran Khan's interim bail till July 18

The counsel for the petitioner, Dr. Baber Awan appeared before the court and requested the court to grant one time exemption from hearing to his client, Imran Khan

ISLAMABAD: A lower court of Islamabad on Wednesday extended the interim bail to Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI)'s Leader Imran Khan till July 18, in different First Information Reports (FIRs), District and Sessions Judge Kamran Basharrat Mufti heard the petition seeking pre-arrest bail of PTI chief. The counsel for the petitioner, Dr. Baber Awan appeared before the court and requested the court to grant one time exemption from hearing to his client, Imran Khan. The court accepted the request and extended the interim bail. Meanwhile, the same court also granted pre-arrest bails to PTI leaders Shah Farman and Shahram Tarkai against surety bonds worth Rs5,000 each. It might be mentioned here that various police stations had registered a total of 15 FIRs against PTI leaders for vandalizing the public property during the long march. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Rana Tanveer Hussain presenting a souvenir to Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran Seyyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini. — DNA

Maskless pilgrims launch largest hajj of Covid-19 era

The hajj poses a considerable security challenge and has seen several disasters over the years, including a 2015 stampede that killed up to 2,300 people.

MECCA: The biggest hajj pilgrimage since the Covid pandemic began kicked off Wednesday, with hundreds of thousands of mostly maskless worshippers expected to circle Islam's holiest site in Saudi Arabia's Mecca. One million fully vaccinated Muslims, including 850,000 from abroad, are allowed at this year's hajj, a major break from two years of drastically curtailed numbers due to the pandemic. At Mecca's Grand Mosque, pilgrims performed the "tawaf", the circumambulation of the Kaaba, the large cubic structure draped in golden-embroidered black cloth that Muslims around the world turn towards to pray. Authorities said last month that masks would be required at the site, but that has been largely ignored so far this week. Many pilgrims held umbrellas to block the hot sun as the temperature climbed to 42 degrees Celsius (108 Fahrenheit). The Saudi health ministry has prepared 23 hospitals and 147 health centres in Mecca and Medina, the second-holiest city in Islam, to accommodate pilgrims, state media reported this week. That includes allocating more than 1,000 beds for patients requiring intensive care and more than 200 specifically for heatstroke patients, while dispatching more than 25,000 health workers to respond to cases as they arise. The hajj poses a considerable security challenge and has seen several disasters over the years, including a 2015 stampede that killed up to 2,300 people. No incidents had been reported as of Wednesday afternoon. "It's all going well so far. I have moved around a lot and saw rules are being respected," said Faten Abdel Moneim, a 65-year-old Egyptian mother of four. "I hope it stays this way." This year's hajj is larger than the pared-down versions staged in 2020 and 2021 but still smaller than in normal times. — APP

Pak, Iran mull co-op in trade, education

Iranian Ambassador meets Finance and Education ministers separately

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Pakistan Seyyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini called on the Federal Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Rana Tanveer Hussain in his office. Senior officials of the ministry including Secretary Education Ms. Naheed S. Durani also attended the meeting in addition representatives from HEC and NAVTTC. Rana Tanveer welcomed the Iranian delegation and said that the two countries have cultural, linguistic and people to people love for each other. He said that Persian language is the mother of Urdu and has deep roots in Pakistan. Rana Tanveer discussed exchange of expertise and knowledge regarding Vocational and Technical Training. He said that the two countries can benefit from the experience of each other. Rana Tanveer welcomed exchange of teachers and students to further mutual cooperation especially for Skilled Vocational Training. He said that there is significant

potential in cooperation between the two countries. He said that Pakistan can learn from the expertise of Iran in Engineering, Nanotechnology and Aerospace technology. Minister said that Pakistan is willing to offer scholarships to Iranian students in order to enhance mutual collaboration. Seyyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini said that People of Iran have deep affiliation with Pakistan. He said that people have a lot of respect for Allama Iqbal as numerous bridges and roads are named after him. He said that Pakistan is brotherly country for Iran. He said that University to University cooperation and Technical Institution to Technical Institution collaboration is the way forward. He said that the University of Tehran is willing to make a Technology/IT park in Islamabad. He said that MoUs should be expedited between Pakistani and Iranian Universities to enhance exchanges. H.E. said that Iran and Pakistan have a border of 900 km and both countries should take advantage of that to strengthen each other. Rana Tanveer Hussain said that the future is in Vocational Training of the population of Pakistan.

India's 'bulldozer justice' flattens Muslim dissent

Many Muslims living in UP now fear their own homes are being earmarked for destruction

AGENCIES

ALLAHABAD: After two nights in police custody, Indian teenager Somaiya Fatima was released in time to watch live footage of an excavator claw smashing into the walls of her childhood home. The residence is among scores of dwellings and businesses flattened by wrecking crews this year, in a campaign authorities have promoted by turns as a battle against illegal construction and a firm response to criminal activity. But rights groups have condemned "bulldozer justice" as an unlawful exercise in collective punishment by India's Hindu nationalist government, and many of the campaign's victims have one thing in common. "We are Muslims and that's why we are being targeted," Fatima told AFP. The 19-year-old was arrested along with her family after her father was accused of masterminding a large public protest in the northern city of Allahabad last month. It was one of several rallies across India last month condemning a ruling party spokes-

woman whose provocative comments about the Prophet Mohammed during a televised debate sparked anger across the Muslim world. The day Fatima was released, she was sitting in a relative's living room when she came across footage of her home's destruction on her phone. She said the demolition was a lesson for Muslims tempted to "speak up" against the government. "They've instilled fear in an entire community," she said. "Everyone now looks at their home and thinks that if it happened to us, it can happen to them also." Fatima's home state of Uttar Pradesh is governed by Yogi Adityanath, a saffron-robed Hindu monk seen as a potential successor to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. In office he has championed the bulldozer as a symbol of his commitment to law and order and as a potential tool to use against "trouble-makers". Adityanath's acolytes celebrated his successful campaign for re-election as chief minister earlier this year by riding on top of excavators, while bulldozer tattoos became a minor craze among supporters of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party.

Since then "bulldozer politics" have spread elsewhere in the country and demolition campaigns have begun quickly following on the heels of outbreaks of religious unrest. After a violent confrontation in April between Hindus trailing a religious procession and Muslims holding Ramadan prayers, authorities in Delhi knocked down nearly two dozen Muslim shopfronts and the facade of a mosque, defying a court order to stop. Officials say the spate of demolitions are lawful as they only target buildings constructed without legal approval. But victims of the campaign deny that their dwellings are illegal, and say they are not given the legally required notice period to dispute demolition orders. Fatima's house was demolished "in the presence of hundreds of police and hundreds of cameras, with no empathy," KK Rai, a lawyer for Fatima's father, told AFP. "There is no comparison for this ruthlessness." Critics of the government say the campaign is the latest manifestation of the BJP's discriminatory policies towards India's 200 million-strong Muslim minority community. "They have an ideological commitment that

in India they have to make Muslims a second-class citizen, socially humiliate them and destroy their property," Rai said. Amnesty International said last month that the demolitions were part of a selective and "vicious" crackdown on Indian Muslims who dared to speak up against the discrimination they faced. Many Muslims living in Uttar Pradesh now fear their own homes are being earmarked for destruction after their family members participated in last month's protests. "Now we have sleepless nights and restless days," said Mohd Javed, a resident of Saharanpur, who received an order to vacate his house soon after his brother was arrested for joining a demonstration in that city. One week after Fatima's arrest, a bulldozer remained parked outside the police station near where her home once stood. The pile of bricks and concrete in its stead has heightened her own sense of belonging to a pariah community. She recalled watching her home being torn down on a news channel's YouTube livestream, as her phone screen filled up with a flood of comments from the public praising the demolition.