



Islamabad POST

Friday, July 08, 2022

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

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Tunisia's Jabeur first Arab in a major final

Detailed News On Page-06

Post-conflict period brings opportunities

Detailed News On Page-07

Mushahid urges US to balance Pak, India ties

Detailed News On Page-08



Briefs

Mariyum lauds PM Shehbaz

DNA

ISLAMABAD: for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb said on Thursday that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was the pioneer of mass transit system in Pakistan. In a tweet, she said the PM has inaugurated first Islamabad bus service from Bhara Kahu to PIMS (Green Line) and from Koral to PIMS (Blue Line). She said that Green Line and Blue Line service (Pindi Islamabad Metro) from PIMS will be merged into Red Line Metro. From Faiz Ahmed Faiz Bus Stop, passengers can travel from Orange Line to the airport, she said.

Threatening calls should stop: Fawad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry on Thursday said "threatening calls" from "unknown numbers" should stop hours after PTI leaders claimed a pilot flying party chairman Imran Khan to his rallies had received them. He has also held several in the past few weeks. On Tuesday, he had fired off a warning that he would be forced to "reveal everything" about the characters involved in the alleged conspiracy to oust his government if harassment of him and his party did not cease.

Govt offices to get solar power

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Power Engr. Khuram Dasgiri Khan says Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will announce the new Solar Energy Policy on 1st of next month. Addressing a news conference in Islamabad Thursday, the Minister said the Ministry of Power gave a detailed briefing to the Prime Minister on the policy. He said under the policy solar plants will be installed alongside thermal plants at seven thermal plant sites in the country.

Boris Johnson quits as UK prime minister

Makes no apology for the events that forced his announcement



CENTRELINE REPORT

LONDON: Scandal-ridden Boris Johnson announced on Thursday he would quit as British prime minister after he dramatically lost the support of his ministers and most Conservative lawmakers, but said he would stay on until his successor was chosen. Bowing to the inevitable as more than 50 ministers quit and lawmakers said he must go, an isolated and powerless Johnson said it was clear his party wanted someone else in charge, but that his forced departure was

"eccentric". "Today I have appointed a cabinet to serve, as I will, until a new leader is in place," Johnson said outside his Downing Street office where his speech was watched by close allies and his wife Carrie.

"I know that there will be many people who are relieved and perhaps quite a few who will also be disappointed. And I want you to know how sad I am to be giving up the best job in the world. But them's the breaks," he added, making no apology for the events that forced his announcement. There were cheers and applause as he began his speech, while boos rang out from some outside the gates of Downing Street. After days of battling for his job, Johnson had been deserted by all but a handful of his closest allies after the latest in a series of scandals sapped their willingness to support him.

"It was a short and bizarre resignation speech which didn't mention the word resign or resignation once. There was no apology, no contrition," Conservative lawmaker Andrew Bridgen said. "There was no apology for the crisis his actions have put our government, our democracy, through." The Conservatives will now have to elect a new leader, a process which could take weeks or months, with details to be announced next week.

Turkey's ambassador meets the PM

PM terms Pak-Turkiye ties as unparalleled



KHAYAM ABBASI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif says Pakistan-Turkiye fraternal ties are unparalleled in terms of mutual trust, understanding and support on each other's national causes. He was talking to Turkiye's new Ambassador Mehmet Pacaci who called on him in Islamabad on Thursday. The Prime Minister hoped that during the ambassador's tenure, bilateral cooperation will be further strengthened, especially in trade and investment domains. He expressed gratitude for Turkiye's steadfast

support on Jammu and Kashmir dispute and reiterated Islamabad's commitment on core interests of Istanbul.

Shehbaz Sharif said he looks forward to welcoming Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan for the 7th session of High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council being held in September in Islamabad this year. A day earlier, Turkish Ambassador Mehmet Pacaci called on Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar in Islamabad. During the meeting, both the sides expressed desire to further strengthen collaboration in all areas of mutual interest. They expressed satisfaction at convergence of views on a number of regional and global issues.

Pak, France sign accord for Lahore Fort renovation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Pakistan and Government of France, represented by Agence Française de Développement / French Development Agency have signed a 22-million financing agreement to extend technical and financial support for the renovation of Lahore Fort. The HURL - Heritage & Urban Regeneration in Lahore - project aims to protect and restore a unique heritage site in Pakistan. The focus areas will be promoting tourism, generating additional economic activities and building climate change

resilience for local communities. The Fort and walled city of Lahore, located in the heart of a metropolis of 11 million inhabitants, comprise a group of various singular monuments of exceptional historical and cultural value, and dense ancient neighborhoods. The listing of the fort as a World Heritage Site in Danger in 1981 by UNESCO highlighted the many threats to its integrity. Since 2012, the Government of Punjab, the Walled City of Lahore Authority (WCLA) and the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) began a decade-long

Continued on Page 06



NATIONAL DAY OF EGYPT



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Speaker National Assembly Zahid Akram Durrani, Senior PPP leader and former Deputy Speaker National Assembly Faisal Karim Kundi, Ambassador of Egypt Tarek Dahroug and others cutting cake on the occasion of National Day of Egypt, at Islamabad Serena Hotel. - DNA

Australian HC extends Eid greetings



DNA

ISLAMABAD: On the occasion of Eid ul-Adha, the Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Neil Hawkins said: "I send my warm greetings to Muslims in Pakistan, Australia and around the world who are celebrating Eid ul-Adha and performing the Hajj this year. Australia is one of the most successful and vibrant multicultural societies in the world."

Continued on Page 06

Pak rejects Indian Army's allegations

Pakistan has regularly shared with the world irrefutable evidence of Indian occupation forces' violations of human rights

SHUJAAT HAMZA

Last Muslim lawmaker leaves BJP

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has out-rightly rejected the Indian Army's dossier making baseless allegations against Pakistan. In response to media queries regarding the reported release of a so-called dossier by the Indian Army, FO spokesperson Asim Iftikhar termed it false and fabricated. In a press release, he said the fact is that in the last few days, numerous instances have been reported where direct links between the BJP and perpetrators of violence in IIOJK, Udaipur and elsewhere have been unearthed. Asim Iftikhar said Pakistan has regularly shared with the world irrefutable evidence of Indian occupation forces' gross and widespread violations of human rights abetted by draconian laws in the IIOJK through comprehensive, evidence-based dossiers.

Continued on Page 06

DELHI: The last remaining Muslim lawmaker in India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party has resigned, leaving the party without a single representative from the minority community among its 395 members of parliament. Minister of Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi resigned on Wednesday, one day before his term was expected to come to an end. The Indian parliament has nearly 800 lawmakers in total.

Continued on Page 06

EMBASSY OF AZERBAIJAN

Repair and Reconstruction

TENDER NOTICE



The Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan announces a tender for the repair and reconstruction in the Embassy and the purchase of relevant new equipment. For more information, please contact the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

051-260-07-03/04
0335-540-10-90

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IPRI launches 'Readers Lounge' for knowledge access - Page 04

'COVID discrimination' must be rooted out - Page 05

Jokowi highlights importance of food independence - Page 06

Turkey, Malaysia to cooperate on regional issues, Palestine - Page 07

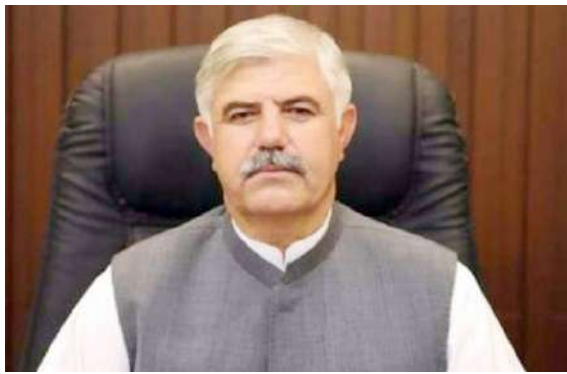
Mushahid Sayed urges US to balance ties with Pak, India - Page 08

Land use and building control authority established

The meeting approved the constitution of Provincial Land Use and Building Control Council under the Land Use and Building Control Authority Act

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: In a bid to protect the agricultural lands and prevent the haphazard housing societies on agricultural lands, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has established Land Use and Building Control Authority. Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan has directed the authorities concerned to take concrete steps so as to make the newly estab-



lished Land Use and Building Control Authority fully functional on war footing and said that the purpose for which authority was established be achieved at all costs. He issued the directives while chairing a meeting regarding Land Use and Building Control Authority here the other day. Provincial minister for Local Government Faisal Amin

Gandapur, Secretary Finance Ikram Ullah, Secretary Law Masaud Ahmad and other relevant senior officials attended the meeting. The meeting approved the constitution of Provincial Land Use and Building Control Council under the Land Use and Building Control Authority Act. The chief minister directed the quarters concerned to convene

the first meeting of council in a couple of weeks. Provincial Land Use Council will be headed by Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while Additional Chief Secretary, Senior Member Board of Revenue, concerned administrative secretaries and experts from private sector will be the members of council. Land use council is mandated to provide policy framework and is the highest forum of approval of land use, master plans, and spatial plans in the province. Further, council will oversight as well as monitor and implement the policies and strategies. The chief minister on the occasion also directed the authorities of local government department to devise lease policy for acquiring lands on lease for establishment of markets and bus stands.



ISLAMABAD: Wendy Gilmour, the High Commissioner of Canada for Pakistan, calls on Federal Minister for Finance, Miftah Ismail and discussed various avenues of cooperation between both the countries and investment opportunities in Pakistan. – DNA

RCCI strongly resents hike in interest rate

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (RCCI) on Thursday showed strong reservations for increasing 125 basis points in the interest rate by the State Bank of Pakistan taking it from 13.75 percent to 15 percent. The RCCI President Nadeem Rauf in a statement urged the government to withdraw the hike as it would increase the credit cost of commercial banks, ultimately have a bad effect on the growth of industrial activities and create more difficulties for the Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) in its efforts aimed at reviving the economy.

PM concerned over terror attacks on KP cops

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday expressed concern over the rising incidents of terrorist attacks on police personnel in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and asked the minister for Interior to extend cooperation to the provincial government in improving the law and order situation. The prime minister stated this in reaction to the terrorist attack on the Mardan police checkpoint which resulted in the martyrdom of two policemen. He said the Federal Government would provide every possible assistance to the KP government in addressing the law and order situation. – APP

State Bank jacks up interest rate to 15% It is the highest since November 2008

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: In line with the market expectation, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Thursday aggressively raised the benchmark interest rate by a massive 125 basis points to 15% – the highest since November 2008. The rate hike came as the coalition government is trying hard to revive the much-awaited International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the resumption of a \$6-billion loan programme that had been stalled since early April.

The central bank has cumulatively increased the rate by 800 basis points since September 2021 to control inflation and narrow the current account deficit. During today's meeting, under the chair of Acting Governor Dr Murtaza Syed, it was decided that the interest rates on export finance scheme (EFS) and long-term financing facility (LTFF) loans are now being linked to the policy rate to strengthen monetary policy transmission while continuing to incentivise exports by preselling a discount of

500 basis points relative to the policy rate. According to a statement issued by the central bank, this combined action continues the monetary tightening underway since last September, "which is aimed at ensuring a soft landing of the economy amid an exceptionally challenging and uncertain global environment." "It should help cool economic activity, prevent a de-anchoring of inflation expectations and provide support to the rupee in the wake of multi-year high inflation and record imports," the statement read.

Pakistan wants balanced ties with major powers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's policy, when it comes to relations with major powers, has always been consistent. Pakistan wants balanced, objective, and broad-based relations, based on mutual interest, mutual benefit, and mutual respect, with all major powers, including the US, China, Russia, and others. This was the key message of the seminar on 'Russia-Ukraine War: A Crisis beyond Borders' organised by the Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS) in Islamabad. Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar was the Keynote Speaker, while other eminent panellists included



Ambassador Riaz Khokhar, former Foreign Secretary, GoP; Lieutenant General Aamer Riaz (Retd), President, Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS); Dr Usman W. Chohan, Director (Economic Affairs & National Development), CASS; and international security analyst Squadron Leader Fahad Masood (Retd). President CASS Air Marshal Farhat Hussain

Khan (Retd) chaired the seminar, while Ambassador Jilil Abbas Jilani, Advisor (Foreign Policy) moderated the proceedings. In her Keynote Address, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar stressed that war and conflict was not in anyone's favour. Its impacts and repercussions were devastating and long-lasting even when the conflict ended. The Minister highlighted that Pakistan understood the trials and tribulations of war having experienced the same for a decade on its own borders. She stressed that Pakistan continued to call for immediate cessation of hostilities and the need for diplomacy and dialogue for an early, negotiated end to the Ukraine conflict.

COURT NOTICE

In the Court of Muhammad Aslam Mangan, Senior Civil Judge Jhelum

Suit for Possession of Shop through Partition, Case title Munir Hussain VS Sardar Ahmed etc. against Nabeel son, Basrat, Kiran daughters of Tazeem deceased, Hassan son, Kainat daughter of Shoukat deceased R/o Kharala Tehsil & District Jhelum. As there is not possible to call the defendants through Summons in the instant suit so through proclamation in Newspaper, you are directed to appear in the court on 14.07.2022 at 8:00AM, otherwise ex-parte proceedings will be initiated.

COURT NOTICE

In the court of miss Sumaira Ashraf sahibah civil Judge Jhelum

Title of case: SADA HUSSAIN etc VS M SALEEM RAZA etc

Respondent no:(2) M Saleem Raza Saddique s/o Muhammad Saddique r/o Muradpur West Tehsil And District Sialkot

Claim: Suit for U/S Application 12(2) In each case, the respondent's are informed through advertisement As there is not possible to call the respondent through Summons in the instant case so through proclamation in Newspaper, you are directed to appear or legal advisor in the court on 14-07-2022 at 8:00AM, otherwise ex-parte proceedings will be initiated.

Sherry briefs Kerry on climate change impacts

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman briefed the United States Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, John Kerry about the hazardous impacts of climate change faced by Pakistan during a telephonic conversation on Thursday. US Envoy Kerry during his telephonic call congratulated Sherry Rehman on assumption of her office and expressed the desire to continue working together for tackling climate change issues, said a news release. The minister underscored that Pakistan was consistently placed in the top ten 'most vulnerable' countries in the world impacted by

climate change which has now become an existential threat to the country. Sherry apprised Senator Kerry about Pakistan's accelerated vulnerability to the climate crisis, saying that despite producing less than one percent of GHG emissions Pakistan was now the ground zero of a global climate catastrophe. The country was lurching from unprecedented heat waves, to critical glacial melt, drought one month and flooding in another. While high climate ambition commitments are important, including NDCs that include an enormous energy transition, Pakistan is facing down the costs of

global warming at 9.1% of its GDP, which is the highest in the region as identified by a recent UN-ESCAP 2022 report. The time to intervene is now, as water scarcity by 2025 is also a looming crisis if current trajectories continue. Apprising Mr. Kerry on the NDCs, the minister remarked, "with the current global energy crisis, and the disruption in supply chains caused by the Ukraine war, including the invisible costs of the pandemic to climate vulnerable countries, energy transitions are facing an uncertain timeline, so technical and financial assistance is the need of the hour. – APP

Sites notified to collect hides of sacrificial animals

ISHFAQ MUGHAL

FAISALABAD: The district administration has notified 26 sites to collect hides of sacrificial animals on the eve of Eid ul Azha by the different organizations and NGOs having permission from the Deputy Commissioner office. According to the notification issued in this regard by the Deputy Commissioner Lt.(R) Sohail Ashraf the hide collection points had been notified in Faisal-

abad City included Baroon Aminpur Bazar EidGah Road, Near Darbar Baba QaimSain outside Graveyard, RiazShahidChowk near WSA Office, ChandniChowk near MC Boys High School, Outside WSA Ware House near Novelty Bridge, Mumtaz Garden Gulshan-e-Rafique Rodex road, Stop No.5, Hilal Road, 224 Wazir Khan Wali, TankiWalaChowkMandi Quarter, In front of Chenab Fabrics Nishatabad, Open place at Saeed Colony No.2 near Graveyard Madina Town,

Outside M. I. Middle School near Lal Dispensary, Gulberg Outside MC High School for Boys, Ghulam Muhammadabad opposite office of UC No.280, ChatriWalaChowk Jinnah Colony, In front of Graveyard DheraSain Ghulam Muhammadabad, outsidekamalabad graveyard while in Jaranwala included Old Tanga Stand opposite MC office Jaranwala, Slaughter House Jaranwala, Slaughter House Khurrianala Chowk, Veterinary Hospital Khurrianwala.

27 people stranded in flash flood at Gomal rescued

TANK: Around 27 people, who were stranded in flash flood in Gomal area, have been evacuated by Rescue 1122 officials and were shifted to safer places. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Local Government and Rural Development Faisal Amin Khan Gandapur praised the efforts of all the departments concerned for rescuing the stranded people soon after flash flood was reported in Gomal Area of District Tank. The minister in a statement here on Thursday said the district administration, Rescue 1122 and

other relevant departments participated in the rescue and relief operations. He said all resources were mobilized in rescuing those people and shifting them to safer places. The people including infants, children, women and men were rescued safely after hectic efforts, he added. Talking to media, Deputy Commissioner Tank Hameedullah Khattak said that all the people trapped including minor kids and women in flood had safely been lifted. FC, District Administration, Tank Police, Rescue 1122 and local volunteers had conducted a joint operation to rescue all the people trapped due to flash flood. He said the administration immediately started rescue operation to rescue people after report of




flash flood in Gomal area. The flood affected Muhammad Saleem said he was going towards his village Raghza when he was trapped by flash flood. He thanked all the departments for timely action and rescue operation besides shifting the affected to safer places. – APP

Resistance Day to remember Kashmir movement icon Wani

ISLAMABAD: Six years after Indian forces martyred tech-savvy young icon of Kashmir freedom struggle, Burhan Muzaffar Wani, many things have changed, but normalcy seems to be far off dream for Kashmiris as Indian forces continued unabated state terrorism to suppress peaceful resistance movement. The cricket-lover Wani and his fellows were extra-judicially martyred by Indian forces on July 8, 2016. Representing his generation, the martyred youth rekindled the freedom struggle and defeated the fictitious Indian narrative about Kashmiris' indigenous freedom struggle. India had been striving hard for many years to equalize the struggle with terrorism, however Wani frustrated these designs by sacrificing his life for the cause. Every year, the Indian authorities impose strict restrictions to prevent people from commemorating the day and pay tribute to the martyred leader. However, despite restraints, people reach Tral (home town of the deceased leader) to pay homage to him. Kashmiris are observing Martyrs Week from July 8 to July 13. Every year on July 8, Burhan Wani's martyrdom anniversary



is observed as 'Resistance Day' while July 13 as Kashmir Martyrs' Day in memory of 22 people who fell to the bullets of Maharaja's troops in Srinagar in 1931. The Resistance Day would be commemorated to pay tribute to Wani and his fellows in particular and all martyrs in general; reiterate commitment for continuing freedom struggle; and remind the world of its promises made to Kashmiris. "The purpose to observe Martyrs Week is to pay tribute to martyrs and reiterate commitment to continue their mission for freedom of Kashmir," Shaikh Abdul Mateen, Secretary General APHC told a state run news agency. Wani, who belonged to a highly-educated Kashmiri family Tral, started longing form freedom after witnessing the deadly summer agitation of 2010 in which 130 civilians were brutally gunned down by Indian forces. His brother and a friend were also beaten and humiliated for no reason by Indian forces in Tral. The martyrdom of his brother in 2015 strengthened his resolve to fight the Indian occupation and entice Kashmiri youth through the social networking media. – DNA




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Rating AAA


CREDIT RATING AAA

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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



Hotels & Restaurants

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



Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....	8494949
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Emergency

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



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CAA.....	9281092



Hospitals

CMH.....	5611111
MH.....	5611116
Cantt Hospital.....	9270907-11
DHQ.....	5556311-4
RGH.....	9290301-7
Holy Family.....	9290322-7
PIMS.....	9261170-79
Polyclinic.....	9218300-09
Shifa International.....	4603666



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CDA.....	9221334-43
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Met Office.....	9250360-6
RDA.....	5555864
TMA.....	5770886
Cantonment Board.....	9270151-3

Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

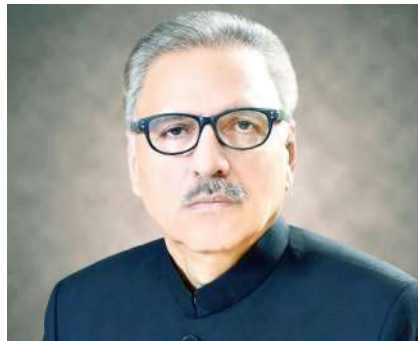
Islamabad.....	0321-5744480
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President takes notice of violence against journalists

The President asked the Prime Minister to keep him informed of the remedial actions taken by him as per article 46 of the Constitution

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi in a letter addressed to the Prime Minister has expressed his deep concern on the rising trend of harassment and torture against journalists and media persons in Pakistan. The President, while referring to recent incidents of violence against journalists, stated that such events reflect a mindset of intolerance that has negative repercussions both on the future of democracy as well as freedom of expression as guaranteed by Article 19 of the Constitution of Pakistan and Article 19 of the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Such actions also come under international focus and tarnish the image of our country, he added. The President noted with concern that Pakistan stands at 157th position in the Freedom of Press Index-2022 which is very low and said that Reporters Without Borders (RSF), Human Rights Watch (HRW), Amnesty International (AI), and the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) in their reports have attributed harassment, intim-



idation, and physical violence against journalists as the main reasons for the dismal position of Pakistan in the said index. The President also referred to the reports of the Committee to Protect the Journalists (CPJ) and HRW, wherein they had reported that 96 Journalists had been killed in Pakistan from 1992 to 2022 and alleged that the journalists in Pakistan were subjected to charges of sedition and terrorism to stifle dissent and criticism against the powerful elements of the state.

While mentioning a few important cases, the President named Mr Nazim Jokhiyo, a citizen journalist, who was abducted from his house in Karachi and was tortured to death, and Mr Aziz Memon, a journalist of KTN and Daily Kawish, who was killed near his home town Mehrabpur, Sindh. Mr Matuallah Jan was abducted in broad daylight from a busy area of Islamabad. Mr Asad Ali Toor and Mr Absar Alam were assaulted and injured by unidentified men. Mr Ayaz Amir was attacked, humiliated and bruised by unknown persons on the road during rush hours in the presence of many eyewitnesses in Lahore and multiple FIRs had been registered against Mr Sami Ibrahim, Mr Arshad Sharif, Mr Sabir Shakir, Mr Imran Riaz Khan and Mr Moed Pirzada at various Police Stations in a number of cities across the country. The President observed that recent actions being taken against the reputed journalists undermined the efforts of the judiciary because when in one jurisdiction relief was provided, cases were filed in another jurisdiction with mala fide intention to continue the harassment. It appears that a reign of terror has been unleashed against

the media persons who have independent opinions, he added. The President emphasized that the actions or inactions of previous governments should not be used as a ruse to repeat similar violations and such a stance is both untenable and a lame excuse. This comparison, he said, instead of taking the country in a progressive and positive direction will become a justification to do worse in retaliation. The President observed that in terms of Article 41 of the Constitution of Pakistan, the President should endeavour to protect the fundamental rights of freedom of speech and fair trial for all citizens. Pakistan being a democratic country, should not allow oppression and persecution of intelligentsia and journalists, he stressed. The President said that law enforcement agencies may be directed to ensure the protection of journalists and media persons as well as politicians across the aisle should also play their role to save the journalists from the highhandedness of unknown and unscrupulous elements. The President asked the Prime Minister to keep him informed of the remedial actions taken by him as per article 46 of the Constitution.

Utility stores to remain open on Friday, Saturday

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Inayatullah Dola, spokesperson of the Utility Stores Corporation, said that all the utility stores would remain open on Friday and Saturday during the Eid-ul-Adha holidays for the convenience of the people. People across the country will be able to benefit from the federal government's relief package on July 8 and 9. Adequate supply of subsidized items has been ensured at all utility stores across the country. In addition to subsidized items, a wide range of standard branded items are also available at discounted rates. So that the people do not face any difficulty in shopping for Eid, all warehouses and regional offices will also remain open to improve demand and supply. The Utility Stores Corporation strives to provide the best retail services to the people at their doorsteps on every religious and national holiday.

Economy has been brought out of red zone

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Iqbal, Federal Minister for Planning & Development said that when the new government took over power, Pakistan was heading towards default, but with tough decisions, the economy has now been brought out of the red zone towards improvement and efforts are afoot to reconstruct it. He highlighted the jumpstart in exports, export-led growth, enhanced tax revenue, USD 25-30 billion annual FDI, political stability and consistency in policies as key requirements for Pakistan to emerge as a stable economy. He said that China's annual imports were USD 1 trillion and the business community should focus on increasing their share in this huge market to improve trade with China. He said that the government was focusing on facilitating SMEs and optimizing businesses & agriculture sectors to improve the economy. He said that the government was seeking proposals from chambers of commerce to abolish laws or amend them that were creating hurdles for the private sector in order to turnaround Pakistan and urged that ICCI should form a task force to develop such proposals and share them with his ministry for consideration and implementation. He further said that ICCI should share its proposal for industrial estate in writing that would be given due consideration. He announced that ICCI would be given representation in the Advisory Board of the Ministry of Planning. Speaking on the occasion, Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said that ICCI has been making efforts since long to establish a new industrial estate in the region to promote industrialization, investment and employment, therefore, he demanded that the government should cooperate fully with ICCI in early materialization of this important project. He said that a modern Expo Center should be set up in Islamabad on the pattern of Karachi and Lahore Expo Centres to organize exhibitions for better promotion of business activities and exports. He said that the government should announce an industrial package to boost industrialization and exports. He said that ICCI should be given representation in the Advisory Board of the Ministry of Planning to finalize development projects keeping in view the interests of the private sector. He said that high taxes, SBP's high interest rate, sharp devaluation of rupee and increase in oil, electricity and gas prices have multiplied the cost of doing business and demanded that the government should take measures to reduce the cost of doing business so that business and investment activities could flourish and the economy could move towards stability. Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President, Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President, Khalid Iqbal Malik Chairman Founder Group, Khalid Javed, Mian Akram Farid, Mian Shaikat Masud, Baser Daud, Shaban Khalid, Muhammad Naveed Malik and others also spoke at the occasion and highlighted various issues that needed the urgent attention of the government for redress. They also offered useful suggestions to turn around the economy.

PBF hopes trade with Afghanistan will improve

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) says Pak-Afghan trade is a potential source for the creation of livelihood for thousands of people and can bring about prosperity in the region which has been badly impacted by terrorism and militancy; however country exports to Afghanistan saw a deeper drop since the Taliban took control of Kabul in August 2021, PBF Senior Vice President, Muhammad Riaz Khattak said the federal government two days back; took a major decision to allow trade of all products to Kabul in the rupee via land routes owing to the non-availability of tradable currency through banking channels which was long demand of the business community and it also supports our current account deficit. The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet approved a summary of the commerce ministry amending the Import Policy Order (IPO) to allow trade with Afghanistan in rupees for a period of one year. It is believed the regime will remain in place until the restoration of regular banking chan-



nels in Afghanistan. Afghanistan was the third largest export destination for Pakistani products, but the trend changed in the past couple of years. Pakistan's exports to Afghanistan fell by 30 per cent to \$717.53 million in 2021-22 from \$1,018bn in 2020-21. Since Aug 15, 2021, when the Taliban took over and declared their rule over Afghanistan, Islamabad has offered Kabul, among other humanitarian assistance waivers of duty and taxes on fresh and dried fruits, vegetables and several other products. Khattak also said in a currency swap arrangement, countries that buy from each other pay in their respective currency at a pre-determined exchange rate instead of trading in US dollar. This helps save foreign exchange and strengthens their currencies. "At a time when the economy desperately needs a push for growth, Pakistan can capitalise on the present situation by increasing the scale and depth of economic engagement with Afghanistan," he said. Similarly Pakistan has started importing coal from Afghanistan and government was paying for the coal in rupees and supplying it to the coal-fired power plants in different cities which should be enhanced in other items too. "The import of coal, initially required for Sahiwal and Hub power plants, from Afghanistan would help Pakistan cut the annual import bill by \$2.2 billion"; khattak added. He believed our economy is

at the crossroads in the wake of a dramatic drop scene of the US-led war in Afghanistan with the return of Taliban back to power, but in this crisis Pak-Afghan trade can be multiplied manifold if the irritants are removed and traders are facilitated." On the other hand, PBF says official from Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI) said Islamabad has once again closed its borders to Afghan apple traders. According to ACCI, Pakistan claims the reason for the ban is that these are in fact Iranian apples. ACCI deputy head Khan Jan Alokozay said Pakistan's decision to close the borders to Afghan apple traders comes during the apple harvesting season. Pakistan has on numerous occasions in the past closed its borders to Afghan produce, citing quality control certification as the problem. This time however, "they have claimed that Iranian apples are being exported under the name of Afghanistan, while Afghanistan apples are different from Iranian apples. Our apples are red and yellow, but Iran's apples are green. Also Iranian apples will only be harvested in two months' time; but in Afghanistan right now it is harvest season," said Alokozay. The Fresh Fruits Exporters Union officials said if Pakistan routes are not re-opened for Afghan apple trade, farmers in Maidan Wardak, Ghazni and Baghlan provinces will suffer heavy losses.



ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President ICCI presenting a souvenir to Ahsan Iqbal, Federal Minister for Planning and Development. - DNA

Ukraine war, PTI govt's failure triggered energy crisis

Before the Russia-Ukraine conflict in January 2022, the price of Brent crude oil was \$86.51 per barrel that has reached \$111.6 in the last week

ISLAMABAD: , the entire world is facing a major challenge of energy crisis in terms of fuel shortage and its price hike, mainly caused by the Russia-Ukraine war, which has badly affected the global economy especially in the developing countries. Pakistan has also been passing through a similar difficult situation of energy crisis. Besides the Russia-Ukraine war, the other fundamental factor responsible for the prevailing situation is the inefficiency of the last PTI government. Before the Russia-Ukraine conflict in January 2022, the price of Brent crude oil was \$86.51 per barrel that has reached \$111.6 in the last week. "Petrol prices in the UAE (United Arab Emirates - one of the major oil-producing countries) have jumped over 74 per cent since January 2022 due to an increase in global crude oil prices, especially after the Russia-Ukraine war in February," the UAE-based daily Khaleej Times has reported. The Ukraine-Russia war accelerated the fuel and gas prices globally affecting the vulnerable developing economies because supply chains, particularly those of crude oil, were disrupted. On the day Russia invaded Ukraine, financial markets around the world fell sharply,

with surge in the prices of oil, natural gas, metals and food commodities. The Brent oil price surpassed \$100 per barrel for the first time since 2014 and peaked at over \$130 per barrel, while the gas prices also jumped to record EUR 192 on March 4, 2022. According to the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the world economy would pay a hefty price in the wake of Ukraine war, encompassing weaker growth, stronger inflation and potentially long-lasting damage to the supply chains. The energy crisis in Pakistan is also the outcome of the Pakistan Treerack-e-Inf (PTI) government's inefficiency and lethargic attitude towards timely completion of the projects initiated by the previous Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government (2013-2018). According to official documents available with APP, the PTI government delayed the completion of 720 MW Karot Hydro and 1,214 MW Shanghai Thar coal indigenous power projects on account of lack of ownership, project monitoring and failure to fulfill contractual commitments on already completed ones. Similarly, another RLNG-based 1263 MW highly

efficient Trimmu project was scheduled to complete over three years ago, but it remained in limbo. The commissioning of these projects would have considerably reduced the load-shedding duration. The PTI government also failed to set up new coal-based power plants in time and deliberately avoided signing long-term contracts with the global suppliers of LNG when it was available in the range of \$3 to 5 per MMBTU (Metric Million British Thermal Unit) in mid-2020 and currently at \$40 per MMBTU. It is a classic case of missing the stitch in time that saves nine. "The existing power load-shedding is occurring due to a 300 per cent spike in the prices of fuel, including furnace oil, liquefied natural gas (LNG) and coal in the local and global markets over the past 18 months, while the Russia-Ukraine war further soared them," official sources in the Power Division said while talking to APP. More importantly, they said, the sharp depreciation of 30 per cent in the rupee value against dollar during the last one year and the ever increasing circular debt caused the shortage of working capital for energy firms. The Petroleum Division, however, strove hard to ensure

the required quantity of Residual Fuel Oil (RFO) for meeting the country's electricity generation needs, and already arranged sufficient stock of the fuel as per the demand placed by the power sector for July. Minister of State for Petroleum Dr Musadik Malik recently said due to the "Russia-Ukraine war, the gas [Liquefied Natural Gas] is not available in the international market." The European countries had reduced their reliance on Russia, and signed short and long-term contracts for gas procurement from wherever it was available in the world, making less availability of the commodity for the developing countries, he explained. Thus the incumbent government cannot be held responsible for the prevailing situation, which it inherited from the PTI government and now the whole nation is bearing the brunt. Despite the fragile health of national economy, the petrol price in Pakistan still remains at the lowest level in the region and even from those in some developed countries like the United States and Canada, despite an unprecedented surge in fuel prices in the international market, gasoline shortages in the wake of Russia-Ukraine conflict and rupee depreciation. - APP

Translate science in urdu, Iqbal advised Molvi Abdul Haq

DNA

ISLAMABAD: COMS-TECH organized a webinar on "Allama Iqbal's Perspective on Science and Technology" which was delivered by Senator Walid Iqbal, the grandson of Allama Dr. Muhammad Iqbal. Mr. Walid said that a few are aware that Iqbal had a complete understanding of all contemporary disciplines and had deep understanding of the scientific developments and philosophical debates of the 20th century. He said that Iqbal was well versed with the science and the science of anatomy and the latest inventions in the fields of engineering and technology. He said that Iqbal's poetry and philosophical thoughts are not only a combination of the impact of modern scientific developments but also contain impressive predictions on the basis of his study of modern science.

Briefs

PIA reduces domestic flight fares by 20%

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) on Thursday announced a 20 per cent reduction in fare charges for domestic flights during the three days of Eid-ul-Azha to facilitate passengers. The eid-package has been provided after Minister for Aviation Khawaja Saad Rafique issued special directives to the PIA's Chief Executive Officer in that regard, a news release said. "The facility will be available for domestic flights during all three days of Eid-ul-Azha," it added.

Mehbooba says raising voice becomes punishable act in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD: Peoples Democratic Party President Mehbooba Mufti on Thursday said that raising voice for Kashmiris rights has become a punishable act in the eyes of Bharatiya Janata Party-led Indian government. According to Kashmir Media Service, Mehbooba Mufti in a tweet said, "Of all the crimes we could commit as Kashmiris, advocating for ourselves carries the greatest punishment. And punished we are through measures like arrests, killings, raids and chance encounters so that we learn to accept abuse and not stand up for ourselves". Referring to the killing a Kashmiri youth, Showkat Sheikh in a fake encounter in Kupwara, she said he was arrested in Shopian and was being investigated in police custody while there was an encounter in Kupwara and the police claimed he was among the militants killed there (Kupwara). "For a Kashmiri to walk to his corner shop has become a risky proposition. If he is lucky he will be briefly accosted by military, but there is a good chance he may never make it home and instead make the headlines for being shot in a chance encounter," the newsletter said. New Delhi says "you never know who you truly are until your back is against the wall. We cannot stick our head in the sand. Fear is a primal emotion that will keep us stuck and turn us into zombies that do and say exactly what the oppressor wants us to." Referring to the Bharatiya Janata Party leaders' photos with an alleged militant in Jammu and the man who killed at tailor in Udaipur, Rajasthan, Mehbooba Mufti said if an opposition leader would have been photographed with "arrested militant Talib Husain", he would have been slapped with FIRs and the BJP "trolis" would have been crying for his blood. "Both men have been photographed with BJP top leadership including the Home Minister Amit Shah. Could you imagine an opposition leader being photographed with these men? They would have been slapped with multiple FIRs and BJP trolls would have been crying for their blood," the PDP head said. - APP

NHA Executive Board meets

ISLAMABAD: The 400th meeting of the Executive Board of National Highway Authority (NHA) was held on Thursday. Chairman NHA Capt (ret) Muhammad Khuram Agha chaired the meeting. The Board, as per vision of the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif approved a number of measures pertaining to the procurement process to award contracts to construction companies which were technically sound, said a press release issued here. These measures were aimed to ensure proper eligibility of contractors for construction, extension and repair of motorways and National Highways. According to the details, NHA would pre-qualify the contractors on the basis of projects and work in light of PPRA rules and regulations. Moreover, the changes have also been made in technical expertise and financial capability during pre-qualification. As per existing pre-qualification procedure, the ratio of technical expertise and financial capability was determined as 70% and 30% respectively. - APP

IPRI launches 'Readers Lounge' for knowledge access

The Reader's Lounge idea has started from the idea that the students of farflung and less developed areas had no access to library

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) on Thursday launched its most modern digital library named as "Readers Lounge" to enable easy knowledge access to researchers, scholars and students at a single click online. A launching ceremony was organised here at the Jinnah Hall of IPRI which is a dedicated library of the Institute where senior Defence Analyst Professor Dr Rifaat Hussain was the chief guest on occasion. In his welcome remarks, President IPRI Ambassador Dr Raza Muhammad said the skills of knowledge learning namely reading and writing have been bestowed upon mankind by the Almighty. Emphasising the need of modern learning skills, he said the study of religious knowledge and teachings of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) indicated the emphasis laid on education and learning. Raza said the initiative of the digital library has been taken to bring the heaps of books at a single platform accessible from anywhere in the world. "Dr Hussain Nadim has been the key person to make this effort to digitize the books come true. We have connected our library with the National Archives of Pakistan which is a knowledge hub but was an inaccessible platform to everyone," he said. The President IPRI underlined that a great effort has been done to provide library access to the students of farflung areas, adding, "initially the library will

be free for six months to everyone." Executive Director Communications and Reforms IPRI Dr Hussain Nadim said the endeavour was initiated back in February 2021 and took a year to achieve its successful execution. Nadim added that the IPRI took digital transformation steps in September 2021 whereas the institution existed since 1999 but the new thing was its new look and accessibility to the masses. "IPRI is a larger think tank on all social media platforms across Asia. It has 4,000 subscribers on WhatsApp whereas it has presence on all major social media platforms expect TikTok. It has 3.5 million views on social media mostly from India, US and Middle East," he said. The team at IPRI had developed a digital infrastructure which would give propitious results in the future. "The research material is useless until it's made comprehensible and easily consumable. Our info-graphics have gone famous mostly made on Afghanistan which are equally beneficial for CSS aspirants to prepare for competitive exams," he highlighted. He added that the initiative helped taking IPRI to the palms and cellphones of the people which was the vision agreed by the former National Security Adviser (NSA) Dr Moeed Yusuf. The digital library has been developed by small team at IPRI at a ten times lesser cost of the market value. He extended his gratitude to former NSA Dr Moeed Yusuf

who supported the project during his tenure and provided the required vision for implementation. The administration of IPRI also supported for digital transformation of the library where Director Research and Analysis Brigadier (R) Raashid Wali Janjua also provided great contributions alongwith Coordinator Administration and Finance Brigadier (R) Naveed Ali. He added the scholarly and intellectual articles of JSTOR was made accessible whereas based on the transformation vision of IPRI the digital library was the last component. "The Reader's Lounge idea has started from the idea that the students of farflung and less developed areas had no access to library". The difference between an online library and a digital library was that the latter was evolving, interactive and a smart library that aided its users, he said. He also presented a demonstration of the digital Readers Lounge which was a separate website that contains almost 3,500 books of IPRI and a plethora of other books of renowned authors. It had also interacted IPRI journals and policy papers in it. He added that it also includes historic images provided by the National Archives of Pakistan that in itself were having a story which was powerful for the researchers. There were also audio voices of foreign affairs magazines and other journals alongwith audio and videos provided by

the National Archives of Pakistan, he added. The international newspapers like the Guardian, the New York Times and others were available for free with the purpose to aid researchers. Dr Nadim shared that the messages received by the students of rural and less developed areas after the launch of the library were heartening. "We want to reach out public, students and universities to create an ecosystem of research through this library," he added. Through this example, he said IPRI tried to show that there were four things to transform any public institution that were intention to reform, ability for the vision to be big, freedom to act, and continuity in the process. The President of Pakistan, he said provided his full support for this project, adding, "the new messiah is technology and digitization that can transform any public sector department of Pakistan as the entire library has been created by two people from the technical side." Chief Guest Dr Rifaat Hussain said the digital platforms were pivotal and very important as the example of IPRI was evident that led to a remarkable institution. "There are couple of risks when the data is digitized like hacking. The second risk is that the digitization is alright but how computer literacy to be increased where people spend less than seven rupees per capita to buy books in Pakistan," he said. He remarked that

Govt notifies transfer, posting of officers

ISLAMABAD: Federal government on Thursday notified the transfer and posting of high ranking of officers. According to a notification of Establishment Division, Ashfaq Ahmad Malik, a BS-20 officer of Pakistan Audit & Accounts Service, presently at the disposal of AGP Office, is transferred and posted as Chief Finance and Accounts Officer (CF&AO), Inter Provincial Coordination Division, with immediate effect and until further orders. Waqar Mukhtar, has assumed the charge of the post of Additional Secretary (BS-21/PAS) in this Division, the notification said. - APP

MoHR, NADRA jointly start awareness campaign for transgenders

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Human Rights and National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) have jointly started an awareness and sensitization session on the 'Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act 2018 & its Rules' for NADRA's designated officers. Talking to APP on Thursday, a ministry official Reem Sharif said that the purpose of the awareness drive was to highlight the issues pertaining to transgenders rights and implementation of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act 2018. - APP

Ornaments, fodder for sacrificial animals attracting buyers

ISLAMABAD: With the sale of sacrificial animals, majority makeshift road vendors have been displaying a wide-range of decorating ornaments and fodder for sacrificial animals in various localities of cities including capital city to attract buyers especially kids. According to makeshift road vendors, decorating the sacrificial animals with different ornaments is a popular trend amongst people especially children before the arrival of annual festival of Eid-ul-Azha. "Many roads were seen full of life as craftsmen selling decorative items at their makeshift stalls for sacrificial animals", said a motorist while talking to a private news channel. Children became more excited and dragged their parents here to buy decorative items to adorn their new friends with sporting glowing colors like yellow, red and electric blue, said a pedestrian, a vendor said. - APP

Eid Telefilm: Junaid Khan, Sumbul Iqbal starrer 'Chand Si Dulhan' teaser out

ISLAMABAD: Versatile star Junaid Khan and the gorgeous Sumbul Iqbal have paired up to dazzle the audience in an upcoming Eid telefilm 'Chand Si Dulhan', of which first official trailer was unveiled recently. Junaid, who is currently winning hearts with his mega hit song 'Yadaan', turned to Instagram and shared the gripping trailer of much-talked-about Eid release along with the caption "Coming soon" and the catchy trailer was instant eye-candy for the fans as well as celebs. Previously, the super hit duo shared pictures from the set of their much-awaited telefilm, revealing the names of their characters. "Pari and Sunny", stated Sumbul along with their photos. In addition to Junaid Khan and Sumbul Iqbal, the star-studded cast includes Sadaf Aashan, Saima Qureshi and Samina Ahmed. Produced under the banner of TNI Production, the story is written by the lady with the golden pen Saba Hassan and directed under the vital direction of Furqan T. Siddiqui. - APP

New Spanish ambassador José Antonio de Ory arrives



ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador-designate of Spain José Antonio de Ory handed over the copy of his Letter of Credence to Director General Protocol Ali Haider Altaf, who welcomed him as new Ambassador of Spain to Pakistan. - DNA

Permeation of Hindutva in Indian politics concerning

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Hindutva and its various manifestations, especially its glimpses in the contemporary Indian politics had made it deeply concerning for Pakistan, said Mr S.M. Hali. He was addressing a gathering at the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) here on Wednesday. He said that while it had been several years that Hindutva had been at play, its evolution over the past decade, especially its inroads into mainstream Indian politics was rather alarming.

He added that considering the fact that the stated goal at the heart of the ideology was the formation of a Hindu rashtra with the elimination and erasure of anything or anyone non-Hindu, the attitude of the Indian government towards the minorities, especially Muslims under the current BJP regime was deeply concerning. Mr Hali highlighted several instances from recent past to establish India's blatant abuse of power in various forms. The tactics and ploys that the current Indian government was using to subjugate the Muslims in India and also those based

in Kashmir were in fact a direct mockery of the justice systems for minorities, he said. Dr Hali further added that under the leadership of a self-confessed RSS activist, the contemporary Indian politics had turned into a mirror of Hindutva-led policies and practices. The only possible solution to this, he said, lied in producing counter-narratives that were strong enough to discredit the prevailing horrors of Hindutva. However this, he added, was a long-term plan and required years of concerted efforts towards the end.

KP govt starts work on various approach roads

ISLAMABAD: Under the Annual Development Plan, the KP government kicked off developmental work with a cost of Rs. 4.6 billion on various approach roads to the tourist destinations in Hazara division.. According to a statement issued by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government, important road projects were included 15 km long Manoor Valley Road Mansehra, 10 km long Shugran Road Mansehra, Ghanol Parang Road Mansehra, Mandi Mali Road Mansehra and 12 Km long Nawazabad to Mandi Road Mansehra. Work on 11 different access road projects in Malakand division was also in progress and would be completed at an estimated cost of Rs.4.8 billion cumulatively. Important projects were also included 78 km long Marghuzar to Elum road, 6 km long Madian-Bishigram Road, Areen Daral Road, Bela Bishigram Road. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Secretary Senate, Muhammad Qasim Samad Khan in a MoU signing meeting between Parliamentary Development Unit (PDU) and UNFPA representative in Pakistan, Dr. Bakhtior Kadirov at the Parliament House, Islamabad. - DNA

Govt set to announce National Solar Policy

The decision was taken by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif as he chaired a high-level meeting of the Energy Task Force aimed at addressing the problems of energy shortage in the country

ISLAMABAD: The government is set to announce a comprehensive National Solar Policy on August 1 to provide cheap and environmental-friendly electricity to the general public. The decision was taken by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif as he chaired a high-level meeting of the Energy Task Force aimed at addressing the problems of energy shortage in the country. The implementation of the National Solar Policy will be subject to approval by the Council of Common Interests. The meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Energy Engineer Khuram Dastagir, Finance

Minister Miftah Ismail, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, Petroleum Minister Musadik Malik and the officials concerned. The chief secretaries of four provinces joined the meeting through a video link. PM Sharif directed the task force to get feedback from the provinces on the draft solar policy and stressed ensuring unanimity of views at the provincial level on the projects of alternative energy generation. Also, it was decided to shift the Prime Minister's Office and the PM House to solar energy within one month. The prime min-

ister said the government was committed to making the country self-reliant in energy generation. He mentioned that solar power was a clean and green way of electricity generation and said the solar projects would mitigate the issues such as distribution losses, power theft, and circular debt. PM Sharif said affordable solar power would reduce the burden of inflation on the common man. The meeting was informed that a proposal for converting the fuel-based powerhouses and the 2,000 feeders of 11 KV to solar generation was on the cards. Switching the government buildings to solar power

generation was also discussed in detail. It was told that in the next 10 years, solar plants with 1,000 megawatts generation would be installed at the government buildings on a BOOT (Build-Own-Operate-Transfer) basis. The meeting also discussed the proposals for B2B (business-to-business) and mini solar grids. It was highlighted that a plan to convert 30,000 tube wells in Balochistan to solar power was under consideration with a cost of Rs300 billion. The meeting also discussed the proposal to provide solar plants to individuals with a facility of net-metering. - APP

'COVID discrimination' must be rooted out

Even as the country tries to spur its economy back on the normal track, the stigmatizing of those who have been infected with the novel coronavirus has appeared in the job market. Job recruitment notices issued by local employers in some places such as Shanghai explicitly exclude recovered patients from applying for positions, according to reports. Volunteers who worked at temporary quarantine facilities are also being discriminated against. Such practices are outrageous. Not only do they rub salt in the wounds of those who have already suffered so much — both physically from symptoms of the illness, and mentally as the result of their going through the stressful experience, from infection to recovery, often isolated from their family members and friends — they are also illegal. It is against the law to deny people of the right to work, as discrimination based on gender, age, social and health status is strictly prohibited in China's Labor Law. The disdain for the legal system being displayed by some employers should not be tolerated. Moreover, there are no scientific grounds for such prejudice. Rather, after overcoming their infection, most of those who have been infected with the virus and recovered will have some protection from repeat infections. Rejecting a person only because he/she once tested positive for the virus is thus as unnecessary as it is unethical and illegal. Discrimination of any kind is toxic to society. The labor authorities must intervene to correct the wrongs of the employers who refuse to recruit people because they were infected with the virus. Such a practice must be quickly nipped in the bud across the country, lest such "COVID discrimination" percolates through society. If that happens it could further deepen the "COVID shame" already felt by some people after they become infected. By adding a sense of guilt to their stress and anxiety, it could deter them from having interactions with other people, thus causing a serious social problem given there are already about 891,000 people on the Chinese mainland who have been infected and the number is still growing. It could also prompt those who become infected but whose symptoms are mild to avoid seeking medical treatment, or try to hide their health condition or journeys for fear of becoming the target of discrimination. This would disrupt the country's prevention and control work by making the work of transmission chain tracing more difficult. Like any form of bigotry, COVID discrimination must not be tolerated.

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Talks with TTP

The civil-military huddle this week agreed to broker peace with the TTP but not on terms infringing the Constitution. As the Parliamentary Committee on National Security was briefed by the army brass, salient features of progress attained in the talks with the militia on the run in Afghanistan were discussed. During the four-hour-long meeting presided over by the Speaker National Assembly, the legislators — comprising the Prime Minister, the leaders of the house and opposition in the Senate and leaders of the parliamentary parties — were taken on board. After detailed discussion, a procedural decorum was jotted down, which says that no extra-constitutional concessions would be conceded to the non-state actor(s), and the final deal shall be subject to approval by the parliament. The talks with TTP fugitives are intentionally meant to give peace a chance, and to avoid fissures that the country has witnessed during the hey-days of war on terrorism. The decision to take the parliament into confidence was mooted by the PPP leadership, as it would not only pave the way for a permanent solution, but also buoy the military in firmly negotiating a deal with the TTP. The banned outfit has demanded withdrawal of security forces from the erstwhile tribal areas; annulment of the merger of tribal agencies with Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province carried out in 2018 through 25th constitutional amendment; and release of fighters belonging to the outlawed group and compensation for the damages it suffered. There are also reports of the militia demanding their interpretation of Sharia law to be imposed in the former Fata region. This loaded wish-list is, pretty understandably, not acceptable to Pakistan which has suffered at the hands of terror outfits and lost more than 80,000 lives in some of the most horrific terror acts in the country, including the December 2014 APS Peshawar attack in which nearly 150 innocent people, mainly schoolchildren, were martyred. Moreover, the damages to the economy and infrastructure as well as the displacement ordeal suffered by more than three million tribesmen are a national tragedy. Thus, the civil-military duo harnessed consensus in peace but refused to take in dictation on terms detrimental to national interests. This manifesto has, in unanimity, sent the right signals to impugned characters at home and abroad. Pakistan is eager for peace but it should not be interpreted as its weakness. As Islamabad had always called for a political solution in the war-torn Afghanistan, these talks with the dreaded elements are an extension of that policy. The onus is on the militias to read between the lines, and respect the largesse that Pakistan is willing to exhibit for the sake of regional peace and security. The meeting was right in conveying that it will not settle for anything less than surrendering of arms and compliance with the law of land. Pakistan has simply furthered the envelope in good faith.

History should not be allowed to repeat itself

Ishtiaq Ahmed



US Special Representative for Afghanistan Thomas West, accompanied by officials from the Treasury Department, last week met with a Taliban delegation led by acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi in Doha, but they failed to solve the financial row

war but also had to face its deadly consequences. Global apathy fueled ethno-religious fissures. The brewing conflict finally resurged to threaten international peace and the world was left with no choice but to intervene in the war-torn nation. The second instance — the longest war in Afghan history — ended last year, producing an unprecedented humanitarian disaster. The world is again unwilling to rescue the Afghans from its ravages. With a simmering crisis and sources of conflict intact, Afghanistan will descend a familiar path, slowly but surely.

The scale of its current disaster is enormous. The evidence furnished by UN agencies is stark: Over 24 million people — more than half of the Afghan population — need emergency assistance to survive. More than a million children under the age of five face a high risk of dying from starvation. The economy has contracted by almost half in the past

year and the official poverty rate could soon reach 97 percent. Last year alone, 1.3 million Afghans were internally displaced. Millions more have taken refuge abroad. Of course, much of this disaster is human-made, rooted in persistent ethnic conflict, religious terrorism and foreign aggression. But nature is also not so kind to the Afghans. A protracted drought has devastated agriculture and livestock, compounding the food crisis. Last month, a devastating earthquake also struck the southeastern provinces, causing massive loss of life and property and exposing half a million people to hunger and disease, according to UN estimates. The global apathy to Afghan suffering is writ large. In March, the UN appealed for \$4.4 billion in emergency support from donor nations. It got merely half of this amount and that too with severe restrictions on its disbursement by UN relief agencies due to Western sanctions against the de facto Taliban regime. Some of these restrictions have relaxed over time, but serious issues continue to hamper the delivery of essential food and health supplies to the bulk of the rural Afghan population. Other sources of support include the Humanitarian Trust Fund for Afghanistan, set up by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in March. Saudi Arabia has provided the bulk of this support with a grant of \$30 million. But contributions to this fund and other bilateral commitments pale in comparison to the gravity of the crisis. Neighboring countries are already overstretched due to the Afghan refugee presence. Pakistan, for instance, has hosted millions of Afghan refugees for the last four decades. Several hundred more have arrived since last year. It has limited economic capacity to help, but still does. No matter what other countries do to help the Afghans — out

of Muslim solidarity or geographical affinity — the primary responsibility for mitigating their humanitarian suffering falls on the shoulders of the US. This is where the real problem lies. About \$9.5 billion of funds from the Afghan central bank were frozen by the US and its European allies as they exited the 20-year war last August. Out of this, \$7 billion was held in US banks and the remaining \$2.5 billion in European banks. The Biden administration has unfrozen \$3.5 billion in Afghan assets, but it is yet to decide how to safely transfer them to the UN and other humanitarian organizations in Afghanistan without involving the Taliban. US officials are concerned that money meant for humanitarian operations may end up in Taliban hands if donors use the Afghan central bank. US Special Representative for Afghanistan Thomas West, accompanied by officials from the Treasury Department, last week met with a Taliban delegation led by acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi in Doha, but they failed to solve the financial row. However, in a promising sign, both sides agreed to keep the conversation going. This was the first high-level contact between US and Taliban officials since March, when the Taliban government decided to ban secondary schooling for girls. Since then, more restrictions have followed. Last week's loya jirga (grand assembly) of more than 3,000 Afghan tribal elders and religious scholars in Kabul clearly suggests that the Taliban regime is in no mood for compromising on women's and minority rights. Without such a compromise, it should forget about being recognized by the world. The Taliban leadership may, however, agree to negotiate on this issue in exchange for the US unfreez-

ing Afghan funds. The economic crisis is a potential driver of conflict and misery in Afghanistan. But once the country's humanitarian woes subside, the Taliban regime can claim international legitimacy on the basis of domestic stability. Therefore, the Biden administration must find a way to deliver the money, which belongs to Afghanistan and can provide direly needed relief to its hapless population. The best option would be to use the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the principal world institution supervising humanitarian activities in Afghanistan. UN relief agencies such as the UN Food Program and the World Health Organization have extensive experience in dealing with the financial complexities involved in humanitarian operations. In fact, the US and its European allies owe a lot more to the Afghan people. Is it not ironic that the US spent \$2 trillion in waging the war and is now squabbling over a mere \$7 billion in relief? The humanitarian disaster Afghanistan faces today is a direct outcome of this war. Yet, American commitment to mitigating this disaster is only \$772 million. The Afghans, resilient as they are for having gone through so much pain and suffering, do not deserve such a rebuke.

To cut a long story short, back in the 1980s, the US blundered by walking away from Afghanistan. The consequences were grave. Failure to learn from history this time around could push the US, and the rest of the world, into even greater danger. This is an outcome we must avoid at all costs.

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

Since 1979, Afghanistan has been a theater of two major global conflicts. We know what happened in the first instance: The Afghan people not only bore the brunt of the

than half of the Afghan population — need emergency assistance to survive. More than a million children under the age of five face a high risk of dying from starvation. The economy has contracted by almost half in the past

Munich Olympics give way to Soccer v. Jihad — I

James Dorsey

Noor said in one of three online statements that one aim of the attacks was "to create an example for the Muslims regarding Wala' (Loyalty) and Baro' (Enmity), especially for the forthcoming visit of Manchester United (MU) Football Club at the hotel

In many ways, the Black September attack on the Olympic Games in Munich in 1972 discloses little about the evolution of the targeting of sporting events by political and religious militants even though it remains to date the incident with the greatest number of fatalities. If anything, the Munich attack was never replicated in scale and drama. It introduced a post-World War Two period in which secular nationalists rather than religious militants dominated the targeting of sporting events, executives, and athletes. That may have been different if plans for attacks by religious militants had not failed or been foiled. Interestingly and more as a result of local circumstances, successful attacks on sporting events and personalities since Munich have struck a balance between having been perpetrated by secularists and religious militants. This is true even if political violence since the 1980s increasingly has been perpetrated by religious rather than secular militants. Moreover, Munich contains few lessons for understanding the evolution of political violence in the half a century since. What the record of political violence in the last 50 years does show is a shift in the 1980s from secular and nationalist to militant religious perpetrators. The record also illustrates that the targeting of sporting events constitutes a minority of the number of trans-national incidents of political violence in the past 40 years. That picture changes when local occurrences such as attacks in Iraq and Nigeria are taken into account. Analysis further shows that the deadliest attacks have been carried out by Islamists, perhaps because Islamists are more prone to embrace death by suicide while secular perpetrators maintain the hope that they may survive the attack.

be played in Marseille as well as US matches against Germany, Iran, and Yugoslavia as targets. The England-Tunisia match was expected to attract a worldwide television audience of half a billion people while the US match against Iran was already highly political because of the strained relations between the two countries. "This is a game that will determine the future of our planet and possibly the most important single sporting event that's ever been played in the history of the world," said US player Alexi Lalas referring to his squad's match against Iran. The plan, which also included an attack on the Paris hotel of the US team, was foiled when police raided homes in seven European countries and hauled some 100 suspected associates of Algeria's Groupe Islamique Arme (GIA) in for questioning. Some scholars and journalists have suggested that the failure of the plot persuaded Al Qaeda to opt instead for the bombing of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in the summer of that same year in which 224 people were killed. [iii] Similarly, purported messages by Top claimed that the bombings in 2009 of the Ritz Carlton and Marriott hotels in the Indonesian capital of Jakarta were intended to kill the visiting Manchester United team. Nine people were killed, and 53 others wounded in the attacks. The bombs exploded two days before the team was scheduled to check into the Ritz and prompted it to cancel its visit. Noor said in one of three online statements that one aim of the attacks was "to create an example for the Muslims regarding Wala' (Loyalty) and Baro' (Enmity), especially for the forthcoming visit of Manchester United (MU) Football Club at the hotel. Those (football) players are made up of salibis (Crusaders). Thus, it is not right that the Muslim ummah (community) devote their loyalty (wala') and honour to these enemies of Allah."

Five Decades of Attacks Targeting Sports

Osama bin Laden and Malaysian-born, Al Qaeda-affiliated bomb maker Noordin Mohammed Top would have perhaps come closest to emulating Black September's success had their separate plans succeeded. Bin Laden authorized a plan by Algerian jihadists to attack the 1998 World Cup. The Algerians pinpointed a match between England and Tunisia scheduled to be played in Marseille as well as US matches against Germany, Iran, and Yugoslavia as targets. The England-Tunisia match was expected to attract a worldwide television audience of half a billion people while the US match against Iran was already highly political because of the strained relations between the two countries. "This is a game that will determine the future of our planet and possibly the most important single sporting event that's ever been played in the history of the world," said US player Alexi Lalas referring to his squad's match against Iran. The plan, which also included an attack on the Paris hotel of the US team, was foiled when police raided homes in seven European countries and hauled some 100 suspected associates of Algeria's Groupe Islamique Arme (GIA) in for questioning. Some scholars and journalists have suggested that the failure of the plot persuaded Al Qaeda to opt instead for the bombing of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in the summer of that same year in which 224 people were killed. [iii] Similarly, purported messages by Top claimed that the bombings in 2009 of the Ritz Carlton and Marriott hotels in the Indonesian capital of Jakarta were intended to kill the visiting Manchester United team. Nine people were killed, and 53 others wounded in the attacks. The bombs exploded two days before the team was scheduled to check into the Ritz and prompted it to cancel its visit. Noor said in one of three online statements that one aim of the attacks was "to create an example for the Muslims regarding Wala' (Loyalty) and Baro' (Enmity), especially for the forthcoming visit of Manchester United (MU) Football Club at the hotel. Those (football) players are made up of salibis (Crusaders). Thus, it is not right that the Muslim ummah (community) devote their loyalty (wala') and honour to these enemies of Allah."

A double-edged sword

The absence of a major sports event-related attack since 2015 suggests that counterterrorism efforts have successfully degraded transnational religious militants' ability to strike. It also, at least temporarily, resolves an issue that did not pose itself to the perpetrators of Munich. Sport offers an attractive environment for recruitment and expressions of empathy for both jihadists and nationalists. Not only do thousands attend matches, but the games are also broadcast live to huge national, regional and global audiences. Jihadists and religious militants, however, in contrast to journalists, seek to polarize communities, exacerbate social tensions, and drive the marginalized further into the margins even if it is likely to alienate large numbers of fans. As a result, soccer poses an unresolved dilemma for jihadists and religious militants: it divides groups between those that see the game's benefits and those that reject it outright and sparking contradictory attitudes among hardcore activists and fellow travelers. The Great Mosque in Mosul, the major Iraqi city that was occupied by the Islamic State (IS), where Abu Baker Al-Baghdadi, who as a student was known as a talented soccer player, declared himself caliph in June 2015 was packed with men, many of whom were sporting soccer jerseys. Similarly, an online review by Vocativ of jihadist and militant Islamist Facebook pages showed that many continue to be soccer fans. They rooted for Algeria during the World Cup but switched their allegiance to Brazil, Italy, England, and France once the Algerians had been knocked out of the tournament despite their condemnation of the Europeans as enemies of Islam. "Jihadis are in some ways like any other fans — they support the local favourites," wrote Versha Sharma, who conducted the review. The Islamic State emerged in the 2010s as the foremost transnational threat in recent years and remains that despite its losses in Syria, including the destruction of its territorial base. The group embodies the jihadists' struggle with soccer and spotlights the pitch as a battlefield. The Islamic State's initial sweep through northern Iraq in June 2015 was preceded by a bombing campaign in which soccer pitches figured prominently. The Islamic State further signalled its dim view of soccer in a purported letter to world soccer governance body FIFA demanding that the group deprive Qatar of the right to host the 2022 World Cup. Addressing former FIFA president Sepp Blatter by his formal first name, Joseph, the letter, published on a since defunct jihadist website, Alplatformmedia.com, said: "We sent you a message in 2010 when you decided or were bribed by the former emir of Qatar to have the 2022 World Cup in Qatar. Now, after the establishment of the Caliphate, we declare that there will be no World Cup in Qatar

since Qatar will be part of the Caliphate (that doesn't allow corruption and diversion from Islam in the land of the Muslims. This is why we suggest that you decide to replace Qatar. The Islamic State has long-range Scud missiles that can easily reach Qatar, as the Americans already know." Many jihadists see soccer as an infidel invention designed to distract the faithful from fulfilling their religious obligations. Yet, others are soccer fans or former, failed, or disaffected players who see the sport as an effective recruitment and bonding tool. Men like Bin Laden, Hamas' Ismail Haniyeh and Hezbollah's Hassan Nasrallah base their advocacy of the utility of soccer on those Salafi and mainstream Islamic scholars who argue that the Prophet Mohammed advocated physical exercise to maintain a healthy body as opposed to more militant students of Islam who at best seek to re-write the rules of the game to Islamicize it, if not outright ban the sport. -Baghdadi and his successors as did Bin Laden embodied the jihadists' double-edged attitude towards soccer. A passionate player in his pre-ISIS days, Al-Baghdadi's Islamic State and its affiliates took credit for scores of attacks on stadia. Had the attack on a major soccer match in Europe, would have gone a long way to achieve the group's goals of polarizing communities, exacerbating social tensions, and driving the marginalized further into the margins.

Straddling the fence

The Islamic State positioned itself with its spate of attacks and letter to FIFA squarely in the camp of those militant Islamists, jihadists and Salafists, puritan Muslims who want to emulate life at the time of the Prophet Mohammed and his immediate successors. In attempting to do so, they oppose soccer as an infidel creation intended to distract the faithful from their religious obligations. They argue that soccer is not one of several sports mentioned in the Qur'an. As a result, the Islamic State joined the likes of Boko Haram in Nigeria and Al Shabab in Somalia, an Al Qaeda affiliate, that in 2014 targeted venues where fans gathered to watch World Cup matches on huge television screens. The spate of attacks emulated Al Shabab's bombing in 2010 of two sites in the Ugandan capital of Kampala where fans had gathered to watch the World Cup finals in South Africa. Anti-soccer jihadists are strengthened in their resolve by fatwas or religious opinions issued by one segment of the Salafi and ultra-conservative clergy opposed to any form of entertainment which they view as a threat to the performance of religious duties. The views of these clergymen are opposed by other Salafist imams who argue that the Quran encourages sports as long as it is in line with Islamic precepts. Twisted rulings of radical Egyptian and Saudi clergy provided

the theological underpinnings of the attitudes towards soccer of militant groups like the Taliban and Boko Haram, informed Al Shabab's drive to recruit soccer-playing kids in Somalia and inspired some players to become fighters and suicide bombers in foreign lands.

With us or against us

Jihadist proponents of soccer's utility recognize the fact that fans like jihadists live in a world characterized best by US President George W. Bush's us-against-them response to 9/11: "You are either with us or against us." It is a world in which deep-seated polarization has been perpetuated by populists, the far right, and narcissists like Donald J. Trump. The track record of soccer-players-turned suicide bombers proved the point. Soccer was perfect for the creation and sustenance of strong and cohesive jihadist groups. It facilitated personal contact and the expansion of informal networks which, in their turn, encouraged individual participation and the mobilization of resources. These informal individual connections contributed to jihadist activity in a variety of ways. They facilitated the circulation of information and therefore the speed of decision making. In the absence of any formal coordination among jihadi organizations, recruitment, enlistment, and cooperation focussed on individuals. Another important function of multiple informal individual relationships was their contribution to the growth of feelings of mutual trust," said Indonesian security consultant Noor Huda Ismail, a consultant on the impact of religion on political violence. "Recruitment into most jihadi groups is not like recruitment into the police or army or college. Indeed, previous formal or informal membership in action-oriented groups such as soccer or cricket teams, and other informal ties, may facilitate the passage from radicalization into jihad and on to joining suicide attack teams," he said. Similarly, University of Michigan professor Scott Atran noted that "a reliable predictor of whether or not someone joins the Jihad is being a member of an action-oriented group of friends. It's surprising how many soccer buddies join together." Atran's yardstick is evident in the analysis of past violent incidents. The perpetrators of the 2004 Madrid subway bombings played soccer together [iv] and some Hamas suicide bombers traced their roots to the same football club in the conservative West Bank town of Hebron.

Soccer's value to jihadists was illustrated by the histories of various, suicide bombers and foreign fighters. That was true for the biographies of Mohammed Emwazi who gained notoriety as Jihadi John, a Kuwaiti-born British national who featured in several Islamic State videos in 2014 and 2015 as the executioner of British and American hostages and his European associates. Emwazi was killed in 2015 by an American drone strike.

To be concluded

Briefs

Pakistan, France sign accord for Lahore Fort renovation

FROM PAGE 01

conservation initiative to restore and develop the site. The French government, through AFD, is pleased to be lending its support to this endeavor: The French Ambassador in Pakistan, Nicolas Galey, said: "France is proud to be part of the ambitious plan of the Punjab Government to develop and promote the unique cultural heritage of Lahore. The rehabilitation and development of the Lahore Fort surroundings will be a powerful engine of sustainable economic development of the city by increasing the tourist attractiveness of the places and improving the living conditions of the riparian populations."

The financing of the HURL project will span over 5 years. It is expected to: (i) contribute to the restoration and enhancement of the Lahore Fort strengthening its resilience; (ii) generate additional income and employment, especially for women and the transgender community; (iii) expand tourism development by including the neighborhoods around the fort (buffer zone) as an interface for growth; and (iv) build the capacity of WCLA and its partners. In financing this project, the AFD is strengthening its commitment towards urban development in Lahore.

Australian HC extends Eid greetings

FROM PAGE 01

Islam has become the second most common religion in Australia, and more than 90,000 Pakistani Australians make up the largest of Australia's dynamic Muslim communities. Their contribution continues to be integral in making Australia a prosperous, inclusive and harmonious society. The people-to-people links between Australia and Pakistan continue to deepen and grow. These links draw on almost 75 years of friendship between our two countries, underpinned by a shared Commonwealth heritage, engagement on peace and security, steady trade ties, cooperation on education and our common love of cricket and sport. On behalf of my family and the Australian High Commission, Dianne and I wish you all a happy and peaceful Eid celebration.

Pak rejects Indian Army's allegations

FROM PAGE 01

These compilations have extensively documented the truth behind India's active planning, promoting, aiding, abetting, financing and execution of terrorist activities in Pakistan. He said it is regrettable that India has chosen to present fictional accounts to divert attention from its own failures instead of fulfilling its obligations under international law and ensuring that the people of IIOJK are granted their inalienable right to self-determination in accordance with the relevant UNSC resolutions and as per their wishes. The spokesperson advised India to carry out introspection with a view to putting its own house in order.

PSB de-notifies PHF's current set-up

LAHORE: Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) de-notified Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF)'s current set-up led by its president Khalid Sajjad Khokhar. In a letter issued on Thursday, PSB dismissed current PHF set-up as their tenure ended on May 14, 2022. Khokhar, Secretary Asif Bajwa and Treasurer Muhammad Ikhlaq no longer hold PHF office. "The tenure of the office bearers has expired on 14-5-22 and no election notice/schedule has been issued by the PHF despite lapse of more than two which is in violation of National Sports Policy 2005," the letter read. - APP

Jokowi highlights importance of food independence

The president reminded that children determined the future of Indonesia. According to Jokowi, if Indonesian children are smart and intelligent, then it will make it easier in facing global competition

DNA

JAKARTA: President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) underscored the importance of food independence in aiding efforts to prevent stunting. Hence, the head of state invited all regional heads to utilize the smallest land in their territory to plant and produce food to meet their daily needs. "Do not let there be empty land. Use it for the nutritional intake of our children. (It is) because we plant wherever it grows, and we can harvest it. It is very important," President Jokowi

stated at the commemoration of the 29th National Family Day at the Merdeka Square, Medan, North Sumatra, on Thursday.

The president reminded that children determined the future of Indonesia. According to Jokowi, if Indonesian children are smart and intelligent, then it will make it easier in facing global competition. "If our children are stunted, then their nutrition is not good, their nutrition is not sufficient, and it will be difficult for us to compete with other countries," he emphasized. The head of state drew attention to the mat-



ter of food self-sufficiency amid the rising global food commodity prices as a result of the Russian military invasion of Ukraine since the end of last February.

Although most Indonesians consume rice as the main food commodity, the president reminded that the Russian military invasion of Ukraine will still

have an impact in the form of the need for wheat.

"We also import a lot of wheat. We import 11 million tons of wheat, and the price may increase," the president stated.

The head of state explained that the regions of Russia and Ukraine contributed about 30-40 percent to the world's wheat production. The conflict between Russia and Ukraine was causal to the complexity of the grain shipping route that had an impact on the surge in prices of global food commodities.

Global food prices have increased by 30-50 percent

due to supply constraints

caused by the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, he noted. However, Indonesia has been fortunate since its farmers have continued to produce food in an effort to meet the domestic needs. On the other hand, the president reiterated his government's target to reduce the stunting rate in Indonesia to 14 percent by 2024. "I entered in 2014 when the stunting rate was 37 percent. In 2021, the stunting rate was at 24.4 percent. The decline was very drastic, but our target in 2024 should be to reach 14 percent," he stated.

Tunisia's Jabeur become first Arab in major final

DNA

LONDON: Tunisian third seed Ons Jabeur became the first Arab and African woman to reach a Grand Slam singles final in the Open era as she beat German mother-of-two Tatjana Maria at Wimbledon. Jabeur won 6-2 3-6 6-1 against 103rd-ranked Maria, who aimed to become the lowest-ranked woman to reach the final. The pair are good friends but were rivals on Centre Court, sharing a long and loving embrace at the net. Jabeur, 27, will face Simona Halep or Elena Rybakina in Saturday's showpiece. The contest between Romanian 16th seed Halep, the 2019 champion, and Kazakhstan's Rybakina follows Thursday's first semi-final at the All England Club. Jabeur, ranked second in the world, reached her first major final with a hard-fought win over 34-year-old Maria, who the Tunisian describes as her "BBQ buddy" and has stayed with at her Florida home when she plays in Miami. Maria only gave birth to her second child Cecilia last year, and has defied the odds in a remarkable run to the Wimbledon semi-finals.

But after fighting back to force a decider, Maria was unable to handle Jabeur's improved level as her fairytale run ended. "It is a dream come true after years and years of work and sacrifice," said Jabeur.

"I'm really happy it is paying off and now there is one more match to come." Jabeur's story is one of an inspirational late bloomer who lacked patience in her younger days before finding the right

mentality to complement her talent. That has seen her win WTA tournaments, rise up the rankings and regularly break down barriers. Known as the 'Minister of Happiness'

in her country, Jabeur is a popular figure in Tunisia, the Arab world and Africa as she continues to be a trailblazer. "I'm a proud Tunisian woman here

today and I know in Tunisia they are going crazy right now," she said. "I try to inspire as much as I can and I want to see more Arab and African players on the tour."

On the basis of their rankings, Jabeur was the overwhelming favourite - and that eventually was borne out in a compelling contest. Both players have a similar style, keen to

play with variety, and it made for an entertaining match. After an edgy start by both players, Jabeur's extra quality shone through in the first set. Immediately Maria's serve came under pressure in an eight-minute opening game, the German eventually after seeing off two break points. However, she was unable to withstand more pressure in her next service game and Jabeur moved into a lead she would not relinquish in the opening set.

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Afridi announced as KPL brand ambassador for season two

KARACHI: Kashmir Premier League has announced the former Pakistan captain Shahid Khan Afridi as their Brand Ambassador for the second edition of the league, the announcement has been formally made in Karachi during a press meeting. The legendary cricketer was part of KPL as brand ambassador and captain of defending champions Rawalakot Hawks in the first edition. The mega cricketing event is aimed at promoting Kashmir's importance and talent at global level.

The league is designed to provide the young cricket talent of AJ&K with a quality platform through which they can exhibit their skills while getting exposure from renowned national and international stars. The addition of a Superstar like Shahid Afridi as Brand Ambassador for the second season solidifies the league's standard and brand value, as he is the face of this league.

KPL's president, Mr. Arif Malik welcomes the legend Shahid Khan Afridi on board and anticipates to collaborate with him to bring a practical change for the success of this league. While addressing to the press conference, the superstar used Kashmir Premier League's slogan #KheLoAzaadiSe as this hashtag commemorates the unity among people of Kashmir and Pakistan. - DNA

Injured Nadal unsure if he can play semis against Kyrgios

LONDON: Rafa Nadal provided no assurance that he would be able to turn up for his Wimbledon semi-final on Friday against Australian Nick Kyrgios after the Spaniard played through an abdominal injury to beat Taylor Fritz in an absorbing contest. Struggling with physical ailment, Nadal appeared close to retiring mid-match on Wednesday on Centre Court but he found the will to beat Fritz in four hours and 20 minutes. A third Wimbledon title and first since 2010 on the manicured lawns and a U.S. Open triumph at Flushing Meadows would see the Mallorcan claim the calendar slam - a feat last achieved in 1969 by Australian great Rod Laver. But there was no guarantee from the 36-year-old that he would be present on Centre Court to keep his historic bid going.

"I don't know," Nadal said when asked about his chances of playing the unseeded 27-year-old Kyrgios. "Honestly, I can't give you a clear answer because if I gave

"Honestly, I can't give you a clear answer because if I gave you a clear answer and tomorrow another thing happens, I will be a liar"

you a clear answer and tomorrow another thing happens, I will be a liar." Nadal took a medical timeout against 11th-seeded Fritz during his quarter-final outing to get treatment on the injury and said he had to adjust his game to continue playing. The Spaniard, however, considered retiring many times during the contest. "I just wanted to give myself a chance. Not easy to leave the tournament, not easy to leave Wimbledon, even if the pain was hard," the 22-times Grand Slam winner said.

"I don't know. I wanted to finish. I fought. Proud about the fighting spirit and the way that I managed to be competitive under that condition." Nadal said he was worried about the injury and he will undergo more scans on Thursday before making a decision about continuing to compete at the grass-court major. "I am used to holding pain and play with problems," said Nadal, who played and won Roland Garros with pain-killing injections prior to each match and only confirmed his Wimbledon participation after radio frequency treatment eased pain in his foot. "Knowing that, when I feel something like I felt, that is because something is not going the proper way in abdomen. But let's see. I had these feelings for a couple of days. Without a doubt, today was the worst day, has been an important increase of pain and limitation," he said. - DNA

Inflation plunged 71m into poverty since Ukraine war

"The cost of living impact is almost without precedent in a generation ... and that is why it is so serious," Steiner said. The speed at which this many people experienced poverty outpaced the economic pain felt at the peak of the pandemic, he added

DNA

NEW YORK: Some 71 million people worldwide are experiencing poverty due to soaring food and energy prices driven by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has warned in a new report. Achim Steiner, the UNDP administrator, said at the launch of the report on Thursday that an analysis of 159 developing countries showed that the surge in crucial commodity prices this year was already hitting parts of Africa, the Balkans, Asia and elsewhere hard. The 20-page report focused on addressing the cost of living crisis in developing countries. It estimated that

51.6 million more people fell into poverty in the first three months after the war, living off \$1.90 a day or less. This pushed the total number globally at this threshold to 9 percent of the world's population. An additional 20 million people slipped to the poverty line of \$3.20 a day.

"This will have immediate and devastating effects on household welfare - with those in poverty and near-poverty typically hit hardest due to their higher energy and food budget share - posing significant policy challenges to governments during the response," the report said. The war in Ukraine has severely disrupted global markets for food and energy due to both countries'

large global market shares. Before the war began on February 24, Russia was the world's largest and second-biggest exporter of natural gas and crude oil. Russia and Ukraine together accounted for almost a quarter of global wheat exports, 14 percent of corn exports, and more than half of sunflower oil exports. Ukraine's blocked ports and inability to export grains to low-income countries further drove up prices, pushing tens of millions into poverty and economic crisis.

The UNDP report said more than two-thirds of the 166.8 percent increase in natural gas over the 12-month period ending on 31 May, 2022 has been recorded since the start of the war. Among those countries like-

ly facing high poverty impacts across all poverty lines are Armenia and Uzbekistan in the Caspian Basin; Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, and Sudan in Africa; Haiti in Latin America; and Pakistan and Sri Lanka in South Asia, it noted. The economic woes are increasing protests in many countries as they are struggling to meet their debt repayment obligations. More than half of the world's poorest countries are in debt distress or at high risk of it, according to the UN.

In low-income countries, families spend 42 percent of their household incomes on food but as Western nations put sanctions on Russia, the price of fuel and staple food items like wheat, sugar, and cooking oil soared.

"The cost of living impact is almost without precedent in a generation ... and that is why it is so serious," Steiner said. The speed at which this many people experienced poverty outpaced the economic pain felt at the peak of the pandemic, he added. The UNDP noted that 125 million people experienced poverty over about 18 months during the pandemic's lockdowns and closures, compared with more than 71 million in just three months after the Russia-Ukraine war.

"The speed of this is very quick," said George Molina, UNDP chief economist and author of the report. Another UN report released on Wednesday said world hunger rose last year, with 2.3 billion people fac-

ing moderate or severe difficulty obtaining enough to eat - and that was before the war in Ukraine. There was a need for the global economy to step up, Steiner said, adding that there was enough wealth in the world to manage the crisis, "but our ability to act in unison and rapidly is a constraint".

The UNDP recommended that "targeted and time-bound cash transfers are the most effective policy tool to address the impacts." Steiner said doing so was not only an act of charity but also "an act of rational self-interest" to avoid other complex trends, such as the economic collapse in countries and popular protests already taking place in communities across the world.

Last Muslim lawmaker leaves BJP

FROM PAGE 01

Naqvi's resignation comes at a volatile time for India's Hindu and Muslim communities. Religious tensions have been flaring in recent weeks, following comments by the now suspended BJP spokesperson, Nupur Sharma, about the Prophet Mohammed widely condemned as Islamophobic.

Violent and deadly clashes have since broken out in parts of the country between Hindus and Muslims - who respectively make up about 80% and 14% of the country's 1.3 billion population.

Tensions reached a boiling point last week following the brutal killing of a Hindu tailor, allegedly by two Muslim men. With about 200 million Muslims in India, the country is home to the third-largest Muslim population in the world, following Indonesia and Pakistan.

Kazakhstan's Rybakina reaches Wimbledon final

LONDON: Elena Rybakina powered into the Wimbledon final by dismantling former champion Simona Halep 6-3 6-3 on Thursday with a clinical display to reach her maiden Grand Slam showpiece. Halep was caught in the cross-hairs of an onslaught from the Russian-born Kazakh, who pummeled her Romanian opponent with rasping serves and savage forehands to set up a Saturday showdown with Tunisian Ons Jabeur. Halep, the champion in 2019 who had not dropped a set at the All England Club since the second round of that tournament, did not help her cause with a string of double faults to hand Rybakina chances at key moments.

Yet the 17th seed needed little assistance, as she became the first player from Kazakhstan to reach a Grand Slam final.

"I don't know how to describe it but it was really, really good," the 23-year-old said after wrapping up victory to become the youngest Wimbledon finalist since Garbine Muguruza in 2015. "Usually, of course, I have ups and downs and it comes from the nerves. But I think today I was mentally prepared and I did everything that I could and it was an amazing match." The Centre Court crowd had willed Halep to get into the contest but the 16th seed was a clear second best from the start as she attempted to go toe-to-toe from the back of the court. Rybakina just had too much power and aggression for the Romanian, who seemingly wilted under the pressure. - APP

Australia consider Maxwell as spin all-rounder

GALLE: All-rounder Glenn Maxwell remains in Australia's plans for the second Test against Covid-hit Sri Lanka on an expected turner at Galle, skipper Pat Cummins said Thursday.

Maxwell, a batsman who bowls off-spin, will fight for a place in the team with fast bowler Mitchell Starc as the tourists look to clinch the series in the final match starting Friday. Cummins said he will announce the XI at the toss. "Same 12 (as in the last match), we are going to have a look at the wicket today, maybe in the morning as well and see what they end up doing with it," Cummins told reporters after having a first look at the pitch.

"The wicket may be different to last week," he said. "Last week we probably didn't need two quicks but we know Mitchell Starc's class, so wait and see." Cummins said Maxwell, who last played a Test in 2017, will come in "as a spinning all-rounder at (number) eight" if he is picked. "I thought he was the pick of the bowlers in the one-day series. He was excellent," Cummins said of Maxwell who took five wickets in his team's 3-2 ODI loss to Sri Lanka. "You feel like you can easily get 15 to 20 overs out of him." The tourists won the opener by 10 wickets inside three days with off-spinner Nathan Lyon taking nine wickets. Cummins said anyone getting a game in the sub-continent has an eye on next year's tour to India, where Australia will play four Tests across February and March. - APP

Briefs

Indonesia's forex reserves rise to 136.4 bln USD in June

JAKARTA: Indonesia recorded an increase in foreign exchange reserves in June amidst strengthening pressure on the local currency due to the aggressiveness of the United States' central bank the Fed, said the country's central bank Bank Indonesia on Thursday.

Head of the Communications Department of Bank Indonesia Erwin Haryono said the country recorded foreign exchange reserves of 136.4 billion U.S. dollars in June, higher than the previous month's 135.6 billion dollars. "The increase in foreign exchange reserves in June was partly due to the issuance of government global bonds as well as tax and service revenues," he said.

This figure is equivalent to financing 6.6 months of imports, or 6.4 months of imports as well as payment of the government's foreign debt, and is above international adequacy standards, added Haryono. Bank Indonesia sees this figure as capable of supporting external sector resilience, as well as maintaining macroeconomic and financial system stability. - APP

Tourists arrivals in BiH up 124.1 in May

SARAJEVO: Almost 140,000 tourists visited Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) in May, up 124.1 percent year-on-year, according to data from the country's Agency for Statistics. Meanwhile, the number of tourist nights approached 290,000 in May, up 115.8 percent year-on-year, of which domestic tourist nights accounted for 40.6 percent and foreign tourist nights 59.4 percent, said a document published Monday by the agency.

The number of domestic tourist nights and foreign tourist nights increased by 54.9 percent and 195.1 percent year-on-year respectively, said the document.

Most of the foreign tourist nights in May were realized by tourists from Serbia, Croatia, Turkey, Slovenia, the United Arab Emirates, Germany, Saudi Arabia, the United States, France and Austria, it added. - APP

Japan introduces up to one-year jail time for cyberbullying

TOKYO: People found guilty of cyberbullying in Japan now face up to a year in prison under rules implemented Thursday, which were toughened up after the suicide of a reality TV star who had been trolled online.

Pink-haired professional wrestler Hana Kimura's death in 2020 prompted calls for stronger regulation of online abuse.

The 22-year-old was a fan favourite on Netflix hit "Terrace House", in which six young people share a home while looking for love.

But she faced a torrent of abuse online, reportedly including comments like "everyone will be happy if you're gone". The revised legislation follows a passionate campaign by Kimura's mother, and now imposes fines of up to 300,000 yen (\$2,200) or a year in prison - increased from previous penalties of up to 10,000 yen in fines or 30 days' detention.

The punishments are contained in legislation on defamation, which defines the crime as "a display of contempt towards someone without demonstrating facts in a recognisable manner".

Justice Minister Yoshihisa Furukawa said the beefed-up punishments are intended to make clear that cyberbullying is a criminal offence. "It's important that we work to eradicate spiteful insults that can sometimes push people to their death," he told a press conference this week.

Though the issue of cyberbullying had been raised in Japan before Kimura's suicide, the wrestler's death prompted domestic and international scrutiny and put pressure on lawmakers to take action. - APP

Turkey, Malaysia to cooperate on regional issues, Palestine

"We will continue to give our best support to Palestinians. Turkey has helped a lot to aid Palestinians. We will tackle the problems in Palestine and we will continue to coordinate our endeavors and efforts in order to make Palestine a free and sovereign state," Ismail said

DNA

ANKARA: Turkey and Malaysia will continue to cooperate on regional issues, including the Palestine crisis, advocating a two-state solution, Malaysian Prime Minister Ismail Sabri-Yaakob said Thursday. "We will continue to give our best support to the Palestinians. Turkey has helped a lot to aid Palestinians. We will tackle the problems in Palestine and we will continue to coordinate our endeavors and efforts in order to make Palestine a free and sovereign state," Ismail said.

The two countries are working for peace in the region, he continued.

Known for its unbreakable solidarity with the Palestinians, Turkey has been voicing support for the Palestinian cause on the international stage for decades. Turkish authorities emphasize that the only way to achieve lasting peace and stability in the Middle East is through a fair and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian issue within the framework of international law and United Nations resolutions. Turkish officials continue to criticize Israel's policies targeting Palestinians, including the illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank and Jerusalem and the humanitarian situation



in Gaza. Among other issues discussed were the fight against Islamophobia, cooperation in the defense industry, the environment, food security, health, education, energy, communication and tourism. "We have decided to elevate the relations between our countries from the level of a strategic partnership to the level of comprehensive

strategic partnership," Erdogan said. "As Turkey, we are working to strengthen our cooperation with all our brothers in Asia with our Asia New Initiative, with a win-win understanding," Erdogan highlighted. Saying that Malaysia is the biggest trade partner of Turkey in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Erdogan pointed

out that, "Despite the pandemic, our trade volume surpassed \$3.5 billion last year." The two countries are eyeing a trade volume of \$5 billion for the year 2024, the president added. "I believe that expanding our free trade agreement to include services, investments and electronic commerce will further strengthen our economic and commercial ties. With this update, we will have the opportunity to move toward our goals with faster steps and to make the trade of goods and services more balanced," he pointed out. "We plan to put our domestic and national vaccine, TURKOVAC, into use in Malaysia, transfer vaccine technology and carry out vaccine development studies together," Erdogan said. Seven agreements were signed between the two countries on Thursday in the fields of the defense industry, industry and technology, health, communications and media. Ismail, who is on a four-day trip to Turkey, was welcomed by Erdogan with an official ceremony at the Presidential Complex in the capital Ankara. Ismail arrived in Turkey on Tuesday and spent the day in Istanbul where he met the Malaysian community and Turkish businesspeople and inspected Istanbul Sabiha Gökçen Airport, which is owned and managed by Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd.

3 injured, two missing in S.Korea's fishing boats fire

SEOUL: Three people were injured and two others missing at a fire of three fishing boats in South Korea's southern resort island of Jeju, Yonhap news agency reported Thursday.

The fire broke out from a fishing boat docked at Hallim Port in Jeju at about 10:17 a.m. local time (0117 GMT), and spread to two other vessels next to it, Yonhap quoted the fire-fighting authorities and the coast guard as saying.

Three people were rescued with serious burns and fractures to be sent to a hospital, while at least two others were still unaccounted for. A witness was quoted as saying that the vessel caught fire after exploding with a bang. The coast guard rescuers, patrol ships and a helicopter were mobilized to extinguish the fire and search for the missing people. - APP

Turi for connecting Kurram to CPEC

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and PPP senior leader Sajid Hussain Turi has demanded that Kurram district be connected with the motorway and China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) by expanding it from Essa Khel to Mir Ali to Kharlachi. "Any other route if excludes district Kurram shall neither be feasible nor acceptable," he stressed. Sajid Hussain Turi said that the Kharlachi border area of Kurram district is currently the busiest commercial center after Torkham for trade with Afghanistan. He added that the commercial importance of the Kharlachi border is 200 years old which is the easiest, shortest and safest trade route to reach Afghanistan and Central Asian countries. He said that in the CPEC Western Alignment, the route from Issa Khel through Karak, Banda Daud Shah, and Tall till Ghulam Khan and Kharlachi borders or from Issa Khel to Tall and Mir Ali from where a route to Ghulam Khan and the other to Kharlachi be included. He said that by including these routes in the Western Alignment, Districts Hangu, North Waziristan, and Kurram could be easily connected to the motorway and CPEC so that people from all these mentioned districts and adjoining areas could be benefited from the national projects equally without any discrimination. The Federal Minister stated that the Prime Minister has already issued several directives regarding the connection of Kurram with Motorway and CPEC which need to be implemented.

UK warship seized 'advanced Iranian missiles'

DNA

LONDON: A British Royal Navy vessel seized a sophisticated shipment of Iranian missiles in the Gulf of Oman earlier this year, officials have claimed, presenting it as proof of Tehran's support for Yemen's Houthi rebels in the war-torn country. The British government statement was striking in that it provided some of the strongest findings to date that Tehran is arming the Houthis against the Saudi-led military coalition with advanced weapons smuggled through the Gulf. The United Kingdom's Embassy in the United Arab Emirates described the seizure of surface-to-air missiles and engines for land-attack cruise missiles as "the first time a British naval warship has interdicted a vessel carrying such sophisticated weapons from Iran". "The UK will continue to work in support of an enduring peace in Yemen and is committed to international maritime security so that commercial shipping can transit safely without threat of disruption," said James Heappey, the UK's minister for the Armed Forces. Iran's mission to the United Nations did not respond to a request for comment.

Çavuşoğlu, Lavrov discuss Ukraine crisis

BALI: Foreign Minister Mevlut Çavuşoğlu discussed the Ukraine crisis and the issue of food security in a bilateral meeting held on the sidelines of the G-20 ministerial meeting in Bali on Thursday, according to the Russian Foreign Ministry. Çavuşoğlu and Sergey Lavrov had a thorough exchange on international and regional affairs with particular emphasis on the situation in Ukraine, the ministry's statement said.

In February, Russia launched an invasion of Ukraine. The West, in reaction, imposed tough sanctions on Moscow, providing Kyiv with economic and military support. The war has also created a global food crisis as the blockade of Ukraine's Black Sea ports is choking global food supply chains. Ukraine has accused Russia of stealing grain from the territories that Russian forces have seized since its invasion began in late February. - DNA



BANGKOK: M. Khurshid Barlas founder Chairman of Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry, had very fruitful meeting with Muhammad Farukh Sharif Trade & Investment Counsellor Embassy of Pakistan in Bangkok, Thailand and discussed feature Business and Trade prospects. - DNA

Disputed grain ship returns to Russia from Turkey

ISTANBUL: A disputed cargo ship carrying allegedly stolen grain from Ukraine has returned to Russian territorial waters, Turkish sources told AFP on Thursday, drawing angry condemnation from Kyiv. The marinetraffic.com website showed ZhibekZholy moving at least 20 kilometres (12 miles) away from Turkey's Black Sea port of Karasu before apparently switching off its transponder and disappearing from view. Two Turkish sources said the ship was heading to Russia's Port Kavkaz on the edge of a strait splitting the mainland from Ukraine's Kremlin-annexed peninsula of Crimea. Kyiv alleges that the Russian-flagged vessel had set off from Ukraine's occupied port of Berdyansk after picking up confiscated wheat. Ukraine has demanded that Turkey impound the vessel and return the allegedly stolen grain. But Russia claims to have "nationalised" Ukrainian state assets and to be buying crops from local farmers. NATO member Turkey has been trying to negotiate a solution that could preserve its good relations with both Moscow and Kyiv. It was not immediately clear what had happened to the wheat. An unnamed crew member of the ZhibekZholy told Russia's TASS news agency that the ship intended to offload the grain to another vessel so as "not to lose money". But one of the Turkish sources said the ship still appeared to be carrying the grain. "As far as we know, it is waiting (at the Russian port) loaded," the Turkish source said. Ankara has not issued an official statement about the ZhibekZholy since its arrival at Karasu last Friday. But the Ukrainian foreign ministry on Thursday summoned Turkey's ambassador to demand an explanation for the ship's return to Russia. - APP

Post-conflict period opens up new opportunities: Bayramov

DNA

BAKU: The post-conflict period opens up new opportunities for Azerbaijan and for the whole region, Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov has said. The remarks were made during the opening ceremony of the week of diplomacy 'Peace and creative efforts of Azerbaijan in the post-conflict stage' at ADA University on July 7. According to the minister, Azerbaijan put forward a peace agenda after the conflict and offered Armenia to work on a peace treaty. "Azerbaijan took practical steps in this direction and at the same time created broad opportunities for the development of the region by proposing to define borders and open transport communications," Bayramov added. Similarly, he noted that Azerbaijan has proposed a peace agreement with Armenia, but no serious progress has been achieved yet. He added that there are still groups in the Armenian society that propagate revanchist ideas. "We hope that the Armenian political leadership is aware of the existing realities. To ensure peace in the region,



it's necessary to observe international principles," the foreign minister emphasized. Additionally, Bayramov stated that chairmen of Commissions on Azerbaijan-Armenia delimitation should coordinate the holding of another meeting. Bayramov emphasized that the delimitation of borders is a complex and lengthy process. "I'd like to point something out. Armenia demanded the withdrawal of Azerbaijani troops from border areas before the formation of a joint border commission for the delimitation of the

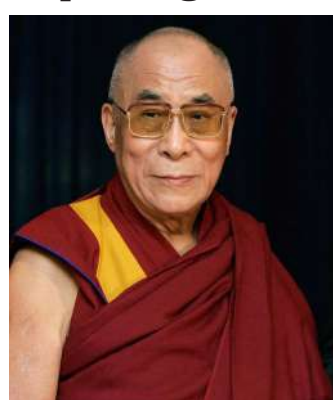
Azerbaijani-Armenian border. Azerbaijan stood its ground on this and the troops remained in their places," the minister said. The venue of the next meeting of the joint border commission on the delimitation of the Azerbaijan-Armenian border will be determined after reaching an agreement on, the minister added.

Further, he noted that Azerbaijani lands were liberated from Armenian occupation under the leadership of Victorious Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces President Ilham Aliyev in 2020. "We are happy to have witnessed these events," Bayramov stressed. A Moscow-brokered ceasefire deal that Baku and Yerevan signed on November 10, 2020, brought an end to six weeks of fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijani army declared a victory against the Armenian troops. The signed agreement obliged Armenia to withdraw its troops from the Azerbaijani lands that it had occupied since the early 1990s. The peace agreement stipulated the return of Azerbaijan's Armenian-occupied Kalbajar, Aghdam and Lachin regions.

China against engagement with Dalai Lama

Zhao Lijian said that the Indian side should also fully recognize the anti-China separatist nature of the 14th Dalai Lama and abide by its commitment to China, speak and act prudently and stop using Tibet related issues to interfere in China's internal affairs

BEIJING: A Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson on Thursday reaffirmed that Tibet affairs was internal matter of China and Beijing was firmly against any engagement by officials of any country with 14 Dalai Lama. "Tibet affairs are China's internal affairs which brooks no foreign interference. China is firmly against any engagement by official of any country with 14th Dalai Lama," Zhao Lijian said during his regular briefing in response to the US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulations to Dalai Lama on his birthday. He said that over the long term, Tibet had enjoyed flourishing economic development, social harmony, stability and the cultural traditions in



Tibetan had been well protected. "People from various ethnic backgrounds in Tibet have the religious freedom and free right to use and develop their own region and spoken language. The international

community bears witness to this," he added. The spokesperson said that the 14th Dalai Lama was a political exile disguised as a religious figure who has long been engaged in anti-China separatist activities. "We urge the US side to have full understanding of the important and sensitive nature of the Tibet related issues, respect China's core interests, have a clear understanding of the anti-China separatist nature of the Dalai group and abide by its commitment on Tibet related issues, stop engaging with Dalai Lama in any form and stop sending any wrong signal to the outside world," he added. Zhao Lijian said that the Indian side should also fully recognize the anti-China separatist nature of the 14th Dalai Lama and abide by its



commitment to China, speak and act prudently and stop using Tibet related issues to interfere in China's internal affairs. Responding to a question about details of talks between the foreign ministers of

India and China held on sidelines of G-20 foreign ministers' meeting in Bali, Indonesia, he said that the relevant information would be released in due course. He, however said that the overall situation at the India-China border area was stable. "The two sides have agreed to follow the important consensus reached by the two leaders in accordance with the treaties and agreements signed by both the sides to properly resolve the relevant issues in the western sector of our border with the principle of equality and security," he added. Zhao Lijian said that China and India were each other's important neighbours, adding, "We have the capability and willingness to safeguard peace and stability around our border areas."

Briefs

Army rescues stranded mountaineers from Nanga Parbat

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Thursday that Pakistan Army aviation helicopters and pilots had successfully rescued mountaineers Shehroze Kashif and Fazal Ali from Nanga Parbat. In a statement, the ISPR said: "Pakistan Army aviation helicopters/pilots have successfully rescued both stranded mountaineers from Nanga Parbat and landed at Jaglot near Gilgit." The two mountaineers had summited Nanga Parbat, the ninth highest mountain in the world at 8,126 metres, on Tuesday morning. However, the duo was reported to have gone missing while on their way back. The Gilgit-Baltistan government had started a rescue operation within hours. On Wednesday morning, the regional government announced that police officials and climbers present at the base camp had confirmed that telescope visuals showed the mountaineers descending from camp 4 and they were "okay".

NEPRA approves Rs 7.90 per unit increase for May

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) on Thursday approved Rs 7.90 per unit increase in power tariff for May under the monthly fuel cost adjustment (FCA) mechanism. The Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPAG) had sought Rs 7.96 per unit increase in the power tariff for the said period. After holding a public hearing on the CPPA's petition on June 27, NEPRA approved Rs 3.99 per unit increase in the FCA for April and Rs 3.91 per unit more than that of April for May i.e. Rs 7.90, it was notified.

Met Office forecasts rain during Eid holidays

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) on Thursday predicted another spell of torrential rainfall across the country on the occasion of Eidul Azha. According to the meteorological department, rains and thundershower is expected in Islamabad, Kashmir, Swat, Mansehra, Kohistan, Abbottabad, Haripur, Peshawar, Mardan, Swabi, Nowshera, Kurram, Kohat, Mianwali, Sargodha, Hafizabad, M. B. Din, Rawalpindi, Murree, Attock, Sialkot, Narawal, Lahore, from 09th to 12th July with occasional gaps. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif traveling in Blue Line and Green Line Metro Bus Service after inauguration. - DNA

PM Shehbaz inaugurates Blue Line and Green Line Metro Bus Service

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has assured to ensure complete transparency in execution of public welfare projects. Addressing a ceremony in connection with inauguration of Blue Line and Green Line Metro Bus Service in Islamabad on Thursday, he said directions have been issued to the relevant departments in this regard in order to save the money of this nation. Stressing the need for timely completion of development projects, he said law will take its course in case of any negligence. The Prime Minister expressed the commitment to collectively steer the country out of immense challenges. He said Pakistan will definitely reach its development destination. Expressing satisfaction over decrease in the prices of petroleum products in the international market, he said this will help bring down inflationary pressures currently faced by the people.

Mushahid Sayed urges US to balance ties with Pak, India

He said Asia-Pacific cannot be merely an 'American Lake' and it must be inclusive to include all the major Asian powers, particularly Pakistan and China



LAHORE: Chairman Senate Defence Committee, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, that any New Cold War will 'unacceptable to Pakistan and instead of asking us to balance our ties between China and US, Washington itself needs to balance its role and relations with India and Pakistan'. He said the US tilt towards India had led to a credibility gap in American regional policies, as US condemned Russian annexation of Crimea while it condoned Indian annexation of Kashmir. He was addressing an International Conference as Chief Guest on the 'Significance of BRI in Regional Connectivity' organised by the Punjab University. He said BRI had already delivered with 300,000 jobs, of which CPEC was centre piece with 75,000 jobs provided, making Gwadar Port the point of regional connectivity, reviving Thar Coal Project with Women's empowerment and strengthening the Federation through speedier car connectivity. He said CPEC was back on track and revival

of the Railways ML-1 Project would be the centre piece of CPEC in the second phase which will include Agriculture and relocation of Chinese industry in special economic zones. Senator Mushahid dismissed notions of a New Cold War as untenable and unacceptable to Asians, rejecting NATO's expansion into Asia as 'unnatural' as it was beyond its stated mandate. He urged for a Maritime Security policy and lauded role of Pakistan Navy in promoting Maritime Diplomacy. He said Asia-Pacific cannot be merely an 'American Lake' and it must be inclusive to include all the major Asian powers, particularly Pakistan and China. Senator Mushahid Hussain said participation in the Maritime Silk Road of BRI through Blue Economy connectivity was pivotal to Pakistan's future security and prosper and urged Pakistan policymakers to 'shed their inherent sea-blindness' as geoeconomics and geopolitics were inextricably intertwined. - DNA

Pakistan Navy confers military awards

ISLAMABAD: In an impressive Investiture Ceremony held at Naval Headquarters here on Thursday Vice Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral Faisal Rasul Lodhi conferred military awards upon Pakistan Navy personnel. The recipients of Sitara-Imtiaz (Military) were Cdre Ahmed Hussain, Cdre Muhammad Khalid, Cdre Dr Nazir Ahmad, Cdre Asim Zaman Malik, Cdre Dr Muhammad Farhan, Cdre Muhammad Naeem Anwar, Cdre Jawad Ahmed Qureshi, Capt Mahmood Ul Haq, Capt Muhammad Farhat Abbas, Capt Omar Farooq Malik, Capt Kamran Haneef Chaudhry and Capt Hamid Sohail, said a Pakistan Navy news release. The recipients of Tamgha-i-Imtiaz (Military) were Cdr Umar Ali Farooq, Cdr Majid Mahmood, Cdr Roomi Jabeen and Lt Cdr Sadia Mazhar. The recipient of Tamgha-i-Basalat was Lt Cdr Malik Abbas Hassan. - APP

Rupee strengthens against dollar

ISLAMABAD: Exchange rate of the Pakistan rupee appreciated by 09 paisas against the US dollar in the interbank trading on Thursday and closed at Rs 207.90 against the previous day's closing of Rs 207.99. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollars in the open market were recorded at Rs 206 and Rs 209.5 respectively. Similarly, the price of the euro was decreased by Rs 1.30 and closed at Rs 212.06 against the previous day's closing of Rs 213.36. - APP

ECP bans political, car rallies through revised election code

KARACHI: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has banned the organization of political rallies during electioneering for the second phase of local government (LG) polls under the revised election code. After witnessing large-scale mismanagement during by-elections, the election commission has toughened enforcement of the election code of conduct for the upcoming second phase of LG polls. The ECP also started strict monitoring of the revised election code during the LG polls' second phase. The political parties have been stopped by the ECP from organizing political rallies for the electioneering of LG polls. The candidates and political parties will be allowed to only organize corner meetings. Car rallies and independent parties were also banned. The political parties and independent candidates of instructions by the disas, the deputy commissioners election code. The monitoring teams of the ECP issued circular to the district administrations and panaflex of candidates bigger than the permissible size. Under the election code, a ban has been imposed on installing party flags on poles and government buildings. Earlier on July 3, the final lists of the candidates for the second phase of in Karachi and Hyderabad divisions for local council elections were displayed. - DNA

Israel asks KSA to let pilgrims fly direct from Tel Aviv

TEL AVIV: Israel's regional cooperation minister said on Thursday that he had asked Saudi Arabia to admit direct flights from Tel Aviv for Muslim pilgrims, pointing to a possible new accommodation by Riyadh ahead of next week's visit by US President Joe Biden. Israeli officials have also been seeking expanded permission for their airlines to fly over Saudi soil to Asian destinations. Saudi Arabia does not recognise Israel and has said nothing of possible bilateral developments during Biden's visit. Israel has also shied from drawing such links. But a person in Washington who was familiar with the matter said the new aviation deals sought by Israel could be announced around the time of Biden's visit, but that details still needed to be worked out and may not be completed in time.

Ukraine raises flag on recaptured island

Russian forces also shelled potential conquests in eastern Ukraine ahead of an expected new offensive

DNA

KYIV: Ukrainian forces raised their national flag on a recaptured Black Sea island on Thursday in a defiant act against Moscow, but Kyiv lost a main international supporter after British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said he would step down. Russian forces also shelled potential conquests in eastern Ukraine ahead of an expected new offensive. Moscow did not conceal its delight at the political demise of Johnson, a leader whom it has long criticised for arming Kyiv so energetically. "The moral of the story is: do not seek to destroy Russia," Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said. "Russia cannot be destroyed. You can break your teeth on it - and then choke on them." Johnson said Britain's support for Ukraine would continue regardless but his resignation comes at a time of domestic turmoil in some other European countries that support Kyiv amid doubts about their staying power for what has become a protracted

conflict. Mykhailo Podolyak, a Ukrainian presidential adviser, thanked Johnson, saying he had been someone who had "began to call a spade a spade from the beginning". Moscow was fast to respond to Ukraine's defiant flag-raising ceremony on Snake Island, located about 140 km (90 miles) south of the Ukrainian port of Odesa. Its warplanes struck the strategic island shortly afterwards and destroyed part of the Ukrainian detachment there, it said. Russia abandoned the Snake Island at the end of June in what it said was a gesture of goodwill - a victory for Ukraine that Kyiv hoped could loosen Moscow's blockade of Ukrainian ports. Images released by Ukraine on Thursday showed three Ukrainian soldiers raising the blue and yellow national flag on a patch of ground next to the remains of a flattened building. Andriy Yermak, the Ukrainian president's chief of staff, suggested the moment was one that would be repeated across Ukraine in the coming months. "The flag of Ukraine is on Snake Island. Ahead of us are many more such videos from Ukrainian cities that are currently under temporary occupation," he wrote on Telegram.

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