



Islamabad POST

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Phillipines' Ressa fights for the freedom of Press

Detailed News On Page-06

Sheikh Al-Issa urges unity in Hajj sermon

Detailed News On Page-08


Novak Djokovic storms into 8th Wimbledon final

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

'Heroin case against Rana Sana false'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Senior PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry on Friday admitted that the heroin smuggling case against Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah was fabricated, saying that the case shouldn't have been lodged. However, the politician while speaking at TV programme, said that it wasn't PTI who filed the case. Responding to a question about Sanaullah's allegations that the drugs were provided by PTI chairman Imran Khan and Shahzad Akbar, Fawad said that his party had nothing to do with the case. The PTI leader was questioned on who filed the case if it was not the PTI government. At this, Fawad told the anchor that he should ask Sanaullah, who has been talking openly about the matter in the Assembly. The former information minister also distanced himself from a pledge then narcotics minister Shehryar Afridi took, saying this was not the right thing to do.

Ahsan vows to revive all sectors

KAMRAN GUJJAR

JHELUM: Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal has vowed to revive all major sectors including health and education after achieving economic stability in the country within few months. Addressing media in Jhelum today (Friday), he said construction work on Lillah-Jhelum dual carriageway will be completed within a year to facilitate the locals. The Minister regretted that the previous government had cut the development budget to half. He said all difficult decisions are aimed at strengthening economy to put the country on track of development and prosperity.

Holiday Notice

The offices of Islamabad POST shall remain closed on account of weekly off and Eid holidays on Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. Therefore, there will be no newspaper on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

- Editor

Inside...

Challenges to Pak-China ties can be proactively tackled
- Page 02

Experts appreciate Uzbekistan's SCO chair for socio-economic integration
- Page 03

West presses Russia at G20 with call to end war
- Page 04

Munich Olympics give way to Soccer v Jihad
- Page 05

Russia lauds Indonesia's role at international forums
- Page 06

Indonesian envoy for promoting trade through product diversity
- Page 07

West presses Russia at G20 with call to end war
- Page 08

Amb. Tugio meets Shehbaz

Indonesia a trusted friend: PM

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif says both countries determined to explore new avenues

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia for Pakistan Adam Mulawarman Tugio called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Lahore on 8 July, 2022. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reiterated to further deepen ties with brotherly Muslim country of Indonesia, which was a trusted friend and partner. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif further said that both countries are determined to work to fully avail mutually beneficial avenues for betterment of their peoples.

Related News on page 7

It may be mentioned here that Pakistan and Indonesia enjoy excellent relations. Indonesia has always helped Pakistan during odd times. Quite recently, the decision of the Indonesian government to resume Palm oil supplies to Pakistan in fact provided a breather to the edible oil manufacturing industry of Pakistan. The decision also contributed towards bringing down the prices of the edible oil. The government of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has promised to the people that prices of the daily use items shall be brought down considerably.

Continued on Page 06

Eid: PM Shahbaz felicitates UAE, Qatar leadership

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Friday had a telephonic conversation with President of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan to convey warm greetings to him on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha. The prime minister extended best wishes for the continued progress and prosperity of the people of the UAE. Reaffirming the fraternal relations between Pakistan and UAE, the two leaders reiterated their mutual commitment to further expand and diversify special bilateral relations. The UAE president reciprocated the greetings from the prime minister and extended best wishes to the people of Pakistan on Eid. The prime minister extended an invitation to the UAE President to visit Pakistan, which he accepted.

Continued on Page 06

NCOC orders Covid testing for returning Hajj pilgrims

The govt has directed airport authorities to begin RAT for all Hajj flights from July 15

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) issued directives to airports on Friday to ensure 100 percent Rapid Antigen Testing (RAT) of pilgrims returning from Hajj. The notification issued by the NCOC stated that in lieu of the risk of transmission involved in mass gatherings, rising disease prevalence globally, and soaring Covid-19 cases in Pakistan, testing will be performed in international airports of Karachi, Lahore, Quetta, Multan and Islamabad. The government has directed airport authorities to begin RAT on arrival for all Hajj flights from July 15. Furthermore, the notification stated that filling credentials on the pass track application has been made mandatory and travellers will be required to quarantine at home for at least 10 days in the event of a positive test. The aviation division, airport management, and Airport Security Force (ASF) have been requested to facilitate the Central Health

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan logs 693 new cases

DNA

ISLAMABAD: According to statistics released by the National Institute of Health Pakistan on Friday morning, Pakistan has reported another 693 coronavirus infections and no deaths in the last 24 hours (Thursday). According to NIH data, the death toll in Pakistan remained at 30,413 while the total number of infections increased to 1,541,645 after the addition of 693 new cases. In the last 24 hours (Thursday), 21,137 tests were performed across Pakistan, with a positivity rate of 3.28 percent. The total number of patients in critical care was 165. 441 cases were reported in Sindh, followed by 142 in

Continued on Page 06



LAHORE: Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia for Pakistan Adam Mulawarman Tugio calls on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. - DNA

ECC okays major hike in gas prices
Mussadiq denies hike in prices

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Coordination Committee of the Cabinet (ECC) has approved an increase in gas prices for the residential, commercial, and industrial sectors. Meanwhile State Minister of Petroleum Mussadiq Malik denies any hike in the gas prices. The rates for domestic consumers have increased by 43 to 335%. However, there are now only five slabs as opposed to seven. The government did not increase the gas price for the second slab for users consuming up to 1 hm3; its price of Rs300 per MMBTU will remain unchanged.

Palestine envoy extends Eid greetings


ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Palestine to Pakistan Ahmed Rahebi has extended Eid greetings to Pakistani. In his message he said, "On the blessed occasion of Eid Al Adha, I avail myself this great occasion to pray to Allah The Almighty to bring you happiness and for you, your families and our beloved Palestinian people and the brotherly Pakistani people as well as the Islamic nation to celebrate Eid Al Adha next year and years to come, in happiness, prosperity and good health. May Allah The Almighty liberate our land, our sanctuaries and our Palestine". - DNA

Imran 'softens' his viewpoint about neutrals

Says 'man in Lahore' trying to 'orchestrate' PML-N victory in by-polls

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan Friday said he has no disagreements with the "neutrals", questioning why should he get into a quarrel with them. "Weakening the 'neutrals' means strengthening the enemy and only the country will suffer during this fight," he said while speaking to senior journalists. Regarding chances of him being arrested, he said that if the government wants to arrest him, they can do so. "I have no fear because I haven't crossed any red line." "Free and fair elections are the only solution to pull the country out of the crisis," Khan said, adding that when a pro-people government will be formed only then



Continued on Page 06

Shazia Marri slams PTI chief Imran Khan

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety and Information Secretary of PPP-P Shazia Atta Marri on Friday said that PTI chief Imran Khan had established "Farah Gogi Raj" in the country by sloganeering to establish New Pakistan, while terrible face of Imran Khan had been exposed in the meeting of Public Accounts Committee of the National Assembly. While slamming the PTI chief, she said that Imran Khan allegedly called his opponents thieves and now he

Continued on Page 06

UAE to run Kabul airport in new deal with Taliban

NEWS DESK

DUBAI / KABUL: The Afghan Taliban and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are ready to strike a new deal for the Gulf nation to run Kabul airport and several others in Afghanistan that could be announced within weeks. According to the details, the Taliban have courted regional powers, including Qatar and Turkey, to operate Kabul airport, landlocked Afghanistan's main air link with the world, and others. But after months of back-and-forth talks and at one point raising the possibility of a joint UAE-Turkey-Qatar deal, the Taliban is set to hand the operations in their entirety to the UAE, which had previously run Afghan airports.

US: "Too early" to recognize Taliban's govt

WASHINGTON: The US says no foreign government is considering recognizing the Taliban administration in Afghanistan, despite the fact that the group will complete a year in power in Kabul next month. "Some countries are beginning a very slow process of normalization of relations. No one is talking about formal recognition," Donald Lu, US assistant secretary of state for South and Central Asia, said in an interview with American media. - DNA

Japan's ex Prime Minister Shinzo Abe assassinated

His first stint as PM was brief - for a little over a year starting in 2006 - and marred in scandal but he made a political comeback in 2012, and stayed in power until 2020 when he resigned for health reasons

DNA

TOKYO: Former Japanese leader Shinzo Abe, one of Japan's most influential politicians in modern times, has died after being shot at a campaign event, prompting shock and condemnation both in Japan and overseas. A conservative nationalist by most descriptions, the 67-year-old remains the country's longest serving prime minister, having led the ruling Liberal Democratic Party to victory twice. His first stint as PM was brief - for a little over a year starting in 2006 - and marred in scandal. But he made a political comeback in 2012, and stayed in power until 2020 when he resigned for health reasons. Abe stepped down then after weeks of speculation, revealing that he had



Continued on Page 06

President, PM term Abe's death 'a great loss'

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday expressed profound grief over the death of Japan's former prime minister Shinzo Abe. "I would like to express my deep condolences to the family of ex PM and to people of Japan on the sad demise of the very respected Mr Shinzo Abe," the president said in a tweet. Dr. Alvi recalled with fondness his meeting with Shinzo Abe during his visit to Japan. "I recall

with great fondness, my meetings with him, [he was] always smiling," he said. The president also mentioned the sincere friendship of Shinzo Abe with the people of Pakistan. He termed the death of Shinzo Abe as a "great loss". Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday extended condolences to the government and people of Japan on the demise of their former premier Shinzo Abe. "I extend my profound condolences over the sad demise of

Continued on Page 06

Challenges to Pak-China ties can be proactively tackled

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: A proactive, solution-oriented and forward-looking approach with due consideration to changing domestic, regional, and international scenarios is required to analyze and tackle current challenges and issues in Pak-China relations, while strengthening policy communication, and safeguarding CPEC projects. The ideas were generated during an in-house session at the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), which was addressed by Khalid Rahman, IPS' chairman, Dr. Saif-ur-Rehman Malik, senior research fellow at IPS, and joined by IPS' research team and associates. Khalid Rahman gave a comprehensive overview of the current status of Pak-China relations concerning the latest developments, i.e. the BRICS meeting and the visit of Yang Jiechi, member Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and director Office of the Central Commission for Foreign Affairs China. The discussion was laid in the context of the ongoing presumptions, the change of Pak-China relation's equation, CPEC, political scenarios affecting CPEC, security is-

sues, and global outlook.

He stated that, as a preamble to analyze Pak-China relations in the current state of events, the presumption that Pak-China ties are strong, all-weathered and based on deep trust, must always be kept in mind. This is important because international policies are framed and played through such presumptions.

While discussing the Pak-China relationship, which is based on an equation of mutual support and assistance, he stated that Pakistan had supported and assisted China in a promising way on various occasions. But now, the equation has transformed, owing to China's emergence as one of the main global powers. Though Pakistan is still equally significant to China, it's leverage in global affairs has weakened for the time being.

He was of the view that the onset of development initiatives including projects, like the Belt and Road initiative, and getting more than 140 countries directly engaged with it has opened several new vistas for China. Though CPEC, the flagship project of the BRI Initiative, was started surrounding political chaos in Pakistan, its early years were a success. But the decision-making, scope, speed,

and high-level interactions got affected with the change in focus and priorities of with the changes in government, it certainly created a bad taste.

Fast forward to mid-2022s political scenario in Pakistan, while the incumbent government has strongly expressed its intent to revive the spirit as well as speed and remove any bottlenecks about CPEC and related development projects, questions on the fate of the current government and its policies may continue looming over for some time. No doubt, the increasing polarization which forms the foundation of political chaos, affects international interactions and dealings and increases the dependency on institutions like IMF, which inherently means dependency on the US, he stated.

Another issue, significant in the context of the Pak-China relationship, is the security of Chinese nationals engaged in development projects, specifically CPEC. Incidents of targeting Chinese nationals in Pakistan are naturally a cause of concern for the Chinese government and raising questions about the efficacy of special security arrangements that Pakistan has made for the Chinese companies and workers engaged in various projects here.



Govt to ensure peaceful observance of Ashura

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Petroleum Dr. Muhammad Malik on Friday said the government would devise an effective strategy in collaboration with all stakeholders to ensure peaceful observance of Ashura during the Muharram-ul-Haram, the first month of the Islamic calendar. "In the coming days, a system/committee will be formed that will sit with Interior Minister Rana Sana Ullah, and strategy will be finalized to ensure fool-proof security of Muharram processions and religious

place, extending all possible facilities in this regard," he said while addressing a news conference along with leaders of Tehreek-e-Nifaz-e-Fiqh-e-Jafariya (TNFJ) here. He assured the TNFJ leaders that all their negotiations held with the Interior minister would be moved forward and "will stand by with its spirit." He said the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) fully believed in freedom of expression and supremacy of the Constitution and would ensure that all people from all schools of religious thought and minorities living in Pakistan would exercise their fundamental rights.

Answering a question, the minister said the incumbent coalition government had a clear policy that it would make utmost efforts and protect poor segments of the society from all kinds of additional financial burdens and negative impacts of inflation. Accordingly, he said the government had devised a broader framework, under which 50 per cent of the country's total population, comprising the poorest of the poorest people, would be saved from the gas price hike. The framework would be got approved by the Federal Cabinet in due course of time. Before leaving the govern-

ment, he said, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) made legislation under which the Federal Government had no authority to change the gas price determined by the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA). He said the government was working out for the last two-three weeks how the gas consumers could be given relief as OGRA had informed it about the new rate which was far high as compared to the last year. The minister also thanked the TNFJ leaders for extending support to the PML-N candidates in the Punjab Assembly by-polls, scheduled on July 17.

Pakistani pilgrims to undergo covid test upon return

DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan's health ministry has decided to conduct a rapid antigen test (RAT) of pilgrims returning from the hajj at the airports amid the fear of the further spread of the infection. The NCO has issued a directive to the airport authorities to conduct the RAT of all pilgrims at Lahore, Karachi, Islamabad, Peshawar and Multan airports. It also asked the authorities to make sure that all data of passengers is registered in Passtrack App. In case of a positive result, the pilgrims will have to quarantine at home for ten days. Airport managers, ASF, and health department staff have also been directed to ensure uninterrupted testing, the notification read. EidulAzha, on the other hand just around the corner, Covid-19 cases have surged in the country as 693 people tested positive to novel coronavirus in the past 24 hours. According to the data released by the NIH in Islamabad, as many as 21, 137 tests were conducted in the past 24 hours. Of these, 693 individuals tested positive for the virus, putting the positivity ratio at 3.28%. However, no deaths were reported.

AJK PM pays rich tribute to Burhan Wani

MIRPUR: Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan while paying tributes to Shaheed Burhan Muzaffar Wani has reiterated Kashmiris' pledge to take the ongoing liberation struggle to its logical conclusion. "BurhanWani will always be remembered in the annals of Kashmir as a symbol of courage and resistance", the PM said adding that Wani had imbued new spirit in the resistance movement by sacrificing his life. He said on the 6th martyrdom anniversary of the illustrious youngest leader of Kashmir freedom struggle, observed on both sides of the LoC in Jammu and Kashmir State, that the Kashmiri nation will continue the mission of Shaheed Burhan Wani and other martyrs who laid down their lives for the noble cause of freedom from Indian occupation. "No power can stop the struggle of the Kashmiri people for independence", he said adding India cannot suppress Kashmiris' spirit and passion for freedom through its military might. Stressing the need for early resolution of the Kashmir dispute, PM Tanveer said that it was high time that the world should realize the fact that peace in the restive region would remain a distant dream unless the lingering dispute is resolved in line with the wishes and aspirations of Kashmiri people. "Kashmir is an internationally recognized disputed territory that needs to be resolved in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council", he added. Urging world community to help stop continued bloodshed and violence in the region, the PM said there was a dire need that the world should take effective notice of the systematic genocide in Kashmir. The atrocities in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) by the Indian occupied forces have crossed all limits of barbarism and brutality", he said adding that IIOJK was now the world's highest militarized zone where 900,000 Indian troops were stationed. He said that India's hands were stained with the blood of Kashmiris. More than 6,000 unmarked graves have been discovered in IIOJK. "India is the largest terrorist country in the world which was engaged in genocide in IIOJK", he said adding that India has issued fake domiciles to more than 4.2 million Hindus to change the demographics of IIOJK. - APP

CUI holds art and design thesis show

Rector COMSATS University Prof. Dr. Muhammad Tabassum Afzal praised work of students and said that the significance of four years of individual research and creative studio practice reflect through students work on a particular design narrative

ISLAMABAD: COMSATS University Islamabad (CUI) on Friday arranged Art and Design Thesis Show of Department of Art and Design. The show was inaugurated at CUI Art Gallery by Prof. Dr. Muhammad Tabassum Afzal, Rector, COMSATS University. 10th batch of the Department of Art and Design presented its thesis show. Students presented their thesis projects in subjects ranging from visual communication design, illustration, game design, graphic novel and animation projects. Speaking at the occasion the Coordinator for Thesis 2022, Meezan Ali Mir congratulated the graduating students and said

that this is the most crucial phase of a student's life. This year's student has set a higher benchmark for the students to come, he added. Head of Department Art and Design, Amna Hashmi said that the B. Design program at COMSATS University Islamabad has come a long way since its inception, purely on the virtues and strengths of the teachers and the students who have defined the department's aesthetics and direction through their works. Ex-Dean Department of Art and Design Dr. SamraMohsin praised efforts of the faculty in bringing forth the best out of the students and setting a higher benchmark for

the coming students. Speaking at the occasion Rector COMSATS University Prof. Dr. Muhammad Tabassum Afzal praised the work of students and said that the significance of four years of individual research and creative studio practice reflect through the students work on a particular design narrative. He said we expect our young graduates to become active leaders and responsible professionals in a competitive global industry, committed to achieving their career milestones. He called on the industry to visit the show and give patronage to the design work of the students which were at par with the

leading universities of the World. He also said that visual arts hold the remedy to various stress and mental illness through stimulative work of art. He said that designers make the world around us more beautiful and meaningful. Thanking all the participants at the event, Ms. Farrah Mahmood, Chairperson, Department of Art and Design said that Bachelors in Design Thesis is the conclusion of four years of study which focuses on extensive research and practice in the fields of visual Arts and Design. She wished the graduates of 2022, their teachers and their parents and wished them best of luck for their future endeavors. - Agencies



FAISALABAD: People arrives at General Bus Stand to leave for hometowns to celebrate Eid ul Azha with their loved ones. - APP

Police fulfil wish of 14-year-old Thalassemia patient

DNA

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's (KP) police have fulfilled the wish of a 14-year-old thalassemia patient, Shoaib Akhtar from Charsadda, who aspired to become a police officer. Peshawar Police SSP Operation Lieutenant Commander (Retd) Kashif Aftab Abbasi hosted the 14-year-old thalassemia patient at his office. Shoaib Akhtar was wearing a police uniform during the meeting. During the meeting, Shoaib Akhtar expressed his wish to meet the SSP Operation Kashif Aftab. The police officer spent time with the thalassemia patient, after which a City Patrol Force vehicle escorted Shoaib to the police line gate with full protocol. Earlier on July 6, the thalassemia patient met Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Dr Shahzad Khan Bangash. Desiring to meet the Chief Secretary in person, Shoaib was all smiling upon the fulfillment of his wish.

The Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa warmly welcomed Shoaib Akhtar "who is living his life with determination and optimism despite fighting Thalassemia since birth".

Karachi receives heavy showers

DNA

KARACHI: Parts of Karachi on Friday received heavy rainfall, causing a flood-like situation in the low-lying areas of the metropolis.

As per details, several parts of the city including, Gadap Town, Surjani Town, North Karachi, North Nazimabad, Gulshan-e-Maymar, Jinnah Old Terminal, Tariq Road, Defence View, FC Area, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Saddar, Guru Mandir, Shahr-e-Faisal, Gulistan-e-Jauhar, Nazimabad and other areas received downpour for several hours. Several vehicles got stuck on inundated roads near, causing massive traffic jams. Rescue officials said several vehicles were also submerged in the water while the Superhighway road from Karachi to Hyderabad was closed for traffic due to the current situation. According to the Met Office, monsoon currents are continuously penetrating the country and are expected to weaken over the next 24 hours before strengthening over the weekend (9 and 10 July). Under the influence of this weather system, it forecast more rain-wind/thundershowers in Islamabad, Karachi, Swat, Mansehra, Okara from July 9 to 12 with occasional gaps.

CM agreed with up gradation of PFI

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan has agreed in principle to the proposal regarding up-gradation of Pakistan Forest Institute (PFI) to the level of Degree Awarding Institute or a full-fledged University. He has directed the quarters concerned to submit the final way forward in consultation with all stakeholders to this effect saying "PFI is a unique institute, which needs to be upgraded in accordance with the requirements of modern era." "The government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will extend all possible resources for the purpose" he assured. He was chairing a meeting of the Forestry & Environment department held here

the other day. Provincial Minister for Forest Ishtiaq Umar, Special Assistant to Chief Minister for Information Barrister Mohammad Ali Saif, Secretary Environment & Forest Abid Majeed and other concerned officials attended the meeting. Briefing about the proposal regarding up-gradation of PFI, the meeting was informed that PFI was a sole institute of its kind not only in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but across the country adding that up-gradation of the institute was a dire need of the hour through which M.Phil and PhD programs in forestry and allied sectors could also be offered in the institute. Agreeing to the aforesaid proposals, the chief minister gave go ahead to this effect and said that the provincial government was fully committed to extend

all possible support for the purpose. He said that up-gradation of the institute will provide opportunity of quality research and education to the students from across the country including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Meanwhile, the forum was also briefed about the revival of Forestry Commission Act 1999, Forest Wood lot Policy and revival of the Forest Development Corporation. It was told that a draft of the amendments in rules under the forest policy was ready whereas a summary regarding Darnalak Special Game Reserve had also been moved for approval. It was further informed that a plan for the rehabilitation of Forest Huts in the various forest regions was also ready and would be presented for the approval of the chief minister very soon.

RCB completes cleanliness arrangements for Eid

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) has finalized an inclusive cleanliness plan for Eid-ul-Azha to remove entrails of sacrificial animals while 800 sanitary workers, two sanitary inspectors and 22 supervisors will perform duty during the Eid holidays. According to the RCB spokesman, all available resources would be utilized to complete the task of cleanliness during the Eid holidays, while 11 dumpers, 20 mini dumpers, nine tractors, trolleys, five Suzuki pick-ups, and one excavator would be part of the special drive. In addition, he informed eight-wheelers vehicles, 34 Suzuki pick-ups, 24 jack trolleys, and three shovels had also been taken on rent to remove the garbage, entrails of animals and offal from all Cantonment areas. RCB had distributed around 15,000 biodegradable waste bags and awareness pamphlets to the citizens, while two transfer

points had been set up at Government Denny's high school and Old Daewoo bus stand, Chungi no 22, from where waste would be transferred to the dumping stations. "All the staff will work under a control room while the residents have been directed to contact these numbers about any complaints 051-9274421, 9274422, or UAN no-111-07-07-07". The spokesman informed that the RCB had cancelled the Eid holidays for sanitary workers and officials of the department to ensure cleanliness during the Eid days. Collection points have also been established for the convenience of the public. After completing the cleanliness task and removing the offal, he said all collection points and other areas would be cleaned and sprayed. He urged the citizens to cooperate with the RCB staff and dump entrails of the sacrificial animals and offal at specific collection points where these could be removed properly. - APP

CM Hamza Shahbaz announces remission in prisoners' sentences

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shahbaz Sharif on Friday announced one-month remission in the sentences of the prisoners across the province. According to the notification, the government has given one remission to convicted prisoners in their jail terms. The remission does not apply to those convicted for murder, espionage, anti-state activities, sectarianism, adultery, robbery, dacoity, kidnapping, culpable homicide and terrorists acts and also those undergoing sentences under the Foreigners Act, 1946. The chief minister Hamza Shahbaz congratulated the prisoners and their families over remission in their sentences and expressed hope

that the relief in jail term will improve their lives. Hundreds of prisoners will get relief and several of them will be released from jails after the announcement of relief. Eid-ul-Azha festival will be celebrated across Pakistan on July 10 (Sunday), Central Ruet-e-Hi-

lal Committee Chairman Maulana Muhammad Abdul Khabir Azad announced on Wednesday. Eid-ul-Azha, also known as thime Feast of Sacrifice, is one of two Eid festivals celebrated by Muslims to commemorate Prophet Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son to God.

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Briefs

ECP terms PTI's claim of changes in voter lists propaganda

DNA

ISLAMABAD: While terming the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) claim of changes in the voter lists of the 20 by-election constituencies a propaganda, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) stated Friday that the by-polls on the 20 Punjab Assembly seats were being held on the previous voter lists. "The voter lists are frozen after the announcement of the election schedule to facilitate the preparation of the polling schemes," the ECP spokesperson said. "No changes can be made to the voter lists after the announcement of the election schedule until the polls are concluded in the constituency concerned," he added. "The statements that have been made on media about the voter lists are baseless and contrary to the facts," he stated. "This is a purely propaganda technique through which the public is being misled," he said and vowed that transparent and peaceful elections would be ensured on the 20 Punjab Assembly seats. It is to be noted here that the ECP issued the aforementioned statement on Friday after multiple press conferences from the PTI leaders – Asad Umar and Fawad Chaudhry, in which they announced to challenge the 'pre-poll rigging' in the by-polls through the induction of unknown voters into the lists. Earlier in the day, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) condemned 'baseless allegations' being levelled by former prime minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan against the commission and Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikan-dar Sultan Raja.

PM prays for Pak's prosperity

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday congratulated all pilgrims on Hajj-e-Akbar (Exalted Hajj which takes place on Friday) and prayed that the Almighty may shower His blessings upon the Muslim Ummah in general and Pakistan in particular. In a series of messages posted on social media platform Twitter, he appealed to the fortunate pilgrims who have a chance to perform Hajj-e-Akbar, to offer special prayers for humanity and to seek relief from the miseries. PM Sharif said this was a blessed occasion to pray for the prosperity of mankind and its deliverance from epidemics and diseases. He prayed to Allah Almighty for the freedom of the occupied Palestine and Kashmir to save the oppressed people. "May Allah Almighty bring Pakistan out of its debt situation with the blessings of Hajj-e-Akbar and grant us economic self-reliance," he said. He also urged the nation to offer special prayers for elevation in the ranks of martyrs. There are several lawmakers who are performing Hajj this year, including seven members of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and the Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q).

IGP pays surprise visit to Security Division

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan paid a surprise visit to the administration block and different branches of the security division. He said that IGP Islamabad along with DIG (Security) Hassan Raza checked the cleanliness of the administration block and different branches. The IGP suspended Reader of SP Diplomatic, Sub-Inspector Tariq Mahmood due to lack of sanitation, cleanliness and for not maintaining official record while ASI Muhammad Ashraf was suspended for not wearing proper uniform. The IGP also sought explanations from DSP Diplomatic Farooq Niazi and the staff officer of SP Diplomatic.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Italy Andreas, CEO Monal Group Luqman Ali Afzal, Editor daily Islamabad POST / Centreline Ansar M Bhatti and others posing for a picture on the occasion of National Day of Egypt. – DNA

Indigenous resources key to solving energy crisis

'Energy security is essential because the kind of disruption we have seen is a potential threat to our economic well-being'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: "We should focus on all the energy resources that can be produced on our land," said Minister of State for Petroleum Musadik Masood Malik while taking to Gwadar Pro, adding that utilisation of indigenous resources is the key to solving Pakistan's energy crisis over the long haul. According to Gwadar Pro, Pakistan's energy sector is again hanging in balance due to inefficiencies, burgeoning circular debt, massive dependence on imported fossil fuels, and the rise in global fuel prices. It's not the first time that Pakistan was stuck in an energy crisis. What is worse, it is facing high power shortages after the demands owing to the summer months have increased rapidly as compared with the total electricity generation. "Energy security is essential because the kind of disruption we have seen is a potential threat to our economic well-being."

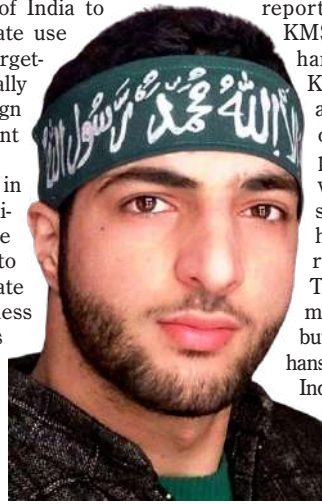
Exploration of the more indigenous and renewable resources is the key to energy security," pinpointed Pakistan Economic Survey 2021-22. Responding to this, the minister said, "the problem we are facing in Pakistan at the moment is that we have to import fuel on which most of our power plants run. This import puts a heavy burden on our treasury, on our external sector, and also on the rupee which depreciates." That is why the government is considering a fundamental transformation of the energy system to achieve sustainable development. That remains to be tested, though. As per the Survey, historically Pakistan's economic growth is constrained by bottlenecks in the energy sector. Pakistan's energy requirements are increasing and demand for energy in the coming decades will rise substantially. Energy demand on this scale will put increasing pressure on energy resources and distribution networks. This is unsustainable without a fundamental transformation of the energy system. Dependence on the dominant fossil energy resources, especially oil is risky. The minister noted that the government has been endeavoring to bring in transformational changes in power system by exploring alternate sources of energy in the country. Government is also focusing on renewable sources of energy to make access to energy affordable. The exploration of alternate and renewable sources of energy will also help ensure energy security and sustainability, he added. For example, consumers are using solar panels on a small scale without the support of the government, which should allocate funds out of the subsidy allocation in the budget. Therefore, Musadik Masood Malik explained, the PM constituted a task force on solar energy initiatives with a vision to promote sustainable and green energy. Members of the task force included officials from

different ministries and departments. Under the initiative, the government is working on a comprehensive solar energy package comprising tax waivers and concessionary loans for consumers in a bid to overcome the prolonged power outages that have stalled life in the country. The solar package will also include a short-term plan for shifting government offices to solar energy. It involves preparation of a plan for helping small consumers switch over to solar energy with the help of subsidy or concessionary loans. "If solar is installed on every roof, those who suffer from heat and load shedding can generate their own electricity at least for the whole day; and if some surplus electricity is generated, they can sell it to the grid," Musadik Masood Malik further suggested. Again he highlighted, "like, where we have wind corridors, we can also set up wind-mills. We should rely on indigenous resources rather than on imported fuel."

Pakistan marks 6th anniversary of Wani

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The government and people of Pakistan on Friday paid strong tribute to the life and legacy of Kashmiri youth Burhan Wani for his selfless contribution for his Kashmiri brethren to attain their inalienable right to self-determination. "While paying homage to Burhan Wani as the face of the indigenous Kashmir freedom movement, Pakistan once again urges the government of India to desist from indiscriminate use of force and relentless targeting of Kashmiris especially the youth," the Foreign Office said in a statement issued here. The Foreign Office said in a statement said, "Pakistan once again urges the government of India to desist from indiscriminate use of force and relentless targeting of Kashmiris especially the youth." The FO said Pakistan also urged the international community to play its due role for a just and peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions and the will of the Kashmiri people.



On the other hand, the Kashmiris have observed the 6th martyrdom anniversary of popular youth leader, Burhan Muzaffar Wani as Resistance Day Friday. Burhan Wani, along with two other associates, was killed by Indian troops during a fake encounter in Kokernag area of Islamabad district on this day in 2016., said a report released by the KMS, today. It said Burhan Wani is the face of Kashmiris' resistance against India's illegal occupation and the people of Kashmir will continue his mission as he lives in the hearts of the Kashmiri people. The report said that India martyred Burhan Wani but thousands of Burhans emerged, adding that India could snatch Burhans physically, but it can't kill the freedom sentiment of the Kashmiri people.

Burhan Wani an icon of Kashmiris' struggle: PM

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday termed martyred Kashmiri youth Burhan Muzaffar Wani as a symbol of Kashmiris' courageous resistance against the Indian occupation. On the sixth martyrdom anniversary of Wani, the prime minister paid tribute to him and said the Indian troops in Occupied Kashmir unjustifiably tortured Wani and forced him to pick guns instead of education. PM Sharif said Burhan Wani was the dear son of a Kashmiri mother who used to teach Holy Quran and of a teacher father who taught students. He said Wani had written a chapter of great sacrifice against the illegal occupation of India and added that even 0.9 million troops could not deter the commitment of such brave sons of soil. The prime minister said for over 70 years, the courageous Kashmiri people were struggling for their right to self-determination. – APP

ICTP chalks out comprehensive security plan for Eid-ul-Azha

2500 police personnel deployed to guard Eid prayer

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The capital police has chalked out a comprehensive security plan to maintain peace and tranquility in the district on the eve of Eid-ul-Azha, a police public relations office said. He said that following special orders of the IGP Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan a comprehensive security plan for Eid Ul Azha prayer has been issued. According to the security plan, more than 1000 police personnel including 4 SPs, 11 ASP/DSPs will shield Eid prayers to be offered in 1032 mosques and 28 imam bargahs which have been categorized according to their sensitivity. Likewise, more than 100 police personnel will be deployed at Faisal Mosque to provide security cover to the devotees. All the mosques, imam bargahs, religious places, public parks and other important places would be provided maximum security on Eid adding that DIG Operations Sohail Zafar Chatha will monitor all the security arrangements in the city while all security will also be monitored through safe city cameras and special police squads. Likewise, 800 personnel of Eagle squad will be deputed in the city for patrolling at all public and sensitive places while more than 150 personnel of special branch will do their duties during Eid prayer. Similarly, 278 traffic officials including one SP and 04 DSPs are deployed to maintain traffic flow in the city.

Bike lifter arrested; four stolen motorcycles recovered

RAWALPINDI: Police have arrested a bike lifter and recovered four stolen motorcycles from his possession. According to a police spokesman, a team under the supervision of SHO, Sadiqabad Police Station managed to net an accused namely Muzamil who was a bike lifter, street criminal and allegedly involved in several cases registered in different police stations. Police recovered four stolen motorcycles and other items from his possession. A case has been registered against the accused while further investigation is underway, he added. Superintendent of Police, Rawal Babar Javed Joya appreciated police team and directed to net the accomplices and facilitators of the bike lifter and street criminal. He also directed the police officers to accelerate the ongoing operation against car and bike lifters and street criminals. – APP

Diabetes harm main organs: Renowned Physicians

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Renowned General Physicians and Diabetologists of twin cities gather here at a local Hotel in Rawalpindi to hear an exclusive talk of Dr Asjad Hameed, Chairman, The Diabetes Centre, senior Diabetologist and Endocrine specialist on 'Limbs for Life'. The session was organized by a national leading pharmaceutical. While giving his talk, Dr Asjad apprised the participants of a continuous rise in number of patients with diabetes in Pakistan. 'Pakistan has 33 million people with diabetes at the moment and ranks third in world' Dr Asjad said while quoting statistics from International Federation of Diabetes – IDF Diabetes harm main organs of body as heart, brain, eyes, limbs. 'In worst case scenario, patient limbs have to be amputated making him or her crippled and burden' Dr Asjad Hameed said he is waging a war against this menace for last a decade. He urged upon Federal Minister of Health to make 'Control diabetes' a national debate and take concrete measures to tackle this life threatening menace.

HEC asks students to submit data online

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistani students, who had failed to return to China for the completion of their courses following lifting of the coronavirus-related restrictions, have now returning to the country thanks to the policy of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) under which they have been asked to get themselves registered for the purpose online. The first batch of students has already arrived in China. The HEC has directed the students to upload their exact data by July 21, 2022 which will then be shared with the Chinese authorities in order to expedite their return to their universities.

10 air quality index devices installed at highways

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police have installed 10 air quality index measurement meters at main avenues of the city with an aim to reduce air pollution by ensuring strict action against smoke emitting vehicles, a police public relations officer said. To implement the vision of the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Mian Shahbaz Sharif and as per instructions of the Federal Minister for Interior Rana Sanaullah Khan, reforms in Islamabad capital police is underway.

China-Pak AI co-op to boost chronic disease screening

Faced with the increasingly serious disease burden in Pakistan, advanced medical technology is an inevitable solution at present

DNA

ISLAMABAD: China-Pakistan medical AI cooperation to boost local chronic disease screening, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday. Later, at the first international "Medical Conference and Exhibition for Next Generation Healthcare" held in Islamabad, Chinese medical AI leader Airdoc Technology and Pakistan's well-known medical device import and distribution company Dynamic Medical Company (DMC) officially signed a cooperation agreement to work together to promote the application of Airdoc retinal imaging AI products in Pakistan. Special Technology Zones Authority Chairman Amer Hashmi, ex-Surgeon General of Pak Army, Lt-Gen (r) Asif Mumtaz Sukhera, Health Services Academy VC Prof Dr Shahzad Ali Khan, former Ambassador to China Ms Naghmuna A Hashmi, Advisor to GoP on Health Dr Ghazna Khalid, and numerous other professionals from public health sector attended the conference.

One of the major objectives of this conference was sensitizing the participants, the general public and the government to hereditary or genetic disorders, its timely diagnosis and available treatments. In his speech HAS VC Dr Khan said that Pakistan is ranked among the countries having high alert of genetic disorders, adding that majorly the increased incidence and prevalence of the genetic disorders are associated with lack of pre-natal testing facilities in the country. "Faced with the increasingly serious disease burden in Pakistan, advanced medical technology is an inevitable solution at present." Experts such as Ms Hashmi, former Pakistani ambassador to China, agreed that pre-marital testing and counseling in Pakistan's health care system will effectively relieve the heavy burden of genetic diseases through technological intervention. Initiating research evidence-based interventions for genetic diseases in Pakistan will open another dimension of trade i.e. Pak-China Health Corridor. At the meeting, Yang Yaqun, representa-

tive of Airdoc's overseas business department, gave a keynote speech on "Artificial Intelligence Solutions for Early Screening of Chronic Diseases", introducing that a series of chronic diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, coronary heart disease has a genetic predisposition. The retina is the only part of the human body that can directly observe blood vessels and nerves non-invasively, thus by observing the subtle changes of blood vessels and nerves on the retina, people can glimpse the clues of more than 200 common chronic diseases. The application of AI technology has made this test, which has a solid medical theoretical foundation, more efficient and accessible, making large-scale early screening of chronic diseases possible. The reporter learned that Airdoc will promote a portable fundus camera in Pakistan, which looks like a VR glasses, is very convenient to carry, and can be driven by ordinary power banks. After the user completes retinal photography according to the voice

prompt, it only takes about 1 minute to receive an assessment report containing dozens of health risks. The product has been applied to domestic and foreign medical, general health, eye health management and other scenarios, serving over 10 million users. If the product can be promoted to the medical and health system of Pakistan, it will be beneficial for the early prevention of local related diseases. It is worth mentioning that DMC in institutional collaboration with the Health Services Academy (HSA) and their Chinese partners plans to set up a Genetic Reference Laboratory and Research Center for genetic disorders in Islamabad. CEO, DMC, Mr. Owais Mir mentioned during the closing remarks that this conference will create an enabling environment for all medical technology-based research and innovation in Pakistan and this is only the beginning. More awareness on mass level coupled with federal govt.'s support will bring plan to action in the form of genetic labs, DNA sequencing interventions, data mining and more.

Democracy and messy politics in West

THE UK and the US have recently been overwhelmed by waves of political turmoil, and various negative events in political circles have been frequently reported. The event that has grabbed the most attention is UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Thursday agreeing to resign after a wave of staffers quit their posts. The no-confidence vote among Conservatives in early June suggested that Johnson has become very unpopular in his own party. Resignations from more than 50 ministers in recent days indicate he has become utterly isolated. "Another important trigger is his poor performance in diplomacy, especially the increasingly tense UK-EU relations, and improper handling of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, which has resulted in soaring inflation. Complaints about Johnson among ordinary British can be heard everywhere. His internal and external difficulties are the fundamental cause of his decision to resign," said Song Zhongping, a Chinese military expert and TV commentator. In the US, Britain's closest ally, some politicians are still focusing on the 2020 election results. A grand jury investigation into Donald Trump's efforts to overturn the 2020 election in Georgia is still ongoing. The Republican Party of Texas in June adopted a resolution that rejects President Joe Biden as the winner of the 2020 election. The direct trigger of the current political chaos in Britain and the US is the incompetence of its elected leaders, which has drawn widespread criticism from the public and officials. But their plight cannot be addressed by changing their leaders, as the root of the mess is structural. On a global scale, a rising East and falling West has been an unstoppable trend. The West represented by the UK and the US is indeed on the decline, and the decline in quality of their leaders is just a manifestation of this. Furthermore, their so-called democratic political system also plays a big role in creating the political chaos both countries are seeing. "The primary problem in their system is political parties taking turns in power. In this system, the relations between the parties are not cooperative, but cut-throat," Song said, "In many internal and domestic affairs, the parties even set traps for each other, resulting in these affairs ending in a mess and becoming unresolvable." Once elected, the ruling party tends to break promises they made to voters during election campaigns. As an inevitable consequence, the public in the UK and US have lost confidence in their leaders. Democracy in itself is a good thing. It is one of the universal core values and principles for all human beings. But the democracy of the UK and the US is a bad thing. Their democratic practice is a mess, resulting in democracy being marred beyond recognition. The US vigorously promotes itself as a "beacon of democracy," an example worthy of emulation by other countries. This is just a narrative Washington has fabricated to consolidate its hegemony and leadership across the world, which is being proved to be increasingly absurd through its own practice. Democratic practices in the US and the UK have tarnished the name of democracy and disappointed people's expectations of it. It is democratic practice filled with confusion and risk.

Munich Olympics give way to Soccer v. Jihad: P-2

James Dorsey

Turkish-American soccer blogger John Blasing said the fan disrespect represented "a nationalist/Islamist undercurrent within Turkish society that has occasionally raised its head with disastrous consequences, and one that now wants to equate...

POLITICAL Grievances V. Religiosity: The jihadist dilemma posed by soccer as a recruitment and bonding tool on the one hand and a convenient target on the other was symbolized by expressions in stadia of the appeal of jihadist groups like the Islamic State that reflects more often than not domestic political grievances or a conspiratorial worldview rooted in puritan interpretations of Islam such as Wahhabism rather than an ideological commitment to jihadism. The dichotomy was evident when Turkish fans twice in late 2015 disrupted moments of silence for victims of Islamic State attacks in Ankara and Paris. Boos and jeers were also heard during a minute's silence in Dublin at a Euro 2016 play-off between Ireland and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The interruptions demonstrated the kind of intolerance bred by religiously-cloaked authoritarianism in countries like Turkey and Saudi Arabia that fails to ensure that all segments of society have a stake in the existing order. The Turkish fans shouting of Allahu Akbar, God is Great, during moments of silence at the beginning of two soccer matches represented more than simple identification with the jihadist group or evidence of a substantial support base in Turkey. It signalled a shift in attitudes among some segments of Turkish society as a result of 12 years of rule by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, one of modern Turkey's most important leaders that increasingly has been infused with notions of 'us' and 'them.' In Turkey, them often refers to Kurds, who account for up to 23 per cent of the population. Kurds were prominent among the 102 victims in Ankara in October 2015 and an earlier Islamic State attack in July of that year in the south-eastern Turkish town of Suruc. The Suruc attack sparked renewed hostilities between the Turkish military and the insurgent Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which has waged a low-intensity war in southeast Turkey since 1984 in which tens of thousands have died. Erdogan's polarization persuaded Diyarbakir Büyükşehir Belediyesi, the Kurdish club in Diyarbakir, a city that is viewed as the capital of Turkey's predominantly Kurdish southeast, to change its name in 2015 to Amed. Amed is the long-banned Kurdish name of Diyarbakir. The club also adopted as its identity the colours of the Kurdish flag, yellow, red, and green of the Kurdish flag. The move constituted part of Kurdish resistance to long-standing restrictions on the use of their languages and expressions of ethnic or national identity. The Turkish fan's provocative disrespect for innocent victims of political violence resembled tweets by conservative followers of Wahhabism, Saudi Arabia's austere interpretation of Islam described by dissident Saudi scholar Mad-

awi Al-Rasheed as "militarized religious nationalism." On Twitter, these Saudis projected the downing of a Russian airliner in 2015 and that year's attacks in Paris, including a stadium, as legitimate revenge for atrocities committed by French colonial rule in Algeria and Russia in its wars in Afghanistan, Chechnya and Syria. Turkish fan disrespect for the victims of IS violence "reflects an alarming sense of estrangement from the victims and the communities to which they belong. This lack of empathy could well stem from the callousness of excluding 'the other' (and possibly lead to one's own sense of exclusion being transformed into radical hostility expressed in violent action) ... The whistles and chants, which continued during the Greek national anthem, demonstrate how Turkey's political culture has changed since President Erdogan's Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power in 2002," said Al-Monitor columnist Kadir Gursel. Supporters of Nacacillir Konyaspor, a club in the conservative Anatolian city of Konya, expressed that sense of estrangement in their justification of their disruption of the honouring of the victims during a soccer match. They published a video on their Facebook page that asserted "the moment of silence was not allowed in Konya." It described the Ankara victims who died while participating in a peace march as "peace-loving traitors." Like many incidents of expression of sympathy for jihadism or jihadist activism, the Turkish soccer manifestations are shrouded in controversy that stems from governments in various Islamic countries viewing the militants as a force to be utilized for their own political purposes rather than a reflection of societal problems that need to be addressed. In the case of Turkey, which has long been accused of turning a blind eye to the Islamic State in the hope that it would check the revival of Kurdish nationalism in neighbouring Syria, Cumhuriyet newspaper reported that the youth wing of Erdogan's ruling party whose members had been granted free access to the stadium had instigated the booing of a moment of silence for the 130 victims of the Paris attacks at the beginning of a match in Istanbul. Two of Cumhuriyet's top journalists were indicted in November 2015 on charges of espionage for disclosing that trucks belonging to the Turkish intelligence agency MIT had been used to ferry weapons to Islamist opposition groups in Syria. Turkish-American soccer blogger John Blasing said the fan disrespect represented "a nationalist/Islamist undercurrent within Turkish society that has occasionally raised its head with disastrous consequences, and one that now wants to equate all Kurds and leftists with the labels 'terrorists' and 'traitor.' It is, for lack of a better term, a dangerous latent Islamo-fascism lying just beneath the surface of Turkish society. It is the same undercurrent that expresses itself in the Turkish state's ambivalence towards ISIS," a reference to the Islamic State's former name. The alleged government connection to the Turkish incidents like a French decision in the wake of the Paris attacks to temporarily ban fans from travelling to their team's away from home matches recognized the mobilization aspect of the sport that jihadist leaders see. French fears were grounded in a degree of alienation among segments of youth with an immigrant background that has prompted them to refuse to support the French national team in a manifestation of their sense that there is no equal place for them in French society. French fears were also rooted in a history of immigrant soccer violence irrespective of whether the French team wins or not dating back to France's winning of the World Cup in 1998 with a team that brought together a generation of players who all had their origins outside France and was widely seen as a symbol of successful French integration of minorities. Days earlier, police in France and four other European countries had arrested 100 people of Algerian descent associated

with the Groupe Islamique Arme (GIA), a militant Islamist group fighting in Algeria's civil war in the 1990s that left at least 100,000 people dead. Eleven years later, some 12,000 youths of Algerian descent poured into Paris Champs Elysees for celebrations to celebrate Algeria's defeat of Egypt in the Sudanese capital of Khartoum rather than support France which was preparing for a crucial World Cup qualifier against Ireland. The celebrations degenerated into clashes with police prompting a student to tell Andrew Hussey, a scholar who has charted French-North African relations and the soccer politics of French communities of North African origin: "I can't believe it. I've never seen anything like it. It's not just about football. It has to be about something else." Hussey argued that the riots were not simply about perceived racism in France but harked back to French colonial rule that viewed Algeria as an integral part of France but treated Algerians as second-class citizens. It is those societal divisions that the Islamic State targeted with its attack on the Stade de France and its alleged plots in Germany. In doing so, the group was seeking to exploit a perception of prejudice, discrimination and abandonment that stretches far beyond France and is not restricted to communities that feel disenfranchised and hopeless. Ironically, that may have failed with French and other Muslims far more assertive in their condemnation of the Paris attacks than of the assault in January 2015 on French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo and a Jewish supermarket. However, mixed with the abhorrence felt by French Muslims at the carnage in Paris was a sense among many soccer fans that Muslims are being stereotyped and targeted whether at home or in countries far and near. That sense evident across Europe is reinforced by Europe's military and law enforcement-focused response to jihadism and Islamist militancy. Said a French taxi driver of Algerian descent who supports Paris Saint-Germain: "Nothing justified what happened. These people are beasts. But France and others can't go round the world bombing countries and leaving ordinary people to pick up the pieces. It's logical that there would be a reaction. This, however, was not the way to do it." The blurry lines between hardcore jihadists and soccer fans for whom the Islamic State constitutes primarily a symbol of resistance as well as the mix of rejection and a degree of empathy were also evident in a one-minute video clip on YouTube that left little doubt about support for IS among supporters of storied Moroccan soccer club Raja Club Athletic. A video clip on the Internet showed fans of the Casablanca club that prides itself on its nationalist credentials dating back to opposition to colonial French rule and its reputation as the team of ordinary Moroccans chanting: "Daesh, Daesh," the Arabic acronym for Islamic State and "God is Great, let's go on jihad." The clip appeared to reaffirm the Islamic State's widespread emotional appeal to a segment of youth across the Middle East and North Africa rather than a willingness to actually become a foreign fighter in Syria or Iraq. "We have a high rate of unemployment. Young people want politicians to think about them... Some of them can't understand... They are too impatient," Moncef Mazrouki, the former president of Tunisia, the Arab country with the largest number of Arab foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq, said in an interview with Al Jazeera. While Raja Athletic's management failed to respond to the video on its official website and Facebook page that has more than 3.1 million followers, supporters of the club sought to minimize the clip's significance. Writing on their Facebook page with its 118,830 likes, supporters quipped: "We are terrorists... Our goal is to bomb other clubs. We do not want land or oil, we want titles" below a mock picture of Islamic State fighters with the inscription, "Raja's Volunteer Championship." The supporters asserted elsewhere on their Facebook page that "we will not

start to argue and beg people to believe that this is a sarcastic action and a joke." Some supporters dismissed the video as a public relations stunt. They insisted that they were demanding reform, not radical change. To emphasize the point, the supporters posted two days after the appearance of the video an image of Osama Bin Laden with the words: "Rest in Pieces Motherf*****." The Islamic State's appeal as a symbol for Moroccan youth is rooted in the gap in perceptions of King Mohammed VI. The monarch, unlike most of the region's rulers, neutralized anti-government protests in 2011 by endorsing a new constitution that brought limited change but kept the country's basic political structure in place. As a result, foreign media have described Mohammed VI as the King of Cool. Moroccans however have seen little change in their economic, social and political prospects while journalists and activists face increased repression.

Conclusion
The 1972 Black September attack on the Olympic Village in Munich represents an era of political violence that has been superseded by religious militancy. Militants in the 1970s and the 1980s were driven by secular nationalist grievances and aspirations. Perpetrators of political violence saw their actions as a way to force governments and international public opinion to pay attention and recognize the legitimacy of their cause. They accepted the risk of dying but retained hope that they would survive the attacks they carried out. Arguably, Palestinian attacks in Israel, Europe and elsewhere and the hijacking of aeroplanes moved their aspirations centre stage. By contrast, jihadist perpetrators of political violence that targets sports were seeking to exploit existing societal wedges and aggravate social tensions to attract frustrated Muslim youth and converts. Osama bin Laden's 9/11 attacks succeeded in undermining multi-cultural policies in relatively ethnically and religiously homogeneous European societies that struggled with migration from other continents, ethnicities, and religious backgrounds. In doing so, the attacks reshaped global politics and attitudes towards large numbers of people fleeing political and economic collapse as "the other"—instead of viewing them as victims of misconceived Western policies that backfired in countries governed and mismanaged by corrupt politicians and political and economic structures. Analysis of the different goals and approaches leads to the conclusion that groups like the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and various of its constituent elements successfully used violence in Munich and operations since to create political opportunities for fulfilling their aspirations and garnering mass support. By contrast, jihadists successfully exploited tensions, recruited marginalized youth, spread fear, and sparked revulsion but proved unable and/or uninterested in creating opportunities for solutions to social, economic, and political problems and failed to win hearts and minds among significant segments of Muslim youth. Launched 12 years ago, The Turbulent World of Middle East Soccer, offers, to borrow a phrase from an early proprietor of The Observer, "the scoop of interpretation." The column continues to have significant impact. It is republished by news websites, blogs, and newsletters across the globe. Maintaining free distribution is key to maintaining the column's impact. However, to do so, I rely on those readers who value the column and its impact by voluntarily becoming paid subscribers. If you are able and willing to support the column, please become a paid Medium member or subscriber by clicking on Substack on the subscription button and choosing one of the subscription options. If you prefer, you can also make a donation Thank you for your continued interest, readership, and support. This chapter is an updated version of a working paper originally published by the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies and the submitted non-edited version of an article in Israel Affairs.

Kashmiri Youth: The torchbearers of struggle for independence

Nayeem Maqbool

The medical services were attacked and obstructed, which led to a serious impact on the injured and general population. Frequent and long periods of curfews and communication blockades had a major impact on Kashmiris and their access to medical facilities, and also had a cumulative impact on students and their right...

IN the age of youth, when the youth movements have got worldwide attention, the role of youth in socio-economic development and nation building processes has increased at a global level. The Kashmir dispute is one of the serious issues in the world where youth have assumed central importance by providing their best efforts to shape

ideology in one or other way. The people of Kashmir are struggling for their right to "self-determination" on different fronts. On each front, the youth of Kashmir are playing an active and important role. On July 8, 2016, BurhanWani, a 22-year old freedom fighter, was martyred by Indian occupational forces in the Koker-nag area of Islamabad district in IOJK. This angered the people of Kashmir and led to mass protests against his killing throughout the erstwhile state. His death strengthened the discourse of the freedom movement and proved that the people of Kashmir support freedom lovers who carry the mission of secession from the Indian occupation. Indian occupying forces used force against peaceful protests, resulting in a large number of extrajudicial killings, injuries, and a wide range of human rights violations. The occupied territory has experienced several waves of protests since 1989, but after the killing of BurhanWani, more people were seen participating in protests, including more young people and women. After the killings of BurhanWani, thousands of people were detained under draconian laws, and the detainees or arrested persons were not informed about the detention or charges levelled against them. Not only adults, but also minors, were arrested and booked under the PSA without their age being verified. The medical services were attacked and obstructed, which led to a serious impact on the injured and general population. Frequent and long periods of curfews and communication blockades had a major impact on Kashmiris and their access to medical facilities, and also had a cumulative impact on students and their right to education. Mobile and internet services were suspended and restrictions were imposed on freedom of expression.

The media and journalists were also targeted. Due to the curfew and innocent killings in 2016, schools, colleges, and universities were closed in the Kashmir valley. 130 school days were lost in the single academic year of 2016, and 1.4 million children were at home. There have been a huge number of arson attacks on schools in 2016. More than thirty schools were damaged by Indian forces in the dead of the night. Later, various schoolboys were accused of burning schools and were booked under PSA. Some of them were minors. In addition, various schools were under the use of the military and various schools were occupied by the central reserve police force (CRPF) and this endangered the lives of students and teachers in 2016. India not only violated the international laws related to free and compulsory education but also violated its own Act (Right of children to free and compulsory education Act 2009), which disrupted access to education and made educational institutions and schools vulnerable to attacks. The Indian armed forces started Operation Calm Down in IOJK following the killing of young commander BurhanWani. In September 2016, four thousand additional troops were deployed in IOK as a part of Operation Calm Down to suppress and oppress the innocent people of Kashmir who have been demanding the right of self-determination since 1947. Operation All Out was also started in 2017 following the killing of young BurhanWani in 2016. The operation is carried jointly by the army, police, CRPF, BSF, and Indian intelligence agencies to kill the Kashmiri youth who are fighting for the right of self-determination. In 2008-2009, the Kashmiri younger generation actively participated in the protests on the Amaranth land issue

and the rape and murder of two women in the northern district of Kashmir. In 2010, 5000 youngsters were arrested, including hundreds of minors. Students of Indian occupied Kashmir also played an important role in the awakening of the Kashmir dispute through protests and demonstrations portrayed in their painting, writing, and conversation. Many political and religious parties have youth wings that work in education and social services to promote freedom in Indian-occupied Kashmir. Many current freedom fighter leaders are among the founders of student organizations. Now the government of India is not allowing students to function in universities and colleges. The story of the Kashmiri youth is directly related to broken promises. Since 1989, unprecedented pressure has been seen on the youth of Kashmir. The atrocities have had a serious impact on the generation that saw the turmoil that began in 1989. Unresolved disputes pushed the younger generation to gun culture and also to the streets to protest. Before starting armed struggle, the younger generation also made many attempts to take the Kashmir conflict to centre-stage, but the government of India betrayed and foiled them. Today, the younger generation of Kashmir are different from other regions of the South Asian States. A continued feeling of living under siege in their own home land and having to curb the movement by force has led to dejection. It forced young people to get together to take on occupational forces and police on a large scale. The Indian forces are conducting fake encounters to get rewards and promotion. All this has also triggered a large scale of violence.

– Nayeem Maqbool is Political analyst & PhD Scholar of International Relations at International Islamic University, Islamabad



Briefs

Indonesia
a trusted
friend: PM

FROM PAGE 01

Indonesia being the busiest tourist destination and having enormous expertise in this particular field can help Pakistan develop the tourism sector. Talks between both the countries are already under way and it is expected that both sides shall be able to benefit from each other's experience in this field. The Indonesian ambassador during his another meeting with the business people claimed that there are significant opportunities to strengthen bilateral trade between Indonesia and Pakistan. Along with the import of palm oil, he emphasized that we should also improve our mutual trade cooperation in the textile, pharmaceutical, herbal medicine, spices and other important areas. Speaking about Indonesia's ban on the export of palm oil, Tugio stated that his nation temporarily imposed restrictions due to the price spike that made palm oil unavailable on the domestic market and made it extremely difficult for locals to purchase cooking oil. He said, "The restriction was lifted, and palm oil export to the entire world has resumed, including the immediate supply of 10 containers of palm oil to Pakistan."

Eid: PM
Shahbaz
felicitates...

FROM PAGE 01

Pakistan and the UAE enjoy close fraternal ties for five decades that are rooted firmly in common belief, shared values, and culture. The UAE is Pakistan's largest trading partner in the Middle East and a major source of investments. Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif also called Amir of the State of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani and extended greetings on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha. The prime minister conveyed his best wishes to the people of Qatar. The Amir of Qatar warmly reciprocated the greetings and extended best wishes to the people of Pakistan. Both the leaders expressed satisfaction over the excellent state of bilateral relations and resolved to carry forward the robust political and economic cooperation that existed between the two countries. The two leaders agreed to maintain close contact and work together on all issues of common interest. Qatar and Pakistan enjoy close and cordial relations rooted firmly in shared faith, mutual understanding and commonality of interests. Qatar is home to 200,000 Pakistani diaspora that is playing a positive role in the development of the State of Qatar.

NCOC
orders Covid
testing for...

FROM PAGE 01

Establishment (CHE) for smooth testing of inbound pilgrims and allocate dedicated spaces at airports. Amid rising cases of Covid within the country, Minister for National Health Services Abdul Qadir Patel appealed to the people to stay indoors during Eid holidays and observe precautionary measures. Talking to the media in Islamabad, he said the positivity ratio of coronavirus cases is over four per cent in the country. He said the government has issued the standard operating procedures (SOPs), which were evolved earlier, to prevent the spread of the virus.

Pakistan
logs 693
new cases

FROM PAGE 01

Punjab and 45 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Another 379 patients recovered from Covid-19 in Pakistan in the last 24 hours (Thursday), bringing the total number of recoveries to 1,501,886. The total number of active cases in the country was 9,346 as of Friday. As many as 584,802 coronavirus cases have so far been confirmed in Sindh, 509,269 in Punjab, 220,253 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 136,513 in Islamabad, 35,611 in Balochistan, 43,428 in Azad Kashmir and 11,769 in Gilgit-Baltistan.

Russia lauds Indonesia's
role at international forums

The foreign ministers of the Group of 20 (G20) countries attended the FMM in Bali amid tensions between West and Russia over Ukraine. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov was in attendance despite objections from Western and Japanese leaders

ANTARA

BALI: Speaking on the sidelines of the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting (FMM) here on Friday, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov lauded Indonesia's role at various international forums. "I see Indonesia's position as a responsible country, which understands the importance of establishing a dialogue based on international law and the principle of equal state sovereignty," he said. The position taken by Indonesia is very appropriate in its capacities as a member of the United Nations (UN), G20 President, and upcoming chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2023, he added. The foreign ministers of the Group of 20 (G20) countries attended the FMM in Bali amid tensions between the West and Russia over Ukraine. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov was in attendance despite objections from Western and Japanese



leaders. German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, British Foreign Secretary Liz Truss, and US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken were among those present at the meeting held on July 7 and 8, 2022. Blinken, who refused to have a dialogue with Russia, invited the G20 countries to put pressure on Moscow to end its invasion of Ukraine.

However, Russia did not appear to be swayed by the attitude of the US and its allies. "It is not us who are ignoring dialogue but the United States. If they don't want to talk, that's their choice," Lavrov said. Indonesia is holding the G20 Presidency, themed "Recover Together, Recover Stronger," this year.

The G20 members comprise Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Japan, India, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union. Spain is a permanent guest.

Abbas, Haniyah hold first
face-to-face meeting in years

NEWS DESK

JERUSALEM: Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas has met publicly with the political chief of the Palestinian Hamas resistance movement Ismail Haniyah for the first time in more than five years in Algeria, raising hopes for reconciliation talks between the two rival factions. The meeting was held late on Tuesday in the Algerian capital of Algiers on the sidelines of the country's 60th independence anniversary, with Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune in attendance. Algerian and Palestinian media outlets published photos of the pair shaking hands at the meeting which was presided over by Tebboune. Algerian state television also aired footage of the meeting, describing it as "historic." The encounter between the "Palestinian brothers"

came after years in which the two "did not sit at the same table together," the Algerian presidency said in a statement, without elaborating on the outcome of the conversation between



Abbas and Haniyah. The PA's delegation included Majed Faraj, the head of the intelligence services, among other officials. Haniyah and Abbas last met face-to-face in October 2016 in the Qatari capital of Doha, in the last efforts

to reconcile Palestinian Hamas and Fatah resistance movements. In the past few months, Algeria has hosted several Palestinian delegations in an attempt to revive intra-Palestinian



reconciliation. In December, President Tebboune launched an initiative to end the rift between the rival Palestinian parties. Since then, Palestinian delegations have reportedly been flying to Algeria regularly to prepare for a

national conference ahead of an Arab League summit set to be hosted by Algeria in November.

Following the 2006 legislative elections, Fatah and Hamas formed a short-lived national unity government.

A year after Hamas defeated Fatah in the parliamentary polls, the latter was driven out of the Gaza Strip as it attempted to replace the Hamas-led government, which resulted in several weeks of fighting.

Hamas has been the de-facto ruler in the besieged coastal enclave since 2007, while Fatah has been in power in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. Many efforts have failed to end the rift between the two Palestinian factions. Abbas called Palestinian legislative elections for May 2021, but he nixed it just weeks ahead of the polls, blaming Israel for not promising to allow residents of the occupied East al-Quds to vote.

ICC starts countdown
for T20 World Cup 2022

MELBOURNE: ICC started the countdown for this year's mega T20 World Cup, scheduled in October-November in Australia. Australian international stars Aaron Finch, Georgia Wareham and Tayla Vlaeminck along with cricket legends Shane Watson, Waqar Younis and Morne Morkel teamed up with other Australian personalities to not only start the countdown but also launched the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Trophy Tour, driven by Nissan. The Trophy Tour is set to visit 35 locations in 13 countries across four continents, more than ever before. The men's T20 World Cup trophy will make stops in Fiji, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Indonesia, Japan, Namibia, Nepal, Singapore and Vanuatu for the first time, taking the sport to more fans in different countries to get a glimpse of T20 cricket's ultimate prize. Australia, who beat NZ last year to win their maiden T20 World Cup, will defend the title this year at home. – DNA



VIENNA: Pakistani ambassador to Austria, Aftab Ahmad Khokhar talks with Austrian Federal Chancellor Karl Nehammer. Both sides discussed ways to deepen bilateral relationship with Pakistan. – DNA

Novak Djokovic
storms into 8th
Wimbledon final

LONDON: Novak Djokovic will get a chance to win a seventh Wimbledon singles title Sunday against Nick Kyrgios of Australia. Djokovic beat Cameron Norrie of Britain in four sets Friday afternoon, overcoming some early match inconsistency and withstanding both a strong start from Norrie and a raucous hometown crowd on Centre Court to win the semifinal, 2-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-4. It was the only semifinal match played Friday. On Thursday, Rafael Nadal withdrew from the tournament with a tear in his abdominal muscle. Nadal's decision not to play after he aggravated the tear in his five-set, quarterfinal victory over Taylor Fritz gave Kyrgios a free pass into his first Grand Slam final and ended hopes for a showdown between Djokovic and the Spanish champion, who have won a combined 42 Grand Slam titles but have played each other for the trophy at Wimbledon just once.

On a sun-splashed, 80-degree day that meteorologists in London were calling a heat wave, Norrie, a steady, never-say-die lefty, was the better player early and into the first games of the second set, going toe-to-toe and trying to out-rally the best rallyer in the world. Djokovic struggled with his serve and to find his trademark precision on his groundstrokes. He also doesn't much care for playing in the heat. Midway through the first set, with Norrie pushing ahead, Djokovic settled into his chair and draped a towel over his head as the packed Centre Court crowd roared for a countryman with a home just up the road. Norrie, who lives so close to the All England Club he cycled to the grounds earlier in the tournament, smacked an ace to win the set, pumped his fist and basked in the sound. – Agencies

Labuschagne, Smith
guide Australia to
298-5 in second Test

DNA

GALLE: Marnus Labuschagne and Steve Smith both hit centuries to give Australia opening day honours against a Covid-hit Sri Lanka in the second Test on Friday. The tourists reached 298 for five at stumps after electing to bat first in their bid to clinch the two-match series in Galle.

Smith, on 109, and wicket-keeper-batsman Alex Carey, on 16, were batting at close of play after debutant left-arm spinner Prabath Jayasuriya took three wickets. Smith smashed fast bowler Kasun Rajitha for a cracking cover drive to bring up his 28th Test hundred as he raised his bat to an applauding dressing room.

It was the former captain's first hundred since January last year during the third Test against India in Sydney. Labuschagne, who made 104, and Smith put on 134 runs for the third wicket to take the attack to the opposition bowlers after Australia lost their openers in the first session. Labuschagne recorded his seventh Test century and his first away from home in an attacking knock before Jayasuriya got him stumped at the stroke of tea.

Jayasuriya took his spin charge into the final session to get Travis Head bowled for 12, and Cameron Green trapped lbw for four. But Smith and the left-handed Carey anchored the innings from there to deny any more wickets to the hosts.

Carey, who made 45 in Australia's crushing opening win last week, once again made his intent clear early in his knock with a reverse sweep for four off Jayasuriya. Earlier, Sri Lanka struck with their lone pace bowler Kasun Rajitha, sending back David Warner for five in the fifth over of the day.

Off-spinner Ramesh Mendis cleaned up Usman Khawaja for 37 before lunch but Labuschagne stood firm and hit back with boundaries. Labuschagne, who survived a missed morning stumping on 28 by Niroshan Dickwella, and Smith both handled the spinners with ease until their stand ended. The hosts handed Test caps to spinners Maheesh Theekshana and Jayasuriya along with all-rounder Kamindu Mendis after a coronavirus outbreak in their team. Ramesh, who took four wickets in the previous match, and Jayasuriya bowled a majority of the 90 overs while Theekshana, a mystery spinner, and Rajitha got the rest.

Japan's
ex Prime
Minister
Shinzo Abe
assassinated

FROM PAGE 01

suffered a relapse of ulcerative colitis - the intestinal disease had led to his resignation in 2007. But as the son of former foreign minister Shintaro Abe, and grandson of former Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi, Abe belonged to political royalty and was still considered a powerful figure in Japanese politics. He was known for his hawkish foreign policy and a signature economic strategy that popularly came to be known as "Abenomics". Abe was shot in neck during attack, fire department says. Former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe sustained wounds on the right side of his neck and left clavicle after being shot, Nara city Fire Department has confirmed. Officials earlier said Abe was shot in the neck in chest, causing significant internal bleeding, and he is now receiving a blood transfusion in attempts to save his life, his brother said. Abe was shot at a political campaign event in western Japan earlier while giving a speech, and has been described as being in "grave condition". Security officials at the scene tackled the gunman, and the 41-year-old suspect is now in police custody. Shinzo Abe: Japan's longest-serving prime minister Shinzo Abe smashed records as Japan's longest-serving prime minister, championing ambitious economic reform and forging key diplomatic relationships while weathering scandals.

President,
PM term
Abe's death
'a great loss'

FROM PAGE 01

former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe," the prime minister said in a tweet. PM Sharif recalled that Abe made invaluable contributions to the Pakistan-Japan relationship. "Our prayers are with bereaved family. At this difficult time, we stand in solidarity with the people of Japan," he said. Former Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe was shot dead this morning while campaigning for a parliamentary election in the Nara region. Shinzo Abe served as Prime Minister of Japan and President of the Liberal Democratic Party from 2006 to 2007 and again from 2012 to 2020. He was the longest-serving prime minister in Japanese history.

Imran
'softens' his
viewpoint...

FROM PAGE 01

will the economy flourish. He said: "If I would speak to the neutrals there would be only one stance - free and fair elections." The PTI Chairman said that nobody is ready to speak to the leaders of this "imported government", asserting that he will never join hands with the "thieves" even if he has to sit on the Opposition benches. "It is better to be in the Opposition than to have a dialogue with PPP," he said. Khan warned that if by-polls in 20 constituencies of Punjab are rigged, then it may harm the country. "What do I have to do? I can wait but it is the country that will suffer," he maintained.

Shazia
Marri slams
PTI chief...

FROM PAGE 01

himself has turned out to be a source of financial and moral dishonesty, said a statement. Ms Marri added that there is famous maxim of Hazrat Ali that power and wealth reveal the true nature of man so that all the shapes of Imran Khan reflect his criminal mentality. She said that former President Asif Ali Zardari rightly said that NAB and economy of the cannot run parallel while Imran Khan needs mental treatment. She vehemently said that Imran Khan brought worst economic policies which destroyed the country's economy and which was unprecedented in the history of the country. She added that President Asif Ali Zardari has saved the country second time by ouster of Imran Khan and if Imran Khan was allowed to remain more time in power, the country would have reached at bankruptcy.

Philippines' Ressa fights for press freedom

Ressa's position at the head of the Rappler news site meant getting, by her own estimate, up to 90 abusive online messages per hour at one point towards end of 2016

MANILA: Philippine Nobel Peace Prize winner and veteran journalist Maria Ressa has battled multiple legal cases and online abuse in her campaign for press freedom. The former CNN correspondent co-founded investigative news site Rappler in 2012, bringing together multimedia reporting and social media savvy to offer an edgy take on Philippine current events. Ressa, 58, has been a vocal critic of former president Rodrigo Duterte and the deadly drug war he launched in 2016, drawing what media advocates describe as a grinding series

of criminal charges, probes and online attacks against her and Rappler. She was named a Time Person of the Year in 2018 for her work on press freedom, but a series of arrests and a conviction for cyber libel further grew her international profile. In October, Ressa and Russian journalist Dmitry Muratov were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts to "safeguard freedom of expression". Rappler has had to fight for survival after Duterte's government accused it of tax evasion and violating a constitutional ban on foreign ownership.

Days before Duterte stepped down on June 30, Philippine authorities ordered the news organisation to shut down. Though Duterte's government said it had nothing to do with any of the cases against Ressa, press freedom advocates disagreed. Throughout the campaign against her, Ressa, who is also a US citizen, has remained based in the Philippines and continued to speak out against Duterte's government despite the risks. "What we have to do as journalists is just hold the line," she said after the Nobel Prize was announced.

Ressa has been on bail pending her appeal against the 2020 cyber libel conviction. On Friday, Rappler said she and a former colleague had lost the case and were considering their legal options. It is one of seven cases she is fighting. The cyber libel law was introduced in 2012, the same year Rappler was founded. Ressa's position at the head of the Rappler news site meant getting, by her own estimate, up to 90 abusive online messages per hour at one point towards the end of 2016. The threats came in the months after Duterte took power and launched his

narcotics crackdown, which rights groups estimate has killed tens of thousands of people. Rappler was among the domestic and foreign media outlets that published shocking images of the killings and questioned the crackdown's legal basis. International Criminal Court judges have since authorised a full-blown investigation into a possible crime against humanity during the bloody campaign. It was an entirely new set of dangers for Ressa, who was a veteran of conflict zones before co-founding Rappler. As CNN's former bureau chief in Manila and Jakar

ta, Ressa specialised in terrorism, where she tracked the links between global networks like Al-Qaeda and militants in Southeast Asia. The Princeton graduate later returned to the Philippines to serve as news chief at the nation's top broadcaster, ABS-CBN, which also fell foul of the Duterte administration. Duterte has been succeeded by the son and namesake of former dictator Ferdinand Marcos. After last week's order for Rappler to shut down, Ressa remained characteristically defiant. "We continue to work, it is business as usual," Ressa said.

Briefs

Billions of people rely on wild species: UN

PARIS: Rampant exploitation of nature is a threat to the billions of people across the world who rely on wild species for food, energy and income, according to a new report from United Nations biodiversity experts published Friday. From fishing and logging to the use of wild plants in medicines and perfumes, societies across the planet are deeply dependent on species that have not been tamed or cultivated in farming, with annual global legal and illegal trade in the hundreds of billions of dollars. But as humans drive alarming biodiversity loss – and climate change threatens to accelerate the destruction – the UN's science advisory panel for biodiversity, known as IPBES, called for "transformative changes" in our relationship with wild species. "Billions of people in all regions of the world rely on and benefit from the use of wild species for food, medicine, energy, income and many other purposes," it said, adding that overexploitation and environmental degradation threaten resources, particularly for the most vulnerable. The report, which took four years to produce and has been written by 85 experts from different specialist fields, comes as the UN steers a crucial international process to lay out a framework for protecting nature in the coming decades. – APP

Russia city councillor jailed for 7 years

MOSCOW: A Moscow court on Friday sentenced a city councillor to seven years in prison for denouncing President Vladimir Putin's Ukraine intervention, an AFP reporter said. Alexei Gorinov, 60, was found guilty of spreading "knowingly false information" about the Russian army. Gorinov is the first elected member of the opposition to be sentenced to jail for criticising Moscow's military campaign in Ukraine. He appeared in court with a poster that read: "Do you still need this war?". Court bailiffs used their hands in an effort to cover the poster from cameras, before Gorinov removed it himself. His wife Alla cried in court as the sentence was read out, and some supporters stood up to applaud him, before being removed from the courtroom. Gorinov is accused of discrediting the Russian army under strict legislation that rights activists say is part of Moscow's increasing efforts to snuff out the last vestiges of dissent. He spoke up against Moscow's military intervention in Ukraine during a work meeting in March that was recorded on YouTube and is available on YouTube. During his speech, he questioned plans for an art competition for children in his constituency while "every day children are dying" in Ukraine. – APP

Indonesian envoy for promoting trade through product diversity

Encourages the implementation of "Vision East Asia" policy

DNA

LAHORE: Ambassador of Indonesia to Pakistan, Adam Mulawarman Tugio, has said that Indonesia can play a significant role in providing economic and trade opportunities to Pakistan and connectivity with ASEAN's potential market. "There is the need for mutual trade expansion with Pakistan beyond traditional products and focus on other sectors, and simultaneously for Pakistan to expand its presence into the ASEAN market", the Indonesian Ambassador said during a meeting at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which was chaired by LCCI President Mian Nauman Kabir. Ambassador Tugio further stated that trade connectivity and regional economy are vital for global economy through which the conclusion of FTA will bring benefit to improve economy growth of their member countries. "Including exploring the potential of Islamic Economy since one-quarter of the world's population is Muslim, and therefore actions must be taken to capitalize on the benefits of D-8 cooperation between eight Muslim countries where Indonesia and



Pakistan are proud members together with Bangladesh, Egypt, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, and Türkiye". The envoy claimed that there are significant opportunities to strengthen bilateral trade between Indonesia and Pakistan. Along with the import of palm oil, he emphasized that we should also improve our mutual trade cooperation in the textile, pharmaceutical, herbal medicine, spices and other important areas.

Speaking about Indonesia's ban on the export of palm oil, Tugio stated that his nation temporarily imposed restrictions due to the price spike that made palm oil unavailable on the domestic market and made it extremely difficult for locals to purchase cooking oil. He said, "The restriction was lifted, and palm oil export to the entire world has resumed, including the immediate supply of 10 containers of palm oil to Pakistan."

In his remarks, Mian Nauman Kabir, President of the LCCI, urged the two Islamic nations to further develop their trade and commercial ties, particularly in the fields of pharmaceuticals and surgical equipment. He stressed the need for cooperative ventures between Pakistan and Indonesia to develop bilateral

trade. Kabir said the Pakistan-Indonesia bilateral trade and economic relations can be further strengthened by exchange of business to business delegations, organizing of joint trade exhibitions and taking equal benefits from each other's experiences. Ambassador Tugio further added that the first "Indonesia Corner" will be established at the University of Peshawar, with a subsequent location is expected in Lahore to strengthen cultural ties and collaboration in the education sector. The envoy also stated that the Indonesian Embassy, in partnership with the National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (Lok Virsa), will host "A Night at Museum" cultural exhibition to show casing the confluence of civilisation between Indonesia and Pakistan.

Mr. Tugio informed the president of the LCCI that every effort would be made to assist the business sector in fostering closer trade and economic ties. LCCI Senior Vice-President Mian Rehman Aziz Chan, Vice-President Haris Ateeq, Former presidents Engr. Sohail Lashari and members of the LCCI's executive committee, traders, importers and exporters were also present in a large number on the occasion.

Azerbaijan, Hungary eye medical co-op

BAKU: Azerbaijani Health Minister Teymur Musayev and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Hungary Viktor Szederkenyi discussed bilateral medical cooperation at a meeting held at the ministry. Welcoming the guests, Musayev stressed the fruitful relations between Azerbaijan and Hungary in the health and social protection sectors, noting the successful cooperation in medical science. "Scientists and medical specialists of both countries regularly participate in conferences and symposiums held in the field of medical science in Azerbaijan and Hungary," he said. Emphasizing the dynamic development of relations in the pharmaceutical industry, the minister noted that some medical institutions in Azerbaijan are equipped with high-quality Hungarian-made medical devices. "Besides, most of the glucometers and reagents distributed to patients under the State Program to Combat Diabetes Mellitus are high-quality Hungarian-made devices," he added. Furthermore, Musayev expressed hope for the further successful development of the cooperation. In turn, Szederkenyi recalled that in 2020, a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the sphere of healthcare and medical science was signed between the Ministry of Health of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Human Resources of Hungary. The ambassador also noted that new opportunities have been created for interaction in the field of medical education. During the meeting, the sides also exchanged views on cooperation between Hungary and Azerbaijan in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, the implementation of the Memorandum of Cooperation in the field of healthcare and medical science, and the proposals of the Hungarian side on technology in the field of oncology, as well as other issues. – DNA

CPEC development needs new momentum

DNA

LAHORE: Zhao Shiren, Consul General China in Lahore has said that China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is more than a gift that China gave to Pakistan, it must be deemed as a joint venture, a shared undertaking, a common endeavor. The current circumstance requires us to have a sense of urgency and inject new momentum into the CPEC development. While addressing a key note speech at the conference on "Significance of the Belt and Road Initiative in Regional Connectivity", Zhao said that Solidarity, stability and security (3S) in the hosting country ensures the timely and quality implementation of CPEC. A three-day international conference was organized by the Punjab

University Regional Integration Centre (RIC) in collaboration with the Chinese Embassy at Al-Raazi Hall. Zhao said that foreign investment, trade and the expedition of CPEC projects on board and launch a CPEC-related publicity of people have the (co)-ownership of the projects. While implementing the Belt & Road Initiative, we Chinese always seek extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits with partners and stakeholders. This principle also applies to the CPEC. Ownership means taking the driver seat, boldness and responsibilities. Zhao said. We invite Pakistani brothers to converge our development strategies and have close policy dialogues. We spare no effort to make CPEC more resilient, vibrant and mutually beneficial.

After all, the future of CPEC is ultimately in Pakistanis' hand, we hereby ask for more initiatives from our Pakistani partners, he elaborated. He mentioned that we must bring all stakeholders on board and launch a CPEC-related publicity of people have the (co)-ownership of the projects. While implementing the Belt & Road Initiative, we Chinese always seek extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits with partners and stakeholders. This principle also applies to the CPEC. Ownership means taking the driver seat, boldness and responsibilities. Zhao said. We invite Pakistani brothers to converge our development strategies and have close policy dialogues. We spare no effort to make CPEC more resilient, vibrant and mutually beneficial.

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India's bullet train project chief sacked over corruption

DNA

NEW DELHI: Authorities have terminated the services of an official who was in charge of the Indian government's bullet train project over charges of corruption, officials said Friday. According to an order issued by the National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL), chairman and managing director Satish Agnihotri's services were being terminated with immediate effect. Projects Director Rajendra Prasad has been authorized to serve on the post for three months from the date of assumption of the charge or until further order. "The competent authority has approved the termination of office of Satish Agnihotri. He has been directed to be relieved with immediate effect," reads the letter of the railway board as quoted in the local media.

Ending war in Ukraine global responsibility: Indonesian FM

ANTARA

NUSA DUA, BALI: Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi on Friday underlined the global responsibility for ending the war in Ukraine, which has posed a new challenge besides the COVID-19 pandemic. "It is our responsibility to end the war and solve our differences on the negotiating table rather than on the battlefield," she said at the opening of the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting (FMM) in Nusa Dua, Bali. As part of efforts to end the war, President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) has undertaken intensive communication with other state leaders and attended several international events, such as the G7 and



BRICS summits. He also embarked on a peace mission to Kyiv and Moscow last week to reaffirm the core of Indonesia's free and active foreign policy, which has always prioritized peace and humanity. At the foreign ministerial level, Marsudi has also been holding dialogues with her counterparts to share Indonesia's views as well as echo the voices of developing

countries, who are grappling with the impact of the food and energy crises triggered by the war in Ukraine. "That's why let us try our best to strengthen mutual trust and respect and uphold all the foundations and principles we have built since 1945 when the UN was established," she said. The UN Charter mandates member states with main-

taining global peace and security in accordance with the principles of international justice and law, developing international friendship, and establishing international cooperation to resolve international issues. "It is our responsibility to build a bridge rather than a wall to promote common interests rather than personal interests and become a part of the solution," Marsudi said. The Russia-Ukraine war will be under the spotlight at the G20 FMM, which will discuss two main issues—strengthening multilateralism and food and energy resilience. Russia's invasion of Ukraine since February 24, 2022, has sparked much criticism, with Western countries providing Kyiv with arms supplies and money.

Peace march kicks off to honor victims of Srebrenica genocide

SARAJEVO: A three-day peace march set to commemorate the 27th anniversary of the genocide in Srebrenica kicked off in Bosnia and Herzegovina on Friday. Traditionally, thousands of people from all over the world come to the Bosnian town of Nezuk every year to participate in the march. The participants will march for three days, and spend the nights in designated areas. The march is expected to conclude at a cemetery in Potocari, a village in eastern Bosnia-Herzegovina, northwest of the Srebrenica town, where a funeral prayer and burial ceremony will be held for 50 newly identified victims. "The number of people registered for the march is 2,000. However, we expect 4,000-5,000 people to attend the march as people can join the march without registration," said Hamdija Fejzic, the head of the Srebrenica Commemoration Ceremonies Organization Board. Meanwhile, Tarik Salkunic, a student from Sarajevo University, said he participates in the march to keep spreading the word about what has happened in Srebrenica. "The peace march should be talked about all the time. It is very important to remember what has happened," said Salkunic. Since 2005, thousands of people have attended the "Mars Mira" (Peace March) following the same route used by the Bosnians when they were fleeing the Srebrenica genocide. Also on Wednesday, the 11th "Vukovar-Srebrenica Marathon" started from Croatia's capital Zagreb to remember and honor the innocent victims of the Serb forces' attack on Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. – DNA

Flooding kills 3 in eastern Afghanistan

DNA

GARDEZ: At least three people died and two more went missing as heavy rain and flash floods hit parts of Afghanistan's eastern Paktia province, the state-run Bakhtar news agency reported Thursday. Xinhua reports. Mawlawi Nisar Ahmad, the head of National Disaster Management Authority office in the province, said the downpour and flooding affected the provincial capital Gardez, and the Sayed Karam, Dand-e-Patan and Ahmad Khil districts. Hundreds of hectares of farmland and scores of houses were damaged or swept away in the flash floods, the report said.

Germany approves Nordic NATO bid

AGENCIES

BERLIN: German lawmakers in the Bundestag ratified on Friday Sweden and Finland's accession to NATO. Parliaments of the Western military alliance's 30 members must all ratify the accession protocol for new members to join. The Bundestag became the latest legislature to approve the process after Canada, Estonia, Denmark and Norway. Finland and Sweden moved from decades of neutrality to join NATO when Russia's invasion of Ukraine started. The process in the Bundestag was "extremely fast," DW's political correspondent Nina Haase said. Haase said, citing unnamed sources, that Germany had intended to become the first country to ratify the accession, but other countries were faster. "But nevertheless, the signal remains the same... [Germany] is firmly behind the idea of Finland

and Sweden joining NATO," she added. The decision had the backing of parties from across the political spectrum. The governing coalition parties (consisting of the center-left SPD, environmentalist Greens and neoliberal FDP), as well as the opposition conservative CDU and the far-right AfD, all voted in favor. Only members of the Left Party abstained. "Today we are strengthening the democratic values of NATO," said German Foreign Ministry official Tobias Lindner during the parliamentary debate ahead of the vote. Jenny L Malmqvist, the deputy head of mission at the Swedish embassy in Germany, told DW it was an "honor" to have been invited to witness the "historic" vote. "There is a before and after the 24th of February [when Russia invaded Ukraine]. And we are hoping, of course, in giving all our support in financial and hu-

manitarian and also military means to Ukraine." NATO has formally invited the two Nordic countries to join the alliance, but as the ratification requires unanimous approval of all 30 members, Turkey's approval is still uncertain. Ankara had threatened to block the accession, and has so far delayed the ratification process. Turkey has accused Finland and Sweden of supporting what it deems terrorist organizations, including the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), the Kurdish YPG militia active in northern Syria and the Gulen movement. The PKK is considered a terrorist organization also by the US, the EU and Canada, but the two other groups are not. Turkey, Finland and Sweden reached a deal, which, according to Turkey, entails that Ankara will back their membership bids on the condition that they extradite dozens of people deemed "terrorists."

JULY 2022

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Briefs

KSA FM meets
Chinese
counterpart

WEB DESK

BALI: Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan met with his Chinese counterpart on Friday on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Bali, Indonesia, the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported. The ministers reportedly "dealt with a host of regional and international issues" such as "enhancing security and stability in the Middle East," according to SPA. The pair also reportedly discussed how to enhance co-operation between the countries. The Saudi ambassador to Indonesia Isam al-Thaqafi and the Director General of the foreign minister's office Abdulrahman al-Dawood also attended the meeting. This is not the first time officials from the two countries have met this year to discuss expanding bilateral relations. The Kingdom's Assistant Minister of Defense for Executive Affairs Khaled bin Hussein al-Biyari, met with China's Defense Minister Wei Fenghe on the sidelines of the Shangri-La Dialogue, in June this year, SPA reported. During the meeting the officials discussed bilateral relations in the defense and military sectors as well as other topics of mutual interest.

EU sends
PPE worth
EUR 1M to
Ukraine

DNA

KYIV: The European Union handed over personal protective equipment worth EUR 977,000 to the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine. "As part of the EU Support to Strengthening Integrated Border Management in Ukraine (EU4IBM), border guards received personal protective equipment, including helmets and bullet-proof vests, for a total sum of more than EUR 977,000," the State Border Guard Service wrote on Telegram, Ukrinform reports. It is noted that procurement is currently underway to meet other needs of the services, including the purchase of additional personal protective equipment, diesel generators, cameras, etc. Meanwhile, Russian President said that Western nations made a mistake by imposing energy sanctions on Russia, and if they persist with further restrictions it will be a catastrophe for global markets. "Sanctions restrictions on Russia cause much more damage to those countries that impose them," Putin said on Friday at a meeting with government officials that was broadcast on Rossiya 24 TV. "Further use of the sanctions policy may lead to even more severe, without exaggeration, even catastrophic consequences for the global energy market."

Khursheed
asks Imran to
quit politics

DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader and Federal Minister for Water Resources Syed Khursheed Shah on Friday demanded of PTI Chairman Imran Khan to leave politics after the emergence of harassment scandal of a woman by the former NAB chairman. In his reaction to the former NAB chairman scandal, Khursheed Shah said the head of entire nation bowed in shame after learning that the victim woman, Tayyaba Gul, was kept in the PM House during the tenure of previous government. He demanded of former prime minister Imran Khan to immediately step down as PTI chairman. "Imran has no right to take part in politics after this serious allegation. First, he should face the transparent investigation. State is like a mother and the importance of PM House is like a shelter home for the daughters of the nation," the minister held. "What would be the biggest allegation other than this to soil the name of the state and country's politics," he added.

West presses Russia at
G20 with call to end war

Blinken shunned a meeting with Lavrov and instead accused Russia of triggering a global food crisis, demanding Moscow allow grain shipments out of war-battered Ukraine

NEWS DESK

BALI: The United States and Western allies pressured Russia at G20 talks in Indonesia Friday over its "unprovoked and unjustifiable war of choice" in Ukraine, but Moscow's envoy remained defiant. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov joined colleagues for day-long talks in their first meeting since the outbreak of war, with the host immediately telling them the conflict must end through negotiations. Before the meeting on the resort island of Bali, Blinken met his French and German counterparts and a senior British official to discuss "Russia's unprovoked and unjustifiable war of choice" in Ukraine, the State Department said in a statement. They "reviewed ways to address the global food security concerns that have resulted from Russia's deliberate targeting of Ukrainian agriculture," it said. Blinken shunned a meeting with Lavrov and instead accused Russia of triggering a global food crisis, demanding Moscow allow grain shipments out of war-battered Ukraine. "To our Russian colleagues: Ukraine is not your country. Its grain is not your grain. Why are you blocking the ports? You should let the grain out," Blinken said in the closed-door talks, according to a Western official present. Lavrov earlier told reporters he would not "go running" after Washington for talks.

Putin warns West of
sanctions catastrophe

MOSCOW: Western nations made a mistake by imposing energy sanctions on Russia, and if they persist with further restrictions it will be a catastrophe for global markets, said President Vladimir Putin. "Sanctions restrictions on Russia cause much more damage to those countries that impose them," Putin said on Friday at a meeting with government officials that was broadcast on Rossiya 24 TV. "Further use of the sanctions policy may lead to even more severe, without exaggeration, even catastrophic consequences for the global energy market." The price of Brent crude has jumped by over a third and benchmark European gas more than doubled since the start of the year after the West imposed several waves of sanctions against Russia in retaliation for its invasion in Ukraine. The resulting energy supply crunch has hampered global economic growth and increased inflation, raising the risks of recession. While the goal of these measures was to reduce the inflow of petrodollars into the Kremlin's coffers and force Putin to stop the war, Russia has responded by redirecting its oil exports to India and China, capping gas flows to Europe. - Agencies

"It was not us who abandoned contact, it was the United States," he said, adding that no ministers walked out of the talks. "Our Western partners are trying to avoid talking about global economic issues," he added. Lavrov was absent as Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba addressed the meeting virtually in the afternoon session of the talks, three diplomatic sources told AFP. The gathering was overshadowed by the shooting of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe at a campaign event on Friday, with Japanese premier Fumio Kishida saying he is in a "very grave condition". Blinken voiced alarm and called it a "very sad moment" after the attack on a longtime ally of Washington and Japan's longest-serving premier. Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi, chair of the meeting, said Jakarta conveyed its "deepest sympathies" to Japan. Before the news emerged, she addressed the war in a speech to the ministers including Lavrov. "It is our responsibility to end the war sooner than later and settle our differences at the negotiating table, not the battlefield," Marsudi said.

A US official indicated Washington did not want to embarrass Indonesia at the meeting by walking out on Lavrov. But there will be no family photo of the G20 ministers as is customary, an Indonesian government official told AFP. The hosts have addressed US concerns about Lavrov attending in part by inviting Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to the G20 summit in November. Blinken arrived at the Mulia hotel on Friday where he could be seen talking with South Africa's foreign minister before entering the same room as Lavrov, who he last met in January. Russia's top diplomat was seated between the Saudi Arabian and Mexican foreign ministers as the meeting began. He was later seen strolling and chatting to Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar before he met with Blinken. In his meeting with Delhi's envoy, Blinken said many of the G20 member countries had criticised Moscow over its campaign in Ukraine. "What we've heard today already, is a strong chorus from around the world... about the need for the aggression to end," he said. Blinken's efforts to have a powerful Western stance against Russia at the meeting were diluted after British Foreign Minister Liz Truss pulled out following Prime Minister Boris Johnson's resignation as leader of his party on Thursday. She flew out of Indonesia on Friday morning and was replaced by former British ambassador to the European Union Sir Tim Barrow, a British official told AFP.

Biden to sign
executive
order on
abortion

DNA

WASHINGTON: U.S. President Joe Biden will sign an executive order on Friday to help safeguard women's access to abortion and contraception after the Supreme Court last month overturned the Roe v Wade decision that legalized abortion, the White House said. Biden, a Democrat, has been under pressure from supporters, particularly progressives, to take action after the landmark decision, which upended roughly 50 years of protections for women's reproductive rights. The president's powers are constrained, because U.S. states can make laws restricting abortion and access to medication, and the executive order is expected to have limited impact. Biden will direct the Health and Human Services Department to take action to protect and expand access to "medication abortion" approved by the Food and Drug Administration, the White House said. Experts have said a pill used to terminate early pregnancies is unlikely to become available without a prescription for years. States that already restrict the medication would not be affected by the presidential order. He will also direct the department to ensure women have access to emergency medical care, family planning services, and contraception, including intrauterine devices (IUDs). Biden's attorney general and White House counsel will convene pro bono attorneys and other organizations to provide legal counsel for patients seeking an abortion as well as abortion providers.

Britain's
Queen 'deeply
saddened' by
death of Abe

LONDON: Britain's Queen Elizabeth said she was "deeply saddened" by the death of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Friday. "My family and I were deeply saddened to hear the news of the sudden and tragic death of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe," said the 96-year-old monarch, who added she had fond memories of meeting Abe and his wife during their 2016 visit to Britain. "I wish to convey my deepest sympathy and condolences to his family and to the people of Japan at this difficult time." - Agencies

Airblue expands operations
with inaugural Skardu flight

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Airblue expands its operations and launches its regular flights to Skardu, after successful training and proving flights to the destination. This is another great milestone achieved by the airline. Airblue affirms vigilant planning with strict compliance to all protocols and SOPs at every step of the journey to ensure Passengers' Comfort and Convenience & Safety. Speaking about the new sector launch, Airblue Managing Director Mr. Aslam Chaudhary commented "We are very proud to achieve this milestone. This sector flights shall open up a steady stream of domestic as well as international tourists in and out of Skardu, resulting in an exponential growth in the tourist based economy of the region. Moreover, we are positive that our careful preparations made at every step of passengers' journey shall build up our passengers' confidence to travel with more convenience and with complete peace of mind"

Airblue, a private sector airline with headquarters in Islamabad, started its operations in 2004 and has completed it's 18 years of service as Pakistan's second largest and fastest growing airline with the Youngest Aircraft



Fleet. Airblue, recognized for its quality services, operates a fleet of Airbus A320 & A321 family aircraft including two A321neos. It provides frequency-driven scheduled air service to Domestic and International destinations.

Palestinian, Israeli
leaders speak
before Biden visit

JERUSALEM: Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas held rare meetings and calls with Israeli leaders in an effort to calm tensions and coordinate security measures days before US President Joe Biden's first visit to the region. Israel's President Isaac Herzog and Prime Minister Yair Lapid had separate calls with Abbas on Friday, official statements said, following a meeting between Abbas and Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz in the occupied West Bank city of Ramallah on Thursday. Lapid and Abbas discussed "continued cooperation and the need to ensure quiet and calm," the prime minister's office said, in the first call between the two since Lapid took over as caretaker prime minister in Israel last week ahead of elections on Nov. 1. Gantz said on Twitter that Thursday's meeting "was conducted in positive terms" and the two discussed civilian and security challenges in the region. "We agreed to maintain close security coordination and to avoid actions that may cause instability," Gantz said. Abbas "stressed the importance of creating a political horizon, respecting signed agreements and stopping actions and measures that lead to the deterioration of the situation," Hussein Al-Sheikh, a senior Palestinian official, said in a tweet. Abbas also stressed the importance of having a "calm atmosphere before Biden's visit, which we welcome."

It was the third known meeting between Abbas and Gantz since August last year. Simmering tensions between Israel and the Palestinians grew more intense following the May 11 killing of Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh during an Israeli army raid in the West Bank city of Jenin. Palestinians say Abu Akleh was shot deliberately by an Israeli soldier. Israel denies this. The US State Department said on Monday that Abu Akleh was likely killed by gunfire from Israeli positions but it was probably unintentional. The Palestinian Authority exercises limited self-rule in parts of the West Bank. US-brokered talks aimed at establishing a Palestinian state in Israeli-occupied territory collapsed in 2014 and show no sign of revival. The Palestinian militant group Islamic Jihad condemned Thursday's meeting in a statement. - DNA

Pilgrims pack Mount Arafat for
climax of biggest Covid-era hajj

"There are one million here today, but if the Saudis allowed more, 10 million would have come,"

MOUNT ARAFAT: Huge crowds of robed Muslim pilgrims prayed on Saudi Arabia's Mount Arafat on Friday, the climax of the biggest hajj pilgrimage since the pandemic forced drastic cuts in numbers two years in a row. Groups of worshippers, many holding umbrellas against the fierce sun, recited verses from the Koran on the rocky rise, where the Prophet Mohammed is believed to have given his final sermon. Prayers on Mount Arafat are the highlight of the pilgrimage, capped this year at one million people including 850,000 from abroad. Pilgrims, many in white robes, chanted "Oh God, here I am" as they reached

Mount Arafat on foot or in buses from their nearby tents. After sunset, they will travel the short distance to Muzdalifah, where they will sleep under the stars before performing the symbolic "stoning of the devil" ceremony on Saturday. "I am so happy to be here... This is the biggest hajj in the coronavirus era, but it isn't big enough yet," Egyptian pilgrim Saad Farhat Khalil, 49, told AFP. "There are one million here today, but if the Saudis allowed more, 10 million would have come," he added. Entry roads were packed with worshippers as helicopters buzzed overhead and volunteers handed out bottles of water and collected rubbish in

green plastic bags. The hajj, usually one of the world's largest annual religious gatherings, is among the five pillars of Islam and must be undertaken by all Muslims with the means at least once in their lives. In 2019, as in previous years, some 2.5 million Muslims from around the world took part, a figure that dropped to a few thousand in 2020 and 60,000 in 2021. A number of world leaders have participated this year, including Mauritania's president and Indonesia's vice president. State media on Friday reported that Chechen strongman Ramzan Kadyrov had arrived in the kingdom to perform the hajj. - APP

Saudi Arabia allows
direct entry of
Lebanese citizens

WEB DESK

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia announced it would allow Lebanese citizens to directly enter the Kingdom without the need to spend 14 days in quarantine in a third country before visiting, a Saudi official said. Saudi ambassador to Lebanon Waleed Bukhari posted on Twitter the ease of restrictions on Lebanese visitors to the Kingdom. "Lebanese citizens can fly directly to the Kingdom without spending 14-day quarantine outside Lebanon," said Bukhari. All passengers departing from Lebanon were previously required to stay outside Lebanon not less than 14 days before entering Saudi Arabia if vaccinated outside the Kingdom as part of COVID-19 precautionary measures. The ease of restrictions comes as Saudi Arabia permitted over one million pilgrims to perform Hajj this year in the largest gathering since the pandemic struck.

900 firefighters battle
massive fire in France

PARIS: Hundred of firefighters backed by water-dropping planes battled a large forest fire Friday in southeastern France that has forced the evacuation of nearby villages. Thirteen firefighters have been injured in Bordezac – the village where the fire started. Overall, 18 firefighters have been injured amid several forest fires that have burned for days in the region, according to France Info. Unfavorable weather – drought, heat and strong winds – are complicating efforts to contain the blaze in the Gard region but its fire service said prospects were "more favorable" Friday. Other smaller fires have been extinguished. - Agencies

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