

Islamabad POST

Tuesday, July 19, 2022

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 20

Putin visits Iran for first trip out of region since war

Detailed News On Page-08

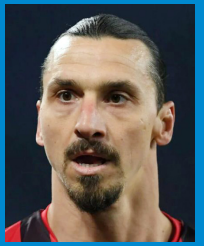
Govt to resolve pharma industry problems: Miftah

Detailed News On Page-07



Ibrahimovic signs contract extension

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

Success of Khan's narrative

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Punjab Assembly Speaker Chaudhry Parvez Elahi Monday said that the PTI's win in the by-elections on July 17 was the success of party Chairperson Imran Khan's narrative. Speaking during a meeting of the PTI and PML-Q, Elahi said that the former prime minister conveyed his message to the nation by running campaigns. "People gave their verdict in PTI's favour and rejected those who changed parties," said the speaker. The PML-Q leader said that the law will take its course against those who opted for illegal actions.

Maryam wants verdict over PTI funding case

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Vice-President Maryam Nawaz on Monday said the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) should announce quick verdict on the PTI foreign funding case. On social networking site Twitter, she lambasted the PTI leadership and wrote that there is no need to be too excited after losing 5 out of 20 seats. PML-N VP further penned that Imran Khan is attacking the ECP because of the fear of foreign funding case, but not of rigging in by-polls, which was not even happened.

Elections will take place on time

DNA

KARACHI: Sindh Information Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon Monday said that the elections will take place on time and the Parliament will complete its term. His comments came after the Pakistani rupee against the US dollar depreciated and the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) plunged as its benchmark KSE-100 lost over 700 points amid the political uncertainty in the wake of the preliminary results of the by-polls in Punjab.

Wants CEC to step down

Imran Khan demands fresh general polls

– Says time to take decisions in closed door over; accuses ECP Sindh member of partisan



SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan reiterated his resolve that the sole panacea to get the country out of the prevailing political and economic quagmire was to hold free, fair and transparent elections. However, he demanded resignation of incumbent Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja because he could not hold transparent and fair elections. Addressing the nation after presiding over PTI Core Committee meeting, Imran Khan the CEC did everything in his power to help PML-N win in the elections, who did not even know that around 4 million

Continued on Page 06

'PML-N established bright tradition'

Mariyum says the PML-N would continue the journey of serving the people

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb has said the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) had established a bright democratic tradition by ensuring free, fair and transparent election in a peaceful manner. "We accept opinion of the people who are real decision makers under the Constitution," she said in a series of tweets. The minister said it should be acknowledged that the PML-N was a "representative party" of the most of people of Punjab. She said the PML-N would continue the journey of representing and serving the people with renewed determination and passion. She said that they would work more on these 16 provincial assembly constituencies to strengthen the party position there. She hoped that PTI chairman would apologise to Chief Election Commissioner for ridiculing him. The Information Minister said the Pakistan Muslim League (N) strongly believes

Court extends interim bail of Imran Khan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A lower court of Islamabad on Monday extended interim bail to Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI)'s Leader Imran Khan in 15 FIRs pertaining to vandalizing the public property during long march. District and Session Judge Kamran Basharrat Mufti heard the pre-arrest bail petitions of Imran Khan in ten cases. Defence Lawyer Dr. Baber Awan requested the court to grant one time exemption to Imran Khan which was accepted by the judge. The court extended the pre-arrest bail of Imran Khan till July 21, in FIRs registered by various police station including Police Station Golra, Kohsar, Tarnol, Secretariat, Abpara, Karachi Company and Industrial Area. Similarly, Additional District and Session Judge Abdul Ghafor Kakar accepted the pre-arrest bail of PTI's chairman in five cases against surety bonds worth Rs 5,000 each.



in transparent, impartial elections and the observance of democratic governance and the election of the previous day is a practical demonstration of this. She said when Imran Sahib had the federal government and Punjab government, he created records of rigging and broke the constitution on April 3 to save himself. "On the contrary, the Muslim League (N) did not use its power in the Federation and Punjab to kidnap the staff of the Election Commission, attack the constitution and violate the constitution," added Mariyum Aurangzeb.



BAKU: President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and President of European Commission Ursula von der Leyen signed MoU on Strategic Partnership in field of energy. – DNA

Rupee hits new low of 215.20

It is the highest day-on-day depreciation after March 26, 2020

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The ruling PML-N's thumping in the Punjab by-elections that has triggered political uncertainty along with import pressure took the Pakistani rupee to a new low against the US dollar in the interbank market Monday. Data released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) showed that the local unit lost Rs4.25, or 1.97%, against the US dollar to close at an all-time low of Rs215.20. It is the highest day-on-day depreciation after March 26, 2020. On June 22, the rupee had closed at a record low of 211.93 against the greenback and since then the currency has remained volatile. Pakistan-Kuwait Investment Company Head of Research Samiullah Tariq cited import payment pressure and political uncertainty as reasons for the rupee's hit. The analyst said that Sunday's by-election results gave clarity but the market is awaiting a strategy going forward. "[The] market is looking for a direction, therefore investors are anticipating what would be the way forward. Will the coalition government announce early elections or not?" said Tariq. On the other hand, Arif Habib Limited analyst Ahsan Mehanti is hopeful that the depreciating rupee would recover soon as all speculations are in favour of the local unit.

By-Polls defeat Nawaz, Zardari, Fazl mull strategy

Prime Minister invites his allies to Lahore for consultations

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif, PPP Co-chairperson Asif Ali Zardari and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman spoke over the phone to discuss the country's political situation after PML-N's humiliating defeat in the Punjab by-elections held a day earlier, media reported Monday, citing sources. The three leaders have reportedly agreed that a detailed plan of action will be adopted in consultation with other allies. According to the sources, Nawaz, Zardari and Maulana Fazl reviewed the results of the Punjab by-elections and discussed the future strategy of the coalition government in Punjab and the centre. In Sunday's Punjab by-polls, the PTI bagged 15 out of the 20 constituencies up for grabs in the province. The clear victory of PTI in the Punjab

Continued on Page 06

Asif Zardari buried PML-N: Rasheed

NEWS DESK

RAWALPINDI: AML chief Sheikh Rasheed said Monday that PPP Co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari "buried" PML-N – after the party suffered a humiliating defeat in the Punjab by-elections. "The funeral of PML-N's [politics] took place yesterday; Zardari has buried the party, and now, Maulana Fazlur Rehman should offer prayers for them," Rasheed, who is an ally of the PTI, said while addressing a press conference. Referring to the "landslide victory" of PTI in the hotly-contested by-polls, Rasheed said that it was a "laboratory test" and the nation gave its verdict in favour of

Continued on Page 06

Taliban tell females to send male relatives as replacement

NEWS DESK

KABUL: The Taliban have asked female employees in the country to send a male relative to offices to do the work on their behalf. The announcement came a year after female employees working in the public sector were banned from government jobs and told to stay at home. Several women said that the Taliban officials asked them to send a male relative as their replacement as they "workload in the office has increased and they need to hire a man instead of us", according to news reports. "Current restrictions on women's employment have been es-

timated to result in an immediate economic loss of up to \$1bn – or up to 5% of Afghanistan's GDP," said Executive Director of United Nations Women Sima Bahous. Maryam, who worked at the Afghan ministry of finance for more than 15 years, said: "I was asked to introduce a male family member to replace me at the ministry, so I could be dismissed from the job." "Since they came [to power], the Taliban have demoted me and reduced my salary from 60,000 Afghanis [£575] to AFN12,000. I cannot even afford my son's school fees. When I questioned this, an official rudely told me to get out of his office and said that my demotion was not negotiable," she said.

PTI's landslide win; what went wrong for PML-N

Let us wait and see as to when Imran Khan uses his trump card of dissolving Punjab, KP assemblies

ANALYSIS

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: To everybody's surprise, the PTI has begged 15 out of 20 seats in the Punjab by-elections thus putting itself in a vantage position of regaining control of the biggest province. Four seats went to the PML-N. These four seats for them are a bonus as these seats never belonged to them. Theoretically, these 20 seats belonged to the PTI and it has just managed to win them back albeit not all. When PTI grabbed those seats PML N was not in power either in the Punjab or at the Center. In 2018, elections were held under a caretaker set up in which all parties were equally poised to exercise their clout and influence to get results of their choosing. But in this particular case the PML-N was not only in power in the Punjab but at the Center as well and historically the ruling parties always perform well in the by-elections and win. This time however it did not happen for which full marks

have to be given to PTI Chairman Imran Khan, who spearheaded a fearless and targeted election campaign. There are many factors that led to the downfall of otherwise a strong political party PML-N. The Punjab traditionally and historically belonged to the Muslim League either it is PML N or Q. PPP another big political party, despite its frantic efforts, has not been able to strengthen its foothold in the Punjab and in 2018 elections it was almost eliminated from this province. The PPP might have played a key role in the defeat of PML N in the by-election. Both these parties have ruled this country for most of the time. These parties have a diametrically different approach on various issues plus having totally different views as to how the country should look like. PML has been more inclined towards deriving inspiration and guidelines from the Islamic injunctions while the PPP always followed the model of socialism. The voters of these two parties got divided in two philosophies, and their difference of opinion made it almost impossible for them to co-exist. In this background, the PPP voters preferred to vote for PTI candidates or they just

stayed at home. Then, the PPP leadership, despite the fact that it enjoys a sizable share in the Cabinet, never took part in the election campaign or maybe was never invited by Maryam Nawaz to be part of the exercise. Resultantly, the PPP voters were left free to exercise their will rather freely. The biggest factor perhaps that led to PML N defeat appeared to be the PTI dissidents' factor. As we know, the PML N had lured these PTI dissidents by offering them tickets in return for their support to Hamza Shehbaz. But then they were disqualified. As an agreement the PML N had to give them the tickets for which it had to ignore its own die-hard and veteran workers. Consequently these disgruntled workers also cast votes against party nominees. Some of them chose to contest in an independent capacity. These independents could not win however they badly damaged the vote bank of their own party. The win of PTI candidates in such constituencies became quite easy. The results show as if the Establishment maintained a neutral posture. The Election Commission of Pakistan too tried its best to hold the entire drill in a free and

transparent manner but the PTI is not ready to accept it. According to them, the ECP made every possible effort to help anti PTI forces – a claim outright rejected by the Commission. We may have more or less the same results in the general elections as well if the neutrality factor remains in effect. Credit goes to Imran Khan that he exerted too much pressure on the ECP and the Neutrals that left them with no option but to stay put. But then perhaps there was no point in interfering into a drill that involved only few seats!! Additionally, the apex court had also made it clear that there should not be any kind of interference in the election exercise. Maybe this factor too went in favour of the PTI. All said and done, it does not mean that PML N has lost its vote bank in Punjab. Not at all. Despite this defeat PML N still holds ground in the province and has capability of staging a comeback provided it earnestly addresses its weaknesses. As the Vice President of the party Maryam Nawaz while admitting the defeat said it rightly that the party has to plug the loopholes to avoid any future disappointment. In the given circumstances the way

forward for the PML N is its quick decision whether it wants to complete the term or go for early elections. If it decides to go for early elections then it had to make for its mistakes or shortcomings whatever we call it, in order to win back masses support. One way of making for the mistakes is to provide immediate relief to masses. Take the prices of oil, gas, electricity to 11 April when this government actually was put in place and try to reverse dollar's upward trend. It may be a difficult call but it has to be made if the party really wants to whip up its sagging popularity. Also it would be in the interest of PML N if it could distance itself from the PPP and try to forge an alliance, if needed, with its like-minded parties. It would also help it to regain support of its workers, who do not want their party to have any sort of association or election arrangement with the PPP. PTI, which will now have governments in the Punjab and KP provinces, holds the key to early elections. If it dissolves both these assemblies, then the Central government will be left with no option but to call it a day. Let us wait and see as to when Imran Khan uses this trump card.

Inside...

ICCI calls for withdrawal of hike in SBP interest rate – Page 02

Rs12.629 billion disbursed for Interior's Division projects – Page 03

Govt to soon provide laptops to 100,000 students: Shaza – Page 04

A double-edged sword: Biden's pilgrimage to Jeddah – Page 05

Paraglider Pilots reach world's second highest mountain K2 – Page 06

Pak envoy for global support to Afghan interim government – Page 07

Pakistani professor gets King Abdullah II prize – Page 08

ICCI calls for withdrawal of hike in SBP interest rate

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) has called upon the government to urge the SBP to withdraw hike in its benchmark interest rate, which has been increased to 15 percent, in order to save the economy from further troubles as this historic hike would badly affect the growth of business activities and cause further slump in the economy. Muhammad Shakeel Munir said that the benchmark interest rate in Malaysia was only 2.25 percent, Indonesia 3.5 percent, China 3.7 percent, Bangladesh 4.75 percent and India 4.9 percent, but it was 15 percent in Pakistan due to which it was not possible for our private sector to compete effectively for promoting trade and exports. He

said that such a massive hike in policy interest rate would prove disastrous for industries and the SME sector as these sectors needed cheap loans for growth and expansion. He strongly demanded that the government should intervene and get the SBP's decision withdrawn with immediate effect to save the private sector from more problems. ICCI President said that the business community has shown great concerns over the SBP's move to increase the interest rate to 15 percent at a time when power, gas, and petroleum prices have already reached new highs. He said that the interest rate in Pakistan is many times higher than in the region, and in such circumstances, no investor would consider investing in Pakistan or setting up any new industries that would ultimately prove more harmful to the economy. Therefore, it is important that SBP should consult

with the stakeholders to save the businesses and economy from the negative impact of a hike in its interest rate, he demanded.

Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President and Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI said that many industries had invested billions of dollars in importing machinery in the last few years at a low markup rate after obtaining loans from the banks. However, industrialists and exporters would not be able to import machinery and plants at a 15 percent policy rate that would lead to a suspension in the industrial activities and thus would be detrimental for the economic future of the country. They stressed that SBP should revise its decision and bring down the benchmark interest rate to single digit level in order to facilitate the growth and expansion of business and industrial activities.



MULTAN: Opposition leader in Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani talking to media persons at Gillani House. – APP

PDM allies to discuss post-by-polls strategy

MULTAN: Leader of the opposition in senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani said on Monday that leaders of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) alliance would discuss the next political strategy in the backdrop of July 17 Punjab bye polls results and reaffirmed Pakistan Peoples Party's (PPP) commitment to stand by the allies through thick and thin, in Lahore on Tuesday. Addressing a press conference at Gilani House, veteran PPP leader said that PPP central executive committee (CEC) meeting, chaired by party chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and former president Asif Ali Zardari, was held at Bilawal House Karachi on Monday evening where all important matters like electoral reforms, NAB reforms, Supreme Court decisions and particularly the July 17 Punjab bye polls were discussed. PPP leadership decided that the party would stay supportive to allies in every difficult time, he said. Gilani said that

PPP being part of PDM supported PML-N candidates whole heartedly in the bye elections. He said that all the 20 seats that witnessed bye polls in Punjab were the seats won earlier by PTI out of which they won fifteen and lost remaining five in the recent bye polls. Responding to a question regarding article 6 on PTI leaders, Gilani said that it was the prerogative of the government to take the decision, however, added that in his opinion it was not a practical option. He said that PPP would be represented by former President Asif Ali Zardari in the important PDM meeting scheduled Tuesday to discuss the situation and carve out the next political strategy. All the decisions would be taken with consensus, Gilani said adding: "There will be no solo flight. We will not ditch our allies." To a question, Gilani said that election was a continuous process and loss or triumph were part of the game. Gilani

said that election commission and the government deserve commendation for holding elections in free, fair and transparent manner. He said, contrary to PTI leaders' claims of rigging and foul play, the whole process was held in a transparent manner, he added. All PTI leaders claims proved wrong, Gilani said that the alliance took difficult decisions and would move forward with consensus for stable political and economic environment in the country. He added that political stability brings economic stability. He lauded PML-N leaders particularly Maryam Nawaz Sharif for the hard work during the election campaign. To another question whether PPP would be part of alliance in the next general elections, Gilani said that PPP was a political party having its own vision and manifesto adding that decision as to how party would enter next general elections would be taken by the party's central executive committee (CEC). – APP



PTBA chief urges bars, chambers to educate members on tax laws

FAISALABAD: Pakistan Tax Bar Association (PTBA) President Rana Munir Hussain said on Monday tax bars and chambers of commerce and industry must forge a productive relationship to facilitate their members and provide them with much-needed awareness regarding the tax laws. Addressing a seminar on 'Federal Finance Bill-2022-2023' at Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FCCI), he said that both institutions were non-profit entities and their basic objective was to facilitate their members. He said that income tax practitioners wanted to serve taxpayers and they had nothing to do with the non-taxpayers. He said the two bodies had a very clear vision that every individual must pay due tax and the FBR must collect it. He said tax practitioners were duty bound to protect the legitimate rights of the business community and taxpayers.

He said he was against the arbitration committees, as under the law both parties had to give their written consent that they would accept the decision of the arbitration committee and thus they become deprived of their right to appeal. He appreciated Faisalabad Tax Bar Association for organising the event and also thanked FCCI for cooperating with it. He hoped the seminar would give in-depth knowledge to the young tax practitioners, and they would be in a better position to plead for their clients. Earlier, FCCI Vice President Rana Fiaz Ahmed welcomed the participants in the seminar. Pakistan Tax Bar Associations General Secretary Qammar-uz-Zaman Chaudhry and former president Lahore Tax Bar Association Zahid Atique gave detailed and critical presentations on direct taxes (income tax) and indirect taxes (sales tax), respectively. – APP

Gold price increases by Rs.1550 to Rs.142,400 per tola

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold witnessed an increase of Rs.1550 on Monday and was sold at Rs.142,400 in the local market against its sale at Rs.140,850 the previous day. The price of 10 gram 24 karat gold also increased by Rs.1329 and was sold at Rs.122,085 against its sale at Rs.120,756 whereas prices of 10 gram 22 karat went up to Rs.111,911 against its sale at Rs. 110,693. The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs1570 and Rs1346.02 respectively.

President for inspiration from Nelson Mandela's vision

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday urged the nation for a renewed pledge to strengthen democratic norms of civility, democratic decision-making and freedom of speech while taking inspiration from Nelson Mandela's vision. The president, in his message on Nelson Mandela International Day annually observed on July 18, paid tribute to the great South African leader as "extraordinary global advocate for dignity and equality, a leader of unparalleled courage and towering achievement and one of the most iconic and inspirational leaders of our time." "Let us find hope in Nelson Mandela's example and inspiration in his vision

and speak out against hate and stand up for human rights by embracing our common humanity to make our world more just, compassionate, prosperous, and sustainable for all," he remarked. The president also called for renewing the pledge to equality before the law and social justice for the empowerment of the country and its people. He said Nelson Mandela exemplified courage, compassion and commitment to freedom, peace and social justice. "He lived by these principles and was prepared to sacrifice his liberty and even his life for them," he commented. President Alvi said that in the face of great adversity, Nelson Mandela displayed extreme courage and resilience. He proved that all of us have the ability and responsibility to fight

against the blight of racism, discrimination, hate, polarization, poverty, and inequalities with positive thinking, social cohesion and forgiveness and passion to build a better future for all. The president said Nelson Mandela spent 27 years in prison for fighting against his country's discriminatory apartheid system of racial segregation without losing hope and finally succeeded in bringing an end to apartheid and ushered in a peaceful transition to majority rule. "While in power as President of South Africa, he emphasized personal forgiveness and reconciliation, pursued national reconciliation and reassured non-discrimination against South Africa's white population despite having an overwhelming majority," he added.

RCCI shows grave concern on economic uncertainty

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has expressed serious concern over the current economic situation and the state of uncertainty in the country. RCCI President Nadeem Rauf demanded that emergency measures be taken to control the economic situation of the country as the dollar closed at 215 in the interbank. The concern was expressed in a meeting of traders in the chamber house here on Monday, in which the representatives of Anjuman Tajran, Shahid Ghafoor Para-

cha, Arshad Awan, Sheikh Hafeez, Small Chamber President Sheikh Asif Idrees, Taj Abbasi, Zafar Qadri, Tahir Taj Bhatti, Chaudhry Iqbal, Tariq Waheed Butt, Rafiq Bhatia, Naveed Kanwal, Hamad Qureshi, Raja Jawad, Khurshid Ahmed, Farooq Chaudhry, Sheikh Abdul Waheed and others. Former presidents of RCCI Major Amanullah Khan, Dr. Hasan Sarosh, Dr. Shamail Dawood, Raja Aamir Iqbal also attended the meeting. Nadeem Rauf said that all political parties should put political issues aside and came up with a consensus document to address the economic situation of the country, including the IMF program and the dollar PKR parity.



Marriott's culinary team draws discerning crowds

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Marriott Hotel, which is known for its quintessential fine dining experience, is proud to welcome a team of International culinary chefs, from around the world. These master chefs belong to Greece, China, Italy, Thailand, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan. The hotel is delighted to introduce specialty chefs whose authentic creations would certainly delight the palate of food connoisseurs. "We are proud to be the only five-star hotel in the capital serving authentic cuisine" says the General Manager of Marriott Hotel Islamabad, Mr. David Richard. The team includes Ioannis Kritikos - the new Executive Chef from Greece, Chef Kevin - Chinese Chef for Dynasty, Chef Mirko - Italian Chef for Zigolini, Chef Thaiwichai - Thai Chef for Royal Elephant, Chef Perwaiz - Pakistani Chef for Nadia Coffee Shop, Chef Mario - Japanese Chef for Sakura and Chef Nadun - Executive Pasty Chef from Sri Lanka.

Islamabad POST
Available in following cities

ISLAMABAD
Qamar News Agency
03105460372

RAWALPINDI
Asim News Agency
03435802610

KARACHI
Nazir Syal
03337554016

PESHAWAR
Zarbagh News Agency
03005412069

FAISALABAD
Ishfaq Mughal
03007689850

GILGIT
M. Yousuf Bhutta
03338436820

JHELUM
Iqrahs News Agency
03005412069

KHARIAN
Ijaz News Agency
03068863870

LALAMUSA
Gulzar Ahmed Noshi
03359494788

SARA-I-ALMAGIR
0300 5428178

PTCL Group registers 5.7 pc revenue growth

ISLAMABAD: The country's leading telecom and ICT service provider, the Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) posted a 5.7 per cent growth in its revenues, owing to a robust commercial strategy during the first six months of 2022. "During the first six months of 2022, PTCL Group successfully managed to keep the top line growth momentum, which further strengthened its market standing as an integrated telecom services provider in Pakistan. Growth in revenue is mainly driven by strong performance in the consumer segment led by fixed broadband, mobile data, and business solutions, along with microfinance services that supported the Group in achieving 5.7% growth in revenue over the comparative period, despite the challenges of the increase in Advance Income Tax (AIT) and reduction in Mobile Termination Rates (MTR)" said CEO said President and Group CEO Hatem Bamatraf while addressing a press conference after attending the Board of Directors' meeting. Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL), the country's leading telecom and ICT service provider has announced its financial results for the quarter ended June 30, 2022, in the Board of Directors' meeting held here on Monday. Group Chief Financial Officer (GCFO) Mohammad Nadeem Khan Group Chief Finan-

cial Officer (CFO) while briefing the media said, PTCL Group's revenue of Rs 71.7 billion in 2022 is 5.7% higher compared to the same period of last year. He said, that the Group's profitability remained under pressure due to a significant hike in power and fuel tariffs, devaluation of the Pak Rupee against the USD, higher interest rates, and other factors like upfront costs associated with the acquisition of the 4G spectrum and related network rollout. "Despite all the difficulties the Group has posted a net loss of Rs 3.1 billion" he added. He said that PTCL continued its growth momentum by posting 4.7% Year on Year (YoY) revenue growth. He added that PTML's (Ufone) revenue grew by 3.5% as compared to the same period of last year, while U Bank has achieved a 25.0% growth in its revenue over the same period of last year. "PTCL's revenue of Rs 40.0 billion for the period is 4.7% higher than 2021, mainly driven by growth in broadband and business solutions segments," he said. The company has, he said, posted an operating profit of Rs 1.9 billion. He said, that a net profit of Rs 5.2 billion for the period is 38.8% higher compared to the same period of last year. "Increase in non-operating income, due to a translation gain on the Company's forex denominated assets, dividend income from a subsidiary and gain on disposal of obsolete

assets due to upgrade and fiberization of the network, has helped turn the 32.6% decrease in operating profit level with a 38.8% increase in the net profit level" he added. While sharing PTCL consumer, business, he said that during the half year, the company's fixed broadband business grew by 10.7% YoY, whereas the IPTV segment also showed 8.6% growth YoY. Within the broadband business, Flash Fiber, the company's premium FTTH service, showed significant growth of 91.7%. The Voice revenue stream has seen a decline due to lower voice traffic and continued conversion of customers to OTT services. He said, "PTCL has achieved consistent performance and enhanced customer experience on the back of the company's seamless fixed broadband, including the fastest internet service in Pakistan through the Flash Fiber brand. PTCL has expanded its FTTH services in 28 cities, and the subscriber base has doubled on a YoY basis as the company continued to tap into the demand for growing internet and data services". Post spectrum acquisition, he said, Ufone has achieved growth in the 4G subscriber base and data services leading to a 3.5% YoY growth in topline despite the challenges of the increase in Advance Income Tax (AIT) and reduction in Mobile Termination Rates (MTR). He said, Ufone continued to expand its net-

work footprint across the country and has significantly modernized its network to 4G since spectrum acquisition. "The company has one of the fastest growing 4G subscriber bases in the country" he added. He said that VIS Credit Rating Company has assigned initial entity ratings of 'AA-/A-1' (Double A Minus/A-One) to Ufone with the outlook on the assigned ratings as 'Stable'. "This acknowledges the financial strength of Ufone through an independent rating exercise which also denotes high credit quality and good fundamental protection factors and is a testimony of stakeholders' confidence in Ufone," he said. About U Bank, he said, the microfinance and branchless banking subsidiary of PTCL, continued its growth trajectory and has achieved 25.0% YoY growth in its revenue by expanding its advances portfolio. He said, "The balance sheet footing of the bank reached Rs 114 billion as the bank continued to diversify its asset classes and funding streams while ensuring positive bottom-line impact. With the core mission of microfinance at its heart, the business model of the bank is evolving to capture new segments and customer classes to include more of Pakistan into the banking network and further its ambition of financial and social inclusion. – APP

National Days and Armed Forces Days

JULY

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



Hotels & Restaurants

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



Airlines

- Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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



Enquiry

- Edhi Ambulance.....115
- PIA Flight Info.....114
- PIA Cargo.....9280979
- Railway Inquiry.....117
- Railway Exchange 9270831-5
- WASA Rawalpindi.....5555489
- CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

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



Departments

- CDA.....9221334-43
- CDA.....9208301-04
- Met Office.....9250360-6
- RDA.....5555864
- TMA.....5770886
- Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

- Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Rs12.629 bn disbursed for Interior's Division projects

Govt also specified Rs100mln for up-gradation of biometrics identification system for passport application and Rs530mln for Water Supply System in Forward area of FC (South) D.I.Khan

ISLAMABAD: The government disbursed an amount of Rs12.629 billion against total allocation of Rs21.048 billion for various new and ongoing projects of the Interior Division under Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) during last fiscal year 2021-21. Similarly, a sum of Rs8093.009 million has been earmarked for 36 ongoing and new schemes of the Interior Division under PSDP for the fiscal year 2022-23. As per the Planning Commission, a sum of Rs12.035 billion was specified for various on-going projects while Rs9.013 billion for new schemes during the last fiscal year. As compared to last fiscal year, an amount of Rs6.792 million has been specified for 28

ongoing projects and Rs2.300 billion for eight new schemes, as per data of the Planning Commission of Pakistan. An amount of Rs710.215 million, allocated for on-going scheme, capacity enhancement of CAF-Management of western border by raising eight additional wings for frontier corps Balochistan (North), Rs3000 million for construction of 10 Avenue, Islamabad, Rs457 million for construction of accommodation for Bhitai Rangers at Karachi, Rs825 million for construction of Korang Bridge and PWD Underpass Islamabad and Rs800 million for construction of Model Prison at H-16, Islamabad, Rs 400 million for feasibility Study for Conduction of Water from

Indus Water System at Tarbela Dam to the cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi including RCB and CCB (Phase-I), Rs 300 million for Integrated Border Management System (IBMS Phase-II), Rs 1717.380 million for Korang River and Rawal Lake Water Treatment Islamabad, Rs100 million for Land Revenue Records Management System in Rural Area of ICT Phase-II, Islamabad, Rs 363.036 million for National Response Center for Cyber Crimes (NR3C), Phase-III during FY 2021-22. The government also allocated Rs400 million under on-going schemes for Operational Improvement of FIA in AML/CFT, Counter Terrorism and Case Management System, Rs400 million

for Revamping of Cyber Crime Wing, FIA and Rs 500 million for Sanitation and Road Projects in UC Bokra, Mera Sumbal Jaffar, Bhandana Kalan, Jhangi Sayyedan Sara-i-Kharboosa, Tarnol Golra Sharif and Shah Allah Ditta, Islamabad during the said period. Under new schemes, the government allocated Rs1000 million for balance works for operationalization of Metro Bus from Peshawar Morr to New Islamabad International Airport (NIIA), Rs300 million for capacity enhancement of CAF-Management of Western Border by raising of (5) Additional Wings for Frontier Corps Balochistan (South), Phase-II, Rs203.379 million for construction of Sector Headquar-

ter at Shakas, Khyber Agency, Rs400 million for construction of accommodation for 2 x Wing HQs at Jamal Maya and Ghari Killi Orakzai Tribal District FC KP Peshawar, Rs400 million for construction of accommodation for 2 x Wing HQs at Mehrban Killi (Tarkho Kas) and Barai Pakdara Khyber Tribal District FC KP, Peshawar and Rs 750 million for establishment of 14 regional passport offices in Sindh in last financial year 2021-22. The government also specified Rs100 million for up-gradation of biometrics identification system for passport application and Rs530 million for Water Supply System in Forward area of FC (South) D.I.Khan. - APP

Government allocates Rs. 719 mln for Technology Park

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has allocated Rs. 719 million for establishment of Technology Park Development Project in Islamabad during the current financial year. The Park will encourage innovative solutions and provide futuristic entrepreneurship opportunities for the youth of Pakistan said an official of the ministry of IT. He said that the government had allocated Rs 6330.696 million in the PSDP for the financial year 2022-23 for ongoing and new schemes of the Information Technology and Telecom Division. Sharing the details, he said, Rs 5,380.696 million was allocated for 31 ongoing schemes, while the allocation for five new schemes was Rs 950 million. Among the ongoing schemes, Rs 320 million has been allocated for High Impact Skill Bootcamp Islamabad and Karachi, and Rs 300 million each for Protection and Upgradation of Pak-China Phase-I OFC Project for establishment of Cross border connectivity project AJK and GB, Upgradation of Existing TDM Based Backhaul Microwave with IP Based Backhaul Microwave Network in AJK and GB (SCO) and Upgradation of Transmission Network and Replacement of Optical Fiber Cable in AJK and GB. The allocation of new schemes included Rs 500 million for Establishment of Four Knowledge Park, Rs 250 million for Expansion of GPON FTTH Service in New and Existing Cities and Rs 100 million for Digital Economy Enhancement Project. - APP

PM lauds Hamza Shehbaz

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday acknowledged the efforts of the leaders and workers of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz for ensuring the holding of by-elections of the Punjab Assembly in a peaceful manner. In a tweet, the prime minister appreciated the government of Punjab under Chief Minister Hamza Shehbaz for conducting peaceful elections.

"The Punjab government under the leadership of Chief Minister Hamza Shehbaz deserves congratulations for conducting peaceful elections," he said. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Winners and participants of Urdu Speech competition on "Role of Media in National Integration" in a group photo with Chief Guest: Secretary Information, Ms Shahera Shahid, at Information Service Academy. - APP

Workshop on "Managing Science and Technology Parks" in September

ISLAMABAD: COMSTECH-the OIC Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTECH) has planned to organize an international training workshop on "Managing Science and Technology Parks" in the month of September. The workshop is being arranged in collaboration with Bilkent Cyber Technology Park, Pardis Technology Park, PAF-IAST Technology Park, and ICCBS Technology Park and Technology Incubation Center.

According to an official of COMSTECH, this workshop will analyze the path

of development of an idea into a commercial product along with discussing the different models of accelerators, incubation centers and technology parks. Furthermore, the workshop will focus specifically on training managers and personnel that run the technology parks. Managers/CEO of technology parks, managers from incubation parks, university based technology incubation centers, consultants, start-ups, ORIC incharge, Scientists, researchers, policy maker/government officials, and academicians from the OIC coun-

tries can register for participating in the workshop till July 31. The training workshop, scheduled to be held from September 7-8, will cover the topics including the growth of an idea and team: from idea to the end of incubation period; Product and market development, fund-raising and commercialization; Accelerators: How to manage and support; Case studies of different types of accelerators and their development plan in Iran, Turkey and Pakistan; Case study: Pardis Summit Event; Pre-incubation and incubation; Graduation pol-

icies and post-incubation interaction; Publication: Success stories documentation; Different types of Tech parks (public/private), Assessment policies, financial, credit and investment services and marketing services in parks (national & international) and Case study of Pardis Technology Park: Planning, funding, government policies and execution. The resources persons will consist of managers and heads of various world renowned technology parks who will deliver lectures on key areas of technology park management. - APP

AIOU offers semester aut 2022 admissions

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has started admissions for the first phase of autumn semester 2022. Programs offered in the first phase include Matriculation (General, Dars e Nizami and Open courses), FA (General, Dars e Nizami and Open courses), I.Com, Middle Tech, Certificate Courses, BS, MSc, MS/MPHil and Ph.D. Admission forms and prospectuses of these programs are available online on the University's website (www.aiou.edu.pk). Admission forms and prospectus for Matriculation and FA programs are available at the main campus of the University in Islamabad, Regional Campuses, and sale points established across the country. Students who are willing to take admission in matric

and FA can submit the forms through both online and manual mode whereas, in BS, MSc, MS/MPHil and Ph.D programs forms can be submitted only through online mode. The admission fee can also be paid online through Jazzy Cash, EasyPaisa, and UPay's mobile app. As per the new policy of the university, overseas Pakistani and international students can also enroll in matric, FA and I.Com programs. It is pertinent to mention here that in the last semester, students from many countries including Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, Malaysia, Italy, Canada, Africa, and the United States, took admission in various educational programs and AIOU has set the goal to increase the number of international students to 10,000 in the next three years.

Court adjourns reference against Zardari till Aug 4

ISLAMABAD: An Accountability Court (AC) on Monday adjourned hearing till August 4, on Thatha Water Supply reference against former president Asif Ali Zardari and others. AC-II Judge Muhammad Azam Khan heard the reference connected with the fake bank accounts scam files by National Accountability Bureau (NAB). The court granted one day experience from hearing to Asif Zardari on his request of his legal team. The judge was informed that the defence lawyer Farouk H. Naek couldn't appear on this day due to his engagements in other cases. At this, the court adjourned the reference till August 4. It may be mentioned here that the accused had filed acquittal pleas in the said graft case and the court had sought cross arguments from two sides. - APP

MoHW reserves 2% quota for employees in Green Enclave-I

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Housing and Works (MoHW) has reserved two percent quota of the total number of plots of each category for employees of nine constitutional bodies in Green Enclave-I, Bara Kahu Housing scheme Islamabad. Around eight plots have been reserved in category-I, 12 plots in category-II, 15 plots in category-III, 17 plots of category-IV and 15 plots of category-V were reserved for the employees of constitutional bodies, a ministry's official told APP. About the Sky Garden scheme, he said the revised layout plan of housing was under process for approval. However, as per tentative plot position in Sky Garden Housing scheme, the two percent quota was also reserved for the employees of constitutional bodies. The official said that around 22 plots of different categories were reserved in the Sky Garden scheme under 2 percent quota for the employees of constitutional bodies. List of members in waiting list (who deposited down payment and whose cases were likely to mature for allotment) is subject to verification of service particulars from their department including their Regular appointment in BPS as on date of membership etc, he added. - APP

Injecting wells recharge 10 MG water per day: CDA

ISLAMABAD: Capital Development Authority (CDA) on Monday said the injection wells installed at various locations in the city had recharged up to 10 million gallons water per day (MGD) amid recent rains. According to CDA spokesman, the federal apex agency in collaboration with Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) had established around 40 recharge wells in sectors I, H, F and G series to maintain ground water level. The teams of CDA water supply department were monitoring the wells after every rain to properly accumulate and inject it underground after complete recycling and filtration. The water was sent underground after removal of impurities and polluted elements, he added. Apart from this, he said, the work on installation of 60 new recharge wells was underway to utilise maximum rainwater to mitigate underground water level. The installation of wells was expected to complete in three to four months. The recharge wells were being built around the hospitals, educational institutions, government institutions, mosques, green areas and other buildings. - APP

'Sino-Indian cooperation imperative for peace'

Professor Lin Minwang from Fudan University, China said that while strategic shift in Indians foreign policy was evident and more so, quite beneficial for its bilateral relations, India still seemingly had certain limitations towards China

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Sino-Indian relations displayed a great deal of potential during two recent events, i.e., the pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine crises, said Professor Dr. Swaran Singh. He was addressing a webinar titled New Dimensions on the Sino-Indian Relations, organised by the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS). Professor Singh said that the current Si-

no-Indian ties were rooted in the shared mission of overcoming the limitations which rendered them constrained in progressing their ties across all sectors. He said that it was interesting to note that how India and China worked hand in hand during the pandemic. The complementarity in their actions to assist their neighbouring countries symbolized the potential for a much deep rooted partnership. Furthermore, he added that the agreement of both the countries

to denounce Russian aggression in Ukraine projected amicable grounds for cooperation. While there were major dimensions between the two countries, areas of cooperation were equally immense, he added. Professor Lin Minwang from Fudan University, China said that while the strategic shift in Indians foreign policy was evident and more so, quite beneficial for its bilateral relations, India still seemingly had certain

limitations towards China. An important facet of the Sino-Indian engagement was its overall influence on the region, said Ambassador Riaz Muhammad Khan, former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan. Referring to the Russia-Ukraine crisis he said that the conflict had revealed how military conflicts could result in unintended consequences no matter how meticulously planned. He added, that Russian adventurism in Ukraine had global and regional

consequences, which could prove disastrous for the economics of the region. Ambassador Riaz added that at present India-China trade was close to 700 million dollars and hence any economic misadventure could prove seriously threatening for the region. New, inclusive and cooperative frameworks were the need of the hour and bossy, assertive and military approaches had to be abandoned, placing economic uplift at the heart of all engagement, he said.

Briefs

IRSA releases 264778 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Monday released 264778 cusecs water from various rim stations with an inflow of 282560 cases. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1129.40 feet, which was 79.04 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded a 24982 and 15000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 131537, 211211 and 165010 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from the Kabul River, a total of 50200 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 67981 54878 released from the Chenab River at Marala. - APP

Govt notifies transfer, posting of officers

ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Monday issued a notification of transfer and posting of high rank officers. According to a notification of the Establishment Division, Mrs. Nasira Batool Jafri, a BS-20 officer of Secretariat Group, presently posted as Joint Secretary, Defence Division, is transferred and posted as Joint Secretary, Economic Affairs Division, with immediate effect and until further orders. While, Ms. Nimra Khan has relinquished the charge of the post of Section Officer (OMG/BS-18) in this Division. - APP

President phones family of martyred Lt Col Laiq Baig

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday telephoned the family of Lt. Col. Laiq Baig Mirza, who was martyred after being kidnapped in Ziarat, Balochistan on July 14, and extended his condolences. The president also talked to the family of Havaladar Khan Muhammad, who was martyred in the attack in Ziarat on July 15. He prayed for the elevated ranks of the martyrs and paid tribute to them for sacrificing their lives for the country. Dr Alvi expressed his sympathy to the bereaved and prayed for their patience. - APP

Digital solutions for agriculture to help grow GDP: PBF

ISLAMABAD: President of the Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) on Monday said that with the use of digital technology the volume of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the agricultural sector could be increased to 6 percent which could bring a revolution in the agricultural sector. PBF president urged ZTBL and other private banks to extend fresh loans to small farmers in all four provinces equally. Currently, the bank's disbursement is tilted towards Punjab only which is unjustified, said a press release issued here.

Meanwhile, president PBF Sahibzada Mian Usman Zulfikar said that Pakistan's population was estimated to almost double in the next 30 years. "That means we will have another 200 million mouths to feed by 2050," he said. He said that on top of rapid population growth, the changing climate or global warming was bringing new challenges to the nation's food security, a total of 21m people in the country were already estimated to be acutely food insecure at present. In this regard Usman Zulfikar suggested that small farmers could be facilitated through timely credit and that could be only possible if banks worked on new technologies instead of sticking only to old four or five products. Currently, agriculture is dying due to ineffective policies which has resulted in migration to urban areas from rural Sindh and Balochistan, he said adding. - APP

Govt to soon provide laptops to 100,000 students: Shaza

The country can be taken on the path of development only through the continuity of the policies

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister for Youth Affairs Shaza Fatima Khawaja has said that the work on Prime Minister Laptop Scheme is in progress, under which free laptops will be distributed among 100,000 youth of government universities and colleges soon. Under the scheme, high quality laptops will be provided to the youth purely on merit, she said while talking to APP on Monday. "These laptops will be provided to all PhD and post graduate students while the top performers in undergraduate programs will also be included in the scheme" she informed.

She said that the quota for the students of Balochistan has been doubled in the laptop scheme, while the quota has also been allocated for the disabled students, adding, 50

percent quota has been allocated for women in scheme. As many as 100,000 youth, she said, will be trained in skills and information technology through Prime Minister Skilled Programme, she remarked. She said that the Prime Minister Youth Program was started by the Pakistan Muslim League (N) government in 2013, which included 6 steps to empower the youth.

She rejected the impression of closing the Prime Minister Youth Loan Scheme terming it as wrong, and added, the restructuring of this program has been done under which the loan limit has been revised. "Now the youth will be provided interest-free loans up to Rs 500,000, while loans from Rs 500,000 to 750,000 will be provided on easy terms" she told APP. She said that every year 20

lakh graduates come to the market after completing their education, and underlined the dire need to provide skills education to these youth as per market needs.

She also informed that the work on forming the National Youth Employment Policy under the Prime Minister's Youth Program is going on. She said that the former government had closed the National Internship Program. The Special Assistant said that traditional and information technology training will be provided to the youth under the skilled program. Digital Pakistan Task Force has been formed for the promotion of information technology in the country, she added. "Our target is to take IT exports to 15 billion dollars" she remarked, adding, the youth working as freelancers are playing an

important role in the country's economy. She said that One lakh youth will be trained in technical skills under the Prime Minister Skilled Pakistan programme. Through this program the youth will be given free training in traditional and high-tech sectors, she said. She underlined the need to create awareness among the youth about acquiring technical skills. She also hinted out to introduce technology programs at the intermediate and matric level. Shaza said that the age of 15 crore youth in our country is between 15 to 25 years and making these youth skilled is our first priority. She went on saying that the sports talent hunt program will continue. The country can be taken on the path of development only through the continuity of the policies, she concluded. - APP

Rs150.560m being spent to advance 'Minerals Data Centre' project

ISLAMABAD: The government has allocated funds amounting to Rs 150.560 million in the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP 2022-23) to advance an ongoing project of establishing a modern National Minerals Data Centre (NDMC). The project, initiated last year, is aimed at compiling the data of available minerals for facilitation of investors and the future projects' planning in the country.

The two-year project is being jointly carried out by the Petroleum and Planning Divisions in consultation with all Provincial Mines & Minerals Departments including that of Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and

Geological Survey of Pakistan.

"Pakistan has world-class minerals' resource potential but contribution in the national GDP is <1% which is considerably below the global average of 2-8% of GDP primarily due to non-availability of integrated geological, regulatory and other relevant data that is the basic requirement for investment facilitation and projects' planning," according to an official document available with APP.

Under the project, Geographic Information System (GIS)-based integrated solutions and application development would be established to ensure availability of online geo-spatial data and maps for investment facilitation

and benefit of the stakeholders in the minerals sector.

The NDMC would contain information such as geological and geochemical maps, minerals sample analysis reports, airborne geophysical maps, areas granted and applied for mineral titles, roads and rails layers, geographical borderlines (province, district and town), reserves areas like 'strategic, forest and religious places.'

The compiled data would be categorized for publication through web-portal as per guidelines issued by the government. "The exercise will be a regular activity and information will be updated accordingly," the document said. - APP

Shafqat shares his masterpiece Manqabat

ISLAMABAD: Singer, songwriter and composer Shafqat Amanat Ali surprised his fans by sharing his soulful Manqabat via social media platforms. Hailing from Patiala gharana tradition of music, the once lead vocalist of pop rock band Fuzon, Ali recently took it to his Twitter handle to announce the official upload of his first ever composed Manqabat. "On the occasion of Eid-ul-Ghadir, I am pleased to share the first ever Manqabat written and composed by me. Presenting 'Dil Hai Tera Ghar Ya Ali' from my studio," stated the vocalist while sharing the significance of the upload as being associated with an auspicious occasion.

Just after the post, fans poured immense love and support for the artist over social media. "God bless you Shafqat ji for this soulful song. Your voice infuses a divine spark into words," shared a fan in the comment section of official YouTube upload. "I adore Shafqat Amanat Ali Khan as the singer with the natural feel he has in his singing and voice. I feel he stands at a different level," praised another fan. "Best wishes for your nice composition, heart touching," another fan shared wishes via tweeter. - APP

CDA to Beautify Orange Line Metro track

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In order to beautify the surroundings of Metro Orange line track Landscaping and other beautification work is in full swing. In this context, the work on plantation including landscaping on both sides of Metro Bus Orange Line tracks is being carried out at fast pace. In this regard, the Environment Wing of the Capital Development Authority continue work on the project even during the Eid-ul-Azha holidays and performed its duties diligently. Due to the special interest of the CDA administration, this project has entered in the final stages. On the direction of the Capital Development Authority administration, the Environment Wing is planting trees at suitable places around the project and decorating the project with seasonal flowers of different colors. Similarly, special plantation have been done along the walls of the underpass and along the entire route.

Meeting of CDA Board held

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Meeting of the Capital Development Authority Board was held on Monday under the chairmanship of Chairman Capital Development Authority at CDA Headquarters. The meeting was attended by the members of the CDA board. During the meeting, different agendas were taken into consideration and various projects were also approved. The CDA Board during its meeting approved handing over the affairs of metro bus service to a private company at the comparatively lowest rate of all the metro bus services operating in Pakistan. Similarly, approval was also given in the meeting for the construction of segregated tracks for Green and Blue Line buses to FWO under section (42) F of PPRPA rules.

11 criminal's rounded up in capital

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital territory police during a drive against anti-social elements arrested 11 outlaws during the last 24 hours from different areas of the city, a Police Public Relation Officer said. According to the details, Lohi Bher police team conducted a raid at the distillery and recovered 900 liters alcohol, 707 bottles wine, empty bottles, stickers, brewing items and 1326 gram hashish from their possession. Similarly, Noon police team crackdown against criminal elements and arrested three accused namely Muzamil Ahmed, Subhan Ali and Israr Ullah involved in possessing illegal weapons and recovered three 30 bore pistols along with ammunition from their possession. Khanna Police arrested an accused during checking namely Mir Alam Khan and recovered weapons with ammunition from his possession.

Court Order

In the Court of **Muhammad Abbas Sherazi** Civil Judge Gujrat
Title: **Muhammad Aslam Versus Muhammad Yousaf etc.**

Notice to:
2. Mehboob Ahmed S/O Riasat Ali deceased, 10. Maqsood Begum widow, 11. Shahid, 12. Warais, 13. Junaid, 14. Jibran sons of Muhammad Ayub deceased Caste Gujjar Residents of Gherara Tehsil and District Gujrat Suit for Declaration Whereas in the above mentioned case it has been proved to the satisfaction of the court that the above mentioned defendants are not served in ordinary way. It is therefore proclaimed under order 5 rule 20 CPC that if the said defendants will not appear personally or through a duly authorized agent or pleader in court at 8 AM on 20-07-2022, otherwise case will be decided ex parte. Court Reporter Gujrat

Civic bodies coordination must to avert encroachments

ISLAMABAD: The experts on Monday demanded that a close coordination and mutual implementation framework to enforce law was must to avert illegal constructions and encroachment in water bodies near peri urban areas causing serious natural hazards like urban flooding land and water pollution. The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) organised the seminar titled illegal constructions in water bodies in peri urban areas of the federal capital to stir debate and extract workable recommendations to ensure remedy to the lurking issue.

Executive Director SDPI, Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri, in his opening remarks, said the webinar and hybrid seminar was held on a pertinent topic that became more relevant in every monsoon season in the country. Dr Suleri said due to urban flooding in the housing societies constructed illegally in water bodies or the Indus River that swells up in monsoon in the areas of Muzaffargarh and Kacha area got inundated that gave its inhabitants a false sense of security as it deluged their lifetime savings. The event was organised to delve deep into this issue to derive suggestions for its resolution, he added. - APP

Addressing population issue necessary: Qadir

ISLAMABAD: Minister for National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination Abdul Qadir Patel on Monday said addressing the issues related to the increasing population was the need of the hour to promote sustainable and inclusive socio-economic development. Addressing a seminar on the occasion of World Population Day, the minister said the government was committed to check the increasing population in the country by implementing global obligations for addressing poverty, health problems, illiteracy, and violation of human rights.

He said the government had given top priority to the subject of population and its development in order to address the matters related to the country's population inclusively. He expressed the hope that Pakistan would take every step possible to fulfill its international commitments and implement the National Action Plan on population while taking all stakeholders and implementing partners on board. The minister highlighted the need for raising awareness about family planning among the citizens to control the exponentially rising population of Pakistan. He urged the provincial governments, civil society organizations, and the private sector to join hands with the Federal Government to advance the agenda of population and development in the country. - APP



ISLAMABAD: People enjoying boat riding at Lake View Park in the Federal Capital. - APP

Ignoring diversity only breeds incompatibility in society: Toaha Qureshi

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The ideological development is not entirely related to and limited by the individuals' different identities and backgrounds. With the determined will and firm resolve, our identities and backgrounds cannot deter our forward movement and journey to prosperity. The youth must realize their unique and infinite potential for communal and national development; they can contribute enormously to portray a positive image of their country especially by addressing misperceptions about their identities like religion, culture and nation.

These remarks were made by Mr. Toaha Qureshi MBE, Founder Chairman, Forum for International Relations Development (FIRD) - a UK

based conflict resolution think tank, during his interaction with the delegation of over 40 female students from newly merged districts; Khyber, Orakzai, North Waziristan and Kurram, visiting Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), Islamabad, as part of their exposure trip arranged by the Department of Criminology, University of Peshawar. Mr. Qureshi said that diversity is a natural phenomenon and society is bound to have individuals and groups with different beliefs. However, distancing from them on the basis of these differences is not only tantamount to discrimination about also breeds polarization in the society and incompatibility among its members.

The best way the youth can make interventions to address different contemporary issues of social con-

cern is by first accepting and taking responsibility of the problem, the actions to ameliorate them will follow automatically.

Stressing the importance of critical thinking as one of the factors key to counter extremist narrative, the Executive Director, CRSS, Mr. Imtiaz Gul noted that the young people should develop and practice critical thinking and inquiry of issues as their contribution to the knowledge building and evolution process, and socio-political development. Critically thinking youth is one of the best ways to refute and delegitimize fake news and motivated narrative on the issues that determine the state of peace and cohesion in the society. Being a good human, and responsible and empathetic citizen is as important as being a good Muslim.

PR receive great response from passengers

Despite the monsoon season across the country, the timing of the trains was also improved as compare to the previous years

ISLAMABAD: The special trains on Eid ul Azha introduced by Pakistan Railways had received overwhelming response from thousands of travelers visited their beloved ones in their native towns. The passengers have expressed their gratitude to Pakistan Railways for facilitating them on Eid through special trains which saved precious time and money. A large number of passengers with families were seen at the railway stations according to whom the staff at the stations was quite helpful in informing about travelers about timing of trains, platforms numbers, ticketing and booking issues. Talking to APP, Muhammad Kamal who arrived at Rawalpindi Railway Station from

Karachi after celebrating Eid with their relatives said that Pakistan Railways had won passengers hearts through completing Eid trains operation with a lot of improvements. Another passenger, Maha Mansha said that the services being provided by the management were very much improved while all the railway stations looked neat and clean. She said that despite the monsoon season across the country, the timing of the trains was also improved as compare to the previous years. It is pertinent to mention here that Pakistan Railways announced three special Eid trains to facilitate the extra passengers traveling home to celebrate Eid ul Azha. Pakistan Railways was set to receive

Rs 9891.685 million as payable amount on account of providing different services to federal and provincial departments, autonomous and private bodies. In that regard, Pakistan Railways had approached the departments to recover outstanding billions of rupees as early as possible, an official of the Ministry of Railways told APP. Giving details, he said the federal departments had to pay an amount of Rs 1172.180 million while provincial departments would pay Rs 2,444.220 million, besides autonomous and private bodies with an amount of Rs 6,275.285 million. The official said the Ministry had approached the federal

and provincial departments for recovering this outstanding amount. He said the federal departments includes Defence, National Highway Authority, AGPR, Pakistan Post Office, Works Department, State Bank of Pakistan and Post Master General (Freight). The provincial institutions includes Food department, provincial highways, irrigation, police and Town municipal authorities while the autonomous and private bodies includes Pakistan State Oil, WAPDA, Oil Companies (Shell Chevron), Public Private Partnership (Business Express and Shalimar Express Night Coach, Bolan Express, he added. - APP

Middle East trip a rude awakening for US

IT is not over-stretching it to describe US President Joe Biden's Middle East trip, which ended on Saturday, as a catalogue of embarrassments. In Israel, it was clear that Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid were not reading from the same page on how to stop Iran's nuclear weapons program. Similarly, he was not on the same wavelength in his meeting with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. And rather than the longed for commitment to increase oil production, Biden received a rebuke from Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for trying to "impose his own values" on Saudi Arabia. Neither of the two main goals of Biden's visit, namely forming a Middle East version of the air defense alliance and persuading Saudi Arabia to increase oil production, were achieved. The Middle East air defense alliance envisaged by the US includes Israel, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Iraq, and is aimed at containing Iran. However, there are obvious differences between the parties and despite the upbeat talk afterward, Biden failed to make any headway in advancing it. Biden also failed with his other main objective, namely to persuade Saudi Arabia to increase its oil production, since Saudi Arabia is not willing to "choose sides" in the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. On many issues in the Middle East, Saudi Arabia is supported by Russia, and Russia's arms sales to Saudi Arabia have increased in the past few years. By increasing its oil production, Saudi Arabia would in effect be participating in the US sanctions against Russia, which would damage the relationship between the two countries, thereby pushing Russia to the side of Iran, and worsening the security environment around Saudi Arabia. This also highlighted how empty-headed was any notion that by reasserting the US' presence in the region, the supposed vacuum it had created would be refilled, and China and Russia would somehow be squeezed out of the Middle East despite the cooperation they have established with countries in the region. Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir made it clear that Saudi Arabia views China as another important partner. Countries in the Middle East have experienced the misery that comes in the wake of the US taking an interest in their affairs. They are wary of falling into that trap again, and they are unwilling to put all their eggs in the US basket. Thus Biden's hopes for the trip were bound to be dashed as his objectives were unrealistic. He misread the regional situation and overestimated US influence. Biden's embarrassment in the Middle East shows that while Washington is still stuck in the past, other countries are keen to accelerate the transition from the power structure it has imposed on the world.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 02 Issue: 361

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-2266165 / 051-2261960

Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad



\$4b from 'friendly countries'

IT turns out that there's a \$4billion shortfall in foreign reserves even after the resumption of the IMF bailout program. That explains why the dollar made a return to form against the rupee even after the announcement. Yet while the finance minister is convinced the gap will be filled in time to keep the currency from collapsing any further and, of course, also rule out any chance of default anytime soon, it's how he's arranging the emergency funds that also raises some concerns.

"We think that we will get \$1.2b in deferred oil payment from a friendly country. We think that a foreign country will invest between \$1.5b to \$2b in stocks on a G2G (government-to-government) basis, and another friendly country will perhaps give us gas on deferred payment and yet another friendly country will make some deposits," is how he explained it. But what if what he thinks does not turn out to be true and the country he hopes will "perhaps give us gas" finds better clients? Will the rupee fall further through the floor, pushing us tumbling into default in that case? Perhaps the finance minister should shed some light on the contingency plan as well, because with so many ifs and buts there's a very real possibility of his ministry falling a little short in its quest for emergency dollars.

The sad fact of the matter is that the economy is in deep crisis and really not very far from sovereign default.

This fiscal year alone we need to cough up more than \$40b dollars in debt payment. And if we have to bend over backwards for a couple of billion, and then, too, count on good luck to get it, there's no doubt that we have our work cut out for us. The best way to proceed in such circumstances is to ensure complete transparency. That's a little difficult to do when the political temperature is so high, no doubt, but if the people are kept in the dark when they need clarity, they tend to take it out at the next election. So the sooner the truth comes out the better for all parties concerned.

A double-edged sword: Biden's pilgrimage to Jeddah

James M. Dorsey

Saudi Arabia's Red Sea Gateway Terminal (RSGT), backed by the Public Investment Fund (PIF), the Saudi sovereign wealth fund, is initially targeting ports that would service vital Saudi imports, such as food.

"We have a focus on ports in Sudan and Egypt. They weren't picked for that reason, but they happen to be significant countries for Saudi Arabia's food security strategy," said RSGT Chief Executive Officer Jens Floe

US President Joe Biden's controversial pilgrimage to Jeddah is part of a broader and more complex geopolitical puzzle with multiple Gulf and Red Sea littoral states attempting to hedge their bets and play rival global and regional powers against one another.

Widely seen as a knee fall after the president refused, since coming to office, to interact with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Mr. Biden's visit is likely to prove a double-edged sword for the United States. Mr. Bin Salman and other regional leaders will have welcomed Mr. Biden's reassurance that the United States, with tens of thousands of troops in the region, would

not abandon the Middle East and allow Iran to become a nuclear power. The problem is the reassurance comes from a man who may not be in office three years from now and from a country whose credibility and authority have been weakened, not least by Mr. Biden's Saudi knee fall. Even so, attempts to hedge bets and enhance leverage will seek to increase the region's relevance to the international community, particularly the United States, rather than supplant the US as the region's foremost security guarantor.

Maneuvering will also heighten regional rivalries, notably in the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa, that figured prominently in a joint statement issued by the United States and Saudi Arabia during Mr. Biden's visit to the kingdom. Some 30 per cent of the world's container traffic passes each year through those waterways. The statement stressed the importance of preserving the free flow of commerce through strategic international waterways like the Bab al-Mandab and the Strait of Hormuz.

It noted that a recently established maritime unit, Combined Task Force 153, would focus on enhancing security in the Bab-al Mandab and intercepting smuggling into war-torn Yemen. In addition, the statement welcomed Saudi Arabia's assumption of the command of a similar unit, Combined Task Force 150, that operates in the Gulf of Oman and the North Arabian Sea. From Mr. Biden's perspective, projecting enhanced security cooperation with regional players was boosted by reports that Russian efforts to establish a naval base, Russia's first in Africa, at Sudan's Red Sea city of Port Sudan, were faltering because of differences among the African country's military leadership.

So far, so good.

More problematic from Mr. Biden's perspective is that Gulf states cooperate closely with China, which has acquired stakes in ports and terminals in Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Oman, and Djibouti, where the People's Republic has a military base. The environment becomes more complex in light of stepped-up competition among US allies for regional influence and Iranian enhancement of the Islamic republic's naval capabilities. Regarding ports, Mr. Bin Salman plans

to turn his kingdom into a transportation and logistics hub that connects continents and replaces the UAE and Qatar as the Middle East's go-to addresses. Saudi Arabia is a latecomer to the global port control game in which Dubai's DP World and China are major players. DP World operates 82 marine and inland terminals in more than 40 countries, including Djibouti, Somaliland, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, Cyprus, and crucially, Dubai's central Jebel Ali port. Saudi Arabia's Red Sea Gateway Terminal (RSGT), backed by the Public Investment Fund (PIF), the Saudi sovereign wealth fund, is initially targeting ports that would service vital Saudi imports, such as food.

"We have a focus on ports in Sudan and Egypt. They weren't picked for that reason, but they happen to be significant countries for Saudi Arabia's food security strategy," said RSGT Chief Executive Officer Jens Floe. Last year, the PIF and China's Cosco Shipping Ports bought a 20 per cent stake in RSGT. The Chinese investment fits into China's Belt and Road strategy, which included the acquisition of stakes in ports and terminals in Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Oman, and Djibouti, where China has a military base. The United Arab Emirates halted in late 2020 construction at a Chinese port project near Abu Dhabi after US officials asserted that China intended to use the site for military purposes.

While Saudi port plans have yet to move beyond modernising Dammam's King Abdulaziz Port and bolstering its crane capacity, Abu Dhabi Ports agreed to develop, operate, and manage a terminal at Safaga Port on Egypt's east coast as a part of a consortium. Safaga, south of Hurghada, a Red Sea resort town, exports phosphates and hosts a ferry for Hajj pilgrims to Dubai in Saudi Arabia. The UAE potentially is more ruthless in its competition for control of the region's waterways. A pro-Houthi Yemeni news agency asserted that the UAE was seeking to change the demography in its favour of the strategic Yemeni Indian Ocean island of Socotra.

The agency, Hodhod, said the UAE police was recruiting Socotra Yemenis in large numbers

and transferring them off the island. It claimed that Emiratis willing to move to Socotra were awarded 100,000 dirhams (US\$27,200). However, it was not clear why significant numbers of Emiratis would want to leave the hypermodern UAE for a forsaken island. The UAE appeared to be playing both ends against the middle as Iranian state television trumpeted that the Islamic republic had welcomed Mr. Biden's visit by enhancing its capability to put armed drones on warships in the Gulf and the Indian Ocean.

The US and its allies see as a major threat Iranian drones that Iran and its allies have used to target critical infrastructure, including oil facilities in Saudi Arabia and the UAE and shipping in the Gulf. Forging its own path, the UAE distanced itself from the security-focused anti-Iranian tenor of Mr. Biden's meetings with Mr. Bin Salman and the leaders of the other Gulf countries and Egypt, Jordan, and Iraq. "We are open to cooperation, but not cooperation targeted at any other country in the region, and I specifically mention Iran... We have to find solutions, and we have also to use economic cooperation in various areas," said Anwar Gargash, diplomatic adviser to UAE president Mohammed bin Zayed.

With Mr. Biden still in the region, Mr. Gargash disclosed that the UAE was seeking to return its ambassador to Iran for the first time since 2016. The UAE downgraded its diplomatic ties after a mob attacked Saudi Arabia's embassy in Tehran in protest against the execution of a prominent Saudi Shiite cleric.

With the UAE staking out its own position and states like Qatar, Oman, Kuwait, and Iraq unlikely to, at this point, adopt confrontational policies towards Iran, Mr. Biden's main anti-Iranian regional pillars are Saudi Arabia, its appendage Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, and Israel.

That left Mr. Biden little choice but to eat humble pie by making his way to Jeddah. That was all the truer given the president's inclination to bolster approaches that have not solved any of the Middle East's multiple problems rather than build them into broader and bolder policies that could prove more effective.

Turkey and security of Middle East

Adham Kawa

Turkey's stance and movements on the level of foreign policy in the Middle East, including rejecting Sisi's military coup in Egypt, interfering in Syria's internal affairs and carrying out an army on its territory...

THE importance of the Position of the East Sea geopolitically and geographically is considered one of the most important factors that push Turkey to pay more attention to the region in terms of Turkey's national security policy, either now or in the future. To understand the importance of this region geographically, it is enough to look at the conflict between regional and international forces to impose their power and influence in the Middle East. Many international and regional forces such as the United States, Russia, France, Britain, Italy, Germany, Turkey, Greece, Israel, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia are part of the countries involved in the conflict in the region.

Geographically, the partnership of several countries rich in energy resources on the coasts of the Middle East Sea, the existence of a water channel such as the Sues Canal, which is considered one of the most important waterways in the world in this region, continues its problems and conflicts. Between Israel and Palestine in this geography, America's encouragement to impose its supremacy on the region by the Israeli lobby, the classic dream of reaching hot waters by Russia, the dream of reviving imperial supremacy. Turkey's search for energy sources by Britain, Russia and France is the reason why the Middle East is geopolitically considered one of the most important areas in the world. Regional and international conflicts to control the Gulf of Sweden, provide Security and Security for Israel,

reach hot water, gain some of Syria's energy resources, and gain more importance in controlling Libya and Cyprus Turkey's foreign policy in the context of these conflicts has caused the country to face many problems, whether regionally or internationally, in a way that is currently being carried out to blockade and put pressure on the country in the Middle East. Here we try to briefly address some of these problems, including: Cyprus is considered one of the most important areas of particular importance in Turkey's foreign policy agendas in the Middle East.

After the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960, the conflicts between Turkey and Greece over the region are still ongoing. Although it was originally established to represent both nations (Turks and Greeks), shortly after its establishment, the Greeks tried to change the republic to a Greek republic by carrying out bloody attacks on Turks in 1963. As a reaction to the move, Turkey planned to interfere in the local situation, but because of US opposition, Turkey was unable to carry out the plan. Even after the 1974 coup, the United States declared Cyprus a demilitarized zone for three years to prevent Turkey from interfering. After accepting Greece's membership in the European Union in 1981, and then accepting the membership of Greek Cyprus (Republic of Southern Cyprus) on 1/5/2014 as the representative of all Cyprus in the European Union Both the United States and the European Union appear more as supporters of Greece and Greek Cyprus on the issue of solving the Problem of Cyprus, particularly in the issue of determining the border of the region's water fronts and establishing power, which is considered the most important problem in the Middle East. Although Turkey is leading the countries with the longest waterfront in the Middle East, efforts are being made to limit Turkey's authority over the region's water fronts, particularly in the East Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea.

In order to prevent Greece's efforts to deal with the islands of Mis, Rodos, Kashout and Krit as part of its territory, Turkey reached an authorization agreement with Turkish Cyprus in 2010. Through the treaty, Turkey has been able to establish naval forces near Cyprus island since 2010 and conduct inspections and searches for natural resources such as oil and gas in the area's water ways. During the conflict in the region, Turkish naval forces prevented a ship belonging to the Italian oil company ENI on February 9, 2016, on charges of intending to conduct searches in the water fronts of the Turkish Republic of Cyprus. Turkey's continued search

and investigation steps near the coasts of Cyprus and Greece in the Eastern Mediterranean and ignoring international protests about this, complicating its relations with Greek and Greek Cyprus, Especially after accusing Cyprus of taking unilateral steps and giving permission to international companies to search for the region's natural resources without considering the rights of Turkish citizens in northern Cyprus, Turkey has Regional and international levels will face a breakdown in relations with Greece, Greece's Cyprus, the United States and France.

Another dimension that Ankara attaches great importance to in the region's foreign policy agenda is its efforts to revive and strengthen its political, economic, historical and cultural relations with Ottoman-dominated countries. Especially during the Justice and Development Party's rule, Turkey has tried to strengthen and develop relations with countries located on the Mediterranean Sea basin such as Syria, Egypt, Libya and Palestine.

With the emergence of the Arab Spring revolutions and uprisings by the Egyptian, Libyan and Syrian peoples against the dictatorial systems of their countries in the hope of ending dictatorship and achieving democracy in their countries, Turkey has expressed its support for the peoples of the region since the beginning of this revolution and rebellion in a way that is compatible with foreign policy agendas. In this context, after the victory of the Egyptian people's revolution, especially after the victory of the Muslim Brotherhood and the rise of Muhammad Mursi by voting and winning the majority of the votes of the country's citizens, Turkey expressed its support for Muhammad Mursi's government. Like Egypt, Turkey has declared its opposition to Bashar al-Assad's government by supporting opposition forces close to Syria.

Turkey's stance and movements on the level of foreign policy in the Middle East, including rejecting Sisi's military coup in Egypt, interfering in Syria's internal affairs and carrying out an army on its territory, sent it Military forces for Libya and interference in the internal affairs of the country, conflicts of interests with the interests of a number of regional and international countries, protests and attitudes of those countries against Turkey's movements and activities in the region have made Foreign relations in the country, whether at the regional or international level, will face problems and weaknesses. In this context, the UAE, Israel, the United States, France, Russia and Saudi Arabia see Ankara's steps to protect its interests and increase its power

and influence in the Middle East as a threat to their interests and work to limit and reduce Turkey's power in the region. At the regional level, a joint front has been formed between the UAE, Egypt and Saudi Arabia to prevent Turkey's power and influence in the region led by the Justice and Development Party. As can be seen now, this side agrees to take joint steps in the Libyan issue and to determine the border of maritime authority in the Middle East against Turkey, in return for the support and assistance of the UAE, Egypt and Saudi Arabia to Libyan national army forces led by Khalifa Haftar. But internationally, because of the rivalry and conflict in the interests of the powerful countries, they have not yet been able to form a common front against Turkey, for example, France and Russia are pursuing a different and opposing policy in Syria according to their own interests, but in Libya the two countries are on the same side and support Khalifa Haftar's government.

In the continuation of their efforts to blockade and weaken Turkey in the Middle East, we need to point to Israel's state policy and the significant impact of the country's lobby ingenuity in directing US foreign policy in the region. As Turkey's economic and military capabilities develop during the Rule of the Justice and Development Party led by Rajab Taib Erdogan, the country's government has intensified its efforts to adopt an independent policy in internal and external affairs, including acknowledging the movement.

The return of Palestinian Hamas as the real representative of Palestinian citizens, especially after the country's 2006 elections, welcomed Khalid Mashali, the leader of the movement, in Ankara, the capital, and expressed his dissatisfaction. The Government of Tel Aviv has expressed concern over the Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip in Ankara. Turkey's continued stance on the Palestinian issue, its stand against Israel's policies in the region, and its continued activities in the Middle East have led Israel to consider Turkey's efforts as a threat to itself, and this situation will certainly have a direct impact on Washington's stance and policies against Turkey. It is no exaggeration to say that Israel's dangers and concerns against Turkey have increased in a way that is politically and economically resorting to benefiting from its lobbying capabilities in western countries in order to oppose and weaken the Turkish state.

– Expert in international relations and international security Tishk International University Iraq
Email: adham.kawa@std.tiu.edu.iq

Briefs

Imran Khan demands fresh general polls

FROM PAGE 01

voters were declared dead in the voter lists. Imran Khan warned that if the general elections were to be held in the same manner as the by-elections, then the crisis would escalate rather than decreasing because every attempt was made to defeat PTI.

He stated that people were intimidated by the police and the state machinery was used in the by-polls but the ECP turned blind eyes to these irregularities.

"Today I want to thank the people of Punjab for reposing their trust on PTI, as the Nation has moved toward Quaid's vision," he added.

He said that a nation that has no ideology can never become a nation, as imported government was imposed under an external conspiracy, which was rejected by the voters, adding that the people would not accept the slavery of others, as we are now going to become a great nation.

He said that an artificial political crisis was created during PTI government, otherwise the economic survey of the government showed that the growth rate was increasing after 17 years, as our government had created more jobs than all the governments despite Corona pandemic. "Our government was also in the IMF program for two and a half years, when we used to say that there is inflation at the global level, the opposition threatened us of anti-inflation march," he added.

"We were taking Pakistan towards an Islamic welfare state, as for the first time, our government gave health insurance of 10 lakh to each family, Ehsaas program was appreciated globally, besides giving interest free loans for house construction," Imran maintained.

He expressed his surprise that despite performing exceptionally well, our government was overthrown under a foreign conspiracy, adding that when the conspiracy was hatching, he and Shaukat Tareen informed the establishment about the possible lethal consequences.

He said that all indicators and statistics were clearly showed that PTI government was performing well, adding that if they read the economic survey they would understand the kind of progress Pakistan was making.

Imran Khan stated that as soon as these corrupt political elites came to power, they amended the NAB law in order to get their money embezzlement and corruption cases cleared.

PTI Chairman announced that he would challenge the NAB amendment bill in the Supreme Court today (Tuesday), adding that the economy would go further downwards, if right and timely steps were not taken.

He suggested that the only way forward was to hold transparent elections in the country. Imran Khan made it clear that the genie of consciousness came out of the bottle and now it was next to impossible to bottle them again.

Talking about the police highhandedness on May 25, he said that people broke the idol of fear, as they gave a clear message that now no one can decide the future of the country in a closed room despite massive use of teargas by police against the peaceful protestors including women and children, which was unforgettable.

He went on to say that he knew each of the police personnel who used teargas and tortured the women and children on the instructions of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah and they would be dealt according to the law.

The PTI Core committee meeting was attended by PTI Vice Chairman Shah Mehmood Qureshi, PTI Central Secretary General Asad Umar, Senior Central Vice Presidents Fawad Chaudhary and Dr. Shireen Mazari. Central Secretary Information Farukh Habib, Central Additional Secretary Generals Aamir Mehmood Kayani and Umar Ayub Khan along with members were also present in the core committee are present.

Paraglider Pilots reach world's second highest mountain K2

Pilots reach world's second highest mountain and climb to 7,500m but still waiting for perfect weather conditions to soar above the summit



DNA

ISLAMABAD: The goal to fly a paraglider above K2 is still on – all the team need is a bit of luck. So says Belgian adventurer Tom de Dorlodot who is in the heart of the Karakoram exploring the Baltoro from the air with fellow flyers Horacio Llorens and Ramon Morillas. The trio have spent the past three weeks flying new lines by paraglider – collapsible foot-launched wings, relying on pockets of warm

air to climb above the region's famously spectacular mountains. "It's been pretty intense," Tom says. Speaking from Askole where the team has gone to pick up fresh supplies, he said the expedition has got off to a great start. "On the first flight we flew the whole Baltoro glacier almost all the way to K2 which was incredible. We've been really blessed with the weather. It's been really amazing, big thermals, small fluffy clouds, never too big and no wind in the valley so it's pretty safe to fly."

The team enjoyed ten great flying days. On three occasions they got to K2, on four they made Broad Peak and some they tagged both on the same day. They've also explored close to Muztagh Tower, Gasherbrum and Masherbrum. Days typically begin with an 800m hike to launch. "It's extremely hot," says Tom. "You're dressed to fly at 8,000m and you're carrying so much gear." From there the team launch by inflating their wing above their heads and running down a steep slope. Once in

the air, it's extremely committing. "It's always a big challenge," adds Tom. "We have to fly 100km almost every day. You have to think, that's 100km without any landing options. We were walking on the glacier the other day and it's just a nightmare of big stones and rocks." One day Ramon landed at the base camp of Broad Peak. It took him two days to hike back. The team has been re-charging in Askole and picking up fresh food supplies after living off rice and chapattis for five days. Due to re-

gional floods that have damaged roads and bridges, supplies haven't been getting through. The plan is now to make one last attempt on K2 and then fly all the way back to Skardu to avoid the difficult journey overland. Ramon has left for Spain so it's just Tom and Horacio now. "There's still not so much wind forecast but we're hoping it will come and we can reach K2 and soar all the way up. It's just a question of luck now. We need a bit of luck to make it happen – but it's possible."



GALLE: Sri Lankan batsman Oshada Fernando plays a shot against Pakistan during first test. – DNA

Putin, Erdogan to discuss Ukraine grain export mechanisms: Kremlin

The Russian defence ministry had indicated Friday that a "final document" on the subject mediated by the UN would be soon ready to release some 20 million tons of currently blocked grain exports as well as those of Russian grain and fertiliser currently held back under Western sanctions

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin and Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan will meet Tuesday in Tehran to discuss Ukraine grain export mechanisms, a Kremlin source said Monday. The two leaders will meet in the Iranian capital with the conflict in Ukraine massively hampering shipments from one of the world's biggest exporters of wheat and other grain, sparking fears of global food shortages. "Firstly, we are ready to continue the work in this direction, secondly this issue is going to be discussed by the presidents," Russian news agencies quoted presidential advisor Yuri Ushakov as saying. The Russian defence ministry had indicated Friday that a "final document" on the subject mediated by the United Nations would be soon ready to release some 20 million tons of currently blocked grain exports as well as those of Russian grain and fertiliser currently held back under Western sanctions. According to Ushakov, a coordination centre is to be opened in Istanbul allowing routing of those exports via the Black Sea. Turkish Defence Minister Hulusi Akar confirmed for his part Monday that "an agreement in principle... has been found" between Ukraine and Russia to establish a secure sea corridor allowing grain transport. Turkey – a NATO member on speaking terms with both Russia and Ukraine – has spearheaded efforts to resume the grain deliveries. An official Turkish source requesting anonymity said another meeting could take place "Wednesday or Thursday", following the Tehran talks. News that Putin and Erdogan are to meet came on a day which saw EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell warn Russia's blockade of Ukrainian ports threatens supplies to countless thousands vulnerable to starvation. Borrell dubbed the issue "one of life and death for many human beings." – APP

Greece protests to Serbia, Ukraine over plane crash cargo

ATHENS: Greece on Monday filed formal complaints to Serbia and Ukraine over the military cargo on a plane that crashed in its territory during an emergency landing, a Greek foreign ministry source said. The Antonov An-12 aircraft, which crashed near the northern Greek city of Kavala late on Saturday evening killing all eight crew members on board, was carrying 11.5 tonnes of Serbian-made mortar ammunition to Bangladesh, which was the buyer. The plane was operated by

the Ukrainian cargo carrier Meridian. The Ukrainian foreign ministry said the eight flight crew were Ukrainian citizens. A Greek foreign ministry source on Monday said Athens had formally complained to Belgrade and Kiev over not being given prior warning on the nature of the cargo. The official said Greece's ambassador in Belgrade had been instructed "to deliver immediately a complaint to Serbia stressing the need for the Greek authorities to be notified in advance about the nature of the cargo."

Hours later, the Ukrainian ambassador in Athens was delivered a similar complaint, the official said. There was confusion initially over the plane's cargo and its final destination. It took off from the Serbian city of Nis on Saturday and had been due to make a stopover in Amman, Jordan. Witnesses said they saw the Antonov on fire and heard explosions. Videos shared on social media showed the plane engulfed by a giant fireball as it hit the ground late Saturday. Debris scattered across a wide area,

and the crash site – surrounded by fields – was visible from the air, an AFP photographer said. Explosives disposal experts were working for a second day on Monday to clear widespread ordnance at the site, so the area could be decontaminated and made accessible. Locals have reported respiratory irritation in the aftermath of the crash. The authorities have forbidden residents from entering nearby fields until the wreckage and any unexploded munitions have been removed. – APP

Ibrahimovic signs one-year contract extension with Milan

The former Manchester United striker returned to AC Milan in 2020, helping them secure a first league title in 11 years

MILAN: Zlatan Ibrahimovic has signed a one-year contract extension that commits him to AC Milan past his 41st birthday. The Sweden striker, who turns 41 in October, scored eight league goals

last season as Milan beat rivals Inter to the Serie A title. He had knee surgery in May and was expected to be out of action for eight months. Ibrahimovic revealed at the end of the campaign that he had "barely slept for six months because of the pain". Former Manchester United and Paris St-Germain striker returned to AC Milan in 2020, helping them secure a first league title in 11 years. Ibrahimovic was also at the club when Milan last won the Scudetto, joining on loan from

Barcelona and scoring 14 league goals in 29 appearances to fire them to the 2011 title. He went on to sign a permanent deal but left for Paris St-Germain at end of the 2011-12 season. Sweden's all-time leading scorer, with 62 goals in 121 international appearances, is not the only outfield player in his 40s in Europe's top leagues. Real Betis captain Joaquin, who turns 41 on 21 July, also recently signed a one-year extension to remain at La Liga club. – APP

Stokes, who became England Test captain in April, made his ODI debut in 2011 and his standout performance in the format came in the 2019 World Cup final against NZ

LONDON: England's Ben Stokes will retire from one-day international cricket after Tuesday's series opener against South Africa on his Durham home ground, citing an "unsustainable" schedule as the motivation for his shock decision. Stokes, who became England Test captain in April, made his ODI debut in 2011 and his standout performance in the format came in the 2019 World Cup final against New Zealand. The charismatic all-rounder scored an unbeaten 84 in the Lord's final to force a super over that ended with England becoming 50-over world champions for the first time by the slenderest of margins. But in the three years since that triumphant moment, the 31-year-old has played just nine

more ODIs due to injuries, a mental health break and workload management. He will turn out one last time at Chester-le-Street against South Africa on Tuesday before focusing on his Test captaincy and Twenty20 career.

Stokes, who has scored 2,919 runs and taken 74 wickets with his lively fast-medium bowling in 104 ODIs, said in a social media post on Monday that it had been an "incredibly tough decision to make".

"As hard as a decision as this was to come to, it's not as hard (as) dealing with the fact I can't give my teammates 100 percent of myself in this format any more," he said. "The England shirt deserves nothing less from anyone who wears it. Three formats are just unsustainable for me now. – APP

England's Stokes announces shock retirement from ODI cricket



Nawaz, Zardari, Fazl mull strategy

FROM PAGE 01

by-polls has turned around the number game in the Punjab Assembly, with Chaudhry Pervez Elahi now most likely to replace Hamza Shahbaz Sharif as the new chief minister of the province in the coming days. Almost all the politicians who joined the PML-N and voted for Hamza Shahbaz Sharif lost to the PTI candidates.

PML-N won four seats and the remaining one seat went to an independent candidate, apart from PTI's 15 seats. Before the by-polls, the PTI and PML-Q had already jointly attained the strength of 173 (163 of PTI and 10 of PML-Q).

Now, with 15 additional seats, this strength has reached 188 whereas the figure for the simple majority stands at 186. This means the PTI and PML-Q have crossed that landmark. One independent MPA will likely be part of the new ruling coalition.

Asif Zardari buried PML-N: Rasheed

FROM PAGE 01

PTI Chairman Imran Khan. "It has been proved today that Imran Khan's narrative has reached every home," he said and doubled down on the demand of dissolving the assemblies this week – and holding snap polls.

"Shahbaz Sharif has become the PM of just Capital Development Authority (CDA)," Rasheed said in a jibe at PM Shehbaz.

He also noted that the PTI could have won the fourth seat in Lahore if it had taken a better decision – as the party managed to secure three out of constituencies. The former interior minister – who wanted the establishment to stay away from the by-polls – also said that the establishment gained respect due to yesterday's free, fair and transparent by-elections.

Gerrard happy after Villa beat Leeds

BRISBANE: Danny Ings scored a penalty, but Philippe Coutinho missed another, as Steven Gerrard's Aston Villa edged Leeds United 1-0 in a high-intensity clash of English Premier League teams marred by 16-year-old Archie Gray being stretchered off on Sunday.

England international Ings converted in the second half after his teammate Coutinho was denied by a fantastic double save from Leeds' young French keeper Illan Meslier. There was plenty of niggles and tough tackling during the pre-season tour match in front of nearly 41,000 fans at Brisbane's Suncorp Stadium, which boiled over when Scottish midfielder John McGinn flattened Gray.

The nephew of Leeds legend Eddie Gray and son of former Elland Road striker Andy Gray had only been on a few minutes when he went down clutching his ankle, with a leg brace fitted before he was carried away on a stretcher. "Really good workout, a win and a clean sheet and a lot of positivity to take away," said former Liverpool and England midfielder Gerrard. "I was really happy with large parts of the first half, parts of the second half were a bit scrappy."

"There was a few spicy challenges, it's a contact game," he added when asked about Gray. "Hopefully the damage isn't too bad and he's back." Villa finished 14th in the Premier League last season, only 10 points clear of the drop zone, and Gerrard has made it clear he believes they belong in the top 10. The former Rangers boss has made some marquee signings, making Coutinho's loan deal from Barcelona permanent and bringing in Boubacar Kamara from Marseille and Diego Carlos from Sevilla.

Both Kamara and Carlos made their debuts Sunday in the second successive win for Villa, after they beat Walsall 4-0 to start their pre-season programme last weekend. Leeds kicked off their preparations for the new campaign on Thursday with a 2-1 win against Brisbane Roar. – APP

Briefs

UN chief calls Nelson Mandela a 'giant of our time'

UNITED NATIONS: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, in his message to mark Monday's International Day in honour of Nelson Mandela, hailed the first Black President of post-Apartheid South Africa and racial justice icon, "a giant of our time", who remains a "moral compass" for us all. The UN chief said that Mandela was the champion of a free and democratic South Africa who spent nearly three decades in prison resisting the racist apartheid regime, and called him "a leader of unparalleled courage and towering achievement; and a man of quiet dignity and deep humanity."

Mandela - or Madiba, the clan name he affectionately known by at home - was a "healer of communities and a mentor to generations", said the UN chief, noting that "walked the path to freedom and dignity with steely determination - and with compassion and love." He demonstrated through his life that everyone has the ability - and responsibility - to build a better future, he added. "Our world today is marred by war; overwhelmed by emergencies; blighted by racism, discrimination, poverty, and inequalities; and threatened by climate disaster. Let us find hope in Nelson Mandela's example and inspiration in his vision."

The best way to honour his legacy, is by taking action, Guterres said in his video message. Amid a rising in hate speech around the world, everyone has the duty to speak out, and stand up for human rights, "by embracing our common humanity - rich in diversity, equal in dignity, united in solidarity." Together and by following Madiba's example, "we can make our world, more just, compassionate, prosperous, and sustainable for all", The Secretary-General concluded.

Oil dispute sharpens Baghdad-Kurd tensions amid deadlock

FOREIGN DESK

BAGHDAD: Iraq's oil wealth is rekindling tensions between federal authorities and the autonomous Kurdish region, in a row that could compromise the lifeline industry and keep investors away, analysts say. The long-simmering dispute came to a head in February - at a time of political deadlock in Baghdad - when the federal supreme court ordered Kurdistan to hand over oil extracted from its territories to the federal authorities.

Then earlier this month, a commercial court in the Iraqi capital annulled contracts between the Kurds and foreign firms, after the oil ministry in Baghdad filed a judicial complaint.

Pak envoy for global support to Afghan interim government

It was important for the international community to come forward and assist the war-stricken Afghan society and their institutions, so that they could overcome their social and economic challenges

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Pakistan to Afghanistan Mansoor Ahmad Khan has urged the international community to extend its support through enhanced engagement with the Afghan interim government to avert the lurking dangers of economic collapse, compounded with large scale hunger and squalor.

The ambassador viewed unfreezing of the Afghan foreign reserves of \$9 billion, including \$7 billion parked in different financial institutions of the United States and continuation of financial support as vital factors to ease out pangs of impoverished Afghan populace since the Taliban took control of the war-weary country on August 15 last.

"It is important that tools of economic sanctions should not be used against the Afghan population. The Afghan foreign reserves should be handed over to Afghanistan, so that it can be spent for the benefits and welfare of the people," he stressed.

The ambassador, during an exclusive interview with APP, observed that the global community's enhanced engagement and broadening of partnership were must for a durable peace and stability in Afghanistan. It was important for the international community to come forward and assist the war-stricken Afghan society and their institutions, so that they could overcome their social and economic challenges, he stressed. According to a UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) report, about 24 million Afghan people cur-

rently rely on humanitarian aid, including nearly 13 million children. In addition, 19 million Afghans are experiencing an acute food crisis. While a report of WFP (World Food Programme) alarms that about 70 percent of the Afghan population is unable to meet basic needs of food and other non-food items. The ambassador said, "The Taliban interim government has to face difficulties, but despite that it was able to meet their expenses with the domestic resources," he said, adding that still it was not sufficed to overcome the mammoth economic ordeals.

Mansoor Ahmad Khan also noted with satisfaction that the UN and other neighbouring countries have been supporting the Afghan interim government. "Efforts of all the countries in must be towards helping Afghanistan in becoming a productive member of the international community," he opined. He also underscored the need for strengthening the capacity building of Afghan institutions.

To a query, the ambassador replied that Taliban interim government was facilitating Pakistan in its talks with groups like Tahreek-i-Taliban Pakistan. "The process of negotiation is underway and we are grateful for the facilitation provided by the Afghan government and their leaders. The negotiation continued within the framework of the Constitution of Pakistan, as you knew, the parliament had been briefed about the process of negotiations," he added. He said during the last two decades, there had been

pockets of terrorists operating from inside Afghanistan, supported, financed and trained by India. They found safe havens around the border areas and used Afghan soil for destabilizing Pakistan, the erstwhile tribal areas and Balochistan province with terrorist activities.

About India's spoiler role in Afghanistan, the ambassador said, unfortunately, in the past few decades, India played a very negative role as they invested in areas where it tried to destabilize Pakistan through covert terrorist activities.

The ambassador regretted that in the past, there were lobbies in Afghanistan supported by hostile countries that were working through media networking or social media platforms portraying Pakistan's cooperation and support in negative. The ambassador said the interim government assured that Afghan soil would not be used against any other country including Pakistan. "We welcome this commitment. We believe that it is very assuring commitment," he added.

Responding to a question, the ambassador said Pakistan granted more visas to the Afghan citizens as compared with any other country in the region and in the past, it had been issuing around 2,000 visas to Afghans on daily basis. In the wake of Aug 15, he said, when there was uncertainty and the foreign embassies were moving out of Afghanistan, Pakistan embassy facilitated in the evacuation of the foreigners and locals and even during that period, issued 1,800 to

2,000 visas daily. Ambassador Khan further said Pakistan had no restrictive visa regime. "Pakistan does not charge any visa fee for the Afghan visa seekers, except a processing fee of only \$8.18, thus helping Afghans to visit Pakistan for education, health and business purposes," he added.

He said currently, they were issuing over 1,500 visas on daily basis. The ambassador said Pakistan and Afghanistan were brotherly countries. Pakistan had hosted about 4 million Afghan brethren on its soil who were enjoying equal opportunities like those available to the Pakistani citizens. He said Pakistan had been providing 1,000 scholarships to Afghan students each year. Besides, Pakistan had undertaken a number of projects in Afghanistan and spent \$1 billion in the development of road, health and educational infrastructures. Three hospitals and educational institutes, including universities and students hostels, established by Pakistan were catering to the health and education needs of Afghans.

The ambassador highlighting Pakistan's role in Afghanistan, said in the wake of August 15 last when Taliban took control of Afghanistan, it played a very facilitative role by providing humanitarian aid in view of the approaching winter season to alleviate the impending sufferings of Afghan people. About a question regarding bilateral trade, he said Pakistan and Afghanistan had been two primary and leading trading partners in the region. - APP

Kashmir's accession to Pakistan Day on July 19

DNA

MIRPURAI is set to observe 75th Kashmir's accession to Pakistan Day on July 19 by the people of Jammu & Kashmir, living both sides of the line of control and rest of the world. The day dawn with a renewal of the pledge to continue the struggle for the achievement of the right to self-determination and to translate the idea of accession of entire Jammu Kashmir state to Pakistan under the spirit of the historic resolution passed this day in 1947.

Wide scale programs have been chalked out to observe Kashmir's accession to Pakistan Day throughout Azad Jammu Kashmir, Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and in other parts of the world - where Kashmiris are living, to observe the historic day in order to strengthen and promote the ideology of accession of entire Jammu Kashmir state to Pakistan.

It will be a public holiday on this occasion to facilitate the masses to participate in the special programs, an AJK government spokesperson confirmed to a state run news agency here on Monday.

Miftah assures pharma stakeholders of resolving issues

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Miftah Ismail on Monday reiterated the government's commitment to resolve the operational issues being faced by various sectors of economy. The minister, in a meeting with a delegation of the Pakistan Pharmaceutical Industry, acknowledged the contribution of pharmaceutical industry, according to a Finance Ministry press release.

Miftah assured the delegation of resolving the issues faced by the pharmaceutical industry at the earliest and directed the relevant authorities to undertake the required measures for addressing the concerns of industry. - APP

Indonesia approves Paxlovid for COVID-19

JAKARTA: Indonesia's Food and Drug Monitoring Agency (BPOM) has issued an emergency use authorization for Paxlovid as a treatment to reduce the severity and mortality in COVID-19 patients. "Paxlovid is approved to treat adult coronavirus patients who do not require supplemental oxygen and are at high risk for severe COVID-19," Head of BPOM Penny K. Lukito said in a press release.

Phase II and III clinical trials showed that Paxlovid could reduce the risk of hospitalization or death by 89 percent in severe COVID-19 adult patients with comorbidity who were not hospitalized. - APP

China, India border issue source of risk for development of bilateral ties

BEIJING: A Chinese observer has pointed out that it will take some time for China and India to figure out a solution of border issues that both sides can accept. The border issue, if unsettled, will always be a source of risk for the normal development of bilateral relations, Qian Feng, Director of the Research Department of the National Strategy Institute at Tsinghua University told Global Times.

The 16th round of Corps Commander-level talks between India and China began on Sunday morning with both sides looking to ease the military standoff at the border. The talks were held on the Indian side of the Chushul-Moldo border meeting point. The previous talks were held on March 11, where China and India carried forward their discussions from the previous round on January 12 for the resolution of the relevant issues along the Line of Actual Control in the Western Sector. The two sides detailed exchange of views in this regard, in alignment with the guidance provided by the state leaders to work for the resolution of the remaining issues at the earliest, according to a joint press release published by China's Defense Ministry.

Qian observed that the "most dangerous" moment in bilateral relations has passed. Through joint efforts, China-India relations have gained upward momentum since the clashes at the Galwan Valley. The overall atmosphere is positive, Qian said. Although the previous two rounds of commander-level talks in 2022 did not achieve a major breakthrough, it is worth noting that both sides have insisted on relying on existing bilateral channels to resolve border issues through dialogue and communication, the expert said. The two sides are trying hard to prevent frictions from escalating into conflicts. China and India continue to narrow differences through dialogue and release positive signals to avoid the recurrence or intensification of conflicts, according to observers.

The border issue, if unsettled, will always be a source of risk for the normal development of bilateral relations, Qian said. But because of the complicated situation, it may still take some time for the two sides to figure out a solution that both agree on. The expert also pointed out China and India's similar position on the Russia-Ukraine conflict is actually a resemblance in understanding of the world situation and major issues as two emerging major powers with large populations. The position of both India and China on the Russia-Ukraine conflict differentiates them from the West, indicating that the two countries have similarities in their international interests, which will help both sides to view border issues with a more positive approach and a vision beyond the Himalayas during the border talks, Qian stressed. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Miftah Ismail held a meeting with representatives of Pakistan Pharmaceutical Industry at Finance Division. - DNA

Three slain in US shooting before passer-by kills gunman
Town is about 10 miles south of downtown Indianapolis, the state capital

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: A man opened fire at a mall in the US state of Indiana on Sunday killing three and injuring two, officials said, the latest armed rampage in a country plagued by gun violence. The attack ended when a "good Samaritan" shot the gunman dead, police said. "We experienced a mass shooting this evening at the Greenwood Park Mall," Mark Myers, mayor of Greenwood, Indiana, said in a statement. The town is about 10 miles (16 kilometers) south of downtown Indianapolis, the state capital. The gunman, who has not been identified, entered the mall's food court at about 6 pm (2200 GMT) carrying a rifle along with sever-

al magazines of ammunition and opened fire, said Chief Jim Ison of the Greenwood Police Department. Those injured included a 12-year-old girl, Ison said, adding that no motive had been established.

"Four have been confirmed deceased," he said, noting that that included the initial shooter. Chief Ison praised the intervention of the armed passer-by who ended the attack, calling the 22-year-old man a "good Samaritan."

"The real hero of the day is the citizen that was lawfully carrying a firearm in that food court and was able to stop this shooter almost as soon as he began," he said. "This has shaken us to our core. This isn't something we have seen in Greenwood before," he said. "It's absolutely horrendous." It is the latest attack in a wave of gun

violence plaguing the United States, where about 40,000 deaths a year are caused by firearms, according to the Gun Violence Archive. It comes just weeks after a gunman opened fire on a July 4 parade in an affluent Chicago suburb, killing seven people and injuring at least three dozen. That incident followed two massacres in May that saw 10 Black people shot dead at an upstate New York supermarket, and 19 children and two teachers slain at an elementary school in Texas. The recent surge in gun violence has reignited the divisive debate over firearm regulation. A US House of Representatives' committee is set this week to discuss a bill that would ban assault weapons for the first time in nearly 20 years. A 10-year federal assault weapons ban expired in 2004.

Monsoon-rain response teams on high alert in Gwadar

GDA's six water tankers, two tractors, 20 dewatering machines, and an excavator are also deployed in the Rain Response Team

ISLAMABAD: Monsoon-rain Response Teams have been set on high alert in Gwadar, says a report published by Gwadar Pro on Monday. To review the situation resulting from the recent monsoon rain-related incidents and safety measures regarding the expected widespread windstorms with heavy falls, Chairman Gwadar Development Authority (GDA) Mujeeb-ur-Rehman Qambarani along with Commissioner Gwadar Captain Jami Ahmad (retired) on Saturday visited the coastal city of Gwadar.

Both officials inspected ongoing cleaning activities, and arrangements to cope with future urban flooding in the city and reviewed maintenance work at the historic site of Mullah Fazil Chowk and other parts of the city. The GDA's Rain Response Team is present on different streets and roads of the city along with their tools and machinery; two sewerage treatment plants with a capacity of 450,000-gallon water will be used in case of heavy rain.

GDA's six water tankers, two tractors, 20 dewatering machines, and an excavator are also deployed in the Rain Response Team.

During the recent spell of monsoon rains, the Rain Response Team successfully thwarted a disaster in Gwadar city. Heavy rains lashed the Makran division and flood water entered several houses in Kech and Gwadar districts. However, the quick response team not only managed to dewater and clean the city but also distributed relief goods to affected families. The teams also remained on duty on the day of Eid-ul-Adha. The water was pushed towards the sea.

Mullah Fazil Chowk is one of the most affected areas of the city. The local people and shopkeepers shared their concerns and suggestions with the officials regarding their issues. The officials also visited sites of different ongoing projects under the Rehabilitation of Old Town of Gwadar. Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecasted widespread wind-thunderstorms/rain-showers with scattered heavy to very heavy falls and extremely heavy falls at times in Lasbela, Uthal, Turbat, Awaran, Kech, Ormara, Pasni, Gwadar and Jiwani from July 17 (today) to July 18. - APP

JULY 2022

Pakistan's Premier News & Diplomatic Affairs Magazine

Find us on:

www.centrelines.com.pk

www.dnanews.com.pl

www.islamabadpost.com.pk

@PostIslamabad/ @Editordnanews

A sister concern of

Islamabad POST

11# Block 18-A, Awan Plaza,
G-8 Markez, Islamabad-Pakistan
Ph: 051-2261960, 051-2266165

Briefs

PTI candidate challenges PP-7 results

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Monday filed an application before the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) for re-counting of the PP-7 results in which the PMLN candidate Raja Sagheer clinched victory. The defeated candidate of PTI filed the vote recount application. ECP polling staff has started re-counting the PP-7. PMLN Raja Sagheer Ahmed got 68906 votes while PTI candidate Lt Col (rtd) Shabir Awan got 68857 votes. Raja won the crucial content with a margin of 49 votes. Rawalpindi district administration had declared 76 polling stations sensitive in PP-7, Kahuta and Kallar Syedan and provided foolproof security arrangements, deploying extra force to control the law and order situation during by-elections to be held on Sunday. 28 special police pickets were set up in PP-7 to guard the 266 polling stations where over 4,000 police personnel were deployed. There were 335,295 voters in PP-7, including 171,464 males and 163,831 females. PP-7, Kahuta and Kallar Syedan fall under the constituency of NA-57.

Britain on course for hottest day on record

LONDON: Britain was on course for its hottest day on record on Monday with temperatures forecast to hit 40C for the first time, forcing train companies to cancel services and some schools to close while ministers urged the public to stay at home. Much of Europe is baking in a heatwave that has pushed temperatures into the mid-40s Celsius (over 110 Fahrenheit) in some regions, with wildfires raging across tinder-dry countryside in Portugal, Spain and France. Britain's government triggered a "national emergency" alert as temperatures on Monday and Tuesday were forecast to surpass the 38.7C (102F) recorded in the Cambridge University Botanic Garden in 2019. By midday, readings of almost 35C were being recorded in southern England. "We've got a difficult 48 hours coming," Kit Malthouse, a minister in charge of government coordination, told BBC radio. He will later chair a meeting of the government's emergency response committee. The national rail network urged passengers not to travel unless necessary and said some services - including a key route between north-eastern England and London - would not run during parts of Tuesday. London's metro network imposed temporary speed restrictions, meaning it would run a reduced service with journeys taking longer than normal. It urged commuters to stay at home. - Agencies

France, UAE sign energy cooperation deal

NEWS DESK

PARIS: The governments of France and the United Arab Emirates signed on Monday a strategic agreement to cooperate in the energy sector, the French government said. The partnership aimed to identify joint investment projects in France, the UAE or elsewhere in the sectors of hydrogen, renewable and nuclear energy, the French government said in a statement. "In the currently uncertain energy context, this agreement will pave the way for a stable long-term framework for cooperation, opening the way for new industrial contracts," it added. The deal coincides with the visit to Paris of UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed al-Nahyan between July 17-19, his first overseas state visit since taking over from his half-brother in May.

Pakistani professor gets King Abdullah II prize

Ambassador of Jordan Ibrahim Al Madani hands over award; Prof Arshad all praise for the Jordan leadership for the honour



DNA

ISLAMABAD: A Pakistani professor Dr. Arshad Munir, Department of Islamic Studies Ghazi University has been awarded with King Abdullah II prize in connection with World Interfaith Harmony Week. The professor got the second prize. To decorate the professor with the prize Ambassador of Jordan to Pakistan Ibrahim Al Madani hosted a small but impressive ceremony and handed over the award to Dr. Arshad Munir. It may be mentioned here that in 2010 King Abdullah II of Jordan intro-

duced the World Interfaith Harmony Week at the plenary session of the 65th UN General Assembly in New York, making the first week of February of every year a time to bring together all people, regardless of their faith or those with no faith to celebrate religious and cultural tolerance and understanding. Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad, Chief Advisor to King Abdullah II for Religious and Cultural Affairs and Personal Envoy of King Abdullah II presented the proposal at the UN General Assembly, where it was adopted unanimously as a UN observance Event



on the 20th of October 2010. The core principle of King Abdullah II's initiative is "Love of God and love of the neighbor or, love of God or the neighbor". The Royal Aal Al Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought in Jordan established the World Interfaith Harmony Week Prize in 2013 to recognize the three best events organized during the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week, which best promote the goals of the World Interfaith Harmony Week. Since 2014 this prize has been known as the King Abdullah II World Interfaith Week Prize. Prof. Dr Arshad Mu-

nir while thanking the Jordan government and the Ambassador said that it was a great honour for him and his family to receive great prize from the great country. He also thanked His Majesty King Abdullah II. He said the initiative of HM King Abdullah to introduce World Interfaith Harmony Week has definitely brought very positive impact in the whole world. The Amman message undoubtedly brought together the most authoritative figures of Islam to denounce terrorism and promote harmony within the world of Islam.

Sri Lanka renews state of emergency ahead of key vote

The bombings were blamed on local militants and 25 men were indicted in October over alleged involvement

WEB DESK

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's acting president renewed the country's state of emergency on Monday ahead of a parliamentary vote to pick a new head of state - a poll in which he is a leading candidate. Ranil Wickremesinghe automatically became acting president when Gotabaya Rajapaksa resigned last week after fleeing to Singapore. A state of emergency allows troops to arrest and detain suspects, and the president to make regulations overriding existing laws to deal with any unrest. One was already in place but parliament had not met to ratify the declaration as required, and Wickremesinghe extended it from Monday "in

the interests of public security", he said. Police and the military, armed with emergency powers, stepped up security in the capital ahead of Wednesday's election of a new president. Wickremesinghe, a six-time former prime minister, is being backed for the position by Rajapaksa's party, which remains the largest in the legislature. In what was seen as a possible appeal to 14 Catholic legislators for their support, Wickremesinghe said he had asked Britain's help to complete investigations into the 2019 Easter Sunday bombings that killed 279 people. Sri Lanka's small but influential Catholic minority believes the coordinated suicide attack against three churches and three hotels was a "political plot" to bring Rajapaksa to

power, and has long sought an independent investigation. Wickremesinghe was "requesting the assistance of the UK government and their intelligence services", his office said. There was no immediate comment from the British High Commission. The bombings were blamed on local militants and 25 men were indicted in October over alleged involvement. But the Church and opposition parties claim state intelligence officers loyal to Rajapaksa directly or indirectly supported the bombers. Rajapaksa was forced to flee last week when tens of thousands of protesters stormed his official residence after months of demonstrations across the country demanding his resignation over Sri Lanka's economic crisis

492 fresh Covid-19 cases reported: NIH

ISLAMABAD: Health officials on Monday said that 492 new Coronavirus cases were reported throughout the country during the last 24 hours. As per data shared by the National Institute of Health (NIH), the case positivity ratio is 2.42 percent while 169 patients were in critical condition. One death was reported from the coronavirus in the last 24 hours while 20,361 Covid-19 tests were conducted across the country. Meanwhile, Minister for National Health Abdul Qadir Patel appreciated the efforts of all stakeholders, healthcare staff, vaccination teams, and administration working across Pakistan despite multiple challenges. He advised all provinces and regions to administer booster doses on priority basis to further improve protection against COVID-19 transmission. He said that in view of the global pandemic situation the Central Health Establishment (CHE) should stringently monitor the health status of incoming passengers at points of entry. He added that CHE will be strengthened to enhance its functionality. The minister emphasized the importance of precautions including social distancing and mask-wearing, especially in crowded places. He also highlighted the need to strictly follow the guidelines for the management of markets. - APP

Putin visits Iran for first trip out of region since war

AGENCIES

TEHRAN: Russian President Vladimir Putin visits Tehran on Tuesday for a meeting with Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the first trip by the Kremlin chief outside the former Soviet Union since the invasion of Ukraine. Putin casts the West's attempt to cripple Russia's economy with the most severe sanctions in recent history as a declaration of economic war and says Russia is turning away from the West to China, India and Iran.

Just three days after U.S. President Joe Biden finished a visit to Saudi Arabia, Russia's paramount leader arrives in Tehran to hold his fifth meeting with Khamenei, Iran's second supreme leader who came to power in 1989. "The contact with Khamenei is very important," Yuri Ushakov, Putin's foreign policy adviser, told reporters in Moscow. "A trusting dialogue has developed between them on the most important issues on the bilateral and international agenda."

"On most issues, our positions are close or identical." Putin's visit to Iran will coincide with one by Turkey's Tayyip Erdogan, and the two leaders will meet in Tehran to discuss a deal aimed at resuming Ukraine's Black Sea grain exports, and Erdogan's threat to launch another operation in northern Syria which Moscow opposes.

Southern Europe battles wildfires

NEWS DESK

MADRID: A heatwave sweeping southern Europe that has caused hundreds of deaths and huge wildfires showed some signs of abating on Monday but continued to move north, including towards Britain where authorities issued an extreme weather warning. Much of Europe is baking in a heatwave that scientists say is consistent with climate change and has pushed temperatures into the mid-40s Celsius (over 110 Fahrenheit) in some regions, with wildfires raging across tinder-dry countryside in Portugal, Spain and France. Temperatures in some parts of southern Europe began to ease over the weekend but thousands of firefighters across the region still battled to contain hundreds of wildfires and authorities said the risk of further blazes remained extremely high. Spain was facing the eighth and last day of a more than week-long heatwave on Monday, which caused more than 510 heat-related deaths, according to estimates from the Carlos III Health Institute.

Earthquake in Islamabad, other KP cities

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: An earthquake struck Islamabad and several cities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Monday. According to media, aside from the federal capital, tremors were felt in several areas of North Waziristan, Malakand, Swat, and surrounding areas. Meanwhile, some places in Punjab also experienced the quake today, including Multan and its surrounding areas. The National Seismic Monitoring Centre said the magnitude of the quake was recorded at 5.4 on the Richter scale. Meanwhile, it measured a depth of 188 kilometres and its epicentre was 64km north of Wana in KP. So far, no reports of any casualties have been received, the report said. Last month, a 5.0-magnitude earthquake hit the federal capital, Rawalpindi, and parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Earthquake tremors were also felt in several other areas of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including Multan, Faisalabad, Abbottabad, Swat, Buner, Kohat, Malakand, Kotli, Azad Kashmir, Swabi, Mansehra, Battagram, Kohistan and Torgarh.

Saudi railways transport more than 1.3m pilgrims

ISLAMABAD: The Saudi Railways Organization said that its planning for Hajj season had been successful, with the Mashaer train service completing 2,228 journeys and transporting 1,350,000 pilgrims. The Saudi Railway Company said the service for pilgrims, covering nine stations in Mina, Arafat and Muzdalifah, began on the evening of Tarwiyah and continued until the end of the third day of Tashreeq, Arab News reported. It transported more than 212,000 pilgrims to Arafat in record time, then took nearly 200,000 pilgrims from Arafat to Muzdalifah 90 minutes ahead of schedule, and 248,000 pilgrims from Muzdalifah to Mina, the company said. The trains carried more than 666,000 pilgrims during the days of Tashreeq from the Mina 1, Mina 2 and Muzdalifah 3 stations to Mina 3 (Jamarat). The CEO of the Saudi Railway Company, Bashar Al-Malik, said that company's aim was to provide the best possible services for pilgrims. According to the Saudi Ministry of Transport and Logistics, the Mashaer railway system has resulted in the reduction of 50,000 buses from the roads between the holy sites. A total of 20 trains, each 300 meters in length and with a capacity of 3,500 people, were put into operation for the duration of the Hajj season. The Mashaer railway lines opened on November 13, 2010. - APP



LAHORE: President Dr Arif Alvi meeting with Governor Punjab, Baligh Ur Rehman, at Governor House, Lahore. - DNA

EU to double gas imports from Azerbaijan

EU leaders agreed to stop most Russian oil imports by the end of the year, as part of unprecedented sanctions they slapped on Moscow over the military action in Ukraine

NEWS DESK

BAKU: The European Union and Azerbaijan on Monday signed an agreement to double gas imports from the energy-rich Caspian nation to Europe which seeks non-Russian suppliers after Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. Natural gas supplies have emerged as a weapon between Russia and Europe since President Vladimir Putin sent troops to Ukraine on February 24. On a visit to Baku, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen signed with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev a memorandum on "a strategic partnership in the field of energy." In a few years, "we will dou-

ble the supply of gas from Azerbaijan to the EU" to compensate for cuts in supplies of Russian gas, von der Leyen told a news conference alongside Aliyev. "From next year on, we should already reach 12 billion cubic meters" per year, she said. The agreement also provides for the expansion of the Southern Gas Corridor running through Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey, and Greece - "to 20 billion cubic metres per year in a few years." Last year, Azerbaijan sent to Europe 8.1 billion cubic metres of natural gas. Von der Leyen said Russian gas supplies to Europe were not "reliable" even before the start of Russia's war on Ukraine and the EU was turning to "more reliable suppliers." "I'm glad

to count Azerbaijan among them." Aliyev praised the deal as a "road map for the future," saying the EU-Azerbaijan energy cooperation has already "changed the energy map of Europe." Ahead of von der Leyen's visit, the European Commission said: "Amid Russia's continued weaponisation of its energy supplies, diversification of our energy imports is a priority for the EU." In May, EU leaders agreed to stop most Russian oil imports by the end of the year, as part of unprecedented sanctions they slapped on Moscow over the military action in Ukraine. But the bloc put off an outright ban on Russian gas, which in 2021 amounted to 155 billion

cubic metres - nearly 40 percent of EU's needs. Russia has already begun reducing its gas deliveries to prevent EU countries from replenishing reserves, prompting the European Commission to prepare "a gas demand reduction plan" to get through the next winter. Under the deal, Azerbaijan will also tap into its vast potential in renewable energy - such as offshore wind and green hydrogen - to move away from overdependence on its role as a fossil fuel supplier. Von der Leyen also called on Azerbaijan to join the Global Methane Pledge - currently supported by 119 countries - "to be consistent with our responsibilities on climate."