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British top security official warns of nuclear war risk

Detailed News On Page-06

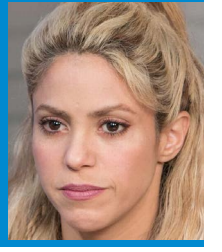
Moscow will propose time for Blinken call

Detailed News On Page-08



Shakira warned of eight year imprisonment

Detailed News On Page-07



IMF Programme for Pakistan

Army Chief seeks US help to secure a deal

General Qamar Javed Bajwa also talks to CENTCOM chief Gen Kurilla; says Pakistan values ties with the US

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa has appealed to the United States to help Islamabad secure an early dispersal of \$1.2 billion in funds under an International Monetary Fund loan programme, Nikkei Asia reported, as Pakistan faces the risk of debt default due to dwindling foreign reserves. The army chief reached out to the US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman on a phone call earlier in the week, sources from both US and Pakistan revealed, on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to speak publicly. They revealed that Gen Bajwa requested the White House and Treasury Department to urge the lender to expedite the bailout process and immediately release the nearly \$1.2 billion that Pakistan expects to receive under a resumed loan programme. Meanwhile, the Foreign Office (FO) on Friday confirmed that there has been contact between Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed

Amb. Nong thanks COAS for Chinese nationals' security

DNA



RAWALPINDI: His Excellency Mr. Nong Rong, Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan called on General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army

Continued on Page 06

Bajwa and US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman. At a weekly briefing, after confirming Gen Bajwa's contact with the US official, Spokesperson Asim Iftikhar Ahmad said that the FO wasn't aware if the two officials talked about the economy. "Our understanding is that ISPR (Inter-Services Public Relations) will be able to comment on it," he added. The FO's statement comes amid reports that the COAS reached out to Washington requesting help in securing an early loan dispersal from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Last month, the Fund confirmed it had reached a staff-level agreement with Pakistan on the combined seventh and eighth reviews for a \$6 billion loan facility, a development that paves the way for the release of the much-awaited \$1.17bn. However, the tranche will only be released after an executive-level agreement, which has been delayed till late-August. Meanwhile, former prime minister Imran Khan addressed the reports in a television interview broadcast later on Friday.



TASHKENT: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari meets with Foreign Minister of Tajikistan Sirojiddin Muhriddin on the sidelines of the SCO Foreign Ministers moot. - DNA

Chinese, Russian FMs meet

NEWS DESK



TASHKENT: Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi met here on Thursday with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on the sidelines of the meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Wang said that faced with the current severe and complex

Continued on Page 06

FM for finalizing trade deal with Uzbekistan

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari expressed satisfaction at the level of bilateral contacts

OVERSEAS CORRESPONDENT

TASHKENT: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari held bilateral meeting with Foreign Minister Norov Vladimir Imamovich of Uzbekistan, on the sidelines of SCO-CFM being held at Tashkent. The two sides exchanged views on deepening bilateral cooperation in a range of

Another Picture on Page 08

areas including political, trade, economic, security, defence, and connectivity. Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari expressed satisfaction at the level of

Continued on Page 06

FM stresses completion of CASA-1000 project

NEWS DESK/DNA

TASHKENT: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari held a bilateral meeting with his Tajik counterpart Sirojiddin Muhriddin on the

Continued on Page 06

Muharram moon not sighted

STAFF REPORT

QUETTA: The Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee on Friday could not sight the Muharram-ul-Haram moon, which will mark the beginning of the new Islamic year, 1444 AH. This means that Youm-e-Ashura will be observed on August 9 and the first of Muharram will be Sunday. Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee Chairman Moulana Syed Muhammad Abdul Khahir Azad presided over the meeting. "In pursuance of the decision of the Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee, in its meeting, the federal government in the Ministry hereby announce that the moon of the Muharram-ul-Haram 1444 AH has not sighted, therefore the 1st Muharram-ul-Haram shall commence from Sunday (July 31).

MBS thanks Macron for 'warm reception'

AGENCIES

Paris, July 29 (AFP/APP): Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on Friday thanked French President Emmanuel Macron for his "warm reception" during talks in Paris that have outraged rights groups. "As I leave your friendly country, it gives me great pleasure to express to your Excellency my deepest gratitude and appreciation for the warm reception and hospitality accorded to me and the accompanying delegation," bin Salman wrote in a message posted by the Saudi foreign ministry. The dinner on Thursday evening was the latest step in the diplomatic rehabilitation of the de-facto leader of the Saudi kingdom.



The 36-year-old became a pariah in the West following the killing of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi by Saudi agents inside Saudi Arabia's consulate in Istanbul

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Attracting US investment top priority

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Miftah Ismail said here on Friday that attracting the United States foreign investment in different sectors of country's economy was the government's top priority. The minister was talking to Ambassador of the United States of America to Pakistan, Donald Blome who called on him here, according to press statement issued by the Finance Ministry. Economic Counselor, Aaron Fishman and Treasury Attaché of US Embassy, Ms Larita Bolden accompanied the ambassador while Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Dr Aisha Ghous Pasha, Special Secretary Finance and senior officers also attended the meeting, the statement added. Miftah said the incumbent government was focusing on creating a business-friendly environment for foreign investors. Miftah Ismail extended warm welcome to the ambassador and congratulated him on assuming the office. He stated that Pakistan and the US enjoy long-term, broad-based and multi-dimensional relationship. He highlighted the economic agenda and policies of the government with aim to bring about economic and fiscal stability.

Holiday Notice

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

Another victory: PTI wins PA Speaker slot

Sibtain obtains 185 votes against the 175 votes obtained by PML-N's candidate

ABID RAZA



LAHORE: The Punjab Assembly elected PTI's Sibtain Khan, who was a joint candidate of his party and the PML-Q, as the new speaker on Friday. The Punjab Assembly speaker's seat fell vacant after the former office bearer, Pervez Elahi was elected as the Punjab chief minister.

Continued on Page 06

PML-N for announcing ECP verdict

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz leader and former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on Friday requested the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to announce the

Continued on Page 06

Dozens of Ukrainian POWs killed in missile strike

Deaths overshadowed U.N.-backed efforts to restart shipping grain from Ukraine and ease a looming global hunger crisis

CENTRELINE REPORT

ODESA: Dozens of Ukrainian prisoners of war appeared to have been killed when a prison building was destroyed in a missile strike on Friday, with Moscow and Kyiv accusing each other of carrying out the attack. The deaths overshadowed U.N.-backed efforts to restart shipping grain from Ukraine and ease a looming global hunger crisis. Russia's defence ministry said 40 prisoners were killed and 75 wounded in the attack on the prison, in the frontline town of Olenivka, in a part of Donetsk province held by separatists. It accused Kyiv of targeting it with U.S.-made HIMARS rockets, Russian news agencies reported. Ukraine's armed forces denied carrying out the strike, saying Russian artillery had targeted the prison to hide the mistreatment of those held there and lay the blame on Ukraine. Foreign Minis-

Ukraine appeals to ICC after prison attack

DNA

KYIV: Ukraine's foreign ministry condemned an attack on a prison in territory held by Russian-backed separatists on Friday, and appealed to the International Criminal Court over what it said were Russian war crimes. Russia said Ukraine carried

ter Dmytro Kuleba said Russia had committed a war crime and called for international condemnation of the incident. Reuters TV footage showed the remains of a cavernous burned-out building filled with metal beds, some with charred bodies still lying on them while other bodies were lined up on military stretchers or on the ground outside. Shell fragments had been laid out on a

Friday's attack, in which it said about 40 Ukrainian prisoners of war were killed, and has denied involvement in any war crimes in Ukraine. "We call on the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to urgently draw attention to the atrocities of Russian servicemen in the context of the investigation of war crimes and crimes against hu-

manity committed by citizens of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine," the Ukrainian foreign ministry said in a statement. Such alleged crimes, it said, coincided with "another war crime by Russia - shelling of penal institutions in occupied Olenivka, where it is believed that Ukrainians were held prisoners of war."

There were no foreigners among the 193 detainees. The Ukrainian government has accused Russia of atrocities and brutality against civilians during the invasion and said it has identified more than 10,000 possible war crimes. Its armed forces general staff said the prison attack was an attempt to shift the blame. "In this way, the Russian occupiers pursued their criminal goals - to accuse

Ukraine of committing 'war crimes', as well as to hide the torture of prisoners and executions," it said. Russia has denied involvement in war crimes, accused Kyiv of staging them to smear its forces and said it is investigating Ukrainian war crimes. A spokesman for the Moscow-backed separatists told journalists in Olenivka that Ukraine had attacked after the prisoners of war had begun talking about crimes conducted by the Ukrainian military. There was no way to immediately verify either of the two versions of events. Separately, Ukraine said at least five people had been killed and seven wounded in a Russian missile strike on the southeastern city of Mykolaiv, a river port just off the Black Sea, as Russia fired across frontlines in eastern and southern Ukraine. A missile struck near a public transport stop, regional governor Vitaly Kim said on Telegram. Russia, which denies targeting civilians, did not immediately comment on the situation.

Family of John Snorri expresses gratitude to Pakistan government

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The family of Icelandic mountaineer John Snorri, who lost his life along with Ali Sadpara and Juan Pablo while trying to reach K2 peak, thanked the Pakistani army, government and nation for the rescue operation. He said that the events that took place in February 2021 were very difficult for us as a family and for the families of Ali Sadpara and Juan Pablo. It is not easy to describe the journey of grief that the children and I have been on since the loss of John.

While holding a press conference at the National Press Club Islamabad along with John Snorri's sisters Karen, Christine, daughter Hilla Karen, his wife Lina Mott said that the friendship between John Snorri and Pakistan's mountaineering hero and legend Ali Sadpara was so sincere and strong. We have decided to vis-

it Pakistan as a family to personally thank the people who have supported us professionally and personally. Lena Mott said that John Snorri loved visiting parts of Pakistan as much as he loved his special places in Iceland. We traveled here hoping to take John on the route to the summit of K2 to a rest stop near his friend and climbing partner Ali and his climbing partner Juan Pablo. Lena Mott said, "The safety of those who take part in such operations has always been of the utmost importance to us. However, today we got news that a team of four climbers led by Mangamaji had failed in their attempt after spending two hours on the summit of K2. Based on the information we have, some new snow on the mountain has created an avalanche hazard. "We as a family would like to emphasize that John should only be transported in a manner that is safe for the person involved and other climbers on

the mountain," Lena Mott said. Their lives and achievements as mountaineers are unique and will be remembered by both nations, through the mountaineering history of both countries, Pakistan and Iceland. "We as a family are grateful for the outpouring of support and warmth from so many people," Lena Mott said. We would like to thank the Government of Pakistan, Chief of Pakistan Army and Commander of 10 Corps, Foreign Office of Pakistan, Local Government of Gilgit-Baltistan Province, Khalid Khurshid Chief Minister, Raja Nasir Minister of Tourism, Mr. Asghar, Ali Sadpara's family. And friends, the good people of Pakistan, local and international media, we are grateful for their continued support. He added that we also want to thank the local military commanders and pilots of Skardu who led the search mission. Plan to when the kids grow up and walk together as a family to K2 Base Camp.



ISLAMABAD: Family of Icelandic mountaineer John Snorri (who lost his life along with Ali Sadpara and Juan Pablo while trying to reach K2 peak) holding a press conference at the National Press Club Islamabad. – DNA

FS welcomes first-ever Ethiopian resident envoy

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood on Friday reaffirmed that Pakistan's resolve to build a comprehensive relationship with Ethiopia, both bilaterally and in the context of African Union. The foreign secretary stated this as he warmly welcomed Ambassador-designate Jamal Beker Abdula as first-ever resident Ethiopian envoy to Pakistan, here at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The foreign secretary termed the appointment of Ethiopian envoy another major step in "Engage Africa" initiative. – APP

NADRA using state of the art tech to manage data

DNA

ISLAMABAD: National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA), the Custodian of national database, is using state of the art technology for managing its data and systems to issue national identity documents like CNIC, NICOP, CRC, FRC etc. To assist the Government and private sector organizations (like telcos and banks) in CNIC verification, NADRA has provided them with VERISYS service. Recently, it has been widely observed that various android/desktop applications and websites claim to provide details of NADRA database, CNIC images, information and family tree details etc. Please be aware that all such applications/websites are a scam just to gain more traffic on their websites and more downloads of android applications. It is assured to all citizens of Pakistan that NADRA database is secure and has not been shared/leaked to any third party. In order to curb such illegal fraud activity, the FIA's Cyber Crime wing has been approached to take stern action against such criminal activity and advertisements. The citizens of Pakistan are hereby informed that such mobile apps or advertisements are a hoax and you should not provide any kind of information about your identity.

Bangulzai debunks propaganda over missing persons killing in Ziarat

QUETTA: Senior Leader of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Sardar Noor Ahmed Bangulzai on Friday debunked the propaganda over killing of the missing person Engineer Zaheer Ahmed in the Ziarat operation and claimed that the so-called killed was alive and the allegations of his relatives were false. Bangulzai who is also the tribe chief addressed a media conference to reveal the facts on the propaganda made on the killing of missing persons under the garb of terrorists. He said a drama was staged on the killing of missing persons after the Ziarat operation and self-interested elements held a sit-in on the Red Zone of Quetta in the name of missing persons. Bangulzai added that the relatives of the missing persons were accusing the security forces of martyr-

dom of Zaheer Ahmed. He was alive and present with him during the press conference, he said. He added that after the operation against the terrorists who killed Shaheed Lieutenant Colonel Laiq Baig Mirza and his cousin Umar Javed and organized malicious propaganda was started to malign the security forces. The terrorists were projected as innocent citizens to divert attention from this heinous incident of terrorism. A misleading attempt was made to include Engineer Zaheer Ahmed in the fictitious list of missing persons, he underlined. The drop scene of the killing of Engineer Zaheer Ahmed raised some questions on the narrative of missing persons. Engineer Zaheer, whose name was chanted in the protest camps organized by the BNM in Europe,

turned out to be alive. "Zaheer Baloch's family members buried the body without identification on whose request?" he queried while breaking the propaganda myth. In the protest camps, Zaheer's pictures were displayed and the women of his family were used to promote the fake narrative at whose behest? Are the families of missing persons willingly part of the terrorist campaign or BLA and Mama Qadir using them for their propaganda by threatening them? The tribal leader raised the questions during the press conference. On the occasion, the alleged missing person Engineer Zaheer Ahmad confessed that he did not belong to any terrorist organization, adding, "On my death, my family members recited Fateha but I am alive and have reached my home safely". – APP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister of Pakistan, Rana Sanaullah received ambassador of Saudi Arabia, Nawaf Saeed Al-Maliki. – DNA

Resolution of Kashmir issue key to regional peace: AJK President

ISLAMABAD: Terming resolution of Kashmir dispute as a key to regional peace, President Azad Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry has said that the international community particularly the United States should play their due role to resolve the lingering dispute that has been a cause and consequence

of tension in the region for many decades. The president made these remarks during his meeting with Incharge Political Section of the American Embassy Andrea Hillyer on Friday. Barrister, while stressing the need for an early and amicable solution of the Kashmir dispute, said, "India and Pakistan are nuclear

powers; any accident or misunderstanding between the two neighbours can lead to a nuclear confrontation that will jeopardize peace in the whole world." He said that given the volatile situation in the region, there was a dire need that the United States and international community play an active role to resolve the

Kashmir issue. The president further said that after India revoked the special status of the Occupied Kashmir on August 5, 2019, an enormous increase in the violation of human rights had been witnessed. Many Hurriyat leaders, including Yasin Malik were booked under draconian laws," he added.

IGP orders security during Muharram

LAHORE: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Faisal Shahkar ordered on Friday that foolproof security arrangements should be made during holy month of Muharram. While presiding over the RPOs conference at the Central Police Office, he said that security of majalis and mourning processions of Ashura Muharram was the first priority and indiscriminate action would be taken against those who would spread hatred and sectarianism, he added. The IGP issued instructions to the RPOs and DPOs in the province. Faisal Shahkar ordered for ensuring four-layered security for sensitive and A-category mourning processions and majalis across province. The IGP ordered strict action against violators of the Loud Speaker Act and promoters of malicious content. – APP

Gandhara art exhibition opens at PAC

RAWALPINDI: PAC Friday organised an Art exhibition highlighting Gandhara art's uniqueness. While speaking as the chief guest at the opening ceremony of exhibition, DG PAC Saman Rai said Gandhara art was the essence of Greek, Saka, Parthian and Kushan civilisations. She said that the Gandhara civilisation was one of the oldest in the world, and the art recovered from the ruins of the civilisation in Taxila had been acknowledged across the globe. "The art of carving, sculpting, painting and engraving that came into existence was called Gandhara art", she added. Saman further said that the Gandhara civilisation gives the message of peace, love and brotherhood, and there is a need to tell the world that Pakistan has the world's oldest civilisations of Gandhara, Harappa and Mohan Jo Daro. – APP

PDM parties formed govt to save country: Talal Ch

The former state minister said that dollar was at Rs.100 when Nawaz Sharif was disqualified, and since then it had been showing an upward trajectory despite the best efforts of different govts to control it

FAISALABAD: Former state minister and central leader of Pakistan Muslim League-N Muhammad Talal Chaudhry said on Friday that PML-N led Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) parties formed the federal government to save the country from becoming bankrupt. Addressing a press conference here, he said it was very easy for the PML-N to announce general election immediately after removing former prime minister Imran Khan through a vote of no-confidence in the National Assembly. However, in that case, it was feared that the country might go bankrupt. That was why, the PML-N put its politics at stake only to save Pakistan from default, he added. The former state minister said that dollar was at Rs.100 when Nawaz Sharif was disqualified, and since then it had been showing an upward trajectory despite the best efforts of different governments to control it. He demanded that all political parties should be provided with level playing field in general elections, because impartiality was imperative for solidarity, stability and prosperity of Pakistan. He regretted that no decision had been announced by the ECP in foreign funding case despite passage of almost eight years. – APP

Pak Navy relief operation continues in Baluchistan



DNA

KARACHI: In the current unprecedented monsoon rain spell, Pakistan Navy continues to provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief support to the people stranded in flash floods affected areas of Urki, Uthal, Lakhra and other small isolated hutments of Lasbela District. Commander Coast Rear Admiral Javed Iqbal along with officials of district admin-

istration undertook aerial visit of the flood hit areas to review relief activities. Pakistan Navy helicopters undertook multiple hops from Uthal to the affected areas to air drop rations near people trapped in their homes. Airdrop of relief goods by helicopters has emerged as the most effective way of providing relief to people who could not be reached as road infrastructure has been wiped away by floods. During the operation by Pakistan Navy helicopters, a critically ill woman along with six other people trapped in floods was also rescued and evacuated to Uthal for medical treatment. Pakistan Navy has always remained at the forefront in extending humanitarian assistance during natural calamities. Relief operation in Balochistan is a practical manifestation of Pakistan Navy's resolve to extend all support to fellow countrymen in the hour of need.

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

JULY

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



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 Bomb Disposal.....15
 Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....1122 & 16
 Emergency Ambulance.....1122
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Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

British HC launches climate finance accelerator in Pak

The CFA programme is operational in seven other countries globally



DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Climate Finance Accelerator (CFA) was launched in Pakistan today at an event organised in the Marriott Hotel, Islamabad. The Federal Minister for Climate Change, Sherry Rehman, attended the event as a chief guest. The technical assistance programme responds directly to the urgency and scale of the climate crisis by supporting highly promising low carbon projects to become more appealing to investors, so that they can secure funding more readily. The CFA approach addresses the challenges involved in attracting climate finance to the places where it is most needed. By bringing together project developers and financial experts who can develop and finance climate projects at scale, the CFA will support Pakistan's efforts to implement its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) pledge under

the Paris Agreement, deliver emissions reductions, and raise its overall climate ambition. The CFA programme is operational in seven other countries globally and is being delivered by an alliance of climate finance experts, led PwC and Ricardo Energy & Environment. It is funded by the UK Government's Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and is implemented in Pakistan by DAI as the in-country partner. CFA Pakistan is initially looking for around ten projects at the pre-feasibility stage that are seeking investment of at least USD\$4 million. The CFA call for proposals is open from 2 August until 31 August. Projects wishing to be part of CFA Pakistan should complete the online application. The projects will be selected from the energy, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), agriculture, clean transport, and forestry sectors - priority sectors to achieve Pakistan's climate commitments.



These projects will be supported by technical, financial and gender equality and social inclusion experts to help them understand and overcome barriers to investment. The CFA will also work with policymakers in the Government of Pakistan to share insights to support the development of the enabling environment for climate finance. Pakistan's Federal Minister for Climate Change, Sherry Rehman said: "Climate finance needs to level up the infrastructure, through catastrophe bonds, blue bonds, and other such workable initiatives. Recently, at the Petersburg Dialogue, loss and damage were central to the agenda of the entire discourse. At this year's COP 27, as chair of G77+China, Pakistan will ensure that climate financial justice and loss & damage are at the core of all multilateral negotiations. Pakistan emits less than 1% of GHGs but still bears the repercussions of activities carried out by the biggest world polluters. We need to expedite our adaptation efforts and act now, not tomorrow. The Climate Ministry is now moving ahead with creating Pakistan's first National Adaptation Plan." Development Director, British High Commission, Annabel Gerry said: "The Climate Finance Accelerator will build part-

nerships between projects, the financial community, and policymakers to help low carbon projects looking for investment. The launch of CFA Pakistan underlines the UK's firm commitment to supporting the effort to fight climate change in Pakistan. I hope that it will lead to the creation of a sustainable pipeline of low carbon projects that make a real contribution to tackling the climate emergency." CFA Pakistan Project Director from DAI, Eldana Djumalieva, said: "Pakistan is amongst the top ten countries in the world most affected by climate change. Climate action is a pressing need in Pakistan. The Climate Finance Accelerator represents an initiative that will raise awareness of available financing for projects with a pro-climate approach, linking project developers and financiers. The key is to adapt to as well as mitigate climate risks, placing emphasis on avoiding investments with a carbon 'lock-in', or emissions-intensive assets and processes that will continue operating when lower-carbon options become available to replace them. To this effect, the CFA work will closely align with Pakistan's climate plans, coordinating with the relevant agencies and seeking to exert a concerted effort in facilitating low carbon transition of the economy."

Dr Khalida Mandro takes oath as Senator

ISLAMABAD: Dr Khalida Mandro, the spouse of late Senator Dr Sikandar Mandro, on Friday took the oath as Senator and signed the roll. Senate Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani took the oath and felicitated her for becoming the member of the upper house of the parliament. Eulogizing late Senator Dr Sikandar Mandro's social, political and parliamentary services, he expressed the hope that she would be a good addition for the august house. Leader of the House in Senate Azam Nazeer Tarar and Opposition Leader in the Senate Dr Shahzad Waseem besides others congratulated their new colleague and extended best wishes for the future. - APP

DC reviews facilities at Citizen Facilitation Centre

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon on Friday visited the Citizen Facilitation Centre and reviewed the facilities being offered to the visitors. He directed the staff of Facilitation Centre to perform their job with commitment and deal the people in dignified manner, said a news release. The DC said multiple services including domicile, international driving license, marriage and divorce certificates, and others were being offered to the citizens on priority and within a specified time under one window system of the centre. Irfan urged the citizens to visit the facilitation centre for resolution of their issues. - APP

HEC launches National Faculty Development Programme

ISLAMABAD: The National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE), HEC has launched Cohort-1 of the National Faculty Development Programme (NDFP) 2022. It is a four-week learning programme designed for pre-placement training of Interim Placement of Fresh PhDs (IPFP) Fellows. The Programme is structured to accelerate the transfer of essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes in three dimensions of a successful career as a faculty member, including teaching and learning, applied research, and professional practice. Highlighting the fact that no institute in Pakistan conducts pre-service training for university teachers, Chohan emphasized the significance of skillful and well-equipped teachers for improving quality and standards of the higher education. - APP

Capital's air quality moderate

The frequent forest fires in the capital also created high suspended particles

ISLAMABAD: The air quality of the federal capital after scattered thunderstorms during rainy weather turned moderate on Friday after the pollutant ratio though less than the permissible limits witnessed a slight spike in their atmospheric concentration. The air quality was recorded moderate as suspended particles were noted below permissible limits in the atmosphere along with the pollutants' ratio due to consistent rainy and gusty weather. The air quality data has been collected by Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) which monitors air pollutants ratio for 24 hours based on three intervals of eight hours data collection from different locations. The Pak-EPA data revealed that the air quality throughout the three intervals of data monitoring remained high as the pollutants were below the permissible limits of national environmental quality standards (NEQS). The hazardous air pollutant particulate matter of 2.5

microns (PM_{2.5}), which was a lethal atmospheric contaminant, remained 21.33 micro grammes per cubic meter on average which is higher than the NEQS of 35 mic-grammes per cubic meter and denotes the air quality unhealthy. The PM_{2.5} is generated through combustion of an engine, industrial emissions, burning garbage or inflammable material and dust blown up by fast moving cars plying on non-cemented patches of the roads. Moreover, the frequent forest fires in the federal capital also created high suspended particles, dust and particulate matter in the atmosphere, an EPA official said. The particulate matter had exceeded the permissible limits beyond 40 microns prior to the onset of rainfall which was mainly due to persistent hot and dry weather. The nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and sulphur dioxide (SO₂) were recorded below permissible ratio as it was recorded 3.64 and 12.52 micro-grammes per cubic meter in past 24 hours in the atmosphere against the NEQS of 80 and 120 micro-grammes per cubic meter respectively. - APP

Deptt sports to be restored: NA informed

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi on Friday informed the National Assembly that the incumbent government was considering restoring departmental sports in the country aimed at encouraging young talent and preparing them for national and international events. Responding to queries during question hour in the National Assembly, he said it was unfortunate that the previous government had stopped departmental sports that hampered the activities of talent hunt for different disciplines. Citing the financial sufferings of sportsmen, the minister said the Captain of the Pakistan Hockey team refused to participate in the ongoing Commonwealth Games 2022, being held in the United Kingdom, as he was unable to meet his household expenses. - APP

FC makes elaborate security mechanism

ISLAMABAD: Senate on Friday informed that Frontier Corps (FC) Balochistan (South) had made elaborate security mechanism for provision of security to Zaireen Convoys during their movement from Quetta Taftan and back (632 kms each side). Responding to queries during Question hour of Senate, Minister of State for Law and Justice Shahadat Awan informed Senate that Zaireen Convoys was constituted at Quetta after receipt of information that a number of Zaireen and buses were passing through, adding that dedicated security/ protection was ensured under the command of senior officer via provision of Army/ FC Quick Reaction Force (QRFs) including jammers and additional deployment enroute. He said that levies/Anti-Terrorism Force (ATF), QRFs also escorted the convoys. The minister said that reserve QRFs were placed at designated locations enroute to deal with any untoward situation. Shahadat Awan said that upon reaching Taftan, Zaireen were accommodated at Pakistan House, a walled facility, located at walking distance from Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) gate. He said that after necessary immigration procedure, Zaireen entered Iran and same procedure was followed on return of Zaireen from Iran. The minister said that Pakistan has a 905 km border with Iran and has three Border Check posts (BCPs) at Taftan and Gabd-Reemdan (BP250) and Mand-Pishin. However, at present Taftan and Gabd-Reemdan were only operational for facilitation of Zaireen, who intend to proceed to Iran. Taftan was the major crossing point along Pak-Iran border. He said that FIA Immigration at Taftan had always facilitated all types of pedestrians specially Zaireen. Shahadat Awan further said that FIA was operating with 10 counters each at arrival and departure points. Furthermore, there was an accommodation facility at Pakistan House managed by local administration where Zaireen could stay. - APP

ICCI calls for supplementary budget to address tax issues



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) said that the traders across the country were up in protest against the levy of fixed sales tax in electricity bills while the business community of other sectors have also shown great concerns over the imposition of many new taxes through the Finance Bill 2022 including deemed rental income, capital gain tax, increase in withholding tax etc. and called upon the government to introduce a supplementary budget in consultation with trade bodies in order to address such tax issues of the business community. He said this while addressing a meeting of ICCI Tax Committee. Muhammad Shakeel Munir said that the government has introduced minimum fixed sales tax of Rs.3000 for small traders in the monthly electricity bills

even though the amount of bill is less than Rs.1000, which was unjustified. He stressed that the government should introduce fixed sales tax on the basis of consumption of electricity units to make it affordable for small traders. He said that the annual income of many small traders was less than the taxable threshold, but they were being forced to pay minimum monthly sales tax of Rs.3000, which is not justified. He urged that the government should consult with the trade bodies to address such tax anomalies and come up with a supplementary budget to rationalize high taxes. Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh, Senior Vice President ICCI said that the government was charging 5% sales tax on the amount of up to Rs.20,000 of electricity bill and 7.5% on the amount exceeding Rs.20,000, which was more affordable for traders while the minimum fixed sales tax of Rs.3000 in monthly electricity bills was not acceptable for them. Naem Siddiqui, Convener, ICCI Tax Committee said that the sales tax should not be col-

lected with electricity bills and urged that FBR should introduce self-assessment scheme for the business community, which would not only address their tax issues, it would also help in enhancing the tax revenue of the country. Mian Waqas Masud said that PRAL was storing computerized payment receipts (CPRs) for just 3 years in its record due to which CPRs of over 3 years were not available in its system and FBR was issuing notices for CPRs to the business community, which was strange. He stressed that PRAL should keep CPRs at least for 5 years in its system to save the business community from such unnecessary notices. Tahir Abbasi, Khalid Chaudhry, Mian Muhammad Ramzan, Muhammad Yousaf Khan, Ch. Masood Tabish, Kashif Mahmood, Hasan Iqbal Gardezi, Touseef Zaman, Babar Chaudhry, Hafiz Bilal and others members of Tax Committee also highlighted various tax issues and urged that the introduction of a supplementary budget in consultation with stakeholders was the best solution to address them.

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (PUBLIC) ISLAMABAD

AUCTION NOTICE

Auction of unusable items on "as and where basis" will be held on Thursday, the 18th August, 2022 at 1100 hours in the Prime Minister's Office (Public), Constitution Avenue, Islamabad. Unserviceable items include CPUs, Monitors, Photocopiers, Printers, Scanners, Shredders, Servers, UPS, Laptops, Fax Machines and other Misc items. The detail of the items can be obtained from Dak Window at Gate No. 2 of PM's Office during office hours. The same may be downloaded from the official website of Prime Minister's Office i.e. <http://pmo.gov.pk>. These items can be inspected during the office hours (08A.M. to 04P.M.) till 17th August, 2022

Terms and Conditions:-

- All bidders are required to bring their Original CNIC alongwith photocopy.
- Interested bidders will submit Rs. 100,000/- as earnest money (Refundable) to DDO, Prime Minister's Office (Public) either in shape of cash, bank draft or pay order before participating in the bidding process.
- The Auction Committee will announce the opening of bid, closing of bid and the name of successful bidder.
- The successful bidder will submit 25% of the total bid amount on the spot. Successful bidder is bound to submit remaining amount within three days through a bank draft in the name of DDO, PM's Office (Public) after issuance of award letter with the approval of competent authority. If successful bidder fails to deposit the 25% of bid amount, his payment will be forfeited in favor of Government.
- If successful bidder could not deposit the complete bid money within three days after issuance of award letter, his earnest money & 25% advance will be forfeited in favor of Government. In such a case, competent authority reserve the right to offer the bid to the 2nd successful bidder on same terms and conditions.
- All taxes imposed by the Government of Pakistan will be applicable as per laws. Successful bidder is bound to pay these taxes.
- Successful bidder is bound to collect all unserviceable items after complete payment of bid money. In case of any loss, Prime Minister's Office's administration will not be responsible.
- Advance payment of all unsuccessful bidders will be refunded at spot right after auction.
- Competent Authority can accept or reject any bid without mentioning any reason.

Muhammad Afzal
Section Officer (General)
Prime Minister's Office (Public)
Room No. 201-C, Islamabad.
Phone No: 051- 9008340

PID N: 546

Briefs

Afghan faculty members visit HEC

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of 30 Afghan faculty members and university administrators visited Higher Education Commission (HEC) Secretariat and called on Acting Chairperson/Executive Director HEC Dr. Shaista Sohail and top management of HEC. Dr. Shaista Sohail gave a briefing on HEC's functions to the delegates, who are currently attending a capacity building programme at National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), Islamabad. She described the overall structure of higher education sector in Pakistan with special reference to HEC scholarships for Afghan students. She also responded to questions of the delegates regarding Afghan students studying in Pakistani universities under Allama Muhammad Iqbal Scholarships. Assuring the delegation of HEC's full support to Afghan students in the light of the Government of Pakistan's instructions, Dr. Shaista Sohail hoped that the students will contribute to the development of Afghanistan and help further improve people-to-people relations. She wished the delegates good luck in their training and hoped that the initiative will help Afghanistan rebuild the academic and administrative capability of its universities.

Over 4.2 mln Pakistani labours working in GCC, NA told

ISLAMABAD: Over 4,296,174 Pakistani labours were working in various Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resources Development Sajid Hussain Turi told National Assembly. In a written reply to the question of Ms Mussarat Rafiq Mahesar, he said as many as 2,000,000 labours were working in Saudi Arabia, 1,755,972 in United Arab Emirates (UAE), 175,000 in Qatar, 239,023 workers in Oman, 68,179 in Kuwait, 58,000 in Bahrain. In a written reply to the question of Ghous Bux Mahar, Turi said 1,552,726 Pakistanis sent abroad in last four years. In a written reply to another question of Sikandar Ali Rahouroti, Turi said as many as 12,992 Pakistani workers had been registered for employment in Iran since 1971 till June 2022. While there were 100 Pakistani prisoners including 62 convicted and 38 under trial were imprisoned in Iranian Jails in different crimes such as drug possession and trafficking illegal entry, murder, espionage, corruption, theft, supply/use of alcohol etc. - APP

AIOU invites nominations for national competitions

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has planned a series of activities including national song and speech competitions to celebrate August as the month of independence through engaging the students of different educational institutions of twin cities. According to the Director of Student Affairs, Rana Tariq Javed, the Directorate of Student Advisory and Counseling Services has directed the heads of universities, colleges, and schools in the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad to nominate a candidate (male or female student) from their institution for national song competition and speech competition respectively. The heads may send these nominations to the office of Directorate of Student Affairs, Allama Iqbal Open University by post or email to director_sac@aiou.edu.pk by August 08. The topic for the speech competition is "Are we following the objectives of the Pakistan Movement". The cash prizes including Rs. 7,000 for the first position, Rs. 5,000 for second and Rs. 3,000 for third position will be awarded to the best teams in both competitions. Certificates will also be given to all the participants. - APP

First Lady for inclusive education of PWDs

The First Lady appreciated that Balochistan was the first province to introduce the Balochistan Persons with Disabilities Act, 2017. She assured participants of her support and guidance towards the resolution of issues being faced by PWDs

DNA

ISLAMABAD: First Lady Begum Samina Arif Alvi has emphasized the need to impart inclusive education to Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in mainstream educational institutions and equip them with the latest and in-demand technical and vocational skills. She said that welfare organizations should create awareness among PWDs about the business loans being offered by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on easy terms and conditions for their financial independence. She made these remarks while addressing a virtual meeting on disability with members of the civil society organizations working for the welfare of differently-abled people (DAPs) in Balochistan, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. Technical Advisor from the World Health Organization (WHO), Ms Maryam Malik, and representatives of the Balochistan Government, NGOs, and welfare foundations attended the meeting via video link. Addressing the meeting, Begum Samina Arif Alvi highlighted that a unified platform



with representation from government, NGOs and welfare foundations was essential for better coordination among different stakeholders as it would help in exchanging information and best practices and coming up with cost-effective solutions to address the issues of PWDs. She said that the issuance of disability certificates to PWDs

needed to be made easier through One Window facilities by establishing and operationalizing them through the assistance of provincial Social Welfare, Health Departments and NADRA. Begum Samina Alvi highlighted that PWDs, especially the physically impaired persons, faced hindrances in mobility which should be addressed by

providing them with Assistive Technology like wheelchairs, and making marketplaces, public spaces, banks, and buildings accessible by installing wheelchair-friendly ramps. The participants of the meeting briefed the First Lady about the role of their respective organizations towards the welfare of PWDs in Balochistan and the issues being faced by the differently-abled people. It was highlighted that efforts needed to be accelerated to ensure the implementation of the Balochistan Persons with Disabilities Act, 2017 to ensure that the benefits enshrined in the policy reach PWDs. The participants presented their suggestions to address the issues being faced by PWDs in getting disability certificates, inclusive education in regular schools, and jobs as per the 5% quota for PWDs belonging to Balochistan. The First Lady appreciated that Balochistan was the first province to introduce the Balochistan Persons with Disabilities Act, 2017. She assured the participants of her support and guidance towards the resolution of issues being faced by PWDs.

'Daraar' first look leaves fans awestruck

DNA

ISLAMABAD: 7th Sky Entertainment has finally unveiled the first look of most-anticipated drama serial 'Daraar', penned by Misbah Nosheen and directed under the vital direction of Shehehzade Sheikh, expected to hit screens soon. Featuring the versatile actor Syed Jibran alongside the diva Momal Sheikh and Amar Khan, who has been riding high on success for her blockbuster film 'Dum Mastam', Daraar promises to bring something fresh to the table. Recently, the 7th Sky Entertainment amused fans with first trailer of much-talked-about serial on their official social media handle, along with the caption "Here's the first look of our upcoming drama serial revolving around family values and regrettable decisions." As per the revealed teaser, 'Daraar' tells a tale of love, honour and rivalry, showing Momal sheikh in a different, never seen before avatar. The first look of serial depicts Momal as a girl blindly running after her dreams, who can go to any extent to fulfill her wishes. Right after the teaser made public, netizens started praising Momal as well as the entire star cast for their efforts and phenomenal acting skills. - APP

COMSATs and WSSCA Abbottabad inks MoU for cooperation

ABBOTTABAD: COMSATs University Abbottabad Campus and Water and Sanitation Services Company Abbottabad (WSSCA) Friday joined hands for a collaboration agreement that has been signed for research on solid waste management, water supply scheme system and sewage system. The agreement would promote cooperation between both institutions with each other in the field of research. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by the Director of COMSATs University Abbottabad Campus, Prof. Muhammad Maruf Shah and the CEO of WSSCA, Engineer Muhammad Javed Abbasi. While speaking on the occasion Director COMSATs said that cooperation agreements between industry and academic institutions are the need of the hour, students of COMSATs University have already done a lot of research work on solid waste management, and water supply schemes system and sewage system which is beneficial for WSSCA. - APP

IRSA releases 460702 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 460702 cusecs water from various rim stations with an inflow of 603041 cases. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the Jehlum River at Mangla Dam was 1146.65 feet, which was 96.65 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet whereas the inflow and outflow of water was recorded a 73239 and 10000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa and Sukkur was recorded as 220230 , 268930 and 280055 cusecs respectively. - APP

Government promoting foreign investment: PM

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said promotion of foreign investment in the country was one of the top priorities of the government. Talking to a delegation of Pakistan-American Business Forum, he said the government was committed to ensure favourable conditions for foreign investors with an aim to strengthen national economy. The delegation included Secretary General Pakistan American Business Forum Waqar Khan, President Riaz Hussain and Senior Vice President Anwar Azam. Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi and senior officials also participated in the meeting. PM Sharif said the coal-

ition government came into power during tough times with an objective to uphold the sanctity of State over politics. He mentioned that the government took difficult decisions to revive the economy and save the country from default. He held the previous government responsible for restoration of economy, beside extending facilities to export industry and addressing the problems of overseas Pakistanis. The delegation apprised the prime minister about their problems and also gave feedback on various related matters. The prime minister instructed the authorities concerned to resolve their problems on priority basis and assured them every possible facilitation by the government. - APP

wind was in the offing. As part of austerity measures, he mentioned imposition of ban on import of luxury goods as well as reduction of unnecessary government expenditure. The delegation appreciated the measures taken by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for restoration of economy, beside extending facilities to export industry and addressing the problems of overseas Pakistanis. The delegation apprised the prime minister about their problems and also gave feedback on various related matters. The prime minister instructed the authorities concerned to resolve their problems on priority basis and assured them every possible facilitation by the government. - APP

1st meeting of China-Pak JWG on IT held

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The 1st meeting of China-Pakistan Joint Working Group (JWG) on Information Technology Industry was virtually held in the committee room of Ministry of IT and Telecommunication. The Pakistani side was led by Additional Secretary (Incharge), Ministry of IT and Telecommunication, Mohsin Mushtaq, while the Chinese side was headed by the Vice Minister of Industry and IT of China, Zhang Yunming. The meeting discussed avenues for cooperation between the two countries in the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector.

False claims of national development being made for decades

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Friday said baseless claims about the country's development have been made for the past thirty-four years. Weak leadership, the endless series of elitism and the blind adoption of the policies of international organizations have left the country's economy dysfunctional, it said. This time, despite accepting the unbearably strict conditions of the IMF, a loan is not being provided, which has destroyed the value of the rupee, said Brig. (ret'd) Aslam Khan, Chairman PEW. He said that transferring the resources of the developing countries to developed countries is the agenda of international organizations, which is being followed by self-interested politicians. Aslam Khan said that our economists are doing nothing except seeking loans, promoting the elite, issuing comforting statements and fueling the crisis with their wrong policies due to which the economy is constantly weakening. Those who can plan to pay the old debts by taking new loans are considered expert economists which is shameful, he added. He noted that despite a serious crisis, the central bank is without a permanent governor and a junior officer has been temporarily appointed as the governor of the State Bank of Pakistan, which is expected to restore the confidence of the market. Aslam Khan regretted Pakistan has the potential to collect 12 trillion rupees as revenue, but the target has been set at 7 trillion rupees to please the nobility. - DNA

World Day against Trafficking in Persons to be marked today

ISLAMABAD: World Day against Trafficking in Persons will be marked on July 30 (Saturday) across the globe including Pakistan to create awareness about human trafficking and worldwide efforts to defeat this scourge. Millions of people are victims of human trafficking and almost a third are children. In 2013, the UN member states adopted a resolution which designated July 30 as the World Day against Trafficking in Persons. They declared that such a day was necessary to "raise awareness of the situation of victims of human trafficking and for the promotion and protection of their rights." The Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons was adopted in 2010 and urges governments worldwide to take coordinated and consistent measures to defeat human trafficking in all its forms. The UN plan calls for integrating the fight against human trafficking into the UN's broader programmes to boost development and strengthen security worldwide. Almost a third of all human trafficking victims worldwide are children, according to the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons released in December 2016 by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Women and girls comprise 71% of human trafficking victims, the same report states. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), around 21 million people are victims of forced labor globally, and of these, a significant number are also trafficking victims. The UN resolution also states that trafficking in persons, especially women and children, constitutes an offense and a serious threat to human dignity and physical integrity, human rights, and development. Despite sustained measures taken at the international, regional, and national levels, trafficking in persons remains one of the grave challenges facing the international community, which also impairs the enjoyment of human rights and needs a more concerted international response. According to the 2016 UN report, women and girls tend to be trafficked for marriages and sexual slavery, while men and boys are typically exploited for forced labor in the mining sector, as porters, and as soldiers. It also states that refugees from war and persecution are particularly vulnerable to becoming victims of human trafficking. - APP

Ground breaking ceremony of "Pak-Korea Testing Laboratory"

ISLAMABAD: The ground breaking ceremony of "Pak-Korea Testing Laboratory for PV-Modules and Allied Equipment" being established by the Pakistan Council of Renewable Energy Technologies (PCRET) and Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) was held at a local hotel on Friday. Federal Secretary for Science and Technology, Ghulam Muhammad Memon was chief guest on the occasion. While Ambassador of Republic of Korea, Mr. Sangpyo Suh and Director General PCRET, Dr. Syed Atta-ur-Rehman were also

present on the occasion. PCRET is establishing solar panel testing laboratory under the project titled "Establishment of PAK-KOREA Testing Laboratory for PV Modules and Allied Equipment". The solar panel testing laboratory is being established under a grant-aid project from Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) amounting to 9.5 Million USD and local Public Sector Development Program (PSDP) share of Rs. 71.629 Million. The testing laboratory is planned to achieve status

of Certification Body Testing Laboratory (CBTL) in collaboration with Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority (PSQCA). The testing laboratory after its completion will be the first testing laboratory of the country having CBTL status. The KOICA will construct the testing laboratory and provide, install and commission all the required equipment for the solar panel testing. The KOICA will also provide one year training to PCRET employees for smooth operation of the project during

and after its completion. Obtaining of International certifications including IEC-61215 and IEC-61730 along with ISO-17025 will also be sponsored and facilitated by the Korean side. PCRET will provide all the local support required for execution of the project along with 8 kanals of space for the project at Plot no. 55, Street 7, Sector H-8/4, Islamabad. PCRET will also ensure involvement of its employees to seek training during the project and ensure its execution and operation after its completion. - APP

New medical center proposed at G-11

ISLAMABAD: Senate informed on Friday that a new medical centre is proposed at G-11 Markaz to serve residents of slum areas located at G-12 and F-12 in the federal capital. Responding to queries during Question hour in Senate, the Minister of State for Law and Justice informed Senate that the Director of Health Services Metropolitan Corporation of Islamabad (MCI) functions in various sectors of Islamabad. He said that the population of sec-

toral areas is 650,000 whereas the population of slum areas in G-6, G-7, G-8, G-12, H-9, I-9, I-10, I-11, Bekha Saedan and Rawal Town is about 80,000 which is 12% of the total population residing in sectoral areas of Islamabad. He said that rural areas including slums are looked after by the District Health Officer (DHO) office ministry of National Health Services Regulation and Coordination. The minister said that Capital Development Authority (CDA) has installed clean drinking water filtration plants in the sectors of ICT and the population of slums is using the same for clean drinking water. Shahadat Awan said that Environment Protection Institute (EPI) vaccination is provided to residents of slum areas at MCI medical centres located at G-6, G-7, G-9, I-8, I-10, F-11 and Rawal Town. He said that all slums are also being targeted through a network of 4 out-reach vaccinators who are given facilities like motorbikes, cold chain equipment and other vaccines. He said that the above-mentioned facilities provide primary and secondary health care services, and conduct measles, polio, de-worming and other EPI campaigns. - APP

ment Authority (CDA) has installed clean drinking water filtration plants in the sectors of ICT and the population of slums is using the same for clean drinking water. Shahadat Awan said that Environment Protection Institute (EPI) vaccination is provided to residents of slum areas at MCI medical centres located at G-6, G-7, G-9, I-8, I-10, F-11 and Rawal Town. He said that all slums are also being targeted through a network of 4 out-reach vaccinators who are given facilities like motorbikes, cold chain equipment and other vaccines. He said that the above-mentioned facilities provide primary and secondary health care services, and conduct measles, polio, de-worming and other EPI campaigns. - APP

FICS '22 concludes at NUST

ISLAMABAD: Grand Finale and Prize Distribution Ceremony of Finding Innovative and Creative Solutions for Society (FICS 2022), a platform to foster social entrepreneurship, was held at National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) on Thursday. The overall winner of FICS '22, organised by Innovation and Commercialization Office, was Team "Mine Information Modeling (MIM)" from NUST Institute of Geographical Systems, NUST School of Civil and Environmental Engineering. The team emerged victorious from amongst 395 project ideas pitched during the 3-stage competition. The winning project revolves around integrated BIM-GIS application that can be effectively used for asset management, having detailed and intelligent design incorporating various aspects of an asset. The winning team was awarded a cash prize of PKR 250,000/-, sponsored by NRTC. In addition, second and third prizes, and four winners of Special Categories in SGDs were awarded cash prizes of PKR 150,000/-, PKR 100,000/- and PKR 25,000/- each, respectively. Team "Environmental Prediction through Satellite" from Egypt stood first amongst the international contestants and was awarded a Global Champion Award of USD 1000, sponsored by Walled City Co. A total of 80+ finalist teams of FICS '22 demonstrated their prototypes of technology-based innovative solutions to a panel of 20+ industry judges. The winning teams have also been awarded 6-month free incubation space at TechOne - NUST's Incubation Centre. Apart from the PDF sponsored by CSAPL and Habib Bank Ltd, FICS is fortunate to have patronage from a diverse set of industries, which includes seed fund for the promising projects. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Turkiye Mehmet Pacaci in a meeting with the Chairman Amir Ali Ahmed. - DNA

Nuclear warfare: talks or destruction

When the most senior figure in Britain's defence and security establishment warns of the increased risk of accidental nuclear war, the rest of us should pay attention. Even today, when security chiefs speak more often in public than they once did, they still ration their pronouncements. So when the UK's national security adviser, Sir Stephen Lovegrove, speaks in Washington about a breakdown in communications with Russia and China causing an enhanced risk of "rapid escalation to strategic conflict", as he did this week, those words should be taken very seriously indeed. The increased international danger is starkly obvious. Russia's deliberate invasion of Ukraine, its use of hypersonic Kinzhal weapons and its threats of further escalation involving its nuclear arsenal add up to the most destabilising repertoire of state-on-state aggression in modern Europe since 1945. In Asia, China's increasingly belligerent postures over Taiwan and in the South China Sea, its intensive nuclear missile development programmes and its disdain towards arms control agreements raise the stakes much higher. Iran and North Korea, where Kim Jong-un appears to be preparing the country's first nuclear test for five years, add further to the current volatility.

Sir Stephen warned that what is happening is not a return to the nuclear tensions of the cold war. In those days, he argued, Nato and the Soviet Union by and large understood one another's military doctrines of deterrence, containment and the avoidance of first nuclear weapon use. That is not the case today. Nuclear doctrine is opaque, and possibly different, in Moscow and Beijing, never mind in Pyongyang. The key role in the west will continue to be played by the United States. But Britain is not currently doing its bit. Boris Johnson prefers to grandstand as a fancy dress war leader. Liz Truss is doing a Margaret Thatcher tribute act in the hope of becoming his successor. Rishi Sunak is afraid of saying anything for fear of the Tory right. This week, though, the Commons defence committee accused the government of being "arrogant and unwilling to learn the lessons" of its defence errors, including in Ukraine, while an Institute for Government report describes the Foreign Office as understaffed, with low morale and expertise on Russia continuing to be downgraded. Sir Stephen Lovegrove's Washington speech may be a welcome piece of strategic thinking at the heart of government. But the people who most need to get his message are the British ministers for whom he works.

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For research and education

MUHAMMAD OMAR IFTIKHAR

University researchers have a responsibility to produce content that is relevant, informative, and thought-provoking. They do so to add value to the research in the field of their study. Their study and analysis, surveys and examinations, insights and findings, become the foundation for other researchers to look beyond the horizon. While the university researchers also have to serve as faculty members, it is their in-depth examination and scrutiny of the subject matter of their choosing that becomes their calling. It also becomes their passion for which they read a plethora of books, extract minuscule details from journals and publications, and include their perceptions and visions in them. Indeed, the researchers have an enormous obligation to fulfill – to provide data that is accurate, relevant, and meaningful. In today's era of global connectivity, a researcher living in Pakistan can collaborate with a researcher living in Australia.

Such collaborations must be made so there is an exchange of knowledge and insights. Moreover, the research papers should also be shared with the common man and with professionals in their fields. For instance, engineers must know the latest research a group of engineers has done. Doctors must know about the insights gathered by doctors. The farmers in the rural areas of Pakistan must be made aware of what new farming technologies are being introduced. For this to happen, the research papers must be converted into easy-to-understand articles for print media and short scripts for radio. Without sharing these insights with the world the researchers will not do justice with their efforts. Students in colleges and universities must be taught these research papers as case studies. A holistic approach must be adapted so that the research is disseminated across students and professionals. It is through this collective effort that we can uplift the awareness and acumen of our nation.



Report documents Israeli brutality against children in Gaza

Ray Hanania



The Israeli government's system of racist apartheid embraces policies that distinguish between Jews and non-Jews. Jews who are arrested must first be charged and given the right to defend themselves before any punishment is meted out

Israel's relentless assault on the citizens of the Gaza Strip began on the very day that it was captured by Israel in June, 1967. But the brutality has risen sharply ever since Israel withdrew its 21 illegal settlements in August, 2005 and relocated its occupation forces to encircle Gaza. Most often, the public only hears about the Gaza Strip when Palestinians initiate violence in response to Israel's constant attacks and strangling embargo.

dramatically, resulting in rising death tolls, including many women and children. Since 2007, Israel's government has launched four full-scale military assaults, killing 4,041 Palestinians, including 1,005 children and 461 women. Killing of Palestinians by Israeli soldiers during incursions or border flare-ups has increased the toll to 5,418, the report said. Many of those who remain are

Gaza is an open-air prison controlled by Israel's government, and often serves as a shooting gallery for Israeli soldiers whenever Palestinians attempt to protest at their confinement.

During the past 15 years, according to a new report released by the Al-Mezan Center for Human Rights, based in the Gaza Strip, Israeli military assaults and policies that oppress the civilian population have increased

forced to live in abandonment, as the assaults have destroyed tens of thousands of homes, industrial and commercial facilities, and infrastructure, such as electricity, water, sanitation and roads.

The brutality rarely gets media coverage unless Palestinians respond with violent acts, such as flying untargeted kites carrying petrol bombs over Gaza's borders toward Israel. The desperation of the oppressed and brutalized Palestinians has only increased as the population has grown by more than 25 percent from 1.5 million in 2006 to more than 2 million today. The Al-Mezan report received no coverage from the mainstream Western news media, which operates with a censorship mandate, only awakening when violence there benefits Israel's self-serving and exaggerated narrative. The Israeli government's assault on Gaza extends to every possible level of contact, according to the report. Israel's navy, the one responsible for the attack on the USS Liberty in which 34 US servicemen were killed by Israeli air and water assault teams on June 8, 1967, has targeted Gaza's fishing industry, disrupting its ability to fish and provide food to its citizens. Even when Palestinians attempt to leave Gaza for foreign destinations, such as students seeking to attend schools

in Europe or the Middle East, Israel's government can incarcerate them without charge, as they do to hundreds of thousands of Palestinians each year in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem.

In the past 15 years, 204 Palestinians, including 48 higher education students, have been arrested and imprisoned without formal charge. The Israeli government's system of racist apartheid embraces policies that distinguish between Jews and non-Jews. Jews who are arrested must first be charged and given the right to defend themselves before any punishment is meted out. Non-Jews, on the other hand, are arrested and punished first without habeas corpus, a Western law that requires a person who is arrested to be brought before a judge into a public courtroom to petition for release unless lawful evidence and grounds are presented to justify their detention. In many cases, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians are imprisoned under the old British mandate system used by Israel's government without ever being charged or allowed to address a judge, individually or with a lawyer. The denial of that right is a fundamental cornerstone of apartheid racism, which this week was showcased by a representative of South Africa, where the West first defined the term. On July

26, Naledi Pandor, South Africa's minister of international relations and cooperation, said: "The Palestinian narrative evokes experiences of South Africa's own history of racial segregation and oppression. As oppressed South Africans, we experienced firsthand the effects of racial inequality, discrimination and denial, and we cannot stand by while another generation of Palestinians are left behind." Pandor called on the UN General Assembly to investigate and formally verify that Israel should be classified as an apartheid state. No Western media covered Pandor's speech. The West led the fight against apartheid South Africa until the system collapsed in the 1990s. Ironically, the apartheid system in South Africa began in parallel with the creation of Israel in 1948, and while apartheid racism was fundamental in the creation of Israel, it was never acknowledged until recently. The Al-Mezan report should be formally introduced to the UN and read by every nation. Its conclusions should be codified internationally as an indictment of Israeli government's racist and discriminatory policies, which violate the fundamentals of international law.

Courtesy: Arab News

Europe can withstand Russia's energy threats

Maximilian Hess

Europe's leaders are now facing the herculean task of simultaneously helping their industries survive on a reduced energy supply, supporting Ukraine's war effort and maintaining public support for the sanctions regime amid a cost-of-living crisis largely manufactured by Russia that seems to have no real end in sight

Not since World War II has the threat to global energy security been as severe as it is today. Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine and the consequent geo-economic war between the Kremlin and the West disrupted global gas markets at a scale unprecedented in recent history. The Kremlin's use of its power over energy markets as leverage – and Europe's efforts to wean itself off of Russian natural gas and avoid a massive shortage this winter – are triggering price hikes and rerouting flows around the world. No one is left unaffected, even those who thought they had prepared for every eventuality. For example, Pakistan, which had secured several long-term natural gas import contracts to increase its

Earlier this week, Moscow tried to tighten its squeeze on Europe further, saying it plans to reduce gas supplies through the Nord Stream 1 pipeline to Germany to just 20 percent capacity. In response, European Union energy ministers swiftly announced an agreement for the bloc's members to cut gas usage by 15 percent this winter. This was an attempt by Europe to show it would not give in to Russian pressure and abandon Ukraine in order to fill up its gas reserves. Such conflict-driven demand reduction, however, means that an already likely recession is now all but guaranteed. Following Gazprom's latest cuts, analysts already predict the EU will not be able to reach its own target of refill-

ing gas storage to 80 percent capacity by winter. Now that Europe made it clear that it is finally – and perhaps much belatedly – ready to take the steps to cut its need for Russian gas at any cost, the Kremlin will do everything it can to inflict maximum pain on Europe in the short term, while the dependency remains.

A recent German poll found that at the moment, 58 percent of the population is supporting sanctions against Russia despite potential negative impacts for Germany. Russian President Vladimir Putin is working to bring that number down – down to the point that it becomes untenable for Germany's leaders to push for policies to support Ukraine and help the West win its confrontation with Russia. The waning of public support for the sanctions regime in the face of economic difficulties is an equally significant risk for other European governments. Europe's leaders are now facing the herculean task of simultaneously helping their industries survive on a reduced energy supply, supporting Ukraine's war effort and maintaining public support for the sanctions regime amid a cost-of-living crisis largely manufactured by Russia that seems to have no real end in sight. Energy is perhaps the most consequential front in the ongoing geo-economic battle between Russia and the West, and thus Europe needs to strengthen its hand there first.

After moving to address the demand side of the equation, now it needs to address the supply side of the problem to be able to shore up its economy to the furthest extent possible, and insulate public support for Kyiv and the sanctions regime against Russia. There are some obvious steps that European governments can take – but

have been reluctant to in fear of domestic backlash – to resolve the supply issue swiftly. The Netherlands, for example, can pump billions of cubic metres of extra natural gas across Europe by increasing production at the Groningen gas field. Bewilderingly, however, it is still planning to take the entire operation offline next year over the risk of minor earthquakes in the surrounding area and some pushback from environmentalists. Germany can also increase its future capacity to supply energy simply by extending the lifespan of its nuclear power plants that are meant to come offline at the end of the year. The governing coalition said it is now considering this option, but the Greens – including Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock – continue to resist the move. The party's stance on this issue is somewhat understandable – after all, Germany's Green Party was in large part borne out of Germany's Cold War-era anti-nuclear movement. Nevertheless, by blocking a relatively straightforward and low-risk solution to a major problem facing the nation, it risks failing the test of being a responsible government partner at a time of war, less than a year after its best-ever election result.

Beyond increasing their own production capacity by any means possible, European nations should of course also work on forming new partnerships with suppliers outside their region. The global gas crisis and its impacts are by no means limited to Europe. It is therefore imperative that Europe seeks to bring together the international community to coordinate global supply. When the world last faced such a major energy crisis, the Allies had significant control over the world's oil supplies. British Petroleum and its predecessors, and the forefathers of the modern United

States energy majors, controlled most of the Middle East's petroleum at the dawn of World War II. Britain established the Petroleum Warfare Department and the Petroleum Board – which brought together all allied energy firms, including US ones even before Pearl Harbor brought the US into the conflict directly – to coordinate supplies for the war. Today, ownership of global energy supplies is far more diversified. And while the US has pledged to use its role as a liquefied natural gas (LNG) exporter to support Europe, a fire this June at its flagship liquefaction plant in Freeport, Texas has seen export capacity fall by some 17 percent. Thus addressing global gas shortages will require a coming together of key public and private players from across the world to develop a strategy for this winter. Opportunities have been missed. No significant agreements on gas production were reached at the recent June G7 summit. And the G20 summit this November is unlikely to deliver any major progress since Russia remains a member. European leaders will have to find other forums to achieve this agenda. The upcoming Gastech conference in Milan at the beginning of September may prove one forum, as it will bring together many of the industry's CEOs and energy ministers from around the world. The United Nations General Assembly summit begins the following week in New York and could prove another opportunity for energy diplomacy, if preparations begin now. But time is running out for Europe and the world to insulate themselves from Putin's weaponisation of gas supplies. The best time to start has clearly passed, but the next best time is now.

Courtesy: Al Jazeera

Briefs

Amb. Nong...

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Staff (COAS) at GHQ, today. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, defence collaboration, progress on CPEC and regional security were discussed in detail. COAS said that Pakistan values China's role in global and regional affairs and we look forward to enhancing our strategic partnership. COAS reiterated that Pakistan remains committed to cooperate with its international partners for peace and stability in the region. The visiting dignitary thanked COAS for special measures taken for provision of safe and secure environment for Chinese personnel employed on various projects in Pakistan and efforts towards regional stability. He also assured to play his role for further improvement in diplomatic cooperation with Pakistan at all levels.

Chinese...

FROM PAGE 01

international situation, China and Russia, as two major countries and permanent members of the UN Security Council, should strengthen strategic communication in a timely manner, which will help demonstrate the basic situation of the China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination, promote the sound and steady development of bilateral relations, uphold and practice true multilateralism, and push forward the development of the international order in a fair and reasonable direction. As this year marks the 20th anniversary of the signing of the SCO Charter and the 15th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty on Long-Term Good-Neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation of the SCO Member States, it is of great significance to inherit the past and usher in the future, Wang said. China stands ready to strengthen solidarity and cooperation with all member states of the SCO, including Russia, to make the organization a backbone for defending international fairness and justice, a stabilizing factor for regional and world peace, and an important engine for global post-pandemic recovery, he added. Noting that time reveals a person's heart, Lavrov said Russia-China relations have withstood the test of the international situation, which fully demonstrates the traditional friendship and mutual strategic trust between the two countries. Russia is willing to maintain close high-level exchanges with China and promote practical cooperation in various fields.

FM for...

FROM PAGE 01

bilateral contacts in the last few years and stressed the importance of maintaining the momentum through consolidating the strategic partnership between Pakistan and Uzbekistan. He underscored the urgent need to operationalize Transit Trade Agreement (UPTTA) and Preferential Trade Agreement for boosting trade and transit between the two countries. The Foreign Minister underlined the importance of direct air connectivity to enhance business and people-to-people links. He also appreciated progress on joint media production on the common heritage and life of Mughal Emperor Zahir-ud-din Babur. The Foreign Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's strong commitment to timely completion of Trans-Afghan railway project and expressed pleasure at commencement of joint field expedition in Afghanistan in this context.

MBS thanks...

FROM PAGE 01

in 2018. Macron's office made no official statement on the talks overnight which were expected to focus on securing extra oil and gas supplies from the Middle East's biggest producer. The prince is being courted by Western leaders again as they urgently seek fresh sources of fossil fuels to replace lost Russian production. US President Joe Biden travelled to Riyadh earlier this month, drawing similar criticism to that faced by Macron at home.

British NSA warns of risk of 'nuclear war'

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: The West risks the start of nuclear war with China or Russia due to a "breakdown of communication" with the two major powers, the United Kingdom's national security adviser has warned. In a speech in Washington at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Sir Stephen Lovegrove said the erosion of backdoor channels had caused an increased chance of an accidental escalation into war. "The cold war's two monolithic blocks of the USSR and NATO - though not without alarming bumps - were able to reach a shared understanding of doctrine that is today absent," said Lovegrove, noting that deterioration of communication with China and Russia has sparked a risk of "rapid escalation to strategic conflict." "During the cold war, we benefited from a series of negotiations and dialogues that improved our understanding of Soviet doctrine and capabilities, and vice versa," added Lovegrove, who was appointed to UK government's most senior defense position in March 2021. "This gave us both a higher level of confidence that we would not miscalculate our way into nuclear war." He further said that they do not have the same foundations with others today, who may threaten them in fu-

ture, referring to China, stressing that London "strongly supports [US] President Biden's proposed talks with China as an important step". Biden and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping held a phone conversation on Thursday, just three days after Beijing warned of "strong measures" if US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi went through with plans to visit self-ruled island territory of Taiwan, claimed by China. During the talks - aimed at diffusing tension over Chinese Taipei - Xi again warned his American counterpart not to "play with fire" over Taiwan, calling on him to abide by the "one China" policy. "Public opinion cannot be violated. Those who play with fire will be burnt. I hope the US can clearly see this," the Chinese president emphasized, according to a readout released by China's official Xinhua news agency.

The strong warning is the latest in a string of similar warnings issued by Beijing in response to reports last week that the 82-year-old Pelosi, who is second in the presidential line of succession, may pay a visit to Taipei in August. While praising

Washington's decision to re-engage with Beijing, Lovegrove also highlighted the risks of China's technological advances. "We have clear concerns about China's nuclear modernization program that will increase both the number and types of nuclear weapon systems in its arsenal," he underlined. Last year, Beijing tested a hypersonic missile that circumnavigated the globe before hitting a target.

China and the US are also developing hypersonic missiles that travel at more than five times the speed of sound and can maneuver in the air. Russia became the first country to use hypersonic systems during a war when it deployed in Ukraine its Kinzhal missiles - which, according to the Kremlin, are capable of carrying nuclear warheads. Commenting on Russia's ongoing military operation in Ukraine, the senior British national security official accused Moscow of "acting deliberately and recklessly to undermine



the global security architecture." "That's a pattern that includes the illegal annexation of Crimea, the use of chemical and radiological weapons on UK soil, and the repeated violations that caused the collapse of the INF [intermediate-range nuclear forces] treaty." Despite the increased risks, however, Lovegrove stressed that much of the existing architecture remains "vital," such as the chemical weapons convention and the biological and toxin weapons convention, and the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. He went on to caution that the reality is "that current structures alone will not deliver what we need a modern arms control system to achieve." Many of the existing arms control agreements, he insisted, are "designed for a world that no longer exists," created for a "bipolar conflict" and not providing coverage of "dangerous new and emerging technologies." A more integrated approach to arms control is required across a variety of areas of proliferation to reduce the risk of a future nuclear conflict, Lovegrove added. "We must acknowledge that existing nuclear states are investing in novel nuclear technologies and developing new 'war-fighting' nuclear systems, which they are integrating into their military strategies and doctrines and into their political rhetoric to seek to coerce others," he said.

Rossouw hits 96 as tourists level T20 series

SPORTS DESK

LONDON: Rilee Rossouw hit a fine unbeaten 96 to help South Africa beat England by 58 runs in the second Twenty20 international in Cardiff and level the three-match series. The left-hander anchored the Proteas innings with a superb knock that took just 55 balls, combining power hitting and deft strokes to lead the tourists to 207-3 from their 20 overs. Rossouw put on 72 for the second wicket with opener Reeza Hendricks, who followed up his half-century in the first T20 with an impressive 53 from just 32 deliveries. England's reply never really recovered from the early loss of captain Jos Buttler and Dawid Malan in the powerplay, with Jason Roy's struggles also continuing as the hosts slipped to 77-3. South Africa were sloppy in the field in Bristol on Wednesday, but were razor sharp here, with Keshav Maharaj taking a stunning diving catch on the boundary to dismiss Moeen Ali. Another fine catch from Lungi Ngidi removed the in-form Jonny Bairstow to end England's hopes. Tabraiz Shamsi was the stand-out bowler in taking 3-27, while Andile Phehlukwayo claimed 3-39 as England were bowled out for



149 with more than three overs remaining. The deciding T20 is at the Ageas Bowl in Southampton on Sunday. This was a complete performance from South Africa after a ragged display in the first T20. Rossouw, back on the inter-

national stage after six years as a Kolpak player, led from the front with a fine innings featuring 10 fours and five sixes, including one huge hit off Adil Rashid that went out of the ground and narrowly avoided landing in the River Taff.

Israel's advanced atomic program poses serious threat: Iran

AGENCIES

TEHRAN: Iran says the Israeli regime's advanced atomic military program poses a serious threat to international security and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), urging the UN nuclear agency to fulfill its responsibility in this regard. "The advanced atomic military program of the apartheid Israeli regime and the regime's continued objection to placing its nuclear facilities under the Safeguards Agreements [of the International Atomic Energy Agency] and not joining the Non-Proliferation Treaty are serious threats to international security and the non-proliferation regime," Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kana'ani said in a series of tweets on Friday. The IAEA is expected to fulfill its responsibility in this regard in accordance with its statute, he added. "According to the agency's statute, it is expected that promoting the peaceful use and non-deviation of the peaceful goals of nuclear energy will be the concern of the agency and its director general with no discrimination," Kana'ani said. In another tweet, the Iranian spokesman wished success for Mohsen Naziri Asl, Iran's new ambassador and permanent representative to the UN office in Vienna and the Islamic Republic's representative to the IAEA and said the diplomat was appointed on July 29, the day the UN nuclear watchdog was officially launched in 1957. Israel, which pursues a policy of deliberate ambiguity about its nuclear weapons, is estimated to have 200 to 400 nuclear warheads in its arsenal, making it the sole possessor of the non-conventional arms in West Asia. The occupying entity has, however, refused to either allow inspections of its military nuclear facilities or sign the NPT.

Emma Raducanu hires new coach ahead of US Open: report

NEWS DESK

LONDON: Emma Raducanu has turned to a Russian coach to guide her as she begins preparations for her US Open title defence next month. The Kent teenager is working with former Davis Cup player Dmitry Turunov, who will be with her when she returns to action next week at the Citi Open in Washington DC. If their initial spell together - which was confirmed to Sportsmail by her management - goes well he will take her through the coming North American swing of the main tour. A year ago saw her playing lower tier tournaments before exploding to prominence at Flushing Meadows. Turunov is a former world number 20, who has had considerable success with clients on the circuit since retiring as a player in 2017. Most recently he took current Anett Kontaveit of Estonia into the world's top five before they split after this year's French Open. He has also worked with another top five player in Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus, plus world doubles number one Elena Vesnina and Russian Aslan Karatsev from the ATP Tour. Raducanu, always happy to take advice from wide-ranging sources, has not had a full-time coach since she finished with German coach Torben Beltz in late April. In the intervening period she has received guidance from a number of figures, such as Canadian Louis Cayer, Head of the Lawn Tennis Association's women's division Iain Bates, and during Wimbledon former LTA coach Jane O' Donoghue.

G20 EdWG prepares youngsters for world of work

JAKARTA: Indonesia's G20 Presidency spokesperson Maudy Ayunda underscored that the G20 Education Working Group (EdWG) aimed at preparing educated youngsters to enter the world of work, especially after going through the COVID-19 pandemic. "The topic of the future of the world of work after COVID-19 has become important in the world of education. I hope that through the G20 Presidency, we can formulate an education system that is able to create human resources (HR), who are ready to work. Hence, the Indonesian younger generation needs to support the EdWG agenda," she noted in a press statement, Friday. The EdWG is one of the working groups of the G20 that examines the factors facilitating or hindering the right to education and the achievement of higher education. Indonesia, represented by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek), led the working group and held three meetings. At the latest meeting, Indonesia discussed recovery in the education sector after the pandemic and also studied the draft of the Declaration of the Minister of Education that was also conveyed at the second EdWG meeting, Ayunda remarked. The Declaration of the Minister of Education is prepared to be later brought to the Education Ministers' Meeting scheduled to be held in September 2022. Ayunda stated that education is a complex sector for every country. Hence, Indonesia encourages the importance of mutual cooperation between countries in a bid to restore the world of education, especially in the post-pandemic situation. During the pandemic, the education sector must adjust to several challenges, such as online learning, the use of technology and limited learning media, mental health problems for both students and



teachers, and learning loss, she pointed out. "Mutual cooperation is an important value to handle this situation. We cannot solve this problem alone. Countries must be committed to working together in restoring the world of education globally," Ayunda emphasized. The G20 EdWG this year focuses on four priority issues of education: Qualified Education for All, Digital Technology in Education, Solidarity and Partnership, and the Future of the World of Work Post COVID-19. In addition to discussing education priority issues at the third EdWG meeting, the Ministry of Education and Culture conveyed the result of discussions conducted at the United Nations (UN) Transforming Education Summit (TES) Pre-Conference that was organized last June in Paris, France. A forum for mobilizing greater political enthusiasm and commitment to reverse the decline of the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), specifically reorganizing education and accelerating educational progress and the 2030 SDGs. - ANTARA

US holds talks with Taliban on reserves

Taliban had warned that it will 'reconsider' policy toward the US if it does not receive its full USD 7 billion frozen assets

FOREIGN DESK

WASHINGTON: A US special envoy met senior Taliban representatives in Tashkent, Uzbekistan and discussed the issue of Afghan central bank reserves. The discussion took place during meetings that took place after the conclusion of the Uzbekistan-hosted Tashkent Conference on Afghanistan on July 26. "On July 27, Special Representative for Afghanistan Thomas West and Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Brian Nelson led a senior inter-agency delegation from the Department of State and the Department of the Treasury to continue discussions with senior

Taliban representatives and technocratic professionals in Tashkent, Uzbekistan," US State Department said in a statement. The US delegation has expressed the need to address the urgent humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. "The United States expressed the need to address the urgent humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. The two sides discussed ongoing efforts to enable the USD 3.5 billion in licensed Afghan central bank reserves to be used for the benefit of the Afghan people. The United States underscored the need to accelerate the work on these efforts," the statement added. After the Taliban seized the nation by force last year, the US froze Afghan reserves. The militants-turned-politicians are currently working to restore the nation's

economy which has been ravaged by sanctions imposed and isolation. Earlier, the Taliban had warned that it will 'reconsider' policy toward the US if it does not receive its full USD 7 billion frozen assets. After the Taliban seized Kabul after toppling the democratic government, US President Joe Biden decided to split USD 7 billion of the frozen Afghan assets to fund humanitarian relief in Afghanistan and compensate victims of the September 11, 2001 attacks. Taliban-appointed acting interior minister Sirajuddin Haqqani said that the ban on USD 7 billion in Afghanistan's assets was unjust and called on the US to release the assets. Addressing a gathering in Khost province of Afghanistan, Haqqani said that the formation of an inclusive government

will come into effect itself whenever "the western ideology" is removed from Afghanistan. "Did they achieve anything over the past 20 years? Now, they have frozen the Afghans' assets and have taken revenge on a certain number of people. You fought against them for 20 years," Haqqani was quoted as saying by TOLONews. Haqqani said that the formation of an inclusive government takes a long time adding that the country should not wait for recognition and that essential steps needed to be taken, local media reported. "We say don't shout for an inclusive government desperately. Be patient. Once the ideology of paganism is eliminated and Afghans are adjusted to their national and Islamic identity, the inclusivity will be ensured itself," he added.

FM stresses...

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sidelines of the Council of Foreign Ministers meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO-CFM) in Tashkent, Uzbekistan on 28 July 2022. The Foreign Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's resolve to further enhance bilateral trade, promote regional connectivity, and strengthen people-to-people links between the two countries. He laid emphasis on reinvigorating bilateral economic relations by boosting trade and investment through cooperation in diverse areas and frequent exchange of business delegations. The Foreign Minister appreciated the close cooperation between the two countries at the multilateral fora including at SCO and exchanged views on situation in Afghanistan. He underlined Pakistan's efforts for relief efforts and lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan and underscored the need for urgent international humanitarian assistance for the Afghan people. Here reiterated Pakistan's support for a peaceful, united, stable and prosperous Afghanistan.

Another...

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Sibtain won the election after obtaining 185 votes against the 175 votes obtained by PML-N's Saif ul Malook Khokhar, who was the Opposition's joint candidate. Four votes were rejected during the session presided over by PTI MPA Waseem Khan Badozai. Ahead of the elections, the newly-appointed assembly secretary Inayatullah Lak approved the nomination papers of both the candidates after scrutiny. Prior to the commencement of the voting process, PML-N's Khalil Tahir Sindhu tried to raise a point of objection related to the position of the polling booth, saying that cameras were installed above it.

PML-N for...

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long-awaited verdict on PTI foreign funding case. The Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) media was talking to the media after the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) leaders met with the Chief Election Commissioner. Khaqqan said the record presented before the ECP by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and foreign funding case was pending since 2014 that demanded a swift probe by the quarters concerned to reveal facts before the nation. The foreign funding case was pending for the last eight years and the PTI used every delaying legal tactic to hamper the proclamation of the decision on its foreign funding, he added.

PM Shehbaz talks to Bill Gates

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif spoke on the telephone today with Mr. Bill Gates, Co-Chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF). They discussed the ongoing public health and social sector programmes supported by BMGF in Pakistan. The Prime Minister appreciated the valuable support extended by the BMGF to Pakistan in polio eradication and improving immunisation, nutrition and financial inclusion in the country. He also reaffirmed Pakistan's desire to further strengthen the fruitful partnership with the Foundation in all the ongoing areas of cooperation. The Prime Minister expressed grave concern on the recent increase in the number of confirmed cases of poliovirus in Pakistan in 2022 and stressed that his Government remained committed to ending all forms of polio from the country. While noting that all cases of poliovirus confirmed so far this year belonged to the southern Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the Prime Minister highlighted that his Government was actively implementing the special emergency response plan for south KP to scale up and improve the quality of the polio eradication programme. The Prime Minister conveyed to Mr. Gates that his Government was also focused on strengthening operations at all levels of the program and empowering districts to make decisions based on the specific needs of their areas.

Briefs

China and Pak to jointly train artistic talents

DNA

BEIJING: China and Pakistan will jointly train artistic talents and conserve the intangible cultural heritage with the establishment of the China-Pakistan Cultural and Educational Exchange Center (CPCEEC), China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Friday. CPCEEC was launched jointly by Hebei Academy of Fine Arts (China) and University of Education (Pakistan) on June 9, 2022. Talat Naseer Pasha, president of University of Education (Pakistan) expressed that "He expects CPCEEC to enhance the in-depth cultural exchanges between Pakistan and China." According to Hebei Academy of Fine Arts (HBFA), on the basis of CPCEEC, they are ready to cooperate with the Pakistani side in training of artistic talents, conservation and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage, transformation of artistic sci-tech achievements and teachers' exchanges. Hao Jinlong, vice director of International Exchanges and Cooperation of HBFA, said that besides the cooperation in energy, security, economy, the cultural and artistic exchanges and communication cannot be ignored by the two nations under the framework of the CPEC.

Nepal bans production plastic flower bunches

KATHMANDU: The Nepali government has banned the production, import, sale and storage of plastic artificial flower bunches, which are growing popular during festivals and other occasions in the country. In a notice issued in Nepal Gazette on Thursday, the Ministry of Forest and Environment stated that the ban was imposed as part of the efforts to control plastic pollution. "The main reason behind the ban is to control plastic-based pollution," Megh Nath Kafle, spokesman of the ministry, told Xinhua. "Another reason is to promote the production and use of natural flowers, which would also support the domestic economy." By encouraging the use of natural bunches, the government is aiming at preserving the culture and tradition of using natural flowers on various occasions, particularly during festivals, he said. Nepal imported plastic and plastic products worth 72.34 billion Nepali rupees (568 million U.S. dollars) in the 2021-22 fiscal year that ended in mid-July, according to the Department of Customs. In early 2022, the government banned the production, import, sale and use of plastic bags thinner than 40 micrometers, but the rule has hardly been enforced. - APP

Death toll from Tehran floods rises to 18

DNA

TEHRAN: The number of casualties from floods caused by heavy rains in villages around Iran's capital Tehran has risen to 18, officials said Friday. Hasan Nami, head of the National Crisis Center, said: "One person died due to the flood in the village of Veska, east of Tehran, and 14 vehicles were submerged." He added: "The situation is more serious in the village of Merzadaran, Tehran where six people have lost their lives so far, and rescue efforts are continuing." According to the ISNA, Murtaza Muradipur, head of the Red Crescent Relief and Rescue Organization, announced that "in addition to six previous casualties, two more bodies were found in the village of Imamzadeh Davoud northwest of Tehran while the search for 19 people missing is still ongoing." "Seven hundred people in the village were evacuated," Muradipur added. Iran's semi-official Tasnim news agency announced that three people were found dead in the Ken River, northwest of Tehran, suspected to be people who disappeared in floods in the village of Imamzade Davoud.

UN General Assembly declares Central Asia a 'zone of peace' Pakistan calls move 'timely'

NEW YORK: The UN General Assembly has adopted a resolution declaring Central Asia a zone of peace, trust and cooperation. Acting without a vote, the 193-member Assembly recommended that all states in the region and all other regions cooperate in preserving peace in the Central Asian zone and respect the national unity, sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of all states of the region, in strict observance of the Charter of the United Nations. Introducing the resolution,

Turkmenistan Ambassador Aksoltan Ataeva, on behalf of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, said that the time has come to articulate and declare clearly the principles and norms that will contribute, based on the legitimate interests of Central Asian countries, to peace and security, sustainable development in that region, cooperation and the cultural relations of their people. The countries of the region have great potential for cooperation and development, she said, adding that they

share a common spiritual, cultural and historical heritage. They also share transport and communication networks and economies that complement each other. Pakistan UN Ambassador Munir Akram said the resolution's aims to strengthen international peace and security, promote the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, advance multilateralism and enhance mutual understanding and cooperation - are essential building blocks for economic development, regional

peace, prosperity and connectivity in Central Asia and beyond. "Pakistan fully supports this timely resolution and its objectives," he said. Pakistan is committed to building connectivity and cooperation in trade, investment, transport, energy and other sectors with its Central Asian neighbors, Ambassador Akram said. Noting that the world has witnessed frequent resort to unilateral force and external intervention over the past few decades, the Pakistani envoy said foreign

occupation persists in several regions, with conflicts, among and within nations, proliferating. "Ideologies of hate-Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, fascism - have re-emerged. And, a new and destabilizing global arms race is underway," he said. "In this challenging global environment," Ambassador Akram said, "It is essential to revive respect for the principles of the UN Charter; to actively promote the peaceful resolution of conflicts and international cooperation; and to over-

come global challenges of development and climate change." Pointing out that Central Asia connects the East with the West and the North with the South, the Pakistani envoy said peace and stability in this region is vital for achievement of stability, cooperation and trade. For sustainable peace in the region, durable peace and security in Afghanistan must be ensured, he added, calling for sustained engagement with that country's government by all its six immediate neighbours. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan Ali Hosseni met with German parliamentarians delegation, Amin-Salehi, Mr. Dietmar Friedhoff & Mr. Stefan Keuter. They discussed & exchanged views abt the latest developments in Afghanistan, the situation of Afghan refugees & the need for more efforts to help the people of that country. - DNA

Italy heading to snap polls amid govt crisis

ROME: Italy is heading to early polls after the resignation of Prime Minister Mario Draghi. Draghi's government fell apart after 18 months as three coalition partners out of 10 withdrew their support. The pull-out by populist and right-wing partners: the 5 Star Movement, the League and Forza Italia, created a crisis as there is no longer a majority in parliament. President Sergio Mattarella dissolved the parliament on July 21 on the grounds that there was no majority to form a new government and announced snap elections on Sept. 25. This will be the ninth snap election in the country where governments on average last a little over one year. The last snap election in Italy was held in 2008 when the left-wing coalition government led by Romano Prodi collapsed in the same year. According to the latest opinion polls, the Brothers of Italy (FdiI), led by the extreme rightist Giorgia Meloni, ranks first with around 23-25% of the votes. The Democratic Party, formed after the merger of the center-left parties, seems to be in second place with 22-23% of the votes. In the third place is the League Party, led by the right-wing Matteo Salvini, who is accused of being under Russian influence in Italian politics, with 12-14% of the vote. If one goes by the polls, neither party will be able to win a simple majority in parliament. In this case scenario, FdiI could form a right-wing coalition government with the other two major members of the center-right alliance, the League and Forza Italia. Speaking to Anadolu Agency, Giovanni Orsina, director of the School of Government at Rome-based Luiss-Guido Carli University, said no one expected the latest government crisis but the vulnerability of the Draghi government was a known fact. "This is a very typical Italian situation. A situation where political conditions are always fragile, but you never know when the breaking point will come," said Orsina. "Many of them are responsible. The number one culprit in this crisis is M5S leader Giuseppe Conte. They are the real culprit of the crisis. After the crisis started, other political parties contributed to this by hardening their stances. Draghi also contributed, but (Silvio) Berlusconi and Salvini also contributed a lot. Maybe they, too, decided at some point that it was better for them to go to the polls," said Orsina. Asked about his predictions for the elections, Orsina said: "It is very difficult to make a prediction. As of now, the right-wing alliance is the favorite. - DNA

Taiwan vows to deepen military alliance with US

BEIJING: The foreign ministry of self-ruled island territory of Chinese Taipei has vowed to further deepen its close military alliance with the US following recent phone discussions between US President Joe Biden and his Chinese counterpart. Friday's announcement came a day after Chinese President Xi Jinping sternly warned Biden not to "play with fire" over Taiwan, reiterating Beijing's concerns about a provocative planned visit to Taipei by US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi while urging him to respect the "One China" policy. "Public opinion cannot be violated. Those who play with fire will be burnt. I

hope the US can clearly see this," the Chinese president warned in a strongly-worded statement, according to a readout released by the official Xinhua news agency. Ahead of the call, White House national security spokesman John Kirby told reporters that it was about "keeping the lines of communication open with the president of China," describing it as "one of the most consequential bilateral relationships" the US has had in the region and the world. It is the latest in a string of similar warnings issued from Beijing in response to reports last week that the 82-year-old Pelosi, who is second in the presidential

line of succession, may pay a visit to Taipei in August. If Pelosi goes ahead with her planned trip to the island - claimed by China as part of the mainland - she will be the highest-ranking US politician to travel to Taipei since 1997, when hawkish Republican House speaker at the time, Newt Gingrich, paid a visit. Biden administration officials expressed concerns last week that China may try to impose a no-fly zone over Chinese Taipei ahead of the potential visit by the top US legislator in efforts to upend the trip amid fears of further escalating tensions in the region. According to the unnamed

officials cited in US press reports, Biden also reflected concerns from the nation's military about Pelosi's possible visit, saying: "I think that the military thinks it's not a good idea right now, but I don't know what the status is." Reacting to Biden's alarming remarks, Pelosi then stated last week that while it's important to show support for Taiwan, she would not discuss her travel plans due to "a security issue." Pelosi further noted that she heard "anecdotally" about Biden's comments regarding her upcoming visit, but had not heard anything directly from the US President. - APP

Jokowi meets South Korean President in Seoul

ANTARA

JAKARTA: President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) met with his South Korean counterpart, Yoon Suk-yeol, at the Yongsan Presidential Office, Seoul, on Thursday evening. He was greeted by Yoon upon arrival, and then the two walked to the second floor of the office. Yoon directed Widodo to fill the guest book and introduced South Korean delegates in attendance. The two state leaders then posed for a picture together. According to a statement issued by the Presidential

Secretariat's press bureau and received here on Thursday, the two leaders held a limited meeting in a separate room before conducting a bilateral meeting with delegations from both countries. During the meeting, President Yoon commended Widodo's efforts to find solutions to global issues, Foreign Affairs Minister Retno Marsudi said. "President Yoon expressed his appreciation for President Jokowi's leadership in trying to resolve global issues," she informed after the bilateral meeting. Yoon said that Widodo's visit to South Korea stressed the importance of the diplomatic ties between the two countries, which date back to 1973. "Mr. President's visit shows the importance of relations between Korea and Indonesia. Ever since (the start of) the two countries' diplomatic relations in 1973, or last 50 years, (there has been) so much economic, trade, culture, people-to-people contact, diplomacy, and security improvement," President Yoon remarked.

China is always Uzbekistan's reliable friend

DNA

TASHKENT: Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev said on Thursday that Uzbekistan values its high-level strategic communication and coordination with China, and China will always be Uzbekistan's reliable friend and partner. During a meeting with visiting Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi, Mirziyoyev expressed heartfelt gratitude to China for its valuable help to Uzbekistan in promoting reform and opening up, poverty reduction and fighting the epidemic, and its strong support for Uzbekistan in maintaining social stability. He said that Uzbekistan and China have upheld the principles of mutual trust and mutual assistance, mutual benefit and good-neighborly friend-



ship, and have pushed bilateral relations to new levels. "Uzbekistan values its high-level strategic communication and coordination with China and always regards China as a reliable partner. Uzbekistan will always be a reliable friend of China too," he said. Wang said China is ready to work with Uzbekistan to take the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties as a new starting point, take the important consensus of the two heads

Uzbek President receives Russia's FM

TASHKENT: President Shavkat Mirziyoyev received a delegation of Russia led by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, attending the events of the Meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Tashkent, reports "Dunya" IA correspondent. According to the press service of the Head of our state, current issues included in the agenda of Uzbekistan - Russia strategic partnership and alliance were considered during the conversation. The main attention was paid to the situation in the region and aspects of interaction within international structures, including preparations for the SCO Summit. The Foreign Minister conveyed the sincere greetings and warm wishes of Russian President Vladimir Putin to the President of Uzbekistan. The dynamic development of multifaceted practical cooperation between the two countries observed in recent years was noted with particular satisfaction. The volume of mutual trade is steadily growing at a high rate. Since the beginning of the year, the trade turnover has increased by 32 percent. Within the framework of the activities of the joint Project office, about 40 major investment projects are planned to be implemented by the end of the year. - DNA

of state as the guide, speed up the alignment of development strategies, increase mutual support, build on the past, upgrade the quality of China-Uzbekistan relations and bring more benefits to the two countries and two peoples. "China and Uzbekistan are friendly neighbors and comprehensive strategic partners. The two countries are closely linked as lips and teeth and share weal and woe in security," Wang said. "China firmly supports Uzbekistan in pursuing its goal of building 'a new Uzbekistan', supports Uzbekistan in safeguarding national sovereignty and social stability, and opposes interference by any force in Uzbekistan's internal affairs." Wang noted that China will always be Uzbekistan's reliable friend and partner. "China is ready to push forward bilateral relations toward the direction of build-

ing a China-Uzbekistan community of shared future," said Wang. "China and Uzbekistan may accelerate the feasibility study of the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway project, further expand bilateral cooperation in economy, trade, investment, energy, agriculture, anti-epidemic, poverty reduction and digital economy, and explore the establishment of a sub-committee on poverty reduction cooperation within the framework of the Uzbekistan-China intergovernmental committee of cooperation." Mirziyoyev said that he is willing to discuss with China the ways and connotations of building a community of shared future between Uzbekistan and China, looking forward to speeding up the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway and actively carrying out connectivity cooperation.

Argentina's president reshuffles cabinet

DNA

LONDON: Argentina's president announced a Cabinet reshuffle Thursday in a bid to get to grips with the country's longstanding economic crisis. Alberto Fernandez decided to unite all economic areas of his Cabinet under Lower House Speaker Sergio Massa, who has been given the new title of "super minister." The ministries of economy, productive development, and agriculture, livestock and fisheries will be unified. "President Alberto Fernandez decided to reorganize the economic areas of his Cabinet for better operation, coordination and management," said an official press release from the Casa Rosada, the office of the president.

It went on to confirm that Massa will oversee developments as soon as his departure from his current role as house speaker is "resolved." According to local daily Perfil, Economy Minister Silvina Batakis has been confirmed as remaining in the government and has been given the role of president of Banco de la Nacion Argentina, Argentina's largest state-run bank. Secretary of Strategic Affairs Gustavo Beliz has also tendered his resignation alongside a number of other lawmakers. On Twitter, the governor of Salta province, Gustavo Saez, wrote that "the incorporation of @SergioMassa to the national Cabinet would provide the energy, dynamism and consensus that the country needs," adding "there are no saviours, but there are leaders with the ability and experience to change reality. Undoubtedly @SergioMassa is one of them."

Nigerian military kills 30 terrorists

DNA

KANO: Nigeria's military killed 30 of the terrorists who ambushed members of the Presidential Guards Brigade earlier this month in the Bwari area of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), the Defense Headquarters said Thursday. The operation was conducted between Sunday and Tuesday by troops of the 7 Guards Battalion and 167 Special Forces Battalion in conjunction with the air component of "Operation Whirl Punch", Maj. Gen. Bernard Onyeuko, director of defense media operations, told reporters in the capital Abuja. According to Onyeuko, the ground troops also recovered six motorcycles, two AK47 rifles and one fully loaded light machine gun (LMG) magazine during the mop-up. "The hierarchy of the Armed Forces of Nigeria and other security agencies wishes to reassure Nigerians of its commitment and pact with all Nigerians," he said. "With the recent operations carried out from July 23, we wish to assure residents of FCT in particular that we are undaunted and unrelenting in our efforts to ensure the safety of lives and properties." - APP

Palestine renews bid for full membership of UN

DNA

RAMALLAH: Palestine has renewed its bid for full membership of the United Nations, according to a Palestinian diplomat. Speaking in an interview with Voice of Palestine, Palestine's Permanent Observer to the United Nations (UN), Riyad Mansour, said that the Palestinian leadership, under the chairmanship of President Mahmoud Abbas, has initiated contacts at the highest levels to secure Palestine's full membership of the UN as a means to safeguard the two-state solution. The Palestinian leadership, he added, was undertaking political and diplomatic moves in coordination with the heads of several states, including US President Joe Biden, French President Emmanuel Macron, Jordan's King Abdullah II in addition to members of the UNSC, so as Palestine would not remain hostage to the actions of the Israeli occupation.

Briefs

Israeli army kills Palestinian teenager in West Bank

DNA

AL MUGHAYYER: An Israeli soldier shot dead a 16-year-old Palestinian near a road leading to a Jewish settlement in the occupied West Bank on Friday, Palestinian officials said, and the army said it had opened fire to protect motorists from rioters. Witnesses said the incident, east of the hub city of Ramallah, also involved face-offs in open fields between settlers, at least one of whom was armed, and Palestinians, with some on either side lobbing rocks at the other. The Palestinian foreign ministry condemned the teenager's killing as an "execution". A second Palestinian was shot and wounded in the incident, health officials and witnesses said. The Israeli army said troops fired to disperse hundreds of Palestinians who had burned tires and hurled rocks at a road leading to Kochav Hashachar settlement. "We are aware of reports of a Palestinian that was killed," it said in a statement. Israel's Channel 14 TV said a settler was also injured and his dog killed. But the army said it knew of no such incident during the confrontations outside Kochav Hashachar and that the report appeared to be referring to an incident elsewhere. Most countries regard the settlements as illegal.

Russia says Moscow will propose time for call with Blinken

WEB DESK

TASHKENT: Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Friday that Moscow would soon propose a time for a call with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, in which Blinken has said he wants to discuss an exchange of prisoners held in Russian and U.S. jails. Blinken said on Wednesday that Washington had made a "substantial offer" to obtain the release of U.S. basketball star Brittney Griner and former Marine Paul Whelan, both detained in Russia. A source said that Washington was willing to exchange convicted arms trafficker Viktor Bout, jailed in the United States, as part of such a deal. Blinken and Lavrov have not spoken since Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24. Families of the U.S. detainees have been increasing pressure on President Joe Biden, most recently in the case of two-time Olympic gold medalist Griner, who was arrested on drugs charges at a Moscow airport on Feb. 17.

CM Murad offers full support to Balochistan flood victims

KARACHI: Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah telephoned Chief Minister Balochistan Abdul Qudus Bizenjo and expressed solidarity on the losses and damages caused by heavy rains in the province and offered him full support. The CM Sindh made this call on the directives of Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, said a statement issued here on Friday. "The heavy downpour has caused serious damages to our Baloch brothers living in Chagi, Qila Saifullah, Noshki districts and various other areas, and they need our support," Bilawal Bhutto told Murad Ali Shah. During the telephonic contact, the CM Sindh offered every kind of support to the CM Balochistan for the rehabilitation of the rain-affected people. "We had sent 500 tents to Lasbela on Wednesday and dispatching 100 more tents to Uthal today [Friday]," he said, adding that the Relief Department Sindh would coordinate with the concerned divisional commissioners in Balochistan for dispatch of other relief items. - APP



TASHKENT: President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev has received the Heads of delegations of the SCO member states, who are to be taking part in the meeting of the Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the SCO. - DNA

Pakistan Army relief efforts ongoing in flood-hit areas

The country has received 467% additional unprecedented rains from July 1 till date during the prevailing monsoon season

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Army relief efforts continued in flood hit areas of various districts across the country alongwith Navy, Frontier Corps (FC) and Rangers troops constantly assisting the civil administration and local communities in all flood affected areas. According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release here received, it said in Balochistan, some 2,300 individuals of four villages were evacuated to safer places from Othal. The Army troops provided shelter and cooked meals to the affected population. The N-25 highway connecting Quetta-Karachi was opened for traffic which was blocked at four different places due to collapse of bridges. Telecommunication was also restored in most of Balochistan particularly in Lasbela District in coordination with the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA). The country, it said had received 467% additional unprecedented rains from July 1 till date during the prevailing monsoon season. Some 29 Districts of Balochistan were affected due to recent rains and flash floods

Relief operation in Balochistan continues

QUETTA: Relief operation in the flood-stricken areas of Balochistan province is in full swing, said a handout issued by the Directorate of Public Relations here on Friday. Handout said that through Balochistan government's MI-17 helicopter a total of 16 hundred kilograms of ration, 250 kilograms of medicines and 300 liters of drinking water were delivered to the flood affectees in Gajan area of Jhal Magsi district. "A seriously ill patient with his attendant was transferred to Quetta by helicopter," it further said that air relief activities will continue in other affected areas as well. Jhal Magsi district is one of the most affected districts of Balochistan. Lasbela, Khuzdar, and Bolan are also among worst hit areas where torrential rains and floods have caused colossal loss to the human settlements inundating dozens of villages, destroying the road infrastructure and dams. Over 30 people have lost their lives in rain-related mishaps during the last three days while the total number of people who died during the monsoon rains is 111. Provincial government, district administration, PDMA, NDMA, Pak Army and Frontier Corps were engaged in rescue and relief operations in catastrophe-hit districts of the province. The World Health Organization has also dispatched tents, medicines and other items for the flood affectees. However, the scale of calamity is so huge that the relief operation carried out in the flood-hit areas seems insufficient as a large number of people are still waiting to be rescued. - APP

particularly Lasbela, Kech, Quetta, Sibbi, Khuzdar and Kohlu. During the abnormal monsoon rains, 3,953 houses got damaged across the province. There were five medical camps established in flood hit areas of Balochistan including Hub, Gaddani, Bela and Duddar and Jhal Magsi.

In Gwadar, Army dewatering teams had cleared Gawadar area whereas the costal highway blocked at Aghore was opened for traffic. In Jhal Magsi, four sorties of Army aviation helicopters operated delivering 1.3 tons of relief items including rations and medicines. Water level considerably receded after no rain was reported in the area. The connectivity of Gandhawa was resumed with Jhal Magsi, and efforts were underway to resume connectivity on other two roads whereas 200 individuals were evacuated. In Khuzdar, water level was still high in Mula River whereas work on connectivity of M-8 would be resumed by NHA after water recedes. The General Officer Commanding at Khuzdar also visited Bela and surroundings to oversee relief efforts.



ISLAMABAD: EU Ambassador Dr. Riina Koinka meets with Federal Minister for Commerce, Syed Naveed Qamar. - DNA

Selling SOEs at throwaway prices: PTI submits adjournment motion in Senate

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) blasted the imported government for selling the State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) at a throwaway prices through ordinance, seeking debate on the matter in the Upper House. The PTI submitted adjournment motion in the Upper House on Friday. The adjournment motion was submitted by Senator Ejaz Chaudhry, Senator Shibli Faraz, Senator Saifullah Niazi, Senator Dr. Zarqa Taimur and others. The PTI leaders, through an adjournment motion, requested to suspend the proceedings of the House and discuss the very important issue of national interest. It was stated in the adjournment motion that the federal cabinet prepared to pass an ordinance in order to sale the national assets at cheap prices. The government decided to sale Pakistan Petroleum Limited, OGDC Limited, Mari Petroleum Limited including all oil reserves for just \$2 billion. The agreement was made part of the IMF program, as even the agreement would be immune from court proceedings. Therefore, it was stated that the government should inform the House of the full details pertaining to the agreement. - DNA

India tops countries blocking tweets by journalists

DNA

NEW DELHI: Twitter has said that India made the highest number of legal demands globally to remove content posted by verified journalists and news outlets on the micro-blogging platform during July-December 2021. Quoting Twitter's latest transparency report, news agency Press Trust of India (PTI) reported that India accounted for 19 per cent of global information requests. India was among the top five countries to issue content-blocking orders to Twitter during July-December 2021 for all kinds of users, the report said. Quoting Twitter, the report said 349 accounts of verified journalists and news outlets located around the world were subject to 326 legal demands to remove content, a 103 per cent increase in the number of accounts since the previous period (January-June 2021). It said that India had topped this list for January-June 2021 as well. In that time frame, India had made 89 of the total 231 such demands the platform received globally. Twitter said 'legal demands' include a combination of court orders and other formal demands to remove content, from both governmental entities and lawyers representing individuals.

Sri Lanka resumes bailout discussions with IMF

AGENCIES

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka has resumed technical discussions with the International Monetary Fund on a potential bailout after a new government took office, the finance ministry said on Friday. Discussions with the multilateral lender started in April under former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa. The Sri Lankan government hopes to secure an Extended Fund Facility (EFF) - which would be conditional on making economic reforms - to help battle the worst economic crisis since independence in 1948. Ranil Wickremesinghe was appointed as president after Rajapaksa was ousted on July 13 by a popular uprising following months of severe shortages of fuel, food and medicines. Wickremesinghe, who served six terms as prime minister, also hopes to restructure Sri Lanka's debt. The talks with IMF were highly successful and Sri Lanka is working with advisers to reach consensus on a deal with creditors, the government said.

Blinken to travel to southeast Asia, Africa

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: Secretary of State Antony Blinken will travel to Cambodia for a U.S.-ASEAN minister's meeting next week during which he will address the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, Myanmar and the war in Ukraine, the State Department said on Friday. After the Aug. 3-5 meetings in Phnom Penh, Blinken will travel to Manila and meet with President Ferdinand Romualdez Marcos and foreign secretary Enrique Manalo to discuss efforts to strengthen the U.S.-Philippine alliance, the department said in a statement. South Africa will be the top U.S. diplomat's next stop, on Aug. 7-9, followed by visits to the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda. "The Secretary will focus on the role the government of Rwanda can play in reducing tensions and ongoing violence in eastern DRC," the statement said. In Rwanda, he will also raise the "wrongful detention" of U.S. permanent resident Paul Rusesabagina, the department said. Rusesabagina, 67, was sentenced in September 2021 to 25 years in prison over eight terrorism charges tied to an organization opposed to Rwandan President Paul Kagame's rule.

189 Pakistanis receive fulbright scholarships

"Pakistani Fulbrighters have solved social problems, written new laws, advanced policies to ensure equal access and voices to all, and so much more

DNA

ISLAMABAD: To promote educational and cultural exchange between the United States and Pakistan, 189 students have been awarded the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship to pursue advanced studies and research at leading U.S. universities. The awardees will start their higher education journey at 82 universities this fall in various disciplines, including environmental studies, energy management, and social sciences. Fulbright is the flagship scholarship program of the United States Government, operating in 160 countries. Pakistan has the largest Fulbright program in the world in terms of U.S. government contribution, with \$18.44 million dollars this year to support 189 students. This is a testament to the U.S. commitment to our cooperation in Pakistan, now celebrating our 75th anniversary. The Government of Pakistan, through the Higher Education Commission, also supports a significant number of PhD scholarships.

This year's 189 students attended a two-day pre-departure orientation organized by the United States Educational Foundation in Pakistan (USEFP) in Islamabad to prepare for the journey, their exchange programs, life on university campuses, and American culture. U.S. Ambassador Donald Blome congratulated the grantees on their achievement. "Pakistani Fulbrighters have solved social problems, written new laws, advanced policies to ensure equal access and voices to all, and so much more. They do this all for one purpose: to create a better, safer, and more prosperous Pakistan. In this goal, the United States and Pakistan are united," Ambassador Blome said. He further stressed that the United States invests in education because it strengthens the American relationship with Pakistan, builds stability in the region, and leads to shared economic prosperity. The 2022 Fulbright cohort is one of the largest ever for Pakistan, with students from 47 public and private universities representing all regions of Pakistan. This year,

125 Master's and 64 PhD (31 Fulbright PhD and 33 Fulbright-HEC PhD) students and 7 Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA) fellows were selected for these awards. Half of the grantees are women. The scholarship covers travel, living stipends, health insurance, and tuition for the entire study period. Since the program began in Pakistan in 1951, 4,100 Pakistanis have received the Fulbright award to study, conduct research, exchange ideas, and contribute to finding solutions to shared international concerns. In just the past two decades, 2,568 Pakistanis have been awarded these scholarships. When they return, Fulbright students join a community of over 32,000 Pakistanis who have participated in a U.S. Government-sponsored exchange or English language program over the years. The United States Government also supports Pakistani higher education in other ways because investing in education strengthens our bilateral relationship. This includes thousands of merit and needs based scholarships for students to attend

Pakistani universities; a variety of partnerships with 99 Pakistani universities to develop faculty and collaborate on research, such as in green energy and climate resiliency; and efforts to develop a new set of university English language courses with the Higher Education Commission. "The Fulbright Exchange Program represents a life-changing opportunity for its recipients, providing a top-tier academic experience and exceptional cultural and social enrichment," noted USEFP Executive Director Rita Akhtar. "It is also a great contribution to both countries more broadly. Americans benefit from the experience and insight of Pakistan's brightest young scholars, and Pakistanis benefit from the contribution these Fulbrighters make when they return with all their new knowledge and experience. More than 2,000 Fulbright alumni already returned and currently working in Pakistan are proof that Fulbright is a great investment in the future and a key component in building mutual understanding between the people of Pakistan and the people of the United States."