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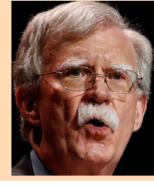
Price Rs. 20

Kazakhstan referendum to change lives of people: Amb. Kistafin

Detailed News On Page-01

Former Trump advisor admits planning coups

Detailed News On Page-08



Raheem Sterling confirms City departure

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

Pak opposes India's UNSC membership

DNA

NEW YORK: Pakistan has opposed the awarding of permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to India, whereas, New Delhi also lacks the support of even half of the required number of states at the global forum, citing sources. India's dream of becoming a permanent member of the UNSC as Pakistan's stance was accepted by the global forum for the continuation of debate on the criteria of the membership.

Country ready for revolution

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Fawad Chaudhry on Wednesday said that the country is ready for revolution. Fawad Chaudhry, while addressing a press conference, said that people of 20 constituencies of Punjab are with PTI. Imran Khan is alone standing against political elite of the country, he added. The former information minister also claimed that fight in Punjab by-polls will be one sided and PTI will emerge victorious. On the other hand, PTI leader Omar Ayub said that his party will give tough competition to PML-N in Punjab by-polls and no matter what government do, PTI will win by-elections.

Punjab ACE summons Rasheed

DNA

LAHORE: The Punjab Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) on Wednesday summoned the former interior minister Sheikh Rasheed for interrogation on July 15. According to an ACE official, the former interior minister has been summoned for interrogation regarding the embezzlement of millions of rupees in payment of government fees. The officials revealed that corruption in the payment of government fees has been reported in the selling of land situated at a housing society in the federal capital.

Forces kill 10 terrorists in Waziristan

The slain terrorists were actively involved in activities against security forces

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

RAWALPINDI: Security forces have killed as many as 10 terrorists in North Waziristan's Datta Khel area in two separate incidents, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said Wednesday. The military's media wing, in a statement, said that Pakistan Army troops gunned down four terrorists in North Waziristan district's Datta Khel area when soldiers observed the presence of terrorists and engaged them. Following this, there was an exchange of fire where the security personnel killed four terrorists. On July 13, security forces conducted an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in the same area on the reported presence of terrorists. As the forces conducted a "successful operation", they killed six terrorists in the process, while also recovering weapons and ammunition. The slain terrorists were actively involved in activities against security forces, the ISPR said.

However, during an intense exchange of fire, Lance Naik Islam-ud-Din, 34, resident of Khyber District, having fought gallantly, embraced shahadat. Sanitisation of the area is being carried out to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area, the military's media wing added. Last week, a soldier of the armed forces embraced martyrdom in an exchange of fire with terrorists in the Mir Ali area of North Waziristan, the ISPR said. "Sepoy Waheed Khan, 23, resident of Nowshera having fought gallantly, embraced Shahada," a brief statement issued by the military's media wing read.

By-polls to decide fate of country: Khan

Former PM says the corrupt rulers are involved in giving bribes to the returning officers (ROs)

BUREAU REPORT

JHANG: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman and former premier Imran Khan said that July 17 by-polls on 20 vacant seats in the Punjab Assembly will decide the fate of the country, ARY News reported on Wednesday. Imran Khan addressed a huge public gathering in Jhang ahead of Punjab by-polls. Imran Khan said that the PTI representative from Jhang has changed its loyalty. He continued that turncoats sell their consciences and violate the Constitution for personal benefits. "Pakistanis are a nation with dignity who will never bow their heads before any power except Allah Almighty and never sell their consciences." "Our ideological leaders are Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Allama Muhammad Iqbal who were honest and men of principles. Unfortunately, we fail to become a great nation over failure to adopt principles based on justice." Imran Khan said, "These turncoats use to become part of the US conspiracy and topple an elected government. Sunday's election will decide the fate of the country. We have to save our country from the US slaves by bringing people to the polling stations to reject these turncoats."



While criticising the present government, Khan said that the corrupt rulers were involved in giving bribes to the returning officers (ROs) and cast bogus votes. "We are training our polling agents to stop the vote-rigging." "Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) has never done anything in an honest way. We are not only contesting the turncoats but the Sharif families and the election commission. Nawaz Sharif had constructed 18 factories by acquiring funds from the government banks and waived off the loans after coming into power."

Continued on Page 06

Says good news will come every day

Bani Gala became 'Money Gala' during Imran rule

Everyone knows why Shehbaz Sharif had to take difficult decisions, Maryam says

BUREAU REPORT

LAYYAH: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) vice president Maryam Nawaz has said that Bani Gala had become "Money Gala" during the rule of former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan. Addressing a rally in Layyah on Wednesday ahead of July 17 by-elections in Punjab, she said that her party will defeat incompetence, inflation and corruption and the PML-N has already won. On July 17, there will be a competition with Punjab's enemy Imran Khan and "Fitna Khan" is another name of anarchy. She also claimed that the petrol and diesel prices will come down in the next 24 to 48 hours. On Tuesday addressing the PML-N election rally in Athara Hazari, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) vice president Maryam Nawaz said on that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will announce to reduce petrol and diesel prices in next two days. She said that the people of Jhang had won her heart by showering their love. "Everyone knows why Shehbaz Sharif had to take difficult decisions," she said and added the prices had to be increased due to agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The PML-N vice president claimed that difficult decisions have been



LAYYAH: PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz addressing a public gathering. - DNA

PTI approaches ECP over pre-poll rigging

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) filed on Wednesday a petition in the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) fearing pre-poll rigging during the upcoming Punjab by-elections on July 17. The ECP had announced by-elections in twenty Punjab assembly constituencies that became vacant after 25 dissident PTI MPs were de-seated

by the ECP for voting in favor of Hamza Shahbaz Sharif. The petition has been filed by the PTI leaders including Omar Ayub, Riaz Fatyana and Iftikhar Durrani. The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has been named party in the application. The PTI has also submitted of what it called proof of pre-poll rigging in the commission. The way things are going on in Punjab, there's no way free and fair elections can be held, the petition read.

Continued on Page 06

Restoration of Neelum-Jhelum Project ordered

Shehbaz says will overcome energy crisis

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has directed authorities concerned to restore the Neelum-Jhelum Hydropower Project at the earliest. He was chairing a high-level meeting in Islamabad on Wednesday, to review progress on the rehabilitation work of the project.

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan to get \$ 1.2 billion Staff-level agreement with IMF reached

Program will be a breather for the depleting foreign currency reserves

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the executive board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Wednesday reached a staff-level agreement that revived the \$6 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF) programme for the country, media reported. The move comes after the coalition government adhered to all "tough" conditions set by the global lender, including an increase in the price of petroleum products and energy tariffs, among others. Sources said that the official announcement in this regard

is expected soon. The staff-level agreement will pave way for a \$1.2 billion disbursement, which is expected in August. Media reported that the disbursement would offer relief to Islamabad as the country's foreign-exchange reserves are depleting so much so that they can only cover less than two months of imports.

In June, Pakistan and the Fund staff achieved substantial progress to strike a consensus on budget 2022-23 after which the IMF shared a draft Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies (MEFP). Finance Minister Miftah Ismail

Continued on Page 06

Kazakhstan referendum to change lives of people

Ambassador of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafin says Baluchistan is the province full of resources and has huge potential

EXCLUSIVE

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan Yerzhan Kistafin has said the recently held referendum in Kazakhstan will change lives of the people of his country adding after the referendum people will now have more rights. He expressed these views while giving an interview to daily Islamabad POST. The ambassador further said, referendum on amendments and additions to the Constitution of our country was held in Kazakhstan on June 5 this year. Already on the morning of June 6 this year, the Central Election Commission reported that according to the results of the referendum, the turnout of citizens who voted was 68.6%, of which more than 77% supported the introduction of 56 amendments to 33 articles of the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and almost 19% opposed the changes, 1.5% of Kazakhstanis who voted accepted both answers, and 2.5% - spoiled their bulletins. Thus, the vote for amendments to the Basic Law was recognized as having taken place. "Taking into account the turnout rate at the referendum sites, we express confidence that the adopted amendments will change the life of the people for the better, since the constitutional reforms initiated by K.K. Tokayev proceed from the long-term request of citizens to expand their participation in state governance and the deep democratization of political processes", he added. Ambassador Kistafin further said, these processes are fundamental, since from now on the country's



political system adopts a new format of interaction between the state and society. This model of interaction consists in the fact that: First, the final transition from a super-presidential form of government to a presidential republic with an influential Parliament and an accountable Government took place. Secondly, a majority-proportional system of electing deputies to the Majilis and Maslikhats - local representative bodies - has been intro-



duced. This will make it possible to more clearly reflect the interests of voters both at the national and regional levels. Thirdly, the President of the country will appoint akims of regions and cities of republican significance, taking into account the results of consideration of candidates in maslikhats. In other words, the people will have direct involvement in the appointment of the heads of regions.

Fourth, the President's equidistant status from all political parties and movements is being consolidated. The President may not be a member of any political party during the period of his/her term of office. The public will be confident that the Head of State will not lobby for the interests of a particular group of people.

Fifth, the human rights functions of the State are being strengthened. In the "Second Republic", the constitutional rights of citizens of our country will be respected, a new political culture based on mutual respect and trust between the state and society will be formed. And this is only a small part of the reforms that have been initiated, which will become an incentive for big changes in Kazakhstan's society, he added.

To yet another question on the subject the ambassador said, an accountable Government is one of the conditions for new reforms. At the same time, a strong and operational executive power represented by a professional Cabinet of Ministers is the key to the qualitative implementation of the requests of the Kazakh society and the instructions of the Head of State. I would like to elaborate on the key political changes, the success of the implementation of which directly depends on the coordinated activities of the Government.

The first is the improvement of the administrative and territorial structure of the country. Progress directly depends on the prosperity of the regions: the principle of "strong regions - a strong country" remains an axiom of the ongoing reforms. Three additional regions were formed in Kazakhstan.

Administrative and territorial changes optimize the process of public administration, make it easier for

Continued on Page 06

Inside...

- US, FC KPK sign agreement for \$10.5 mln projects - Page 02
- Sindh, Balochistan to get above normal rain - Page 03
- Pakistan remains at the bottom of the Global Gender Gap Index - Page 04
- Oil drags Biden back to Middle East - Page 05
- Wimbledon title down to Kazakh support: Rybakina - Page 06
- Malaysia's experience highlighted in localising SDGs - Page 07
- Protesters storm PM office after President flees abroad - Page 08

PTI's allegations on ECP, Punjab govt reflecting frustration: Kundi

D.I.KHAN: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Information Secretary Faisal Karim Kundi on Wednesday said that the leadership of PTI was foreseeing its defeat in the upcoming by-election in Punjab and levelling of baseless allegations against Punjab government and Election Commission was clearly reflecting its frustration.

"The masses of Punjab are very well aware of the fact that the Imran Khan led previous government's policies created hurdles like signing of agreements with IMF regarding increase in prices of petroleum products and electricity," he said while talking to APP.

As a result of such agreements, it became inevitable for current government to jack up the prices of petroleum products and electricity. However, the coalition government was not oblivious to the difficulties of the people in wake of inflation and the situation would



gradually come to the normal, he reiterated. Kundi said that the previous government of PTI wracked havoc with the institutions and the country's economy suffered due to over three and a half years by promoting corrupt practices like nepotism and bad administration. He regretted that the Imran Khan led government badly failed to launch any mega project despite the fact that

the country was overburdened with unprecedented and record loans. He said above all the key development projects like CPEC were put in the cold storage which hurt the trust of our time tested friendly country China. But now this government has taken effective damage control measures, yielding concrete results and improvement had been witnessed in relation with China, Saudi Arabia and other countries.

He added that the provision of loans on soft conditions to the country was picking high volume of the fact. The PPP information secretary said that their was worst type of bad governance and corruption during the PTI government and now in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa too corruption, unemployment, nepotism were on rise. The people of province were desperately awaiting relief oriented measures. - APP

Kashmiris observe 92nd Kashmir Martyrs Day with renewed resolve

MIRPUR (AJK): A large number of people paid glowing tributes to the martyrs of Jammu and Kashmir, including 22 sons of the soil who lost their lives on this day in 1931 in front of Central Jail Srinagar. The day is remembered as the Kashmir Martyrs Day and these martyrs are credited to have laid the foundation of the movement for liberation from the despotic Dogra rule. Kashmiris all over the world observed the 92nd Kashmir Martyrs Day on Tuesday with the resolve to continue the struggle with full vigour in order to achieve liberation from the tyrannical Indian rule.

Special prayers, meetings and symposiums were held across Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), the strife-torn Indian occupied Kashmir valley and rest of the world to observe the day. It was a public holiday in the AJK. It was on this day in 1931 when the Dogra troops shot dead 22 Kashmiris in front of the Central Jail Srinagar. This year too, the Kashmir Martyrs Day gave a sense of renewed hope that if India agrees to the ground realities without any reservations and learns a lesson from the historical facts that she (New Delhi) cannot rule the

Kashmiris at gun point, it may help bring a lasting peace and prosperity in the region through the early peaceful settlement of the Kashmir issue in line with the aspirations of the people of Kashmir and United Nations resolutions. Special Kashmir Martyrs Day meetings were held at almost all the districts and tehsil headquarters of AJK, including Mirpur, Muzaffarabad, Kotli, Bagh, Rawalakot, Sudhanoti, Neelam Valley, Haveili, Hattian and Bhimber, and all other small and major towns and cities. A large number of people from various social, political and religious Kashmiri groups, the civil society members including the business community, lawyers and the media persons participated in the gatherings. Speakers paid rich tributes to the martyrs of 1931 who were gunned down by the Dogra rulers for raising voice for the liberation of their motherland.

Speaking at special prayer meeting in Mirpur on Tuesday morning, Deputy Commissioner Chaudhary Amjad Iqbal and others strongly condemned the persistent reign of state terrorism and violence unleashed by the Indian occupation forces in Srinagar and

rest of the valley for the last six years where hundreds of innocent Kashmiris including the young commander of Hizbul Mujahideen Burhan Muzaffar Wani were martyred. They paid glorious tributes to Shaheed Burhan Wani and other Kashmiri martyrs for laying down the supreme sacrifice of their lives for the noble cause of freedom from the forcible Indian bondage.

Historic Significance of the Day: The Kashmir Martyrs' Day, or Youme Shuhada-e-Kashmir is observed on July 13 every year not only on both sides of the Line of Control but also all over the world by the Kashmiris to pay homage to 22 Kashmiris who were martyred in 1931 to free Kashmir from the brutalities of despotic Dogra rulers. The tragic day is a milestone in the Kashmiris' struggle against foreign occupation which still continues against the Indian alien rule. The history of Dogra rule (1846-1947) in Kashmir is replete with brutal treatment of the Kashmiri Muslims perpetrated by the Dogra forces. Slave labour, heavy taxes, capital punishment for cow slaughter, and living under constant state-terror are order of the day. - APP



MULTAN: Leader of Opposition in Senate Syed Yusuf Raza Gillani is talking to media persons at Gilani House. - APP

Veteran actor Tanveer Jamal passes away



DNA

LAHORE: Veteran Pakistani actor and producer Tanveer Jamal on Wednesday passed away in Tokyo, Japan after a long fight with cancer. The "Teri Raza" actor moved to Japan for his treatment of cancer in May this year, and he had asked his fans to pray for his speedy recovery. He was first diagnosed with the disease in 2016 but he had recovered from it and made a comeback to TV dramas.

It is recalled that Jamal suddenly fell ill during the shooting of his play "Mere Apne" and he was later replaced by Firdous Jamal.

342 mm rainfall drained in 24 hours: CM Sindh

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Wednesday said that the city received a record rain of 342.4 mm between July 10 to 11 upto 2 pm, however the rainwater was disposed of soon after the rain. He said this while addressing a press conference at CM House. Provincial ministers, Sharjeel Inam Memon, Intiaz Shaikh, Syed Nasir Shah and Advisor to CM Rasool Bux Chandio were present on the occasion.

Syed Murad Ali Shah said that the city received 342.4 mm rain, including 106 mm on July 11 and 126 mm upto 2pm on July 12. "This was a record rainfall in the history of the city but now the infrastructure of the city in terms of disposal of the water was built, therefore the rainwater was disposed of within 24 hours and our teams comprising provincial ministers, advisors and government officers suctioned the water out from the depressions, low-lying areas and from the underpasses with the help of machinery and pumps.

The CM said that people slaughter sacrificial animals on the roads. "The district central has the largest number of slaughters in the country," he said and added the solid waste management had started lifting the offal when the rain started, therefore the lifting [the offal] work was stopped, and the backlog emerged, which had been cleared. Syed Murad Ali Shah said that after completion of Clifton Sewage pumping station for Rs 493 million, it catered to the sewage disposal of large areas and served the various vicinities, including Clifton Blocks: 1 to 9, Bath Island, Clifton, Civil Lines and Cantt: Station areas, I.I. Chundrigar Road, Shahrah-e-Faisal, starting from Gora Graveyard, M.A. Jinnah Road, Bolton Market and Kapra Market, Saddar and old city areas, Lines Area, Lucky Star, Nishtar Road, Napier Road and Jodia Bazar.

The CM said that KWSB had a fleet of 36 Suction and Jetting Machines upto the year 2010. "Frequent sewage overflows are encountered across Karachi due to overloading of the sewerage system," he said and added that the addition of 20 new Suction & Jetting Machines has improved KWSB's capacity to clean and de-silting the affected sewerage system of Karachi. He said that another lot of 56 Suction & Jetting Machines were being added to existing fleet under the World Bank funded KWSSIP Project and in this way the total number of machines would increase to 112 within next six months. To a question, the chief minister said that the storm-water system was not designed for such a huge rainfall. "The cities London has such a huge storm water drain because it receives the rain, light and heavy, almost the whole year," he said and added we, in Karachi receive such heavy downpour once in five to eight years, therefore we could not afford to invest billions of rupees on its expansion by digging the entire city.

According to the CM Sindh these heavy rains were the results of climate change, and his government was working on different projects to mitigate its effects. The CM Sindh said that various areas such as Saadi Town and other areas have been constructed on the natural waterways which have blocked the natural flow of rainwater in gravity. He added that the local government office at Tughlaq House was built on the storm water drain, similarly, parking of Ombudsman, Supreme Court, Shaheen Complex and a media house was built on the storm water drain. "I have not built or allowed these encroachments on the nullah but yes, I'll talk to the cabinet and if they allow me I would bulldoze the Local government department office on the nullah and then request the others to follow the course," he said. - APP

Over 8.5m people vaccinated in Faisalabad

In order to facilitate the people these centers had been established in various areas of the city

FAISALABAD: Over 8.5 million (8,520,304) people have so far been vaccinated against COVID-19 in the district. District Health Officer Dr Ataul Mun'im said on Wednesday that 4,651,462 citizens were injected first dose while 3,784,727 were administered the second dose of vaccine. He further said that 39,863 health workers were also given first dose while 44,242 received the second dose of vaccine. He said that sufficient stock of coronavirus vaccine was available in the district.

He said that 37 vaccination centers and 20 mobile vaccination camps were operational in Faisalabad where registered people were being vaccinated. In order to facilitate the people these centers had been established in various areas of the city including Allied Hospital, District Headquarters Hospital, Government General Hospital, Faisalabad Institute of Cardiology, Government General Hospital Samanabad, Children Hospital, Sports Complex Samanabad, Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Jaranwala, Samundri, Tandlianwala, Chak Jhumra, Sports Complex Chak Jhumra, Sports Complex Jaranwala, Government General Hospital Chak 224/R-B, New Building RHC Khurrianwala, New Building THQ Samundri, New Building THQ Tandlianwala, Social Security Hospital Madina Town, Wapda Hospital, Rural Health Centers Mureed Wala, Chak 174-JB, Chak 134-JB, Chak 229/R-B, Chak 65-GB, RHC Lundianwala Jaranwala, RHC Khurrianwala Jaranwala, Pindi Sheikh Musa, Kanjwani, Mamukanjan, RHC Chak 400-GB, RHC Chak 153/R-B, RHC Chak 374-GB and Chak 469-GB, he added. - DNA

China always stand by Pakistan side in difficult times: Zaka Ullah

DNA

PESHAWAR: Provincial Secretary Information Zaka Ullah Khattak Tuesday said that the friendship between Pakistan and China was a source of pride for the people of both the countries. China has always stood by Pakistan side in difficult times and Pakistan has never disappointed its great neighbor. He expressed these views during a visit to China Window, a Chinese Cultural and Information Center here.

During his visit, Provincial Secretary Information Zaka Ullah Khattak visited various galleries, penned his impressions in the guest book and signed on the Friendship Wall. Zakaullah Khattak said "CPEC is an important project for Pakistan's economic development and a new era will begin after

the establishment of Rashakai Economic Zone, where employment opportunities will be available, and products made in this special economic zone can be imported to Afghanistan and Central Asian countries." Secretary Information said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also has vast opportunities for religious tourism that need to be tapped. "We also need to further improve people-to-people contacts to further strengthen the friendly relations between the two countries," Zaka Ullah Khattak added. Calling the establishment of China Window in Peshawar an important step, the Information Secretary said "After coming here, it feels like you are in China." He hoped that China Window would help the people to people contact between Pak-China. It would play a positive and constructive role in the friendship between Pak-China.

City improvement project to improve life of residents, says KP Minister

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Local Government, Elections and Rural Development Faisal Amin Gandapur on Wednesday said that work on multi-billion rupees Khyber Pakhtunkhwa City Improvement Project (KPCIP) was in full swing that would ensure availability of all civil amenities to residents. In a statement, he said that the project funded by Asian Development Bank (ADB) would provide services including solid waste management, infrastructure development and others for durable urban development.

He said that the provincial government of PTI under the leadership of Chief Minister KP Mahmood Khan has continued its indiscriminate develop-

ment policies across the province, adding that change of minister or advisor didn't make the slightest difference in the development process. He assured to continue the consultation process with MPAs and local people regarding every development project so that it could be completed timely without compromising on quality of work. Faisal Amin said "The development of cities is one of the top most priorities under KPCIP whereby ensuring proper solid waste management and availability of modern machinery, the se cities would become free from all kinds of pollution and also provide sanitation and drinking water facilities to the citizens." - APP



LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shahbaz and Makhdoom Ahmed Mehmood are talking to joint media at the residence of Pakistan Peoples Party leader Makhdoom Ahmed Mehmood at Model Town. - APP

CM supervises relief, rescue operation in KP

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant for Information and Public Relations Muhammad Ali Saif on Wednesday said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Mahmood Khan was supervising all the relief and rescue activities in flood affected areas of the province. He said that PDMA, Rescue 1122, police and the relevant departments of district administration were carrying out relief operations in the affected areas. Food items, medical supplies and other essential items were being provided in the flood hit areas.

Giving details of the relief activities here, he said that houses were reportedly damaged in Tank, Lakki Marwat and Swabi districts due to the floods wherein PDMA had provided blankets, plastic mats, gas cylinders, hygiene equipment, water coolers, kitchen kits, drainage machines and other essentials to the affected people. Saif said that medical teams had also been sent to the affected areas and so far 150 patients had been treated. The PDMA had also provided rubber boats, shovels, handcars, life jackets, electric searchlights and other essentials, he added. Helpline number 1700 had been activated to respond timely to any emergency situation, while Rescue 1122 had set up medical camps. Heavy machinery and water suction pumps were being utilized to drain flood water, he said. Saif said that the leave of all rescue personnel had been canceled in the wake of the emergency. - APP

Free transportation facilities for females hailed

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Education Champions Network hailed decision to provide free transportation facilities for female students in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. According to a press release issued here on Wednesday, the government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa recently announced free transportation facilities for female students. Mehmood Khan, the Chief Minister (CM) of KP, has approved free transportation for female students attending any public sector school in the province, to increase the literacy rate of young women. Many young girls in Khyber Pa-

khunkhwa (KP) province were discouraged from continuing their education each year because of the long distances between their homes and schools and the lack of affordable transportation options for them to travel. Initially, the PTC (Parent-Teacher Council) fund would be used for a pilot project in remote areas of the province, according to the details provided by the Elementary and Secondary Education Department (ESED). In 2022 Women Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) through a recommendation paper and joint position paper by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Commission on Status of Women and Child Welfare & Protection Commission in their joint position paper with Pakistan Education Champions Network emphasized the provision of free transportation for girls in the rural areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. According to the survey, which was carried out as part of the BISP's National Socio-Economic Registry census with the help of elementary and secondary school teachers, the children not attending school in the province total 4.7 million while the number of out-of-school girls in the province is 2.9 million, which amounts to 53

per cent of the total 5.4 million girl population of the same age group. Blue Veins local not-for-profit organization working to promote and protect girls' secondary Education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for girls says if there is no school in her village she is forced to drop out. Parents will not allow their girls to walk to school due to the risk of violence, and there is no affordable way for them to attend school outside of their village. Because of this, there is little incentive for a girl in these rural villages to stay in school past sixth grade.

Qamar Naseem, Program Manager Blue Veins and Education Champion from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa said "free transportation can support girls at the transitional stage, leading the way in establishing female education as a norm rather than an anomaly." "The approved scheme will help mitigate gender imbalances, bolsters individual self-esteem and fosters a greater, more active role for women in society." "The impacts of this program will be far-reaching, reverberating across the economy and the futures of women and their families," he added. - APP

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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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- Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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



Enquiry

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



Hospitals

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



Departments

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

Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

- Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Sindh, Balochistan to get above normal rain

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman on Wednesday said the provinces of Sindh and Balochistan were receiving above normal monsoon rainfall which would scale up further in the coming day. The Federal Minister for Climate Change took to Twitter to share the abnormal rainfall situation in Sindh and Balochistan causing serious urban flooding and risk to human life and property. She wrote, "Sindh & Balochistan still under heavy monsoon pressure for the last 13 days. Sindh is 625 % above the 30 year average, Balochistan 501".

Sherry further wrote that the Pakistan Meteorological Department reports claimed a further rise in heavy rainfall starting tomorrow (July 14th). She urged that the quarters concerned across the board were asked to ensure better preparedness and response measures during the inclement weather. The weather cycle again would focus on Sindh and Balochistan for high precipitation, she added. The Minister also



shared an info-graphic highlighting the monsoon rainfall situation across the country. In a separate tweet, the Minister said climate change was sweeping through the world with its existential impacts. She also posted the images of major flooding in Sydney that submerged the urban thoroughfares under water. "This is Sydney last week, Australia's biggest city, lashed by torrential rains, leading to flash urban flooding". She added that over 30,000 residents had to be evacuated from Sydney's flooded areas.

Widespread rain, wind predicted for KP

PESHAWAR: The Met Office has forecast widespread rain, wind and thunderstorm with isolated heavy falls in Abbottabad, Mansehra, Haripur, Battagram, Kohistan, Torghar, Malakand, Swat, Chitral, Shangla, Buner, Lower and Upper Dir, Bajaur, Mohmand, Mardan, Swabi, Nowshera, Charsadda, Peshawar, Khyber and Kohat districts during next 24 to 48 hours. It further said that scattered rain, wind and thunderstorm with one or two heavy falls are expected in Hangu, Orakzai, Kurram, Bannu, Karak, Lakki Marwat, DI Khan, Tank, North-South Waziristan

districts during the period. It warned that heavy rainfalls may trigger land sliding in the hilly areas, flash flooding in local Nullahs and rivers of the province. The Met Office said that rain and thunderstorms would persist in most parts of the province till July 16 after which hot and humid weather would prevail. The weather remained humid and partly cloudy in most parts of the province during the last 24 hours, however rain and thunderstorm occurred at isolated places in Risalpur, Peshawar, Dir, Kohistan, Kohat, Abbottabad and Bajaur.

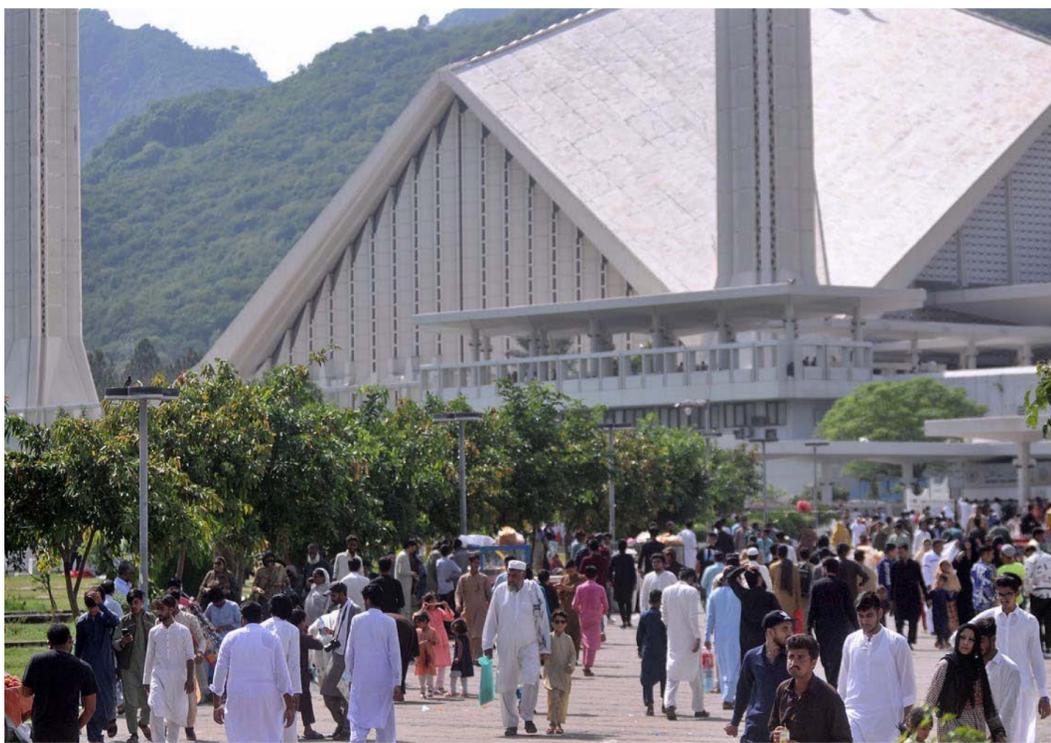
The Minister went on to mention that South

Asia, especially Pakistan was still in a serious monsoon cycle. - APP

IRC launches relief activities for flood affectees

DNA

ISLAMABAD: As the torrential rains and flash floods in Balochistan areas have played wreak killing dozens of people, including women and children, and over 150,000 population in need of humanitarian assistance, 30,000 badly affected, an emergency has been declared in the provincial metropolitan city followed by relief operations at all levels. According to the assistant commissioner, the wards and emergency room of Muslim Bagh Civil Hospital were flooded, while rain in the hilly areas of Muslim Bagh damaged more than 100 houses. Most of the access roads to remote areas of Qila Saifullah, Zhub, and Harnai have been affected, hampering rescue operations in several areas. A Pishin administration official said hundreds of mud-houses were washed away or badly damaged in Malikiyar, Don Khanozai and Sheikmalzai areas of Pishin as floodwater coming from hilly areas of Burshor lashed the area. Given the rapidly deteriorating situation, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) has initiated response activities in Pishin and Quetta districts. With the financial aid of German Federal Foreign Office, the IRC's internal funds and support of its on-ground partner, the People's Primary Healthcare Initiative (PPHI), the IRC has launched a rapid emergency response within 24 hours of the declaration of emergency, which is being implemented in close coordination with the Provincial Disaster Management Authority, Balochistan. "We have so far set up three free medical camps in the flood-affected areas. More than 500 Afghan refugees and host communities have so far availed the services," shared Esfandyar Baloch, CEO PPHI, while giving details of the relief operations.



ISLAMABAD: A large number of people visit Shah Faisal Masjid during a pleasant weather after rain in the city. - APP

KP Forest Dept retrieves over Rs30 mln land

No land use change can be made in Guzara Forest without the approval of the provincial cabinet

ISLAMABAD: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Forest Department has recouped some 20 kanals of State owned Reserve Forest land worth more than Rs30 million from the land grabbers during its anti-encroachment operation. The anti-encroachment operation was carried out in Dana Ferozpur Reserve Forest of Makhial Forest sub division under the supervision of Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Haripur Sardar Farhad Ali and sub-divisional SDFO Makhial Zohaib Hassan. SDFO Zohaib Hassan told APP, "Reserve Forests are the state owned for-

ests where all kind of construction and sale, purchase activities are banned under section 26 of Forest Ordinance 2002". Informed that the total area of 20 kanals was encroached in 2015 whereas in 2021 the Survey of Pakistan was consulted to do the reallocation of forest boundaries. After the Survey of Pakistan report in October 2021, the illegal occupants of the land were served with notices whereas consequently the land grabbers upon receiving notices approached the Session Court. After contesting for eight months the

stays were vacated on July 5th and July 8th, he said, adding, "I along with my staff went to the site and vacated the encroachment". SDFO Zohaib Hassan informed that from October 2021 onwards some 25 kanals and 14 marlas reserve forest state owned land was retrieved that worth Rs60 million. "The Survey of Pakistan cadastral maps have verified the forest land status with proper GPS coordinates indicating the status of the land before and after any encroachments carried out in the area," he said. The Forest Department team comprising SDFO Zo-

haib Hassan and forest guards had raided on various encroachment spots and vacated the government land brought under illicit construction activities. SDFO Makhial Zohaib Hassan informed that there were two types of forest land Guzara and Reserve forests. The latter was the property of Forest Department whereas the former was owned by the local communities under the management of the department. "No land use change can be made in Guzara Forest without the approval of the provincial cabinet," he underscored. - APP

ECP to start compiling voter lists from Friday

ISLAMABAD: Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) would commence compiling of verified voter lists from Friday and complete the whole process till July 25 after which the printing of final electoral rolls would start. ECP spokesman Haroon Khan Shinwari told APP that the final electoral rolls for next general elections would be published on August 25, 2022. The ECP had displayed the preliminary voters' lists from May 21 to June 30 at 20,159 display centres at prominent places across the country. The basic aim of displaying those lists was to provide an opportunity to people to get theirs and their family's votes registered in their respective areas in case they were not enlisted and register their objections regarding their votes if any. Subsequently, ECP had appointed 525 officials as Revising Authorities (RAs) to dispose of claims and objections of the citizens on draft electoral rolls by July 9. Revising Authorities had been tasked to complete the verification of the entries and proposed corrections in the voter lists and remove allegations filed by individual voters as well as the political parties. - APP



Oil & Gas Regulatory Authority
Government of Pakistan

آئل اینڈ گیس ریگولیشن اتھارٹی حکومت پاکستان

During Eid Holidays

FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS TO MAKE YOUR TRIP SAFER

Instructions for Tourists



Get a proper vehicle maintenance checkup before leaving for trip



Fill up your vehicle's fuel tank



Avoid going to over crowded places



Avoid unnecessary travel during eid holidays

Adopt Precautionary Measures during Monsoon

Contact helpline for complaints  OGRA Helpline: 0800-777-33

Pakistan State Oil 0800-03000

Attock Petroleum Ltd 051-5127263

Total Parco 0800-87751

Shell Helpline +92-21-111-544-344

Gas & Oil Pakistan Ltd (GO) 021 111 46 46 46

Hasco Petroleum Ltd 021 111 757 757

Cnergyico PK Ltd (Byco Petroleum) 021-111 222 081

Be Energy Ltd 021-111 122 574

Puma Energy Pakistan +923096667862

Torrential downpour swamps Swan Garden

ISLAMABAD: Torrential rains that lashed federal capital not only inundated several low-lying areas of Swan Garden Housing Society but also houses and shops causing severe damage to properties. The overflowed nullahs, rivulets passing through the housing society played havoc with the residents. The water accumulated in basements was being flushed out with the help of heavy water pumps. Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon rushed to Swan Housing Society and started rescue operation. Assistant Commissioner Rural Management and rescue teams also joined the rescue operation. Luckily, water has started receding making rescue operation comparatively easy. Swan Housing Society was directed to buy own de-watering pumps, life jackets and necessary machinery to meet any emergency. Deputy Registrar Cooperative Housing Societies was directed to conduct audit of housing societies' machinery. - APP

157 women kidnapped in June

DNA

ISLAMABAD: According to research by the Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO) and the Centre for Research, Development and Communication (CRDC), kidnapping of women, physical assault, rape and domestic violence against women were the most reported cases in the month of June 2022 in the mainstream media. Kidnapping of women was the most heavily reported in the media, with a total of 157 of cases. 108 of these cases were reported only from the province of Punjab. Looking at other provinces, Sindh reported 22 cases, followed by 06 from KP, 04 in Balochistan and 17 from Islamabad. 112 Cases of physical assault against women were reported in media all over Pakistan.

Briefs

Sanjrani expresses unity with Kashmiris

ISLAMABAD: The dream of the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) to win right to self-determination would come true one day, Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani said. In a special message on Kashmir Martyrs' Day, he said that lasting peace in South Asia was impossible without resolving the Kashmir issue. "International community should take stern notice of the atrocities committed by Indian occupied forces in IIOJK and play its role in ending the ongoing human rights violations in occupied valley" Sanjrani emphasized. The Senate chairman said that the Upper House has always been playing its effective role in highlighting the Kashmir issue. A number of resolutions have been passed condemning brutalities of Indian occupied forces and calling for resolution on the issue in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions and international conventions. On the occasion, Deputy Chairman Senate Mirza Muhammad Afridi said that the sacrifices of the people of Occupied Kashmir would not go in vain. - APP

Thin attendance witnessed in offices

ISLAMABAD: Public and private sector organizations witnessed thin attendance of employees on Wednesday, the first working day after the Eid ul Azha holidays. Most of the employees have opted for casual leaves for Wednesday, Thursday and Friday to extend their Eid vacations till Sunday as the majority of capital residents went to their native towns to celebrate Eid with their loved ones. Starting from Friday last, such employees would enjoy nine days break till coming Monday when work at government and semi-government organisations would start at a normal pace. However, those who celebrated Eid in the twin cities or resided nearby returned to their respective offices today. The government and private offices, business centres, small and large enterprises, corporations, banks, shops, medical centres and utility service centres also witnessed a low number of clients. - APP

Zardari condoles death of Jugnu Mohsin's father

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) Chairman Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the sad demise of the father of Jugnu Mohsin and father-in-law of senior journalist Najam Sethi. In a condolence message issued here by the party secretariat, he said that the services of late Mian Syed Muhammad Mohsin for the humanity would always be remembered. Asif Zardari prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul, grant courage and patience to the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss with equanimity. - APP

IT exports increased by 25.45%

ISLAMABAD: The Information Technology (IT) exports have surged at the growth rate of 25.45 percent in eleven months of the last financial year. "ICT export remittances, including telecommunication, computer, and information services for the period July 2021 to May 2022 during Financial Year 2021-22 have surged to the US \$2.381 billion at a growth rate of 25.45 % in comparison to the US \$1.898 billion during the same period in FY 2020-21," the official of the ministry told APP. The net exports for the period July 2021 to May 2022 during FY 2021-22 were US\$ 1.809 billion which was 75.98% of US\$ 2.381 billion in ICT exports. - APP

Pakistan remains at the bottom of the Global Gender Gap Index

The cost of living crisis is impacting women disproportionately after the shock of labour market losses during the pandemic and the continued inadequacy of care infrastructure

DNA

ISLAMABAD: After a big COVID hit, the gender gap hasn't bounced back, according to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2022. As the global economy enters its third year of continued disruption, it will take another 132 years (compared to 136 in 2021) to close the gender gap. Pakistan has also regressed in its gains from the last few years and stands back at 2nd from the bottom. Pakistan at 145th among 146 countries has a population of 107 million women, and in 2022 has closed 56.4% of the gender gap that affects them. This is the highest overall level of parity Pakistan has posted since the report launched, 16 years ago. Pakistan registers significant improvement across three subindexes, with the highest positive variation on Economic Participation and Opportunity. While wage equality carries the highest gender gap score among economic indicators (0.620), advances were also reported in estimated earned income, where women's earnings increased 4% compared to 2021. However, it is worth noting that women's labour-force participation in Pakistan declined by 1.9 percentage points in 2022, while both shares of men and women workers in senior and professional categories saw a downturn. On Educational Attainment, gender parity scores for literacy, secondary and tertiary education enrolment all rose. However, the shares of male and female students in secondary and tertiary education both increased from 2021, while a drop in parity in literacy correlates to a reduction of the population of men that are literate. Amir Jahangir, Chief Executive Officer, Mishaal Pakistan and Country Partner Institute of the Centre for the New Economy and Society, World Economic Forum said, "the data for Pa-



kistan is being contributed through the Executive Opinion Survey being carried out by Mishaal Pakistan annually". He further said, "the report uses the EOS datapoint, Wage Equality for Similar Work from the 2021 edition of the dataset which forms a key component of the Index, capturing the wage gap between men and women who perform similar work". The Global Gender Gap Report benchmarks the current state and evolution of gender parity across four key dimensions, Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment. South Asia with 62.3% gender parity, has the largest gender gap of all regions, with low scores across

all measured gender gaps and little progress made in most countries since the last edition. At its current pace, it will take 197 years to close the gender gap in the region. The economic gender gap has closed by 1.8%, with increases in the share of women in professional and technical roles in countries including Bangladesh and India, as well as Nepal. The report suggests that of the 146 economies surveyed, just one in five has managed to close the gender gap by at least 1% in the past year. As a result, while gains have been made in the past year, they have reduced the time it will take to reach gender parity by only four years. This progress does little to offset the setback of an entire generation recorded in 2020-2021 at the

start of the pandemic. "The cost of living crisis is impacting women disproportionately after the shock of labour market losses during the pandemic and the continued inadequacy of care infrastructure. In face of a weak recovery, government and business must make two sets of efforts: targeted policies to support women's return to the workforce and women's talent development in the industries of the future. Otherwise, we risk eroding the gains of the last decades permanently and losing out on the future economic returns of diversity," says Saadia Zahidi, Managing Director at the World Economic Forum. The Global Gender Gap Report, now in its 16th year, benchmarks the evolution of gender-based gaps in four areas:

economic participation and opportunity; educational attainment; health and survival; and political empowerment. It also explores the impact of recent global shocks on the growing gender gap crisis in the labour market. Taking a longer view over 16 years, at the current rates of progress it will take 155 years to close the political empowerment gender gap - 11 more than predicted in 2021 - and 151 years for the economic participation and opportunity gender gap. Although 29 countries have reached full parity, it will still take 22 years to close the educational attainment gender gap. And while more than 140 countries have closed at least 95% of their health gaps, overall backsliding in health and survival means there may be a reversal. For the 13th consecutive year, Iceland is the most gender-equal country in the world and the only one to have closed more than 90% of the gender gap. Closing gender gaps remains a critical driver of national prosperity. Countries that invest in all of their human capital and make it easier for their populations to balance work and family life tend to be more prosperous. With an increasingly uncertain economic outlook, the Global Gender Gap Report 2022 calls on more leaders to unleash the creativity and dynamism of their countries' human capital to overcome the current crises and accelerate a strong recovery. The Closing the Gender Gap Accelerators work with government and business in advanced and developing economies to create structured public-private collaborations for rapid acceleration to economic parity, focusing on increasing women's participation in the workforce, closing the gender pay gap and helping more women advance into leadership roles and develop in-demand skills. The model has been adopted in 12 economies, with Ecuador, Kazakhstan, Japan and Mexico joining the accelerator network in 2021-2022.

PR explores 'Gateway of Prosperity'

A network of roads, highways, motorways, seaports, and airlines in a country makes it a center of economic activity by attracting investment

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways was expanding the scope of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to explore the "Gateway of Prosperity" for both countries and the region at large through the advancement of the Railways sector. The department considered CPEC as a long-term development project as it has the potential to serve as a corridor with multiple doors connecting China with Central Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Europe, said an official document issued here. It said the Chinese and Pakistani workforce, in a large number, was employed to ensure timely completion of the infrastructure projects. There were also new projects launched such as Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway (M-6), Peshawar-D.I.Khan Motorway (M-14), KKH Alternate Route (Gilgit-Shandor-Chitral), Swat Expressway (Phase-II), Dir Expressway, and Karachi Circular Railways. Pakistan Railways was providing one of the key modes of transport in the public sector which promoted national integration and economic growth, it added. Pakistan Railways comprised a total of 466 locomotives for a 7,791 km long route. During July-March FY2022, the gross earnings of railways were recorded at Rs 43.73 billion, it added. The modern transportation and communication system was one of the key inputs for achieving sustainable economic growth, the document said. "A network of roads, highways, motorways, seaports, and airlines in a country makes it a center of economic activity by attracting investment, raising productivity, and reducing the cost of doing business," it said. The government was committed to upgrading the transportation and communication system with the development of new roads, highways motorways, railway tracks, and airports to improve connectivity under CPEC. The CPEC was a pragmatic step for converting the unique geo-strategic location of Pakistan into geo-economics through various transport-related projects that would transform the road infrastructure of Pakistan and improve access to Central Asian, African, and European states, it added. - APP

Indian oppression can't suppress Kashmiris' indigenous movement

Kashmir Martyrs' Day was also a reminder of the decades-old struggle of the Kashmiri people for their right to self determination

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday said that the aggression and the cheap tactics of the Indian Occupation Forces had neither succeeded in the past, nor would be able in the future to suppress the indigenous movement of the Kashmiri people. The president, in his message on Kashmir Martyrs' Day, paid rich tribute to the martyrs and brave people of Kashmir for their continuous freedom struggle. He

said only the resolution of Kashmir dispute in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council could guarantee the regional peace. He saluted the resolve of the Kashmiri people who embraced martyrdom on July 13, 1931 by the Dogra rule. He said the Kashmir Martyrs' Day was also a reminder of the decades-old struggle of the Kashmiri people for their right to self determination. He said the people of Kashmir had been sacrificing their lives since generations to keep the passion for freedom alive. The president de-

manded the Indian Occupation Forces to immediately stop the human rights abuses in IIOJK and take measures for holding an impartial plebiscite. He reiterated that the resolution of Kashmir dispute as per aspirations of the Kashmiri people as well as the UNSC resolutions was inevitable for peace in the region. He said on Kashmir Martyrs' Day, the nation should reiterate a pledge to continue its diplomatic, moral and political support to the Kashmiri people till they get their right to self determination.



RAWALPINDI: Children wading through a flooded street at Dhoka Khabba neighbourhood following heavy monsoon rain in the city. - APP

Growth-oriented monetary policy vital

The FPCCI former president said that achievements in exports and stabilization of the economy through the monetary policy measures now require to sustain again

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry's Businessmen Panel (BMP) calling for growth-oriented monetary policy, stated that the current policy rate of 15 percent is the highest in view of the regional countries mark-up rates and industry cannot survive at the existing 14-year high record discount rate. FPCCI former President and BMP Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar demanded the immediate reduction in electricity tariff especially for SMEs as a first step towards cut in production cost while the second and vital step toward this direction would be bringing discount rate to the regional level with a view to provide level-playing field especially to the export industry. The decision would have the same importance for the domestic industry too, as it has also been facing tough competition of cheaper imported merchandise in the country following FTAs with several countries, he added. While appreciating the central bank's role in sustaining economic growth through supporting trade and industry, he said that reduction

in interest rate would be vital relief to the business community. The FPCCI former president said that achievements in exports and stabilization of the economy through the monetary policy measures now require to sustain again by extending reduction in the policy rates so that the debt liability of the business sector is compensated through lower mark-up rate. The trade and industry need continued support from the government in the form of lower interest rates amidst such external shocks, he suggested. The BMP Chairman expressed serious concern over the the highest policy rate in the region and in this situation industry cannot survive and to compete in the international market is absolutely impossible. Mian Anjum Nisar asked the SBP governor to fulfill his commitment of maintaining an accommodative monetary stance in the near and long-term to support the rare recovery amid uncertain Covid-19 challenges. He stressed the need for reduction in discount rate, arguing that low key policy rate is essential to make the Pakistani exporting sector as well as the local industry competitive. He said that the central bank should an-

nounce an initiative related to loans for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), as the SME sector has to show collateral to banks, which are always reluctant to offer them concessional credit. He expressed dismay that on a month-on-month basis, CAD has increased by 131 percent, from \$618 million in April 2022 to \$1.425 billion in May 2022. The only way forward is to increase exports substantially and post a double-digit growth in exports each year, he added. He said that what the country needs is enhanced industrial production; rapid increase in exports; private sector and foreign direct investment (FDI) and the resultant employment generation; increased tax collection and a healthy economic growth rate. He maintained that the current phenomenon of stagflation in the country is not demand-pull based and will not be solved by irrationally increasing the interest rate to an excruciatingly high level, where borrowing from the formal sector becomes unviable. He was of the opinion that uncertainty in political and economic environment, ever-so-volatile rupee-dollar parity, and incessant interest rate hikes will hurt all the sectors across the board, as cost of doing

business, ease of doing business index, access to business financing, and access to foreign exchange for imports will be adversely affected and running companies in profit will become next to impossible. He termed the 15% key policy rate as very high, especially in the extraordinary prospects, suggesting to promote the present growth pace further in the industrial and service sectors through lowering of mark-up rate, as the economy is on track, with stability on external and domestic fronts. He said that the banking sector should also take measures to strengthen SMEs to stimulate the growth of trade and industry in the country as SMEs are considered the engine of economic growth. He said that usually the banking industry in Pakistan was dependent on the strength and performance of the economy in which the SME sector has attained an important role in terms of its growth potential and greater employment opportunities. He cited the example of Taiwan, Korea, Brazil, China and Turkey, who have been concentrating their efforts in developing the SME sector. He further said that SBP should initiate special schemes and come up with growth oriented policies to support the trade and industry.

AIU offers aut semester admissions from July 15

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU) is commencing admissions for the autumn semester 2022, across the country. According to AIU, the admission for the first phase will start on July 15, while admissions in the second phase will start on September 1. The educational programs offered in the first phase will include Matriculation (General and Dars e Nizami), FA (General and Dars e Nizami), Certificate Courses, BS/B.Sc (Face to Face), M.Phil, and Ph.D programs. Overseas Pakistanis and citizens of other countries are also eligible for admission in matric, FA and I.Com programs. From admission to exams, all teaching activities will be online for international students. Admission forms and prospectuses for all the programs will be available on the University's website from July 15. Admission forms and prospectuses for matric and FA programs will be available on sale points set up at the University's main campus in Islamabad and regional offices in different cities of the country. It is pertinent to mention here that admission in BS/ MSc (face to face), MPhil and PhD programs can only be applied via online system while admission forms for Matric and FA programs can be submitted both manually and online, there will be no need to print and send the admission form to the university in case of online submission.

BTS all set to light up the Disney World

ISLAMABAD: Internationally acclaimed musical group and 21st century pop icon, BTS took the internet by storm as they announced major deal with streaming giant Disney+. According to a video message released via YouTube channel of Disney Plus, Grammy nominated Bangtan boys disclosed the plan of their upcoming shows set to be appeared on one of the biggest entertainment platform Disney+. According to the statements shared via members of the group, these new shows will include a wide variety of content including concert films and documentary series. While revealing about the most-anticipated docuseries, the group spills the tea stating it a unique content that will showcase all the ups and downs and more distinctive side of all the members including the glimpse from their daily lives. - APP

Oil drags Biden back to Middle East

US President Joe Biden has tried to portray his forthcoming trip to the Middle East, which will take him to Saudi Arabia, Israel and the West Bank, as a new chapter for "America's engagement" with the region. But were it not for the urgent need to check the soaring price of gasoline at home, the US leader would not have headed to the region, which hitherto has not been a priority for his administration. The Joe Biden administration will not have ignored the results of recent surveys. Its approval rating has plummeted to a historical low of below 30 percent as of Saturday as a result of the soaring inflation in the United States. And as some observers pointed out, only Saudi Arabia has sufficient oil production capacity and reserves to stabilize the world oil market and help bring down the price of gasoline in the US in a short time. So sealing a deal with the country could be a life-saving straw for his party that Biden is desperately trying to grab. Yet even if the world knows that his visit to Saudi Arabia on Friday is aimed at persuading Riyadh to release more oil to help the US bring down the price of oil that is fueling inflation in the country to a decades' high, Biden still claimed in an op-ed published in The Washington Post on Saturday that the trip is to "outcompete China". It was predictable that Biden will try and cast his visit in the noble light of "values". That it takes Biden himself to pen an op-ed before the visit explains how much he wants to take the sting out of the remarks he made about Riyadh when campaigning for the White House. Then, he vowed that he would treat the Saudi royal family as "the pariah that they are" after the death of a reporter, saying there is "very little social redeeming value in the present government in Saudi Arabia". That he has gone so far as to try and justify the necessity of the trip from the perspective of his administration's "global engagement", intentionally playing down his quest for oil, is a face-saving move should he be unable to persuade Riyadh to increase oil output. In May, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud stated that the kingdom is already pumping close to maximum capacity, and it had "done what it could" for the oil market. The industry needs to increase refining capacity instead of simply pumping more barrels of crude, he argued. That indicates how much homework Biden has to do for the trip if he does not want to return home empty-handed. History shows that the only reason the US appears in the Middle East is oil, and what happens when it does. The US' renewed interest in the region threatens to break the region's hard-won equilibrium and positive development momentum, which came after the US' strategic withdrawal, and make the world more volatile.



Biden goes to Riyadh: Realism may not need to trump principle

James M. Dorsey

One way the United States could attempt to bridge differences over what should drive US policy would be to focus on human security, including endemic untransparent and unaccountable governance, economic diversification, corruption, and social reform. This approach could offer a backdoor to more sensitive human rights issues

At the core of a US policy debate over the merits of President Joe Biden's pilgrimage, this week to the Middle East lies the question of how best to ensure regional stability and protect United States interests. Lost in the debate is whether the cost of maintaining stability by supporting autocratic rule is lower in the long term than the upfront expense of adhering to human rights principles, pluralism, and transparent and accountable governance that would initially alienate Middle Eastern partners. Mr. Biden's visit to Saudi Arabia, where he will meet with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman whom US intelligence has described as probably responsible for the 2018 killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, reverses what seemed to be a more principled US policy under Mr. Biden, at least when it came to the kingdom. Mr. Biden had refused to meet Mr. Bin Salman and had vowed during his election campaign to force the Saudis to "pay the price, and make them, in fact, the pariah that they are." Much has happened since Mr. Biden's vow. The war in Ukraine has sparked a global energy crisis that requires Saudi Arabia to help increase supply and reduce prices. Tension is building between Israel and Iran amid pessimism that a 2015 international agreement to curb the Islamic republic's nuclear program can be achieved. The rising tension adds to the perceived urgency for regional security cooperation between Israel and Arab states. Finally, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is festering and, like a black swan, could escalate into greater violence at any given moment. All of this bolsters the

realist argument that respected Middle East scholar F. Gregory Gause succinctly summarized as the need for US policy to "privilege order over other goals," which means "dealing with regimes and leaders that have blood on their hands if it serves US interests. Reengagement with Saudi Arabia fits this agenda." The United States has long operated on the principle of kicking the can down the road by supporting autocracy at the expense of making greater transparency and accountability cornerstones of cooperation with Washington. The short-term benefits are obvious but so are the wounds that fester because they are not properly treated, causing greater turmoil and costing more to resolve further down the road. Moreover, the approach that juxtaposes US actions against US rhetoric makes US pledges of adherence to values ring hollow at a time when credibility may be a major determining factor in the rivalry with Russia and China. President George W. Bush and his then-national security advisor, Condoleezza Rice, acknowledged this two decades ago when they asserted that jihadist violence and the 9/11 attacks were partly the results of the United States' failure to stand up for its values. However, like Barack Obama, they bungled their effort to do something about it. The insight did not prevent Mr. Bush from starting never-ending wars in Afghanistan and Iraq that seeped US strength, caused significant loss of life, and cost trillions of dollars that ultimately empowered groups hostile to US interests, including the Taliban and pro-Iranian forces in various parts of the Middle East. Support for autocrats sparked popular revolts that toppled eight Arab leaders in the 2010s and provoked a brutal counterrevolution responsible for the region's worst human rights abuses in decades. To be clear, this is not a plea for US interference to impose its values and standards. That could prove to be as disastrous as military interventions. Instead, nations need to make their own choices, weigh options, and apply a cost/benefit analysis. One way the United States could attempt to bridge differences over what should drive US policy would be to focus on human security, including endemic untransparent and unaccountable governance, economic diversification, corruption, and social reform. This approach could offer a backdoor to more sensitive human rights issues. The focus on human security takes on added significance against the backdrop of a recent poll of 23,000 people in nine non-Gulf Middle Eastern and North African countries. More than half of the respondents agreed with the statement that the economy was weak under a democratic system. They said they were more concerned about the effectiveness of their government's policies than their type of government and believed they needed a leader who

could "bend the rules" if necessary to get things done. For the United States, the cost of making transparent and accountable governance a cornerstone of cooperation may quickly prove less costly when dealing with Gulf states, who, in the short and middle term, have few options. Neither China nor Russia is willing or able to replace the United States as the region's security guarantor, even if the United States is seeking to rejigger its commitment to free up energy and resources for its rivalry with China. Regional alliances, particularly with Israel, may compensate to a degree for uncertainty about US reliability but are fraught with pitfalls. Gulf states are a long way away from being able to shoulder full responsibility for their defense, which in the case of the smaller states may never be achievable, even if there is a greater emphasis on building domestic arms industries. To seduce Mr. Biden, Saudi Arabia is reportedly mulling, inviting a senior Israeli official, most probably caretaker Prime Minister Yair Lapid, to join Mr. Biden on his visit to the kingdom. The invitation would make the meeting between Messrs. Bin Salman and Biden more palatable for the US president and strengthen a Saudi bid for a closer defense relationship with the United States that would include a firm pledge to facilitate the sale of arms such as advanced drones that the US has so far been reluctant to approve. Well-placed sources reported days in advance of Mr. Biden's visit that the administration was considering a lifting of its ban on sales of offensive weapons to Saudi Arabia. They said a final decision would hinge on whether the kingdom progresses toward ending its seven-year-long war in neighbouring Yemen. The potential trade-off for a more robust US commitment to Saudi security could be a promise by the kingdom to maintain its economic and energy relations with China but weaken its growing strategic links to Beijing. The obstacle to such a deal is the same circumstance that undermines the proponents' argument for a more principled US foreign policy: US domestic politics. Middle Eastern rulers will have noted that the chances of Mr. Biden's Democratic Party retaining a Congressional majority in this year's mid-term elections are bleak. They will also consider when dealing with Mr. Biden that former President Donald J. Trump or a Trump-like Republican could well win the 2024 presidential election. "They are acutely aware of (Biden's) diminishing political currency and have begun to look past him toward the return of former US President Donald Trump or his avatar," said Aaron David Miller, a former State Department Middle East analyst and negotiator, and former National Security Council official Steven Simon. Ultimately, the implicit lesson is that for the United States to adopt a values-driven foreign policy successfully, it would have to first get its own house in order – something its Middle Eastern partners may not believe with good reason to be imminent. **Dr. James M. Dorsey is an award-winning journalist and scholar, a Senior Fellow at the National University of Singapore's Middle East Institute.**

14th BRICS Summit and Pak-China ties

Muhammad Waqar Anwar

It is good to see that China and Pakistan remain firm on the continuation of this project, and the latter is hopeful to become a partner in China's future multilateral engagements, which can help in strengthening further the bilateral partnership

China hosted a high-level development dialogue on the sidelines of the 14th BRICS summit in Beijing on 24th of June, 2022. It was chaired by President Xi, where he made an important speech titled, 'Forging High-Quality Partnership for a New Era of Global Development.' The overall theme of the conference was to 'Foster a Global Development Partnership for the New Era to Jointly Implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.' In addition to the BRICS members there was an additional participation of 13 countries including, Algeria, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Senegal, South Africa, Uzbekistan, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Malaysia and Thailand. The major points which came under

the limelight included, remaining committed to multilateralism, development, people centric approaches, inclusiveness and benefits for all, innovation-driven development, harmony between humans and nature along with results oriented actions. Thirty-two deliverables were agreed upon ranging from a global alliance for poverty reduction and development (GAPRD) and launching food production initiatives to launching a world youth development forum and establishing a global knowledge network for development. The event was marked by the absence of China's long-time development partner Pakistan, and concerns were raised in the country regarding non-invitation. Later on, it was reported that China had engaged Pakistan prior to the BRICS meeting; however, due to the internal decision-making process where all the members have to be consulted before inviting a non-member, there was some resistance by one member (reportedly India) which resulted in canceling invitation for Pakistan. The academia, intelligentsia, and analysts in Pakistan debated the non-inclusion at different platforms, including the local media. However, it was noted that China's relations with Pakistan are being discussed in a rather superfluous manner ignoring the overall context, the high level of trust and the depth of the relationship between the two countries, in addition to the high stakes involved in it for both of them. While it is true that the relationship has seen a few hiccups since the launch of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), primarily due to security concerns and some governance issues related to the progress on

the ground. Nevertheless, Pakistan's rather volatile domestic political situation is not new to anyone. It is also true this kind of uncertainties do affect long-term projects and communication related to these projects. However, the overall trajectory of CPEC has remained positive, with the successful implementation of the 1st phase of the project, and its transition to the second phase. This project is considered as the flagship project of the Chinese multi-billion-dollar development project; the Belt and Road Initiative. It involves 64 billion USD, with around 28 billion USD already invested through various projects of CPEC. While in the backdrop of so many mutual stakes, the questions about the absence of Pakistan in a forum which was related to dialogue on development and being hosted in China are quite natural, these should be addressed in the overall context of the relations. Although CPEC is the backbone of BRI it is essentially a bilateral project which has its foundations in the mutual trust between the two countries which have continued in spite of changes within and without. Those adversaries who are working against the CPEC would like to take benefit from any opportunity where the trust between the two countries could be targeted. On the other hand, the leadership of the two countries need to take measures at various levels to protect the environment of mutual trust. It is good to see that China and Pakistan remain firm on the continuation of this project, and the latter is hopeful to become a partner in China's future multilateral engagements, which can help in strengthening further the bilateral partnership. China has a strong commitment to the development needs of Pakistan, and CPEC is its prime example, which has promised to improve the socio-economic profile of the local people along with the provision of employment opportunities. **(The writer may be reached at waqar@ips.net.pk)**

War crimes in Afghanistan

The UK government closed down its investigation into alleged war crimes in Afghanistan, known as Operation Northmoor, before any soldier was prosecuted. But the BBC's Panorama has unearthed shocking evidence that Britain's special forces executed detainees and murdered unarmed people in cold blood in Afghanistan. The programme suggests there was a cover-up within the military to protect the SAS. Any decent prime minister would launch an independent investigation into claims that British soldiers, especially those of its elite units, had committed war crimes. But Britain has Boris Johnson. The allegations date back a decade, to when British troops were still fighting the Taliban alongside allies in Afghanistan. The BBC obtained detailed military reports of SAS night raids and uncovered a "pattern of strikingly similar reports of Afghan men being shot dead because they pulled AK-47 rifles or hand grenades from behind furniture after having been detained". It found that 54 people were killed in suspicious circumstances by a single SAS unit in Helmand between 2010 and 2011. The death toll sparked alarm among senior officers, who worried about a "deliberate policy" of unlawful killing. In 2014, the RMP launched Northmoor, a wide-ranging investigation into 675 criminal allegations in Afghanistan, including a number of killings by the SAS squadron. Six years later, Northmoor was shut down. No UK soldier faced prosecution. But investigators told the BBC that they were obstructed by British military in their efforts to gather evidence – which may explain why there was insufficient evidence to charge anyone. At the time Johnny Mercer, the minister for veterans' affairs, blamed human rights lawyers for bringing claims against the Ministry of Defence. The allegations of death and deceit never went away. Rather than deal with the message, the MoD has shot the messenger, claiming the BBC reached "unjustified" conclusions. There is prima facie evidence that Britain's soldiers have committed war crimes in Afghanistan. This is unsurprising, given that in 2020 the international criminal court found evidence that British troops committed war crimes in Iraq. The MoD breathed a sigh of relief back then as the ICC declined to prosecute. But it ill behoves the country to reserve justice only for its enemies. Attempts to prosecute claims in the courts have engendered a hostile environment for legal redress. The UK government tried to make it almost impossible to prosecute war crimes with legislation last year. Labour did not do enough to oppose that bill. Despite a history of championing the laws of war, the UK has been reluctant to prosecute its own personnel. This suggests British ministers think foreign lives don't matter. Other nations have faced up to the brutal fact that their soldiers committed atrocities. The first step to doing so would be for Britain, like Australia, to set up a statutory judge-led inquiry into war crimes.

Knowledge is power

Dr. Abdus Sattar Abbasi

Palestinian resistance results in heartbreaking scenes and stories as a result of Israeli aggression due to their supremacy in terms of knowledge and prosperity owing to their continuous focus on education and innovation

In May this year I hosted a delegation from Turkey representing three different universities. We had a discussion on different aspects during their short visit including Pakistan-Turkey relations, Islamic banking, higher education, scholarship programs, cultural heritage, and while discussing entertainment industry of both countries it was inevitable to avoid mentioning popularity of Turkish dramas in Pakistan from Mera Sultan to Abdul Hameed. The group leader told me that Ertugruland Abdul Hameed are close to reality rest contain exaggerated dramatization. Abdul Hameed's struggle, as depicted in the drama, for construction of railway track across Muslim world, for the acquisition of latest cannons and dependence on Western countries for drilling oil speaks volumes about knowledge degradation in Muslim world for centuries now. Our history is packed with exceptional stories of swordsmanship, spearmanship, and horsemanship which are indeed awe-inspiring. But now it is a proven fact that knowledge overpowers bravery and courage. Modern-day unmanned combat aerial vehicles (UCAVs) also known as combat drones or colloquially shortened as drones can be considered as a symbol of knowledge in contemporary warfare. These unmanned drones have the capacity and ability to, on a push of a button by either of the gender; kill any of the bravest fighters of the time without risking lives of your soldiers. There is exceptional development in missile technologies which determines supremacy of a nation in our times. Today's man in trying to look beyond our universe, dreaming for Mars is no more a fantasy, tracking a person from office to the bedroom is in everyone's reach, listening to your whisper on the other side of the globe is just normal. What else you can expect from the knowledge except raising dead from their graves and taking you to the next millennium which I think soon will be possible if knowledge expands in the same manner. However, the Muslim world has not yet learned the lesson from the history. We still celebrate American withdrawal from Afghanistan, which certainly symbolises resilience and resistance of Afghans, but at what price? I witnessed complete destruction in Afghanistan when I travelled through the country in 2007. Abandoned tanksdamaged armoured vehicles, ruins of buildings, widespread poverty, decaying health and educational institutions, and lack of basic necessities. It is still a real achievement for Afghans to oust coalition of 39 countries under the leadership of the superpower of our times but this resulted in a kind of deterioration which requires decades to recover. Palestinian resistance results in heartbreaking scenes and stories as a result of Israeli aggression due to their supremacy in terms of knowledge and prosperity owing to their continuous focus on education and innovation. Gallantry of Palestinians is indeed exemplary but their future remains uncertain as long as they overpower Israel in the field of knowledge and education in every aspect from the warfare to the economy. Although defence remains a key for the survival of any nation in today's vulnerable age but the balance among education, health and defence expenditure can bring sustainable progress for any nation. It is not necessary to compromise any of these dimensions; Bangladesh is proving to align national strategies with those of leading economies of the world. Human development index presents a yardstick to determine commitment of any society for health, education and per capita income, thus providing a composite analysis to determine prosperity in a particular country. Comparison of human development index (HDI) and defence spending of leading economies also suggest a balance in allocations. United States of America, United Kingdom, France, Australia and Germany are among top 20 nations in terms of defence spending and HDI both. We need to learn from the history, we need to learn from our existing times, we need to learn from the progress of successful nations that balance in the spending needs to be spread over all critical areas if we wish to survive in the long-run. We are at number 23 in the world in terms of spending on defence but at number 149 in HDI which clearly suggest a huge gap and lack of our strategic foresight to build a strong nation to face challenges of contemporary knowledge based global society. On one hand we need to maintain our historic bravery and courage while on the other we have to develop all-encompassing infrastructure for knowledge development to ensure prolific education, research, innovation and invention in every field of human life. **The writer is Associate Professor Management Sciences Head, Center of Islamic Finance COMSATS University (CU) Lahore Campus drabdussattar@cuilahore.edu.pk**

Briefs

By-polls to decide...

FROM PAGE 01

He alleged that the chief election commissioner (CEC) held secret meetings with Hamza Shahbaz and Maryam Nawaz, whereas, 'Mr X' was also preparing to facilitate 'thieves' to win the Punjab by-polls. "We have to win this match despite the opposition of the umpires. I will return to Jhang for celebrations after winning the by-polls on Sunday." The PTI chairman said that all elections after 1970 were rigged and he tried to conduct fair and free elections in Pakistan after becoming the prime minister. "Thieves have dissolved their corruption cases worth Rs1,100 billion by amending the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) law. Moral values are very high in the West where a prime minister in the United Kingdom (UK) will have to resign from his office for not following the social distancing law. In Western societies, powerful dacoits are sent behind the bars." He criticised that there are corruption cases worth Rs20 billion against the present prime minister and his son. "Mir Jafars and Mir Sadiqs have been imposed on the nation. If these thieves will be allowed to rule, they will loot the country again." Imran Khan appealed to the nationals to completely reject the turncoats and corrupt rulers in the decisive Punjab by-elections on July 17.

Staff-level agreement...

FROM PAGE 01

on June 28 announced that Pakistan had received the MEFP from the IMF for the combined seventh and eighth reviews. The IMF in June 2019 approved a three-year, \$6 billion loan "to support Pakistan's economic plan, aimed at returning 'sustainable growth to the country's economy and improving the standards of living'".

Bani Gala...

FROM PAGE 01

made and now good news will come every day, whereas, today, Shehbaz Sharif summoned a summary for reduction in petrol prices. She went on say that former PM Nawaz Sharif started CPEC while Imran Khan started GPEC and plundered money from Punjab to Bani Gala. Earlier, addressing a rally at Chiniot Moor, Maryam Nawaz said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that if the people want inflation to decrease then they should vote for PML-N. PML-N's competition is not with Imran Khan but with inflation and incompetence," she said while making a case for the people of Jhang to vote for her party in the July 17 by-polls. She asked the people to make a promise to her that they will throw out the people against Punjab's development. The PML-N vice president said that today the whole Jhang has come out in love with Nawaz Sharif. We have come to carry out development work including building schools and colleges in the country and to reduce the prices of potatoes and onions. She promised that she won't sit idly until the development of the city, adding that Imran Khan does not digest the development of Punjab and is trying to impose a woman on Punjab again which we will not allow.

Restoration...

FROM PAGE 01

The Prime Minister was informed that the closure of 3.5 km long Tailrace Water Tunnel affected power generation from the powerhouse, which caused hurdle in supplying 969 megawatts of electricity in the national grid. Taking stern notice of the incident, he directed the relevant authorities to immediately inquire into the incident with the help of authorized international bodies and complete the restoration work of the plant as soon as possible. The Prime Minister said that we are bringing in an effective mechanism of pre-qualification and third party monitoring and evaluation of companies to ensure transparency and quality in development works.

Wimbledon title down to Kazakh support: Rybakina

We found each other, and at the end of the day I am very happy that my journey continues exactly with Kazakhstan. The history is happening together thanks to Kazakhstan. Thank you very much for your support," said Rybakina

SPORTS DESK

NUR-SULTAN: From asking about meeting men's singles champion Novak Djokovic, to questions about her citizenship and whether her emotional calmness helped her win the final – the press lobbed curious questions to Elena Rybakina, the first Kazakh player to win the Wimbledon women's singles final, during a press conference. Rybakina became the first tennis player from Kazakhstan to win the Wimbledon Championship after defeating Ons Jabeur of Tunisia in three sets 2-6, 6-3, 6-3. During the press conference in Nur-Sultan that followed Rybakina's triumphant win, she was asked what was the most difficult match during her play. "All the matches were quite difficult. One of the most difficult was, of course, the final, because I was terribly nervous for the last two days and did not sleep well," said Rybakina. "In the first set I didn't exactly show my best game. I think it was just the emotions. But then I was able to cope with them. The second and third sets I played a little bit better, although my opponent was not easy. She plays very unorthodox and difficult," she added. Rybakina also addressed predictable que-



ries about her Russian origin and adoption of Kazakh citizenship back in 2018. "At that moment, which was almost five years ago, it so happened that I had an acute question: what to do next? I was about 17-18 years old. I had to decide whether I would try to play and stay in professional sports or go studying," replied Rybakina. She highlighted that she was very lucky to receive an invitation from Kazakhstan after

successfully playing at her first tournament. "We found each other, and at the end of the day I am very happy that my journey continues exactly with Kazakhstan. The history is happening together thanks to Kazakhstan. Thank you very much for your support," said Rybakina. She also said that she was a junior when she moved to Kazakhstan's national team and, in her opinion, "The transition from juniors to an adult professional

career is very difficult. Besides the fact that you have to have a good team around you, not everyone is able to continue at the professional level and only a few people reach the top. I've been very lucky in that respect," said Rybakina. Earlier, Rybakina announced that she was going to allocate part of the prize money to charity. "First of all, of course, I would like to help the juniors, most of it (money) will go to them. And the second important point for me: I was at the shelter, and I was very much moved by it, so I would like to allocate money for the animal shelter," she said. Answering the question, about what it was like to meet Djokovic, who won his fourth consecutive Wimbledon crown and his 21st overall Slam title, Rybakina said that she remembered visiting Kazakhstan. "Novak noticed how good our tennis centers are, they are world class. When he came to Kazakhstan, he was very surprised. I talked to him a little and took some pictures. I will have very good memories about it, but now it's all like a blur," said Rybakina. Among her immediate plans is to prepare for the tournaments coming up in the United States. "There are quite a few games, almost every week, and not a lot of time. The main tournament is, of course, the last Grand Slam of the year," she said.

Indonesia committed to addressing climate change for public good

JAKARTA The Indonesian government is committed to handling crises arising from climate change to protect citizens from potential climate-related threats, Finance Minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati has affirmed. The commitment is not merely meant to align with the rules or regulations of other countries. "Climate change has brought some scary consequences for many of our own people. So, addressing climate change essentially means (we are) addressing our own needs of development," Indrawati said during a webinar on "Sustainable Finance: Instruments and Management for Achieving Sustainable Development in Indonesia," on Wednesday. Climate change can lead to weather

anomalies, which can trigger natural disasters that put people at risk. That's why the Indonesian G20 presidency has raised climate change as an important topic for discussion, including at the meetings of the G20 finance ministers and central bank governors. "In sustainable finance, it does only discuss about affordability and commitment to resolving climate change issues, but also aspects of justice and equality," the minister said. Indonesia, which owns large swathes of tropical forests, will be under the spotlight for its commitment to achieving its nationally determined contributions on carbon emissions. Indonesia is aiming to slash carbon emissions by as much as 29 percent on its own and 41 percent with global sup-

port by 2030. To achieve this target, it needs to begin by cutting 314 million tons to 446 million tons worth of carbon dioxide from the power sector alone. The government also needs to promote the transition to green energy as a means to encourage the development of eco-friendly electric power. Currently, 62 percent of the energy produced by state electricity company PLN is derived from coal, thus every unit of energy consumed would result in carbon emissions. "Thus, the mechanisms of energy transition become important. The role of Pertamina and PLN cannot be (brushed off) in fulfilling Indonesia's commitment to resolving climate change for humanity," the minister said. – ANTARA

Sterling confirms Manchester City departure

FOREIGN DESK

LONDON: Raheem Sterling has confirmed his Manchester City departure and said he was leaving the club as "a man". The 27-year-old's £50m move to Premier League rivals Chelsea is expected in the next 24 hours. The England forward issued a heartfelt goodbye message to his former team-mates and the club's staff and fans on his social media account. "I arrived in Manchester a 20-year-old. Today, I leave as a man," said Sterling. "Seven seasons, 11 major trophies, a lifetime of memories." City signed Sterling from Liverpool in a £49m deal in 2015. He went on to score 131 goals in 339 games, winning four Premier League titles. Capped 77 times by England, Sterling will become Chelsea's first major signing since the Todd Boehly-led takeover. He added: "I am thankful for the ups and downs, as it's the downs that have tested my strength and resolve and enable me to stand here in front of you as the best possible version of myself." Sterling will now link up with the Chelsea squad who flew out for their pre-season tour to the United States on Saturday. Sterling's deal is worth up to £50m including add-ons and is expected to be a five-year contract with an option for an extra year.

Pakistan's tour of Sri Lanka to go as planned

DNA

LAHORE: There have been reports that the series is in danger after Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe declared a 'state of emergency' following President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's exit from the country. The Test series between Pakistan and Sri Lanka will go as planned, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has confirmed. There have been reports that the series is in danger after Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe declared a 'state of emergency' following President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's exit from the country. "Despite the imposition of emergency in Sri Lanka, the series between Pakistan and Sri Lanka will go ahead as planned," PCB Media Director Samiul Hassan Burney told this correspondent. Sami added that the cricket board is in constant touch with Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) while they are also discussing the situation with Pakistan High Commissioner in Sri Lanka. Pakistan squad is currently playing a three-day warm-up match in Colombo amid protests. As per PCB's spokesperson, the side will leave for Galle tomorrow at 11 am for the first Test, starting from July 16.

Passenger traffic approaching pre-pandemic levels in Azerbaijan

The base air carriers of the Baku airport – AZAL and Buta Airways – have carried 618,000 and 201,000 passengers

NEWS DESK

BAKU: Since the beginning of this year, the total passenger traffic of Azerbaijan's international airports has exceeded 2 million people. Only in June this year, 530,000 passengers were served at the airports, which is 96% of the pre-pandemic 2019 levels. The base air carriers of the Baku airport – AZAL and Buta Airways – have carried 618,000 and 201,000 passengers, respectively, since the

beginning of the year. Of these, 457 thousand are passengers of international flights, which is 36% of the total international traffic. In June 2022, 24 foreign airlines operated regular flights to Baku airport. Also this month, "Salam Air" launched direct flights from Muscat to Baku. The top ten most popular international destinations from Baku in June included Istanbul, Moscow, Dubai, Tbilisi, Antalya, Abu Dhabi, Riyadh, Ankara, Sharjah and Minsk. Heydar Aliyev International Airport (IATA: GYD) is the largest air-

port in Azerbaijan and the region in terms of passenger and freight traffic, takeoff and landing operations, the airport terminal area and capacity of the cargo complex. In 2021 the Heydar Aliyev International Airport was certified with the highest 5-Star COVID-19 Airport Safety Rating by international air transport rating agency Skytrax. This is the highest recognition of the effectiveness of COVID-19 measures instituted at the Heydar Aliyev International Airport to protect its passengers and employees from the spread of COVID-19.

Kazakhstan referendum to change lives...

FROM PAGE 01

citizens to move around the country, contribute to more effective regulation of internal migration, as well as the distribution of finances. Taking into account the introduction of elective mayors, the Government is considering a mechanism for direct financing of local self-government bodies in accordance with international practice. Third, the constant changes in the geo-political and geo-economic realities associated with the conflict potential on a regional and global scale. Accountability, efficiency, responsibility in decision-making and their execution in the conditions of turbulence of world processes, disruption of production and trade chains and other negative trends are designed to be among the main qualities of the current Government of Kazakhstan. He added, the Government is obliged to act as a guarantor of the adoption of priority anti-crisis measures. Ensuring the food security of our country is also of great importance for the current Cabinet of Ministers. 'In this regard, I would like to draw your attention to the unique idea of the Head of State to create an Operational Headquarters under the Government of Kazakhstan, which simultaneously performs the functions of a Situation Center. The Operational Headquarters analyzes information and the situation in the country and abroad in real time, as well as develops specific emergency measures'. When asked to share some initiatives taken by the president for the welfare of the people, Ambassador Kistafin said, a number of political reforms above, so I will not repeat myself. I will try to focus on the basic

ones. Already from the moment of his election to the post of President of the country, K.K.Tokayev began to audit the entire political system of Kazakhstan. As a result, an understanding has matured of the need for deep socio-political transformations that: - eliminate the bureaucratic gap between the government and the people, - they will form a civil society with an active life position, - strengthen the positions of non-governmental structures and, eventually, - they will launch the process of democratization on a national scale. It was for this purpose that the Concept of a "Hearing State" was first declared, designed to promptly and effectively respond to all constructive requests of Kazakhstanians, create conditions for a permanent dialogue between the authorities and society, and also build a harmonious state embedded in the context of modern geopolitics. The support and strengthening of civil society, the demand for its involvement in the discussion of urgent national tasks caused the crea-

tion of the National Council of Public Trust in 2019, which has been working on a rotational principle for a long time. Having existed for three years and fulfilled its tasks, this year the Council was transformed into the "National Kurultai", which formed a single institutional model of public dialogue.

It is, in fact, a comprehensive representative body: it includes representatives of all regions of Kazakhstan, includes a number of deputies of Parliament, members of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, Civil Alliance, public councils and organizations, authoritative public figures, representatives of business, industry and agriculture, etc. Thus, the Kurultai will present a wide range of very different opinions and views. Meetings of the authority will be held on a regular basis. The current leadership pays great attention to the right of the public to freedom of speech and expression of will. The first step towards this was the improvement of the legislation on rallies and peaceful assemblies. The well-being of the development of the entire Kazakh society should also be

the strengthening of harmony between various social and ethnic groups. In particular, the authority of non-governmental organizations is increasing, work is being carried out in the field of language policy, a presidential decree in August 2020 adopted a concept for the development of civil society in the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2025. Modernization of the party system of Kazakhstan plays an important role in political transformations. But it should be noted that the modernization of the political system of Kazakhstan is not possible without optimizing the state apparatus. Starting from 2022, the leadership of Kazakhstan has begun to gradually reduce the number of civil servants, and the released funds were used to financially stimulate the most useful employees and employees of state structures. It is expected that by 2024 the number of government employees and employees of national companies will be reduced by 25 percent. This, of course, is not the whole list of activities that are carried out within the framework of K.K.Tokayev's political reforms. Separately, there are issues of economic diversification, development of small and medium-sized businesses, the fight against corruption, law enforcement reforms, etc. The ambassador said, at the same time, it must be recognized that the main achievement of the reforms of the current President of Kazakhstan was the response from all Kazakhstanians who did not stay away from supporting his initiatives. And I am sure that the results of the referendum held on June 5 this year are the main guarantee of the effectiveness and success of further political transformations in Kazakhstan.

Germany beat Spain, reach the quarter-finals

AGENCIES

LONDON: Eight-times women's European champions Germany cruised clinically into the Euro 2022 quarter-finals as Group B winners with a game to spare on Tuesday after beating Spain 2-0 at Brentford's Community Stadium. Spain, who had hoped for an historic first win over Germany, enjoyed far more of the ball but lacked the final touch against opponents who pressed hard and were quick to seize their chances. Germany were gifted a goal in the third minute after a blunder by Spain goalkeeper Sandra Panos, whose attempted clearance went straight to Klara Buehl for her to slot home into the bottom corner.

Forward Lucia Garcia then had a chance to equalise in the 10th but, after going around keeper Merle Frohms, her shot went into the side netting. Alexandra Popp, making her first start after striker Lea Schuller tested positive for COVID-19 the day before, doubled the tally for Germany in the 37th with a flicked header off a corner. "We scored the two goals at the right moment which really helped us. If the game had been 0-0 for longer maybe it would have been a different game," said Germany coach Martina Voss-Tecklenburg. "If you win 2-0 against Spain, you didn't do too much wrong." Frohms made a great fingertip save in the 71st from a Mariona Caldentay volley, her only big moment of the night, and Tabea Wassmuth had the ball in the back of the net in the 81st but was clearly offside. While Spain had 70% of the possession, they managed only three shots on target to Germany's two and the Germans did not miss as they ended their rivals' 24 match unbeaten run. "At this level, if you make two errors then you get punished for it," said Spain coach Jorge Vilda, whose team started the tournament among the favourites. Both sides had scored four in their opening group games and drew 1-1 on their last meeting in February in the Arnold Clark Cup at Middlesbrough's Riverside stadium. The defeat in front of a 16,000-strong crowd left Spain level on three points with Denmark, who beat Finland 1-0 earlier, but ahead on goal difference. Spain and Denmark play each other on Saturday with Spain needing a point to set up a quarter-final with hosts England.

Over 140 settlers defile Aqsa under police guard

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM: Dozens of extremist Jewish settlers escorted by police forces desecrated the Aqsa Mosque in Occupied Jerusalem on Wednesday morning and later in the afternoon. According to al-Qastal news website, at least 142 settlers entered the Mosque in groups through its Maghariba Gate and toured its courtyards under police guard. During their tours at the Islamic holy site, the settlers received lectures from rabbis about the alleged temple mount and a number of them provocatively performed Talmudic prayers. Meanwhile, the Israeli occupation police imposed movement restrictions on Muslim worshippers at the Aqsa Mosque's entrances and gates. – Agencies

Amnesty launches 'End Israeli Apartheid' campaign

WEB DESK

LONDON: Amnesty International announced a new line of merchandise titled 'End Israeli Apartheid' including t-shirts, stickers, placards, and "briefing documents." The announcement of the new merchandise was made by Amnesty UK's campaign manager for Israel/Palestinian territories and Syria, Kristyan Benedict, on Twitter on Monday. "New Amnesty UK T-shirts, briefings, and other merchandise to support the #EndIsraeliApartheid global campaign - more coming soon," Benedict tweeted.

Briefs

Pakistan to take part in 13 trade exhibitions in China

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan to participate in 13 trade exhibitions in China during 2022-23, Gwadar Pro reported on Wednesday. In line with Trade Development Authority Pakistan (TDAP) Annual Business Plan (ABP), Pakistani officials, experts, importers, and exporters will participate in exhibitions and fairs in different Chinese cities during this period. The exhibitions will cover a variety of topics including textile, leather, agro & food, exports of rice, mangoes, and meat to China, etc. Apart from exhibitions, the authority has also planned export promotional conferences, webinars, workshops, and delegations to and from Pakistan during this period. The 7th China-Eurasia Expo under the category of International Markets Development Division (IMDD) will take place from August 25 to 30 in Urumqi, China. Similarly, Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics will be organized from August 29 to 31, 2022. From September 16 to 19, the China-ASEAN Expo will take place in Nanning, China under the IMDD category while in October 2022, Seafood and Fisheries Expo will take place in Hongdao, China. China Int'l Import Expo (CIIE) has been planned for November 5-10 2022 in Shanghai under the category of IMDD while Wenzhou 4th Int'l Import Expo will be organized on November 18-21 in Wenzhou.

Global oil supply up in June

AGENCIES

ANKARA: Global oil supply in June increased by 690,000 barrels per day (bpd) to around 99.5 million bpd, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said in its monthly oil market report on Wednesday. The IEA said Russia's resilience despite international sanctions bolstered the world oil supply in June and helped offset outages elsewhere due to operational issues and civil unrest. "Global output rose in June as a surprising increase from Russia along with higher US and Canadian flows more than offset steep maintenance-related losses from Kazakhstan and smaller declines from other producers," it explained. The daily crude oil production of the OPEC group increased to 28.74 million bpd (mbpd) in June, with a rise of about 180,000 bpd compared to the previous month. During this period, OPEC natural gas liquids were recorded as 5.38 mbpd, raising OPEC's total oil production to 34.12 mbpd last month. Non-OPEC production saw a jump of around 500 million bpd to 65.34 mbpd in June.



SHUSHA: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov and former Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan Ali Alizada making a victory sign during their recent visit to the newly liberated areas. The picture is taken at the point from where the Azerbaijani special services troops attacked the enemy. This attack ultimately led to the fall of Shusha to the Azerbaijani forces. – DNA

Malaysia's experience highlighted in localising SDGs

DNA

KUALALUMPUR: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Economic Planning Unit in collaboration with the All Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia for Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG) co-organised a side event entitled "Building Back Better in Localising SDGs: A Case Study of Malaysia and Three Southeast Asian Country Experiences of the Partnership Model" on 11 July 2022, at the margins of the 2022 High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

The side event, which was held in a virtual

format, highlighted Malaysia's experience, as well as three other Southeast Asian countries namely, Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand, on the achievements and challenges in localising SDGs. Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Economy), YB Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed in his welcoming remarks recognised the importance of localising Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda). As the world works to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed highlighted the urgent need for countries to work together and enhance their commitment to implement

the SDGs. He commended the role of the APPGM-SDG and the Malaysia CSO SDG Alliance in forging stronger collaboration between Parliamentarians, state and local governments, as well as local communities in implementing 121 local solution projects in 30 parliamentary constituencies. Panellists speaking at the event shared experiences, priorities and lessons learned from the implementation of the SDGs at the local level. They also shared respective national implementation efforts, challenges and good practices in the course of achieving the 2030 Agenda.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Malaysia, Dato' Sri Saifuddin Abdullah, in his closing remarks stressed the importance of

joint action by all stakeholders including government, the private sector and civil society; in addressing poverty and inequality, climate change, gender-based discrimination, ethnicity or class with a strong inclusive agenda especially, when reaching out to the most vulnerable communities in localising SDGs. The HLPF is the main United Nations platform on sustainable development and it has a central role in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs at the global level. Localization of the SDGs refers to the process of defining, implementing, and monitoring strategies at the local level to achieve global, national, and subnational goals of the 2030 Agenda.

CPEC exemplar for Pak energy scenario

BEIJING: China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) power plants we have are the most efficient in Pakistan, noted Minister of State for Petroleum Musadik Masood Malik. These plants sent an exemplar for Pakistan's energy scenario, he said in an exclusive interview with China Economic Net (CEN). Again Pakistan's energy sector is hanging in balance this summer due to inefficiencies, burgeoning circular debt, massive dependence on imported fossil fuels. The energy crisis in the country inevitably brought a direct impact on economic activity and hit lower-income citizens the hardest. The minister said that due to CPEC, the efficiency and productivity of the energy sector has increased in Pakistan, and investment has also come to the country, yet more needs to be done. The more efficiently we generate electricity, the more the price of electricity will gradually decrease, he said.

Musadik Masood Malik highlighted that the solution to Pakistan's problems is to continuously increase Pakistan's power, gas and petroleum infrastructure. CPEC projects like run-of-river project are very important for our national interest and security, the minister noted. He pinpointed the significance of hydropower stations in the country as Pakistan has a body of water that flows through the Himalayas and down to the sea. In between there are many places where the government can set up hydroelectric power plants like Karot, he added. As you can see from Mangla Dam Project and Tarbela Dam Project, after running for twenty to twenty-five years, the cost of generating electricity from them is just the cost of operating a turbine. The cost of new power plants, especially the hydropower ones, is very high, but over a period of time it is in our interest to use indigenous resources. – APP

Pakistan's exports to China surged 8 per cent in June

EXPORT PROFILE

TOP PARTNER COUNTRIES SHOWING INCREASE *Trade values in US\$ million

COUNTRY	June 2022	June 2021	% CHANGE
CHINA	251.30	232.74	8%

TOP PARTNER COUNTRIES SHOWING DECREASE

COUNTRY	June 2022	June 2021	% CHANGE
China	1625.21	1894.16	-14%
Indonesia	260.26	307.80	-15%

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's exports to China in June 2022 have increased by 8% to US\$251.30 million as compared to the corresponding month of the previous year when it was recorded at US\$232.74 million in June 2021, Gwadar Pro reported on Tuesday quoting Trade Development Authority Pakistan (TDAP). Also, as compared to May 2022, Pakistan's exports to China have shown positive signs by gaining a value of US\$22.38 million. In May, the total exports to China were recorded as US\$228.92 million.

Pakistan's exports to UAE, Italy, Netherlands, UK, Spain, Bangladesh, Thailand, Canada, and France have also increased as compared to the corresponding month of June 2021. Pakistan's exports to all destinations of the world during June 2022 were recorded at US\$2,887 million, which is 5.83% more than the corresponding month of June 2021 when the total figure was US\$2,728 million. Regarding imports, China is one of the top partner countries which shows a decrease during June as compared to the corresponding month of the previous fiscal year.

UNGA supports President Mirziyoyev's initiative



NEWS DESK

NEW YORK: On July 11, 2022, the UN General Assembly approved a special resolution on strengthening the connectivity between Central and South Asia. The document was presented by Abdulaziz Kamilov, the special representative of the President of Uzbekistan on foreign policy matters, who is visiting New York. The initiative to develop this resolution and strengthen the common approaches, main principles and directions of the dialogue between the two regions was put forward during the Tashkent conference on the topic "Central and South Asia: regional interdependence. Threats and opportunities" held by the head of our state in July 2021.

In his speech at the conference, the head of state emphasized the importance of strengthening dialogue based on the historical closeness of the Central and South Asian regions, mutual trust and consideration of interests. About 600 representatives from 50 countries of the world, including heads of state and government, foreign ministers, heads of international and regional organizations took part in the Tashkent conference. In his video address to the participants, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres emphasized that "interconnection plays an important role in trade, economic growth and sustainable development" and "can contribute to the establishment of long-term peace, stability and prosperity in Central and South Asia". Co-authors of the document include

Azerbaijan, Armenia, Angola, Vietnam, Vanuatu, Ghana, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, China, Ivory Coast, Qatar, Egypt, Iran, Nepal, Malaysia, Mongolia, Morocco, Pakistan, Russia, Senegal, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Sri Lanka, Philippines and others. In the resolution, strengthening cooperation on the implementation of the Vienna Declaration and its action program for landlocked developing countries for 2014-2024, as well as the importance of transport and transit corridors for accelerating economic growth and increasing the efficiency of economic relations between Central and South Asian countries and their unique role in realizing the importance of transport, transit and investment potential has been noted. The document recognized the important role of regional organizations in strengthening regional relations, the role of Afghanistan in establishing relations between Central and South Asia, as well as the importance of its integration into interregional economic processes for its economic development and ensuring lasting peace and stability. The document reflects the rules for establishing close cooperation between the Central and South Asian regions in order to reduce poverty, improve food security, expand transport infrastructure and create new international transport corridors that open convenient, stable and safe routes to seaports.

UNGA decides to continue UNSC reform talks

NEW YORK: The General Assembly Tuesday decided that intergovernmental negotiations (IGN) on enlarging the UN Security Council will continue during its upcoming 77th session, with the 193-member body's President, Abdulla Shahid, saying that the negotiating process this year has made progress towards agreement on reforming the 15-member Council. "We have made progress this year. This is clear," Shahid said, ahead of the unanimous adoption of a draft oral decision to roll over the IGN process to upcoming session that begins in September this year. Pakistan's UN Ambassador Munir Akram concurred with Assembly president's assessment about the progress achieved. Full-scale negotiations to reform the Security Council began in the General Assembly in February 2009 on five key areas, the categories of membership, the question of veto, regional representation, size of an enlarged Security Council, and working methods of the council and its relationship with the General Assembly. – APP

COVID-19 deaths in UK surpass 200,000

FOREIGN DESK

LONDON: The deaths involving COVID-19 have surpassed 200,000 in the UK, official data revealed on Wednesday. The Office for National Statistics announced that 200,247 coronavirus-related deaths were recorded up to the start of July. The 200,000 figure was actually breached on June 25, but there was a delay in registrations. Meanwhile, the UK is experiencing a continued increase in COVID-19 cases, driven by omicron subvariants. The statistical office's weekly infection survey showed COVID-19 case levels were at their highest since April.

DW loses case against Palestinian journalist

NEWS DESK

COLOGNE: A labor court in Germany's Bonn ruled against Deutsche Welle (DW) on the dismissal of Palestinian journalist Maram Salim. The Bonn Labor Court on July 6 ruled that her termination of employment at Deutsche Welle was invalid, unlawful, and that her Facebook posts were not anti-Semitic. On Facebook, Salim said she has been an advocate of women's rights, human rights, animal rights, and that Deutsche Welle's accusations trembled her. She called on German broadcaster to publicly apologize and retract its accusations. Deutsche Welle has the right to appeal the decision within a month but it has to pay court costs of 36,000 (\$36,133). In early February, Deutsche Welle announced that it fired five journalists from its Arabic service after a two-month investigation into allegations of anti-Semitism.

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Briefs

NAB summons Farah Gogi on July 20

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on Wednesday directed Farah Gogi alias Farah Gogi to personally appear before the investigators on July 20 besides serving her a notice. The anti-corruption watchdog served a notice to Farah Gogi, a close friend of former first lady Bushra Bibi, and directed her to personally appear before NAB investigators.

The accused was ordered to appear along with the relevant documents. According to the anti-graft watchdog's spokesperson, an inquiry was underway against Gogi and other accused who are facing allegations of assets beyond income and money laundering. Earlier in May, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Lahore had summoned four accused in the assets beyond means case. The bureau had sent notices to her manager, cashier and bankers. All four people were directed to appear before the NAB on May 30 along with the relevant records. The notices had been served to four accused including Mazahir Baig, Waqar, Asif and Munir.

Police release MQM leader Babar Ghauri

DNA

KARACHI: Karachi Police on Wednesday released Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) senior leader Babar Ghauri over lack of evidence. In this regard, police said that there is no complete evidence against Babar Ghauri. Police said if the evidence is gathered, Babar Ghauri can be taken into custody again. It is pertinent to mention that on July 4 Babar Ghauri was arrested by the security agencies upon his return to Pakistan. He was taken into custody over his alleged involvement in a corruption and terrorism case.

Iran says JCPOA talks to start soon

DNA

TEHRAN: Iran has said it remains committed to talks to restore its 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, as Western countries continue to warn that time to save the landmark accord is limited. Nasser Kanani, the new spokesman for the Iranian foreign ministry, told reporters during a news conference on Wednesday that a time and place to continue the indirect talks with the United States, which unilaterally abandoned the deal in 2018, will "soon" be announced. This comes a day after Catherine Colonna, France's new foreign minister, told politicians that Iran was using delaying tactics while forging ahead with its uranium enrichment programme.

Emergency declared in Sri Lanka

Protesters storm PM office after President flees abroad

NEWS DESK

COLOMBO: Protesters in Sri Lanka defied tear gas, water cannon and a state of emergency to storm the prime minister's office on Wednesday after the president fled overseas, with the crowd demanding both men step down in the face of an economic crisis. In a televised statement Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe said he had instructed the military and police to do "what is necessary to restore order". But footage showed armed security personnel standing by in the grounds of his office as protesters, some holding national flags, milled and took pictures. Other demonstrators at one point broke into state television studios, as the country's months-long political and economic crisis appeared to be moving towards a climax. President Gotabaya Rajapaksa promised at the weekend to resign on Wednesday after escaping his own official residence in Colombo just before tens

of thousands of protesters overran it. As president, Rajapaksa enjoys immunity from arrest, and he is believed to have wanted to go abroad before stepping down to avoid the possibility of being detained. The 73-year-old, his wife and two bodyguards took a military aircraft to the neighbouring Maldives, immigration sources told AFP. Hours later, with no formal announcement he was stepping down, thousands of demonstrators mobbed the office of Wickremesinghe - whom Rajapaksa named as acting president during his absence - demanding both officeholders should go. "Go home Ranil, Go home Gota," they shouted. Tear gas and water cannon fired by police and the declaration of both a nationwide state of emergency and a curfew failed to disperse them and the crowd poured into the building. Wickremesinghe, also 73, would automatically become acting president if Rajapaksa steps down, but has himself announced his willingness to resign if consensus is reached on forming a unity

government. "We can't tear up our constitution," he said in his statement. "We can't allow fascists to take over. We must end this fascist threat to democracy," he said, adding that the official buildings occupied by protesters must be returned to state control. The protesters' actions were a repeat of the capture of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's home and office on Saturday, when Wickremesinghe's private home was also set ablaze. The prime minister's office confirmed that Rajapaksa had left the country, but said it had no schedule for any presidential resignation announcement. The succession process could take between three days - the minimum time needed for parliament to elect an MP to serve out Rajapaksa's term, which ends in November 2024 - and a maximum of 30 days allowed under the statute. Rajapaksa is accused of mismanaging the economy to a point where the country ran out of foreign exchange to finance even the most essential imports, leading to severe hardships for its 22 mil-

lion people. Earlier Wednesday, smiling Sri Lankans again thronged the corridors of the president's official residence after his departure, with young couples walking around hand in hand in a mood of quiet celebration. "People are very happy, because these people robbed our country," said retired civil servant Kingsley Samarakoon, 74. "They've stolen too much money, billions and billions." But he held little hope for an immediate improvement in Sri Lanka's plight. "How are people going to run the country without money?" he asked. "It's a problem." Sri Lanka defaulted on its \$51 billion foreign debt in April and is in talks with the IMF for a possible bailout. The island has nearly exhausted its already scarce supplies of petrol. The government has ordered the closure of non-essential offices and schools to reduce commuting and save fuel. The departure of Rajapaksa, 73 and once known as "The Terminator", had been stymied for more than 24 hours in a humiliating standoff with immigration personnel in Colombo.

IHC declares navy golf course construction illegal

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has issued its written verdict in a case declaring the construction of the navy golf course in the federal capital illegal. IHC Chief Justice Athar Minallah issued a detailed judgment in the case relating to encroachments in Margalla Hills National Park. The report of the Islamabad-based environment commission has also been included in the detailed decision. The court declared the construction of the Navy golf course illegal and ordered an inquiry by the Ministry of Defence. The court ordered the defence secretary to conduct a forensic audit of the Navy golf club to assess the damage to the national treasury.

Miftah resolves to facilitate businesses for sustainable growth

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Miftah Ismail on Wednesday expressed his government's resolve to promote business activities and to facilitate business community to attain sustainable economic growth. The minister was talking to a delegation of businessmen, led by President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce Industry (ICCI), Muhammad Shakeel Munir and President Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce Industry (RCCI), Ch. Naeem A Rauf. Among others, the meeting was attended by Chairman Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), senior officers from finance division and FBR and representatives of various business sectors, according to press statement issued by the finance ministry. Miftah acknowledged the contribution of business community in the growth of economic activity in the country. He stressed that macroeconomic stability was the top priority of the present government and it was focusing



to ensure financial discipline through effective and business friendly policies to achieve the economic growth level. The Finance Minister further assured the delegation to address their issues

on priority with regular communication and consultation with business community. Earlier, the members of the business community apprised the minister about multiple issues related

to taxation in the Federal Budget 2022-23 on various sectors. They requested for resolving their issues and sought support of the government for bringing in efficiency in various sectors. - APP

Biden heads to Israel on first Middle East tour as US president

AGENCIES

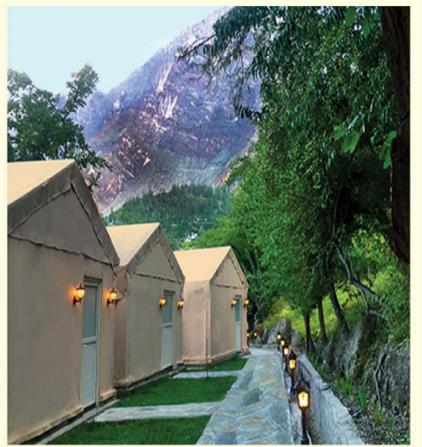
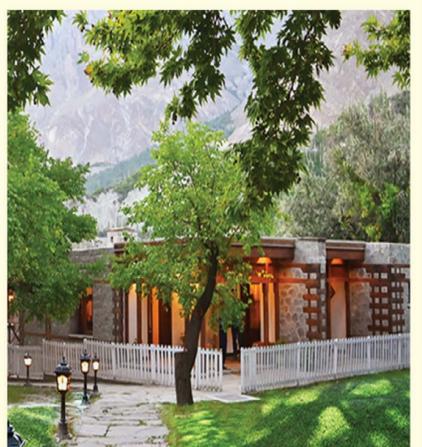
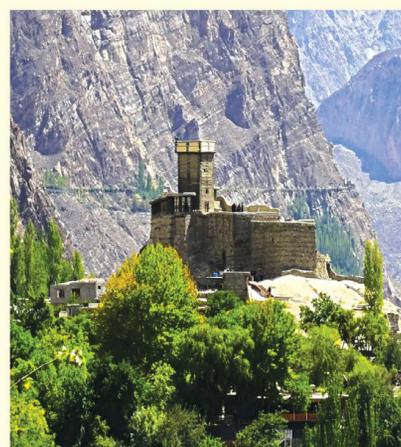
JERUSALEM: US President Joe Biden was to start a Middle East tour on Wednesday in Israel, where leaders will urge tougher action against their common foe Iran, before a delicate stop in oil-rich Saudi Arabia. The 79-year-old's visit to Jeddah on Friday will be the focus of the tour, after Biden branded Saudi Arabia a "pariah" over the 2018 murder of dissident Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi. Air Force One will make a first direct flight from Israel to Saudi Arabia amid efforts to forge a relationship between the Jewish state and the conservative Gulf kingdom that does not recognise Israel's existence. Before that, Biden will meet Israeli leaders seeking to broaden cooperation against Iran, and Palestinian leaders angered by what they describe as Washington's failure to curb Israeli aggression. The persistent frustrations of Israeli-Palestinian diplomacy are nothing new for Biden, who first visited the region in 1973 after being elected to the Senate. Israel and Iran were allies then, but they are now sworn enemies that have been engaged in a "shadow war" of attacks and sabotage. Israel's caretaker prime minister, Yair Lapid, has said talks "will focus first and foremost on the issue of Iran". Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi warned that if Biden's goal on the trip was to bolster Israel's security, he was destined to fail.

Former Trump adviser admits to planning coups

MONITORING DESK

WASHINGTON: John Bolton, a former United States ambassador to the United Nations and ex-White House national security adviser, has admitted in an interview he had helped plan coups in foreign countries. Bolton made the remarks to CNN on Tuesday after the day's congressional hearing into the January 6, 2021 attack on the US Capitol. Former President Donald Trump has faced accusations of inciting the violence in a last-ditch bid to remain in power after losing the 2020 election. Speaking to CNN anchor Jake Tapper, however, Bolton suggested Trump was not competent enough to pull off a "carefully planned coup d'etat", later adding: "As somebody who has helped plan coups d'etat - not here but, you know, [in] other places - it takes a lot of work. And that's not what he [Trump] did." Tapper asked Bolton which attempts he was referring to. "I'm not going to get into the specifics," Bolton said, before mentioning Venezuela. "It turned out not to be successful. Not that we had all that much to do with it but I saw what it took for an

opposition to try and overturn an illegally elected president and they failed," he said. In 2019, Bolton as NSA publicly supported Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaido's call for the military to back his effort to remove socialist President Nicolas Maduro, arguing that Maduro's re-election was illegitimate. Ultimately Maduro remained in power. "I feel like there's other stuff you're not telling me [beyond Venezuela]," the CNN anchor said, prompting a reply from Bolton: "I'm sure there is." Many foreign policy experts have over the years criticised Washington's history of interventions in other countries, from its role in the 1953 overthrow of then-Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh and the Vietnam war, to its invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan this century. But it is highly unusual for US officials to openly acknowledge their roles in stoking unrest in foreign countries. Bolton's comments prompted a lot of reactions online. "John Bolton, who's served in highest positions in the US government, including UN ambassador, casually boasting about he's helped plan coups in other countries," Dickens Olewle, a BBC journalist from Kenya, wrote on Twitter.



Pakistan expresses solidarity with Kashmiri people

On this somber day, we join our Kashmiri brethren on either side of the LoC in commemorating the contribution of the Martyrs of 1931

ISLAMABAD: The government and people of Pakistan on Wednesday solemnly observed the 91st Youm-e-Shuhada-e-Kashmir (Kashmir Martyrs' Day) and paid homage to the 22 Kashmiri martyrs who rendered the ultimate sacrifice while braving the indiscriminate force unleashed on them in 1931 by the Dogra forces. "On this somber day, we join our Kashmiri brethren on either side of the Line of Control (LoC) in commemorating the contribution of the Martyrs of 1931," the Foreign Office said in a statement. The Foreign Office said, "Regrettably, Kashmiris are still struggling against India's illegal occupation. Even today, the 900,000-strong Indian occupation forces continue to hold hostage the Kashmiri people under the worst form of military siege to perpetuate their

occupation of Jammu and Kashmir". The statement mentioned that India's illegal and unilateral actions of August 5, 2019 were yet another attempt to strip the Kashmiri people of their distinct identity and turn them into a minority in their own land. More than 640 Kashmiris have been martyred in extra-judicial killings since then, and 120 have been martyred in cold blood this year alone, it said. In 2020, hurting the sentiments of the Kashmiris, India scrapped the regional public holiday on Kashmir Martyrs' Day, which had been observed every year since 1948. India also discontinued the traditional guard of honor ceremony at the Martyrs' Graveyard. "As we honour the invaluable sacrifice of the heroes of 1931 as well as all innocent Kashmiris who have laid down their lives in this just struggle, Pakistan once again urges India to

immediately halt its state-terrorism in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK)," the FO said. The FO urged India to cease all human rights violations, release all political prisoners, lift the in-human military siege, stop its attempts to change the demographic structure of the occupied territory, and let the Kashmiri people exercise their legitimate right to self-determination. "We also call upon the international community, international human rights organizations, and particularly the United Nations and its human rights mechanism to take cognizance of the dire human rights and humanitarian situation in the IIOJK and ensure peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with the relevant UNSC resolutions and the wishes of the Kashmiri people," it said. - APP

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