



# Islamabad POST

Saturday, July 16, 2022

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 20

### New UK leader must tackle Islamophobia within ruling party

Detailed News On Page-07

### Pakistan must reframe regional connectivity push

Detailed News On Page-08

### Pakistan ready for Sri Lanka challenge

Detailed News On Page-06

## Briefs

### Army troops rendering great sacrifices

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday paid tribute to the martyred Lieutenant Colonel Laiq Baig, saying that the officers and jawans of the Pakistan Army were rendering great sacrifices for the motherland. Lt Col Laiq Baig, who was abducted on the night between July 12 and 13 while returning from Quetta, was shot dead while two terrorists were also killed in a rescue operation. The prime minister said the sacrifice of Lt Col Laiq Baig would not go in vain and the terrorists would be taken to task. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the entire nation was determined to eliminate terrorism from the country. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif extended condolences to the family of Lt Col Laiq Baig and prayed for the departed soul of the martyred in rest in peace. - APP

### Special body for Article 6 proceedings

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Federal Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb on Friday said that the federal cabinet has constituted a special committee to deliberate whether action should be taken against the PTI leadership under Article 6 of the Constitution. Article 6 states that any person who "abrogates or subverts or suspends or holds in abeyance, or attempts or conspires to abrogate or subvert or suspend or hold in abeyance, the Constitution by use of force or show of force or by any other unconstitutional means shall be guilty of high treason". The development on the government exploring Article 6 proceedings against the PTI leadership comes after the SC released a detailed judgement explaining the reasons why it dismissed former NA deputy speaker Qasim Khan Suri's controversial ruling on the no-trust move against then-prime minister Imran Khan.

### Holiday Notice

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

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## Meets King Salman, MBS

# Biden on a 'historic' Saudi visit

### Energy sector, security issues came under discussion

NEWS DESK / DNA

JEDDAH: Joe Biden began a visit to Saudi Arabia on Friday by giving Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman a fist bump as Washington looks to reset its relationship with a country that the U.S. president once pledged to make a "pariah" on the global stage. Once in Jeddah, Biden met with Saudi King Salman and then held a larger working meeting with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and other senior Saudi officials as well as the president's top advisers. Energy and security interests prompted Biden and his aides to decide not to isolate the Gulf oil giant that has been strengthening ties with Russia and China. But the U.S. national security adviser dampened expectations of any immediate oil supply boost to help bring down high costs of gasoline and ease the

highest U.S. inflation in four decades. Biden, who said he would discuss human rights during the visit, was met by Prince Khalid al-Faisal, the governor of Mecca province, which includes the Red Sea city of Jeddah. The U.S. president then headed to the royal palace where Saudi TV showed him fist-bumping the crown prince. At the start of Biden's Middle East trip, officials said he would avoid close contacts, such as shaking hands, as a precaution against COVID-19. But the president ended up engaging in hand-shaking in Israel. The White House said Biden would hold a bilateral meeting with Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz and then, with his team, have a working session with the crown prince, known as MbS, and Saudi ministers. The White House did not immediately provide a list of names of people greeting the president as is customary. When

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Speaker NA Raja Pervez Ashraf, Ambassador of Türkiye Mehmet Pacaci and others attending the July 15 event. - DNA

## NA Speaker says...

# Türkiye a model for developing democracies

### Türkiye ambassador Dr. Mehmet highlights the significance of the day

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD, Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf on Friday said the July 15th episode of the failed coup attempt in

Türkiye, is indeed a great message to the entire world that nothing can harm a democratic order if it is tested and then trusted by the people. Addressing the 6th anniversary

Continued on Page 06



JEDDAH: The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman Bin Abdul Aziz meets President of America Joe Biden. - DNA

### Pakistan shows solidarity with Türkiye

DNA

ISLAMABAD: On the occasion of the 6th Democracy and National Unity Day, the Government and people of Pakistan reaffirm their abiding solidarity and strong support for the brotherly people and Government of the Republic of Türkiye. The heroic struggle of the brave Turkish people against the treacherous coup attempt of 15 July 2016 shows that with unity, courage, resolve and commitment, nations can overcome all odds and challenges. The people and Government of Pakistan join the fraternal people and Government of

Continued on Page 06

### BLA terrorists killed

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: As many as five terrorists of the banned Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) were killed during the follow-up clearance operation held on the night of July 14 and 15 to recover the abducted cousin of Shaheed Lieutenant Colonel Laiq Baig Mirza and apprehend the perpetrators. During the ongoing recovery operation in Ziarat area, a terrorists' hide-out was identified and cleared by security forces near Khost in Khalifat mountains, said an Inter Services Public Relations

Continued on Page 06

### Demands major cut in oil prices

# Imran says PTI to clean sweep Punjab by-polls

### Directs workers to guard every polling station till results

BUREAU REPORT



FAISALABAD/LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) supremo and former Prime Minister Imran

Khan on Friday said that nation will never forgive those who bring the two families [Sharif and Zardari] into power through conspiracy, and the US will use the incumbent government like 'tissue paper'. He demanded of the government to further reduce the oil prices to benefit people of

Continued on Page 06

### SC to hear Khan's petition on July 19

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan (SCP) has constituted a three-member special bench on the petition of former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan against the amendments to National Accountability Bureau

Continued on Page 06

# July 17 will 'mark triumph' for PML-N

STAFF REPORT

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League - N a w a z (PML-N) Vice President Maryam Nawaz on Friday said their opponents eyeing four seats of Lahore in Punjab by-polls would return disappointed as the

Continued on Page 06

city has always stood behind Nawaz Sharif. Maryam Nawaz said that July 17 will be a day PML-N's victory. She claimed that Lahorites had survived a difficult period and predicted that the nation will experience good news as time went on. "Lahore always belongs to PML-N supremo and former premier Nawaz Sharif," she said while addressing PML-N's workers' convention in Lahore. She said that Lahore was treated like an 'orphan' during the past four years of PTI government,

Continued on Page 06

# Indonesia all set to hold grand cultural exhibition

### Indonesia Ambassador says 'A Night at Lok Virsa Museum' intends to feature the fusion of Indonesia-Pakistan's cultural history and artworks

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia is all set to organize a grand cultural exhibition titled "A Night at Lok Virsa Museum", being held jointly by the Embassy and the National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage Pakistan. The exhibition will take place on July 20, 2022, which would be the first of its kind. Ambassador of Indonesia Adam Tugio organized a press briefing in this regard and shared with the members of the mass media the details of the event. He said that the exhibition is likely to further cement and deepen people to people and

cultural links between the two brotherly countries. 'A Night at Lok Virsa Museum' intends to feature the fusion of Indonesia-Pakistan's cultural history and artworks through a selected collection of photographs and videos, which will shed light on the inter-regional connectivity and cross-cultural influence during the course of history of respective countries. The exhibition aims to offer fresh perspectives into historical connections, religious backgrounds, and the confluence of civilization of both countries from past to present', he added. Ambassador Tugio further said, the Exhibition will highlight the religious-cultural influence and similarities between



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Indonesia Adam Tugio giving details of the upcoming cultural exhibition. -DNA

the two countries during their journey of civilization through the display of art works. He said, similar to Pakistan, Indonesia has also a huge impact on the study of palaeontology. The island of Java has produced some of the most diverse vertebrates and fossils in numerous discoveries. And in Flores archaeological evidence of prehistoric life has been discovered. Experts like Prof. Verhoeven and Prof. Dubuis predicted that the artefacts were created around 750,000 years ago based on a number of stone tools connected to a stegodon fossil (now-extinct elephant). He said that the Rock Art is yet another important aspect of the forthcoming exhibition.

The importance of Indonesia's rock art has been seriously underestimated and overlooked, especially as it occupies a crucial position on the crossroads between South-East Asia and the Pacific. The rock art research conducted in this region is expected to reveal underlying cultural exchanges, patterns and similarities between people living in this vast part of the world. Ambassador Tugio hoped that the exhibition will help Pakistanis and even foreigners living in Pakistan to better understand the cultural potential that exists between the two countries besides having firsthand information about hitherto unexplored facets of the Indonesian cultural heritage.



# PM for strong Pak-Egypt ties in trade, energy



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday underscored his government's resolve to strengthen cooperation with Egypt in trade, investment, energy, education, and climate change. In a meeting with the

ambassador of Egypt Tarek Dahroug, the prime minister highlighted the fraternal relations between Pakistan and Egypt. During the meeting, views were exchanged on matters of bilateral interest. The prime minister

ter lauded the efforts of Ambassador Dahroug to promote cooperation between Pakistan and Egypt in diverse fields. He felicitated Egypt on the assumption of the Presidency of COP-27. PM Sharif drew attention to the continued egregious violations of human rights in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). He underlined the importance of peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with the relevant UNSC resolutions and the wishes of the Kashmiri people.

The Egyptian ambassador conveyed cordial greetings from the leadership and people of Egypt, and said the Egyptian leadership was looking forward to the prime minister's participation in the COP-27 later this year. While conveying warm wishes to President Fatah El-Sisi, the PM renewed the invitation for the Egyptian President to undertake a visit to Pakistan at an early date. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Senior PPP leader and former Chairman Municipal Committee Lalamusa Nadeem Asghar Kaira shakes hands with the Chairman PPP, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari during a meeting in Islamabad. - DNA

## 13 females among 1188 drug addicts nabbed

PESHAWAR: Under the Drug Free Peshawar campaign, the district administration along with other departments apprehended 1188 drug addicts including 13 females from different parts of the city and found 143 positive of HIV-AIDS and other fatal diseases. It was informed during a meeting jointly chaired by Special Assistant to CM on Information Muhammad Ali Saif and Commissioner Peshawar Division Riaz Khan Mehsud. The meeting was told that 139 critically ill drug addicts were shifted to Islamabad for further treatment, while four were admitted at Lady Reading Hospital and 1045 in different rehabilitation centres in Peshawar. It was said that still there were around 700 to 800 drug addicts in the city who would also be held soon and shifted to rehabilitation centres.

The district administration also managed to meet 281 drug addicts with their family. Speaking on occasion, the CM's aide

appreciated the commissioner and his team over the initiative and announced to extend the campaign to the whole Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in order to make the province drug free. He said that Chief Minister Mahmood Khan had convened a meeting on July 19 to finalize the measures for the drive and crackdown against drug peddlers. He said the government wanted to turn the drug free KP campaign into a project and take measures to make the rehabilitated drug addict useful and skilled citizens. He directed the commissioner to arrange a meeting with welfare organizations, industrialists, and line departments to impart vocational training to rehabilitated drug addicts. The CM's aide further directed to conduct dope tests of schools, colleges and Universities' students soon after the summer vacations and also conduct an awareness seminar about the menace of drug addiction. - APP

## Over 8.53m people vaccinated in Faisalabad

FAISALABAD: Over 8.53 million (8,538,102) people have so far been vaccinated against COVID-19 in the district. District Health Officer Dr Ataul Mun'im said on Friday that 4,654,673 people were injected the first dose, while 3,799,255 were administered the second dose of vaccine. He said that 39,863 health workers were also given the first dose while 44,311 received the second dose of vaccine. He said that sufficient stock of coronavirus vaccine was available in the district. As of now, 15,394 first doses and 10,263 second doses were in the stock in Faisalabad. He said that 37 vaccination centers and 20 mobile vaccination camps were operational in Faisalabad where registered people were being vaccinated. He said that timing of these vaccination centers were 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. except for Sports Complex Samanabad centre, which would remain open round-the-clock. - APP

## LHC stops ACE from harassing Rashid

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Friday stopped Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) Punjab from harassing former interior minister and Pakistan Awami Muslim League Chief Sheikh Rashid Ahmad in a land sale case. Justice Farooq Haider passed the orders while hearing a petition filed by Sheikh Rashid Ahmad challenging summons by ACE Punjab in land sale inquiry. During the proceedings, Sheikh Rashid Ahmad submitted that he contracted the sale deed of the land, measuring 149 kanals, situated in district Attock, for Rs 670 million, with a private housing society 'Royal Residencia Pvt. Limited'. Sheikh Rashid submitted that he received Rs 100 million in advance. - APP

## Huge reduction in oil prices hailed

FAISALABAD: Various circles welcomed the huge reduction in oil prices and said that this decision was indicative that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was sincere and committed for betterment and welfare of Pakistani nation. Reacting after decrease in petrol and diesel prices here Friday, President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) Atif Munir Sheikh said that Pakistani people were facing great deal of difficulties due to rise in oil prices at international level. However, record decrease in oil prices reflected the prime minister's love

and affection with Pakistani nation. Hajji Aslam Bhalli, Patron-in-Chief of Supreme Council of Anjuman Tajjiran, said that transporters had increased fares when oil prices were enhanced and its reciprocal consequences had to be borne by the common people because the manufacturers increased the prices of their items. "Now, the government should devise a strict mechanism to disseminate fruits of reduction in oil prices", he said and hoped that the government would also provide more relief to the people in the days to come.

He said that people were facing very miserable condition due to increase in oil prices. However, present reduction would prove a sigh of relief for them. MPA Rana Ali Abbas Khan also welcomed massive decrease in oil prices and said the prime minister was very anxious for his nation. The PM immediately announced reduction when oil prices decreased at international level. The government step would also help in reduction of prices of daily use items and the people could get the essential commodities easily, he added. - APP

## Iqra University, Ehad Healthcare sign MoU

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Dr. Syed Ali Raza and Dr. Umema Muzamil signed the memorandum of understanding between Iqra University North Campus and Ehad Healthcare. Dr. Syed Ali Raza believes in meeting the health-based needs of society. There is a lack of educated girls in our field, while women's rights are also given equal rights in Pakistan. Dr. Umema Muzamil Karachi: Community pharmacy in Pakistan is a widely growing chain. The Department of Pharmacy at Iqra University North Campus always aims to collaborate with positive, like-minded organizations that believe in meeting the health-based needs of society. This step has been taken to highlight the potential of our graduat-

ing youth for a better future so that they can play an important role in the health sector with their ability, hard work and honesty. These views were expressed by Director Dr. Syed Ali Raza while signing a memorandum of understanding between Ehad Healthcare and Iqra University North Campus. He said that the health sector is very wide and includes many types of fields, and the work of this pharmacy is present in all hospitals, pharmacies, clinics, laboratories, and other health institutions, which gives the youth the best opportunity to serve humanity. Dr. Umema Muzamil, General Manager Pharmacy Operations of Ehad Healthcare, said that the purpose of signing the MoU with Iqra University North Campus is to utilize the education and credentials of young students

who are studying pharmacy. She further said that there is a shortage of educated girls in our sector and that while women's rights are also given equal in Pakistan, we have decided that we will give intern placements to the youth who are studying at Iqra University North Campus. They will be informed and trained. Educated youth will be taught the principles of working in institutions so that they can play a better role with their skills in the future. At the end of the ceremony, the director of Iqra University North Campus, Dr. Syed Ali Raza, signed a MoU with the support of the General Manager Pharmacy Operations of Ehad Healthcare, Dr. Umema Muzamil, and visited the department of pharmacy. At the end of the ceremony, Dr. Syed Ali Raza expressed his gratitude to the guests.



## '28 arrested in connection with Karachi's riots'

NEWS DESK

KARACHI: Sindh Information Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon Friday said that 28 people were taken into custody for forcing people to shut restaurants across the province. Unknown men set a car on fire at the city's Al-Asif Square today during protests over the killing of a youth during a quarrel at a restaurant in Hyderabad. Addressing a press conference alongside provincial ministers, Sharjeel added that some miscreants want anarchy in the county. "The government has arrested some people involved in the riots," he said, adding that law enforcement agencies are doing their job while political dialogues are also being held to resolve the matter.

The provincial minister further added that the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) will initiate an investigation against all those who will pass negative comments on social media to ignite hatred. Accusing the PTI of being involved in the incident, he said that people who were protesting at Sohrab Goth were seen carrying Afghanistan's flags during the riots today. "A person contesting election on PTI's ticket is the brother of the person who is carrying Afghanistan's flag," Sharjeel said, sharing the pictures with the journalists. Speaking on the occasion, provincial energy minister Imtiaz Sheikh contacted ANP's Shahi Syed and Riaz Chandio of Jay Sindh Mahaz, seeking their support to

control the situation. "Everyone is requested to remain peaceful and not take the law into their own hands," Sheikh said, adding Sindh is the land of Sufis who always teach love. In response to the call, ANP President Shahi Syed appealed to the people to remain peaceful. "We are in contact with the government and no injustice will be meted out to anyone." "All illegal immigrants from Afghanistan, Burma, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Iran will be sent back," Qaumi Awami Tehreek chief Ayaz Latif Palijo said, adding that this is what entire Pakistan wants. He further added that even the court has said that Pakistan's economy cannot bear the burden of the immigrants residing illegally in the country. "We request people belonging to Sindh and Pashtun ethnicity to remain calm," he said, announcing that the leadership will deliver a mutually-consensual message in a day or two. In a statement, Chief Minister Sindh Murad Ali Shah said the government has ordered authorities to take action against the suspects involved in damaging properties during the Karachi riots. "The district administration and police should ensure that activities in the city continue as per routine. Mischievous and negligence on the part of the administration will not be tolerated," he said. In response to the reports of streets being closed amid the protests, the chief minister said that he has directed the administration to ensure that nothing of the sort happens.

## Climate change, a threat to human life

KfU will help bring improvement in communities' life in natural forest areas in 12 forest divisions of the country including Peshawar

SWABI: Despite losing his wife and daughter in a roof collapsed incident, Mufarakh Shah was unruffled to meet people arriving at his residence to condole the tragic death of his loved ones during recent torrential rains that wreaked havoc in Swabi district. Mufarakh Shah, who lost his wife Mumlaykat Bibi and his seven-year-old daughter, Asma Mufarakh in a recent rain related incident, controlled his nerves despite the great tragedy and met people with calm at his native village Sikhandari at Kalu Khan here. "I was using my mobile phone when all of a sudden the roof of a room of my house caved in with a loud sound burying my wife and daughter alive under debris during heavy torrential rains that wreaked havoc mostly to people's properties and killed several people," he said. "I rushed toward the collapsed room while neighbours also quickly arrived to rescue my family members but in vain," he said, adding during half hour hectic efforts, "we managed to retrieve their dead bodies from the rubbles," Mufarakh Shah said while tears rolling down on his cheeks. Like Mufarakh Shah's wife and daughters, 10 people died, two injured in KP during recent downpours, while 10 houses razed to ground and 20 partially damaged. The flash floods and torrential rains have adversely affected people of Tank, DI Khan, Lakki Marwat, Karak, Swat and Swabi. "The recent torrential rains

and flash floods in most parts of the country are mostly caused by climate change posing serious threats to human life and properties, environment, biodiversity and food security," said Muhammad Mumtaz Malik, former Chief Conservator, Environment and Wildlife Department KP while talking to APP. He said "Pakistan is among 10 countries mostly vulnerable to climate change. The climate change is converting fertile agricultural lands into deserts, water scarcity and flash floods owing to the weather's vulnerability in the region." Dr Mumtaz Malik said thousands of acres of barren lands could be seen at Swabi and Mardan while travelling on Islamabad-Peshawar motorway and Kohat, Karak, Lakki Marwat, Bannu and D.I.Khan districts while moving on Indus highway. The high deforestation has resulted into an increase of floods, cyclones and erratic rains due to climate change vulnerability, severe heat-wave and fast melting of glaciers besides glacial lake outbursts mostly in Chitral and Gilgit Baltistan. He said "Enhanced discharge of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in our outer atmosphere due to fossil fuel combustion leads to a rise in earth's average temperature besides polluting the air, thus making negative effects on economy and causes disruption in climatic processes in addition to leading flash floods, droughts and cyclones." The global climate risk in-

dex annual report 2020 has disclosed that Pakistan had lost about 0.53 percent per unit gross domestic products and suffered economic losses worth about US\$ 3792.52 million besides witnessing 152 extreme weather events from 1999 to 2018. To combat climate change and desertification, the federal and provincial governments have joined hands by launching a 10 billion trees project (10 BTAP) under which 10 billion saplings including one billion in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa would be planted by 2023. Latifur Rehman, Spokesman KP forest, wildlife and environment department told APP that 10BTAP was successfully underway in the province where 566.54 million saplings were planted till May 2022. "KP's share in 10 BTAP is Rs27.3 billion under which plantation on 68,074 hectares and raising of seeds on 15,402.73 hectares was achieved," he said, adding forest enclosures on 239,560 hectares were set up for natural generation. The plantation of fruits plants were also made part of 10BTAP and so far 137.65 million fruits plants were distributed among masses and farmers. Besides establishment of 115 ponds for storage of rainy water and using water of 152 waterfalls for plantations, he said that green jobs were provided to 713,165 people and 19, 353 jobs to labourers during 2020 COVID pandemic. The spokesman said that 6.3pc increase in

KP's forests and one percent overall have been registered under the billion trees project, adding that according to the SUPARCO report, 85percent positive change detection in atmosphere in the project witnessed besides 88pc plants survival rate as per WWF report. Latif said in 2017, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) KP has prepared the province's first climate change policy, adding following merger of Fata into KP, EPA's policy and action plan were being revisited and the new amended policy would soon be enforced in the province. He said survey of existing glaciers in Chitral, Upper Swat, Upper Dir, Kohistan and Mانشera were made in 2019-20 and GIS maps were shared with UNDP for identification of glacial lakes to avert flash floods in future. Ibrahim Khan, deputy project director, 10BTAP said an agreement with KfW German bank has been signed to provide eruo 13.5 million for billion trees afforestation support project. He said it was a six year project primarily focused on sustainability of forest projects launched under billions trees project. "KfU will help bring improvement in communities' life in natural forest areas in 12 forest divisions of the country including Peshawar," he added. Under the project, he said a management information system would be developed and all the project activities and records would be digitized. - 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	Natioal Day
July 01 / Somalia	Independence Day (National Day)
July 04 / USA	Independence Day
July 05 / Algeria	Independence Day
July 09 / Argentine	Independence Day
July 09 / Mongolia	Revolution Day
July 14 / France	National Day
July 15 / Brunei	Sultan's Birthday
July 20 / TRNC	Independence Day
July 21 / Belgium	National Day
July 23 / Egypt	National Day
July 26 / Cuba	National Day
July 26 / Liberia	National Day
July 30 / Morocco	National Day



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& Rescue Services.....	4451122
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Potohar Town.....	9209224
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# Civil society calls for more budget on important SDGs

The civil society organizations (CSOs) pointed out that addressing the reported regressions and stagnation on critical goals including inequalities, hunger, justice, education, gender equality and climate change needs more focus

**KHAYAM ABBASI**

ISLAMABAD: The civil society of Pakistan has appreciated the incumbent government's presentation of official voluntary national review (VNR) at the UN High Level Political Forum in New York showing progress on the 2030 Agenda. However, it said that several concerns still exist on critical sustainable development goals (SDG) priorities in the absence of policy coherence, efficient implementation and review mechanisms. The civil society organizations (CSOs) pointed out that addressing the reported regressions and stagnation on critical goals including inequalities, hunger, justice, education, gender equality and climate change needs more focus. According to them, the most marginalized like the

poorest, women & girls, transgenders, religious & sexual minorities, farmers, labourers, and persons with disabilities are the subjects still need to be covered properly in public sector development programs. These concerns were expressed in a joint statement of representatives from a number of CSOs including Pakistan Development Alliance, Parliamentarians Commission for Human Rights, AwaZCDS-Pakistan, Sight Savers Pakistan, Malala Fund UK, Save The Children, Umang Champions, The Brook International, UGODD, PCE, PODA, HomeNet Pakistan, Roods for Equality, Karachi Research Institute and LifeSavers here on Friday. Pakistan is attending the UN HLPF (July 5115) in New York under the auspices of ECOSOC under the theme "Building back better from the coronavi-

rus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". The HLPF also reviewed in-depth SDGs on quality education, gender equality, life below water, life on land, and partnerships for the goals. During the session, representatives of 44 countries carried out voluntary national reviews (VNRs) of their implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The CSOs, while pointing out over 22 million children are out of school, called for holistic planning, equitable financing, and stronger political will to enhance the educational outcomes prioritizing the millions left behind. At least 4-6 per cent of GDP or 20-25 per cent of public expenditure must be ensured to protect peoples' fundamental right to education, as per Ar-

icle 25A, they suggested. They were of the view that the gender equality requires multi-sectoral gender-sensitive planning based on comprehensive vulnerability assessment for achieving gender-responsive social protection, health and education outcomes, protection from violence and disasters, and protection of right to inheritance, employability and political participation. For the protection of civic spaces and democratic accountability, they emphasized for CSOs' meaningful inclusion across agenda-setting and planning processes to avoid tokenistic representation. The resolved that the civil society needs a world that is considerate of our collective concerns upholding the ideals we all believe in. For more information, please contact: Nazakat Hussain-0331-1200122.

# Price of tomatoes, gram, other food items go down

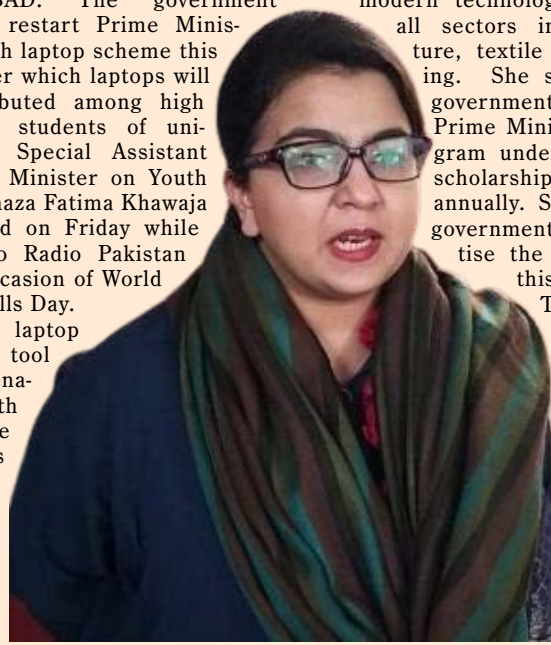
ISLAMABAD: The prices of various food items went down during the week ending on July 14 as compared to the previous week, according to the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI) data released by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) here Friday. According to the data, the food commodities that witnessed decrease in prices on Week-on-Week (WoW) basis included tomatoes, the prices of which declined by 24.55 percent. The other food products that witnessed decrease in prices included, bananas (2.82%), gram pulse (0.67%), LPG (0.46%) and mustard oil (0.05%). On Year-on-Year (YoY) basis, the commodities that witnessed decrease in prices during the week compared to corresponding week of last year included chillies powdered (43.42%), sugar (15.13%), gur (2.41%) and pulse moong (2.09%). On the other hand, the items that witnessed increase in prices on WoW basis included, potatoes (4.72%), chicken (4.45%), cooked daal (1.43%), rice Irri 6/9 (1.17%), rice basmati (broken) (1.14%), vegetable ghee 2.5 kg (1.12%), gur (1.08%), curd (1.07%) and washing soap (1.59%). On YoY basis, the commodities that witnessed increase in prices included diesel (141.46%), petrol (119.61%), onions (89.33%), pulse Masoor (88.60%), vegetable ghee 1 kg (78.92%), mustard

oil (75.72%), cooking oil 5 litre (73.01%), vegetable ghee 2.5 kg (72.44%), washing soap (59.93%), chicken (52.61%), gents sponge chappal (52.21%), pulse gram (51.14%), garlic (40.54%), LPG (39.95%) and pulse mash (31.01%). During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 29 (56.86%) items increased, 05 (9.81%) items decreased and 17 (33.33%) items remained stable. The overall SPI based weekly inflation for the week ended on July 15 witnessed a nominal increase of 0.01 per cent for the combined income group as compared to the previous week. The SPI for the week under review in the above mentioned group was recorded at 200.55 points against 200.53 points registered in the previous week. The weekly SPI with base year 2015-16=100 is covering 17 urban centers and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. The Sensitive Price Indicator for the lowest consumption group up to Rs17,732 witnessed 0.34 percent decrease and went down from 206.23 points in last week to 206.12 points during the week under review. The SPI for the consumption groups from Rs17,732-22,888 decreased by 0.03 percent whereas it remained stagnant for groups from Rs22,889-29,517. The SPI for consumption groups from Rs29,518-44,175 and above Rs44,175 increased by 0.02 percent and 0.01 percent respectively. - APP

# Government plans to restart PM's youth laptop scheme

ISLAMABAD: The government plans to restart Prime Minister's youth laptop scheme this year under which laptops will be distributed among high achieving students of universities. Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Youth Affairs Shaza Fatima Khawaja announced on Friday while talking to Radio Pakistan on the occasion of World Youth Skills Day. She said laptop was a tool that enabled youth to have access to latest skills, online work and businesses. She said World Youth Skills Day was important as Pakistan was a country with 68 percent of the population comprising youth. Shaza Fatima stressed on enriching the youth with modern vocational and technical skills as advancement in

modern technology has advanced all sectors including agriculture, textile and manufacturing. She said the PML N government in 2013 started Prime Minister's youth program under which 100,000 scholarships were given annually. She said that the government will soon advertise the scholarships for this year. The SAPM said loan schemes for young entrepreneurs will also be revived under the Prime Minister's youth program through which loan up to seven point five million rupees can be acquired on easy installments. She said that special awareness programs and business plan trainings will be conducted to encourage the youth to start entrepreneurship and become job givers instead of job seekers. - APP



# Secretary appreciates RWMC for arrangements

RAWALPINDI: Secretary Punjab Local Government and Community Development Imran Sikandar Friday appreciated the performance of RWMC for outstanding cleanliness arrangements on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha. Presiding over a meeting along with Commissioner Rawalpindi, Noor Ul Amin Mengal to review cleanliness arrangements that had been made on the eve of Eid, he directed the concerned to give one month's basic salary to RWMC workers as provided to the staff of Lahore Waste Management Company. Recognizing the services of RWMC during Eid days, the Secretary expressed hope that they will work with the same zeal and spirit in future also. Managing Director RWMC Owais Manzoor Tarrar briefed the Secretary about the lack of machinery in Rawalpindi and the establishment of more waste dumping stations in Murree to maintain cleanliness work smoothly. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Federal minister for Interior Rana Sana Ullah chairing a meeting to finalize security arrangements for By-Elections. - DNA

# Research to be conducted on cousin marriages

The research will be helpful for others for not to go for cousin marriages to avoid the possibility of genetic diseases in future generations

ISLAMABAD: National University of Medical Sciences (NUMS) and University College London (UCL), England have joined hands to work on the genetic neurological disorders which would help the affected families. The research will be helpful for others for not to go for cousin marriages to avoid the possibility of genetic diseases in future generations. Dr Sara Mumtaz from the NUMS Department of Biological Sciences (NDBS), is conducting research on inherited neurological disorders in Pakistan in collaboration with Dr Henry Houlden, Professor of Neurology and Neurogenetics, from Queen Square Institute of Neurology, UCL, England. An estimated 29 million people in Pakistan are suffering from genetic disorders attributed to cousin marriages. Prof Houlden met Lt Gen Wasim Alamgir HI (M), the Vice Chancellor NUMS, Maj Gen Saleem Ahmad Khan HI(M), (Retd)

Pro Vice Chancellor Academics, Dr Aisha Mohyuddin, Dean Multidisciplinary Sciences, Dr Jawad Hassan, Head of Department, NDBS and the faculty members of the section of Human Genetics, NDBS and discussed ways to further promote cooperation between the two institutions. Prof Houlden, was in Pakistan to attend a neurological conference and was specially invited by NUMS to deliver a lecture at its PWD Campus. His visit was part of the on-going collaboration between NUMS and UCL about the project on Clinical and Molecular Analysis of Inherited Neurological Disorders in the Pakistani population. He gave a talk on the clinical and genetic aspects of neurological disorders to the faculty members of the NDBS. He referred to different molecular methods that were being used in diagnosis of disorders.

He added that he would send report of each case after molecular diagnosis so that his work can be used for the benefit of family and patients. Dr Sara Mumtaz said prevalence of genetic disorders was much higher in Pakistan as compared to Western countries. One adverse outcome of cousin marriages in our population is that it allows expression of recessive mutations in families, she added. She said the most effective way to prevent the health hazard was to educate people to avoid cousin marriages, particularly in cases where a non-communicable disease is already present in one of the family members. With the advancement in science and technology, it has become possible to study, development mechanisms of these disorders, at the molecular level for the proper diagnosis, treatment and management of genetic disorders. The combination of genetics and functional cell

biology is a particularly powerful approach for understanding genetic diseases and their pathological processes. The analysis of DNA, RNA and protein interactions has become central to genetic research. Dr Sara Mumtaz said it was likely that the next 10 years would see the development of treatments for human diseases based on these advances. The number of laboratories that are working on genetic disorders and particularly neurological genetic disorders within Pakistan are limited. Hence there is a need to promote research in these areas. Families with neurological problems were invited for clinical evaluation by Prof. Houlden. Blood samples and skin biopsies were collected from these families. In the next step of the study, DNA and RNA of the patients and their families will be analyzed to find out molecular cause of diseases found in these families. - APP

# DC briefed on anti-Dengue measures

ISLAMABAD: Officials of the Health and other departments concerned on Friday briefed Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon on the measures taken to prevent spread of dengue virus amid the ongoing monsoon season. He was also apprised about the latest situation and performance of the officials for eliminating the dengue larvae from the city. Presiding over a meeting over dengue-control, the DC noted that the monsoon season was favourable for dengue larvae growth due to accumulation of water at different spots. He directed the departments concerned to deploy teams in the areas where the increase in dengue larvae was suspected. More teams should be formed to improve efficiency. Android-based trainings were being imparted to the teams, the DC observed during the meeting which was also attended by officials of livestock department, district administrations and the World Health Organization. Irfan Nawaz also underlined the need for sensitizing the masses about the steps required to prevent the dengue larvae growth at homes. - APP

# ECP sets up special control rooms to monitor Punjab by-polls

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has set up special control rooms to monitor by-elections, being held in 20 constituencies of Punjab assembly on Sunday. According to ECP, separate special control rooms have been established at central and provincial levels. The control rooms would continue working till compilation of polling results. Returning officers, relevant deputy commissioners, representatives of police, Rangers and Pak Army would be present in the control rooms to deal with any emergency. The control rooms would promptly resolve election related complaints. Complaints could be registered in central control room Islamabad at 051-9210837; 051-9204403; 051-9204402; 051-9210838. Complaint could also be communicated through fax number 051-9204404 and email; dd-monitoringisb@gmail.com Provincial control room, Lahore could be contacted at landline telephone 042-99212620; 042-99212209 and email pecpunjabcontrol-room@gmail.com. - APP

# SSDO launches helpline for free legal aid

ISLAMABAD: Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO) has launched a helpline to provide free legal aid to the victims of human trafficking and bonded labor. The SSDO initiated the helpline in collaboration with Barrister Abdus Saleem Law Firm. On the launching of the helpline, Syed Kausar Abbas, Executive Director, SSDO said, "a helpline is a way to ensure that victims of trafficking and bonded labour are properly identified and referred to relevant institutions for assistance and protection." Shizza Qureshi Advocate, Director law firm said, "it is an honor and privilege to be part of this initiative. Human trafficking is a heinous crime and our firm is ready to help poor and needy victims." The helpline will provide a platform to the victims of human trafficking and bonded labor, i.e. brick kiln and agrifarms in Pakistan. The victims themselves or their relatives can lodge their complaints on the helpline which will be further taken up by a team of expert lawyers who will provide free legal aid and assistance to the victims. The victims can lodge their complaints on "0333-1110566" after which they will be provided free legal aid by the legal experts. The helpline can be accessed freely from 9.00 am to 6.00 pm on the working days. - APP



## Briefs

**OGDCL carries out 1,426 Line-km 2D, 120 Sq-KM 3D surveys**

ISLAMABAD: Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) has carried out 1,426 Line-km 2D and 120 Square-KM 3D surveys in its various operational areas during the first nine months of the last fiscal year. "The acquired seismic data represents 74% and 15% of total 2D and 3D seismic data acquisition in the country respectively," according to an official report available with APP. Moreover, the company using in-house resources processed/reprocessed 2,572 Line km of 2D and 905 sq. km of 3D seismic data. During the period under review, OGDCL made four hydrocarbon discoveries, having expected cumulative daily production potential of 39 MMCF gas and 2,850 BBL of oil, during the first nine months of the current fiscal year. Discoveries include Wali-1 (Kawagarh), Wali-1 (Hangu) and Wali-1 (Lockhart) in district FR Lakki, KP province and Jandran West-1 in district Kohlu, Balochistan province. Preliminary 2P reserves estimates attributable to these discoveries are 236 billion cubic feet of gas and 13 million barrels of oil, a combined 58 million barrels of oil equivalent. Besides, the company injected eight operated wells, including Tando Alam-21, Sial-1, Pasakhi-12, Mangrio-2, Togh Bala-2, Gundunwari-1, Pandhi-1 and Stab-1 that produced 305,804 Barrel (BBL) crude oil and 3,677 Million Cubic Feet (MMCF) gas, in its production gathering system. - APP

**ITP issues 4,166 tickets in single day**

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) have expedited strict action against traffic rules violators and issued 4,166 fine tickets to road users over violation of traffic rules during 24 hours. Following the special directions of Inspector General of Police Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, ITP was making renewed efforts to maintain traffic discipline in the city. Various teams of ITP issued 4,166 fine tickets over violation of traffic rules during last day. Out of these fine tickets, 139 challans were issued over lane violation, 85 for crossing red signal, 10 for amateur driving, 118 over violation of one-way, 74 for violation of zebra crossing, 43 vehicles for having pressure horns, 232 for having tinted glasses, 28 for emitting smoke, 21 PSVs for not having fitness certificates, 609 for having fancy number plates, 2026 bikers for riding without helmets and 762 motorists for violation of miscellaneous nature. - APP

**10 outlaws nabbed; liquor, drugs, weapons recovered**

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory police teams apprehended 10 outlaws involved in selling liquors, drugs and possessing illegal weapons, a police spokesman said. He said that DIG Operations Sohail Zafar Chatha had categorically ordered all zonal officers to curb the crime in their respective areas and arrest those involved in looting innocent people. Following the directives, Secretariat police team arrested an accused namely Salman Riaz involved in selling liquor and recovered 30 litres liquor from his possession. Likewise, Bani Gala police team arrested an accused namely Muhammad Adil involved in illegal refilling of LPG cylinder. Similarly, the Nilore police team arrested an accused namely Waleed Razaqat for possessing illegal weapons and recovered one Kalashnikov from him. Whereas, Koral police raided an illegal sheeha bar and arrested six accused namely Saad, Waleed Ali, Hसनain, Fareed, Ayub Khan and Sheerwan Ali. Case has been registered against all accused under the tobacco regulation act. - APP

**Businessmen asked to tap Cambodian market for exports**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Zaheerudin Babar Thaheem, Pakistan's Ambassador to Cambodia, said that there are vast opportunities for Pakistan to promote trade with Cambodia, so the business community should intensify efforts to take advantage of these opportunities, while the embassy would extend them all possible cooperation in this regard. He said that Cambodia imports most of its goods from abroad to meet its needs, so Pakistan can export a number of products to Cambodia including textiles, garments, pharmaceuticals, and chemicals. He expressed these views while addressing the business community on the occasion of his visit to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Zaheeruddin Babar Thaheem said that the Cambodian private sector is keen to promote business relations with Pakistan, so ICCI should consider sending a delegation to Cambodia to explore all untapped areas of mutual cooperation between the two countries. He said that the construction sector in Cambodia is booming and Pakistan's business community has good potential to export construction materials to Cambodia. He said that the tourism sector in Cambodia is also developing rapidly and tourists from the Middle East visit Cambodia due to which there is a lot of demand for halal meat, so Pakistan should promote the export of halal meat with Cambodia. He assured that the embassy will cooperate with the business community in promoting trade and exports with Cambodia.

Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Shaheel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber



of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) said that the close cooperation of embassies with the private sector is important to promote Pakistan's exports. He said that the Cambodian market is untapped for Pakistan, so the embassy should get information about the demand for Pakistani products in the market and share it with the chambers of commerce so that the business community can take advantage of these opportunities. He said that various products of Pakistan including marble & granite, engineering goods, surgical instruments and IT products

can find a good market in Cambodia. He said that ICCI is planning to send its trade delegations to several countries and will consider forming a delegation for Cambodia to explore business opportunities for Pakistan in this market.

ICCI Senior Vice President Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh and Vice President Muhammad Faheem Khan said that trade and economic relations between Pakistan and Cambodia can be better promoted by promoting direct connectivity between the private sectors of both countries. They said that embassies

have an important role in finding business and investment opportunities for Pakistan in foreign countries and hoped that the Embassy of Pakistan in Cambodia will try to play an active role in this regard.

ICCI Executive Members Humayun Kabir, Mohammad Saeed Khan, Mohammad Shabbir, Khalid Mehmood, Faseehullah Khan, Akhtar Hussain, Ali Akram Khan, Ms. Parveen Khan and Aslam Khokhar also spoke at the occasion and offered useful suggestions to improve trade relations between Pakistan and Cambodia.

**Dastgir visits Japan Embassy; condoles Shinzo Abe's murder**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Energy Khurram Dastgir Khan on Friday visited Japan Embassy and condoled the tragic assassination of former prime minister of Japan Shinzo Abe. The minister expressed deep sorrow and grief over the murder of Shinzo Abe on the behalf of Federal Cabinet, government as well as people of Pakistan, said a press release. The minister visited the embassy on the direction of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, where he also wrote his comments in the condolence book.

**PIA to operate 19 Ashura-Arba'een flights for Iraq: Saad**

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Aviation Khawaja Saad Rafique on Friday said the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) would operate 19 special flights to transport intending Zaireen to Najaf (Iraq) for observance of Ashura [the 10th day of Muharram] and the Arba'een [the Chehlum of Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS)]. The minister, in a tweet, said the national flag carrier would operate eight flights for Ashura and 11 for the Arba'een gatherings, in addition to its weekly regular flights for Najaf and Damascus cities of Iraq. He said PIA would soon resume its flight operation to Mashhad, Iran. - APP

**Air Force continues relief, rescue efforts in flood hit areas**

ISLAMABAD: On the special instructions of Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force, PAF bases situated in Karachi are actively participating in relief operations in the rain affected areas of the city. PAF teams are reaching out to the needy families whose houses have been inundated in the natural calamity, said a news release on Friday. As a humanitarian gesture, ration packs carrying basic food items and commodities such as flour, rice, sugar, oil, pulses etc. were distributed amongst needy families of the worst hit areas in the recent torrential rains. - APP

**Ten more diagnosed with deadly coronavirus**

RAWALPINDI: As many as ten people were diagnosed with fatal coronavirus during the last 24 hours, raising the district's tally of confirmed cases to 47,022. As per the latest data released by the District Health Authority here on Friday, the infected cases included 43,473 from Rawalpindi and 3,549 from other districts. - APP

**Amin for giving relief to telecom industry**

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Syed Amin-Ul-Haque Friday called for solving problems of the IT and Telecom industry and giving maximum relief for the enhancement of the country's Digital Economy. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also has a special interest in promoting the IT industry, the minister said this while attending the preliminary meeting of the PM's Advisory Council on IT and Digital Economy. The meeting was chaired by Minister IT and Telecom Syed Amin-Ul-Haque while Minister for Finance Miftah Ismail, SAPM on Youth Affairs, Shaza Fatima, Senator Afanullah Khan, Secretary IT Mohsin Mushtaq Chandra, Additional Secretary MOITT Aysha Humaira, Former Secretary IT Shoaib Ahmed Siddiqui, Representative from FBR, State Bank, USF and other members of the council representing IT & Telecom Industry attended the meeting. The minister constitute three committees for IT Export, Personal Data Protection and Telecom Sector growth. The committees will finalize its recommendations in a week's time which will be presented to the PM who

is the Chairman of the Advisory Council, said a news release.

In order to enhance the Digital Economic activities in the country, the meeting discussed CPEC projects related to IT and Telecom, Broadband Services in un-served and under-served areas to provide digital solutions on micro level. Matters related to IT and Telecom Industry and proposals from the stockholders discussed deeply to enhance the digital economy of Pakistan by identifying the key areas of growth, their challenges and way forward to overcome these challenges.

On Data Protection Law Member IT Syed Junaid Imam and Member Legal Babar Suhail, while Member Telecom Muhammad Umar Malik, MD PSEB Osman Nasir, Chairman PASHA Badar Khushnood and CEO Jazz Amir Ibrahim briefed Advisory Council about the issues related to IT and Telecom Industry and suggested key points to resolve and boost digital economy. Council Members suggested that there should not be any new taxes and procedures for IT, Freelancers, E-commerce and Startups to facilitate domestic digital transformation and

growth in Exports. Otherwise, people will be encouraged to park a significant portion of their earnings abroad which will be a loss to the exchequer. IT and ITeS is the fastest growing and lowest investment option to grow Pakistan's forex reserves so we have to ensure ease of doing business and policy continuity as much as possible.

The Advisory Council stressed the need for consistency in government policies to attract local and international investors, saying that industry and investors become uncertain due to the changing situations, which hurts the efforts to promote the Digital Economy. Syed Amin-Ul-Haque said that the purpose to constitute the Advisory Council was to formulate workable proposals to address the issues of IT and Telecom industry, make the Industry more functional in the National Economy and then required directives by the PM can be issued in this regard. "When all the stakeholders/institutions are on board and the issues resolved in a timely manner, there is no reason the industry cannot become the backbone of the country's economy and lead the country out of the economic crisis", the minister added. - APP

**Sanjrani pays tributes to martyred Lt Col Laiq Mirza**

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani on Friday paid homage to martyred Lieutenant Colonel Laiq Baig Mirza who was martyrdom in line with his duties for national defense and prayed for the elevation of high ranks and patience to his family to bear this loss. Sanjrani in a message said that the sacrifices of these brave grandsons of the motherland for the defense of the beloved country would not go in vain. "The sacrifices in the war on terror are unparalleled and we are determined to end the scourge of terrorism" Sanjrani emphasized. Chairman Senate while severely condemning the incident said that the sacrifices of brave soldiers would further strengthen our resolve to fight against terrorism. Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani said that the martyred Lieutenant Colonel Laiq Baig Mirza has embraced martyrdom by crushing the nefarious intentions of anti-national elements. "Cowardly acts of the terrorists cannot shake the resolve of the Pakistani nation" he added. Deputy Chairman Senate Senator Mirza Muhammad Afridi, Leader of the House in the Senate, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar and Leader of the Opposition in the Senate Senator Dr Shehzad Waseem also prayed for the elevation of ranks of martyred Lieutenant Colonel Laiq Baig Mirza and prayed to grant patience to his family. They in their separate messages said that the sacrifices made by the Pakistan Army against terrorism are unrivaled and incidents of terrorism cannot demoralize the force. - APP

**AIOU announces admissions in first phase**

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has announced the admissions for the autumn semester 2022 yesterday. As per the instructions of Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum, students who are willing to take admission in matric and FA have been provided with both the facilities for submitting admission forms online or sending them by post. In case of online submission of the form, it will not be necessary to print the admission form and send it to the University. While, students applying for BS, MBA, M.Phil, or PhD programs, can only apply online. Prospectus sale points have been set up at the Union Council level across the country to facilitate students seeking admission in Matric and FA programs from where students can obtain prospectuses and admission forms. According to Director Admissions, the addresses of the prospectus sale points have been uploaded on the university's website www.aiou.edu.pk. Admission forms and prospectuses for all programs are also available on the University website. "Facilitation Centers" have also been set up in all the Regional Offices of the University for the guidance and assistance of the students where they will be provided information regarding admissions and they will be assisted in submitting the forms online. - APP

**Monsoon torrential rains cause 186 deaths, injures 181 so far**

ISLAMABAD: The Monsoon torrential rains causing multiple risks and hazards have resulted in 186 deaths and injured 181 individuals so far since June 14 across the country. The country received abnormal rainfall during the prevailing monsoon season with record precipitation in various parts of the country especially Sindh and Balochistan. The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Friday issued a daily situation report of the damages and losses reported across the country due to heavy monsoon rains. The report mentioned that almost six deaths were reported in various districts of Sindh province due to heavy monsoon rains. In Sindh province's District Badin two males died due to electrocution and three perished to lightning strike. In District Sanghar, a male died and three got injured due to a windstorm. In Tharparker, 21 Goats died due to lightning strike in Islam-

kot area. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), due to heavy rains in Lower Chitral, 20 houses got partially damaged, in District Swabi, 15 houses partially and a house got completely damaged. In District Swat, the rains caused death of a child, injured three females whereas a house got partially damaged while in Upper Dir, a house got partially damaged. In Balochistan province's District Dera Bugti, Baikhar Bhal dam got damaged due heavy rains. In District Sibbi, Mach Bridge got damaged. In District Lasbela, the flashfloods washed away a culvert at Welpat Bela, resulting into suspension of traffic whereas the intruding water affected the crops in the area. Moreover, the Khakhar bridge approach also got damaged where markers were placed and traffic resumed from one side. The Nari River also remained in high flood, however, no losses and damages were reported. In Punjab province's Dis-

trict Muzaffargarh, a breach in main Muzaffargarh canal was reported at Ultra Sandila (Tehsil). In Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) District Sudhnoti, two houses got partially damaged due to torrential rain. In Gilgit Baltistan (GB), District Hunza's Misgar Valley road blocked due to flash flood triggered by the rainfall occurred the previous night. In District Nagar, Hisper road was blocked due to river erosion. The provincial, state and district disaster management authorities conducted various relief activities in the rain affected areas. In District Swabi, five tents, four iron beds, 11 blankets, five mats, four gas cylinders, four solar torches with solar cells, four pillows, two family packs, four bed sheets and five prayer mats were distributed amongst the affectees. In District Swat, non-food items including tent, mattress, kitchen set, hygiene kit, plastic mats and quilts were also handed over to the affected family. - APP

**Sindh irrigation dept working proactively**

Sindh : CM , CS , Sec. W&S , Sec. irrigation disproved the perception that development projects in Sindh are in files not on ground

MUMTAZ AHMED BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: CM Sindh , Chief Secretary Sindh, Secretary W&S and Secretary Irrigation disproved the perception that development projects in Sindh are in files not on ground. The quality of work of development projects of Works and Services and Irrigation Department of Sindh is improving day by day. Zero Tolerance from Secretary Works and Services and Secretary Irrigation for Engineers who commit corruption and negligence in development projects. A large number of engineers are also working to improve the quality of work of development projects. The old perception was developed that there is a lot of corruption in development projects in Sindh and Balochistan. Development projects are completed in files while they do not exist on the ground. This thinking is still present in Islamabad today. It has definitely decreased but it could not be completely eradicated. Bilawal Bhutto's decision to remove Syed Qaim Ali Shah and make Murad Ali Shah Chief Minister of Sindh was timely and correct. Syed Murad Ali Shah, after taking over the

Chief Ministership, made capable, experienced and hardworking bureaucrats part of his team. After his appointment, Chief Secretary Sindh Dr Muhammad Sohail Rajput did not make unnecessary transfers of administrative officers and engineers but encouraged those who performed well. This positive action of the Chief Secretary was appreciated in public, social and political circles. Secretary Works and Services Imran Atta Soomro has worked hard to improve the quality of development projects, which is improving the quality of development projects. One foreign Aided Project namely Sindh Provincial Road Improvement Project (SPRIP) is also being executed by Works & Services Department having cost of Rs. 22,750.00 (Million). (US\$ 197.85 (Million)) (90.86% ADB Loan and 9.14% Government of Sindh share). SPRIP has been initiated by Works & Services Department with the assistance of Asian Development Bank (ADB). Rehabilitation of 6 roads was completed in the financial year 2018-19. (1)Tando M. Khan - Badin 67 Km (2) Digri - Naukot 54 Km (3) Khyber - Sanghar via Tando Adam 64 Km (4) Sanghar Mirpurkhas via Sindhri 63 Km (5) Sheranpur - Ratodero 36 Km (6) Thul to Kandhkot 44 Km. For the rehabilitation of six roads, not only six roads

were rehabilitated as per the set standards, but also Rs. 4099.405 million was saved and additional three roads were improved from this saving. The Sindh Provincial Road Improvement Project (SPRIP) is the perfect answer for all those who say that development projects in Sindh are only in files not on the ground. A master plan is being prepared for the road network of Sindh province for the next twenty years. This effort is also commendable as this step was also taken by Sindh first. Irrigation Department Sindh has also made great efforts to improve the quality of development projects and has succeeded in this endeavor. Anyone who visited the small dams under construction in Sindh under PSDP realized the quality of work. Secretary Irrigation Suhail Ahmed Qureshi has given a clear message to all the engineers of the Irrigation Department that strict action will be taken against any engineer who compromises on the quality of work of development projects. In the construction of small dams in Sindh, it is very difficult to ensure quality of work and maintain quality, but the engineers of the Irrigation Department of Sindh carried out this difficult task. I thought that in this modern age it is not possible

for development projects to be just in the files and not really exist. But in Islamabad, the perception was strong that development projects in Sindh are only in the files. Then I visited some of the roads constructed by the Works and Services Department in Sindh and the small dams under construction by the Irrigation Department Sindh. So I was surprised that development projects are on the ground and their quality is better than Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. After the visit, I wrote in several articles on development projects in Sindh that the perception developed that development projects in Sindh are only in files and not on the ground is completely wrong and misleading. There were some issues regarding the quality of development projects which are being rectified. It is now becoming clear that the quality of work of Sindh's development projects is improving day by day. And the perception that development works are only in the files and not on the ground is proving to be wrong. Credit should be given to Syed Murad Ali Shah CM Sindh, Dr Muhammad Sohail Rajput Chief Secretary, Imran Atta Soomro Secretary Works and Services, Suhail Ahmed Qureshi Secretary Irrigation for the improvement quality of development projects in Sindh.



## Gender gap

The Global Gender Gap Index 2022 has not come up with a phenomenally surprising finding as far as the inequality row in Pakistan is concerned. The country is still hovering at the bottom of the list. Only Chad fares worse. That Democratic Republic of Congo has managed to climb a notch above us despite being plagued by constant in-fighting is, however, a horrifying tale on its own. Some glad tidings do manage to crawl our way as the report does acknowledge "significant improvement" in empowering girls and women, may it be by encouraging greater economic participation or shattering glass ceilings for employment opportunities. But even after closing 56.4 per cent of the disparities, Pakistan still stands to lose out on most of the gains offered by a larger, diversified workforce. Because while the demoralising assessment of "progress (being) stagnated" is behind us, we do suffer from the smallest share of women sitting on powerful tables all over the world.

That means an overwhelming majority of key decisions (from legislation to company policies) are deliberated and passed by men, which in turn dictate the path to be trodden upon by millions of women in times to come. Add to that the rather unbelievable wins of just one-and-a-half decades ago when Pakistan had come 112th in the examination of the economic and societal position of its women and the gravity of its ill-advised priorities hangs a lot heavier. Comparing the notable contribution by female professionals in other parts of our neighbourhood (Nepal and Bangladesh), the state should pull up its sleeves and get down to assessing why only 22 per cent of its women form a part of its labour force.

Is it because the country has still miles to go before the riches of education manage to touch young girls or due to societal stumbling blocks that actively pursue subjugation of women in the name of culture? These tiny mirrors can give out far more details about the inequality faultlines than just sighing out a list of numbers if someone is willing to change the future.

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## Political shifts

MUHAMMAD OMAR IFTIKHAR

It seems as if the global political structure is changing. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson resigned on July 7, 2022, after his party lost the majority. Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi has presented his resignation following the withdrawal of the populist coalition partner Five Star's support in a confidence vote. The Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Ranil Wickremesinghe, is trying to make things right in his country which is surrounded by an economic crisis of immense proportions. As the acting President, he declared a state of emergency after Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa fled to the Maldives. Earlier, in April 2022, Shehbaz Sharif was elected Prime Minister of Pakistan after Imran Khan was removed from office, following a no-confidence motion. Khan was in office for three years and seven months. Such a turbulent political fabric was never witnessed before. These events did not happen within years. They took place within weeks of each other. It seems the powers to be are trying their best to shake and rattle the foundations of democracy not only in South Asia but in Europe as well.

Whether there were internal actors at play that manifested these incidents or was it the external powers impacting the country's government, one aspect is for sure; the world is witnessing a change. The changing of governments takes years before they can be manifested. Their impact is felt across all sectors of the country – mainly it is an economic shift that each regime change brings.

It is yet to be seen how will such political changes impact the region. For instance, the next UK Prime Minister may look at UK-EU relations in a different light and may pursue UK-US ties differently. Moreover, the turmoil in Sri Lanka will affect its political and economic relations with other South Asian nations. Furthermore, if Italian PM Draghi eventually leaves office, what impact will it have on the EU and its ties with the US.

## The role of varsities in nation building

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Suleman Tahir

It is a priority to develop an environment-friendly infrastructure at KFUEIT. A solar project with a capacity of 145KV has been installed. Under the Clean and Green Campus project, more than 50000 (including 20% fruit plants) plants have been planted on the campus. University designed and installed its own solar-based wastewater treatment plant and recycled wastewater for use in horticulture and agriculture

Universities are considered to have been regarded as key institutions in processes of social change and development. It is a general view that great nations have great universities. This motivates significant public and private investment in universities. These days much of the focus is on universities promoting economic growth based on a knowledge economy. No doubt, equally important are the contributions that universities can make to culture, political stability, and positive social change. Great nations are not just built by brilliant scientists, writers and entrepreneurs. Rather they also require effective school teachers, engineers and small business owners, etc. Furthermore, it needs well-informed citizens, critical thinkers and engaged in politics and communities. The best universities are populated with

highly gifted and motivated faculty and students. The most important role the universities have been assigned is the production of highly skilled manpower and research output to meet perceived targets. Another role that universities may play is in the building of new institutions of civil society, developing new cultural values, and training and socializing people of the new social era. In economic perspective, the role of universities is to produce new knowledge and commodify it in collaboration with industry. It means that universities must have a candid assessment of indigenous problems and good linkages with community & industry. Once Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan said that the role of newly established universities in Pakistan is more important than the older higher education institutions because such institutions have the potential to develop their values and can easily align their priorities with national goals and objectives. No doubt, Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology (KFUEIT) is such a good example among newly established universities in Punjab. Expansion and consolidation have both been observable since 2019. Now, 180 trained PhD faculty members are contributing

to teaching and research at KFUEIT. The strength will increase with the ongoing hiring process. The impact factor of research raised from 560 to 4500. It secured more than 25 research grants under National Research Program for Universities (NRPU). KFUEIT is continuously improving its position in different international university rankings like Time Higher Education (THE), UI GreenMetric and SCIMago, etc. Quality education and innovative research are priority at KFUEIT.

100% fee scholarship has been announced for Hafize-Quran and the girls in a variety of engineering programs. Such scholarship for girls' students is a remarkable effort for women's empowerment in south Punjab. The scholarship given to the students has crossed a dream figure of Rs.1000 million. 28 active student societies are continuously providing students with confidence & character-building opportunities in the form of seminars, webinars, conferences, workshops, exhibitions, study circles, book talks, magazines and a variety of competitions. KFUEIT campus is declared a smoke and drug-free campus which is a good step for the healthy future of the youth at KFUEIT. Suitable sports facilities and pieces of training are also available for students. KFUEIT-trained athletes won more than fifty medals in different national sports events since 2019. Infrastructure has been rapidly expanding since 2019. Already, state-of-the-art guest house, executive club, sports complex and faculty hostels are added and in a few months, student hostels and the academic block will become part of KFUEIT infrastructure. State of the art Hi-Tech lab has been installed at KFUEIT. It will provide the MS & PhD researchers with modern equipment and will facilitate their research. KFUEIT also has good linkages with the community and offers a variety of social services to the community with the help of students. These services are in the form of free medical camps, availability of drinking water (Aabe-Fareed), Iftar Dastar Khwan and distribution of rations among needy families etc. During the drought in Cholistan, the students of KFUEIT man-

aged the supply of water to different water reservoirs by using tankers. They also managed the supply of fresh drinking water to a large number of families in Cholistan.

It is a priority to develop an environment-friendly infrastructure at KFUEIT. A solar project with a capacity of 145KV has been installed. Under the Clean and Green Campus project, more than 50000 (including 20% fruit plants) plants have been planted on the campus. University designed and installed its own solar-based wastewater treatment plant and recycled wastewater for use in horticulture and agriculture. Electric environment-friendly motorbikes are provided to the security staff for use inside the campus. Business Incubation Center was established. To provide students with all services at one window and to save their time 'Student Facilitation Center' was established. South Punjab Skill Development Institute was established in collaboration with NAVTTC. More than six hundred students are enrolled in different certificate courses. To improve research and collaboration more than forty MoUs were signed with different national & international universities or organizations. Now, KFUEIT has planned to propose solutions to the indigenous social and industrial problems. It would revolutionize the whole indigenous scenario.

No doubt, with all above said achievements KFUEIT is a successful model for all emerging higher education institutions in the country. Such excellent planning is the need of time for a better educational future, to address the needs of the region & indigenous society and for better nation-building. KFUEIT is an emerging university in all avenues of higher education under the vision of the Government of Punjab. Such marvelous developments at KFUEIT were not possible without the kind support of the Government, hard work & dedication of faculty & staff.

Writer is the Vice Chancellor of Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology

## Looming Israeli, US elections make Palestine breakthrough unlikely

Yossi Mekelberg

Strategically, it would be a triumph for the Biden administration to be the convener and coordinator of such a venture and would go some way toward restoring US leadership in the Middle East. America has a particular incentive to play this role as a result of the blossoming relationship between Saudi Arabia and China

The last time US President Joe Biden went to the Middle East on an official visit, in 2016, he was still a "heartbeat away from the presidency." This time, he is a president well into his first term and due to face, in a few months' time, America's interim verdict in crucial midterm elections. While on this trip, he will find a region that has changed significantly since 2016, but with many of the previous challenges remaining, if not exacerbated. His tour of the region as vice president was tricky, coming shortly after Washington agreed to the nuclear deal with Iran in a move that led to friction with a number of Gulf countries and especially with the Netanyahu administration in Israel. Iran's adversarial policies are as pertinent to the stability and well-being of the region now as they were then. Similarly, the unresolved Israeli-Palestinian conflict has no peaceful resolution on the horizon and, if anything, is more likely to implode.

Every US presidential visit abroad is significant due to the very fact that it takes place, for the discussions conducted and the understandings that are reached, but also for some of the symbolic gestures of friendship. And one such gesture from Biden in his opinion piece in The Washington Post, entitled "Why I'm going to Saudi Arabia," is that he will make the trip from Tel Aviv to Jeddah, flying directly between the two cities. In the Kingdom, "leaders from across the region will gather, pointing to the possibility of a more stable and integrated Middle East, with the United States playing a vital leadership role," Biden wrote. Nevertheless, Biden's visit to Israel and Palestine was always expected to be a matter of symbolism over substance. His correct decision, although controversial in Israel, to visit East Jerusalem unaccompanied by Israeli officials sends a powerful message that his administration does not recognize Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem or its claim that the entire city is the country's capital. It has been argued that the timing of this visit leaves Biden unable to exert any pressure on the current Israeli government or to make gestures of goodwill toward the Palestinians. In both America and Israel, crucial elections are just around the corner. Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid assumed office only a few weeks ago and a general election has been called for November. Lapid is the candidate that Washington would like to prop up, which means that, in the illogical context of the relations between Israel and the Palestinians, any concessions made to the Palestinians might expose Lapid – and those who might partner him in a future coalition government – to accusations by the right that they are a soft touch who will cave in to international pressure. This is regardless of whether such moves to improve relations with the Palestinians also benefit Israel in preventing future conflict.

In the current discourse within Israeli society, any measure to ease the harshness of the occupation is not a vote winner, and neither will it be in the US midterm elections. Biden's decision to visit East Jerusalem and meet with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has been criticized in some quarters of Israeli and US politics, while for the rest of the world it is the most obvious things to do. There is no doubt that orchestrating with the Saudis a meeting of leaders of major Middle Eastern powers in order to consolidate their common strategic interests is a major achievement for both countries in containing Tehran's destabilizing policies in the region. However, Biden, as US president before him, is unlikely to find the conviction and stamina to make a difference when it comes to edging even an inch closer to ending the Israeli occupation, ensuring Palestinians' self-determination and human rights and, by doing so, bringing peace to both Israelis and Palestinians. This will leave the bitter taste of another missed opportunity, which is harmful for the Middle East as well as for America's interests in the region.

Courtesy: Arab News

## Yang Jiechi's visit: Looking beyond BRICS and HLDGD

Sabur Ali Sayyid

It is, therefore, very heartening that the two sides redoubled their determination to speed up the work on CPEC-related projects in the Northern and Southern Belts and stand together to defeat all those forces and elements who are predetermined to sabotage them, besides creating mistrust and bad blood between Beijing and Islamabad. CPEC is the backbone of economic cooperation between them and they have to take it through at every cost

On June 24, 2022, the High-Level Dialogue on Global Development (HLDGD) was held on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Beijing, China. Apart from the five-member countries of the BRICS, 13 countries were invited to the dialogue to share their views and perspectives on the need for enhanced economic cooperation between member coun-

tries to ensure development and progress in the region and beyond. Pakistan was not invited to the dialogue because of the Indian reservations, reportedly endorsed by Russia as well. As the decisions at BRICS are made through mutual consultation, China was ostensibly left with hardly any option but to accept the Indian contention. Seen in this backdrop, the visit of a high-level delegation of China, led by Yang Jiechi, a senior member of the Politburo of the Communist Party of China and director of its Foreign Affairs Commission, provided an opportunity for mutual reassurance for the two countries. The visit took place from June 29 to 30 during which Yang Jiechi held discussions with top leadership in Pakistan, including the echelon of the military. The visit underlined that the two countries attached utmost importance to their bilateral relations and stood duly alert to any

happening which can potentially damage or create a misimpression about them.

According to the official statements issued by the concerned authorities in Pakistan and China, the two sides in the meetings reemphasized the depth and vigor of the bilateral relationship between Pakistan and China and pledged to take them forward in the days ahead. Though not part of any official communication, it also transpired that the issue of the safety and security of the Chinese nationals working on CPEC-related projects in Pakistan also came under discussion. Additionally, different drastic ideas and proposals were also looked into to address the issue head-on. Pakistan reassured the delegation unequivocally that it gave utmost importance to the CPEC-related projects and had taken a strong exception to the targeted killings of some Chinese nationals in recent times. Pakistan army, for instance, has created two special divisions for the safety and protection of the Chinese nationals working on Northern and Southern projects. As a professional army, it is fully capable of undertaking this mission and has demonstrated it too on different occasions by foiling the nefarious designs of the anti-CPEC and China forces in Baluchistan and elsewhere.

After the Karachi incident in which three Chinese and a Pakistani were killed in a suicide attack on April 26, Pakistan took several swift measures to take to task all those who were involved in this ghastly act in any manner. While the concern shown by China over such incidents is truly legitimate and well-placed, it should not escape our attention that many international players and actors are avowed opponents of the CPEC and engaged in diverse activities to kill it in the nip at every cost. The case of Kulbhushan is one of the many examples which provide evidence that how India and its allies are directly involved in the training and

financing of different terrorist organizations in Baluchistan and elsewhere to sabotage the CPEC projects. Pakistan has repeatedly invited the world's attention to it.

It is, therefore, very heartening that the two sides redoubled their determination to speed up the work on CPEC-related projects in the Northern and Southern Belts and stand together to defeat all those forces and elements who are predetermined to sabotage them, besides creating mistrust and bad blood between Beijing and Islamabad. CPEC is the backbone of economic cooperation between them and they have to take it through at every cost.

CPEC, especially Gwadar Port, is poised to deepen further the geo-economic and geo-strategic relations between Pakistan and China. It will reduce the sea-land route distance between Europe and Western China to less than half. Almost 80% of China's oil is currently transported from the Strait of Malacca to Shanghai. Transportation time of oil imports from the Middle East and Africa will be reduced from over 30 days to just 2 days after completion of pipeline projects and will not be dependent on shipping through the Straits of Malacca and the vulnerable maritime routes. Besides economic factors, the presence in Gwadar is of great strategic value for China and would be a great strategic advantage in case of any eventuality in Asia and blockade of the Strait of Malacca.

The visit of a high-level Chinese delegation at this point in time is a reaffirmation of the fact that HLDGD-like incidents though can't be ruled out in the future as well because of the compulsions of international relations, but both China and Pakistan stand committed to mitigating their effects and forging ahead for larger cause and interests in the region and beyond. # (The author may be reached at [sabur@ips.net.pk](mailto:sabur@ips.net.pk))



## Briefs

## Biden on...

FROM PAGE 01

former U.S. President Donald Trump, who enjoyed close ties with MbS, visited Saudi Arabia in 2017 he was met by King Salman, who has made few recent public appearances. The Mecca governor met France's president when he visited Jeddah late last year. The sensitive visit will be closely watched for body language and rhetoric and will test his ability to reset relations with the crown prince, the kingdom's de facto ruler. U.S. intelligence concluded that MbS directly approved the 2018 murder of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi, while the crown prince denies having a role in the killing. Biden wants to "recalibrate" Washington's relations with Saudi Arabia and not rupture them, Sullivan stressed.

## Pakistan...

FROM PAGE 01

Türkiye in paying tribute to all those martyrs who laid down their lives in defence of Türkiye's democracy and stability. The exceptional relations between our two peoples - embedded in a common religious, cultural, linguistic, and spiritual heritage - go back centuries and have withstood the test of times. With strong resolve of the political leadership on both sides, the historic, multi-faceted strategic relationship between the two countries will continue to grow from strength to strength.

## BLA...

FROM PAGE 01

(ISPR) news release received here on Friday. The terrorists opened fire on the closing-in troops, resulting into Shahadat (martyrdom) of Havildar Khan Muhammad, once encircled by the forces. The BLA terrorists were killed in ensuing heavy exchange of fire whereas the sanitization operation would continue in the area to apprehend the remaining perpetrators and recover abducted Omer Javed.

## Imran says...

FROM PAGE 01

Pakistan. Addressing a public rally in Chak Jhumra tehsil of Faisalabad ahead of Punjab by-elections campaign, Imran Khan said that the two families had looted the country for 30 years, and soon after taking into the power, they have taken the NRO after coming into the power. He said that the cabals of crooks imposed through US-backed conspiracy - plundered Rs1,100 billion of public money through amendments in NAB laws as they came into power. He promised the participants of the rally that he would not let the crooks usurp the public money. "The US wants such leadership in the country that follow its order and they brought them to the power for its own use," Imran said. "We want good relations with everyone including the United States but no one's slavery is acceptable. This nation will see the looters being defeated on July 17. The United States will use them like tissue paper," the PTI Chairman said. Taking a dig at bigwigs of PPP and PML-N, he said that the nation will not forgive the two families who raised them through conspiracy, adding that today the country is in a bad condition and they are the responsible for all the blunders. "We will fight for hard to win the political match of Punjab then celebrate the success, adding that the rulers came to power through conspiracy will have to face historic defeat on July 17," Imran Khan said. Imran Khan has claimed that his party will clean sweep in Punjab by-polls. He claimed that he will defeat Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) in by-elections like India in the cricket match. Former Prime Minister Imran Khan directed his party workers to guard every polling station on the polling day of the by-elections in Punjab till getting the final results on Sunday. He also vowed to defeat Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shahbaz despite the fact that the 'umpires' in the public meeting, Imran Khan strongly criticized the Prime Minister for his speeches about begging loans from different countries and said Pakistanis are not beggars.

## Biden affirms commitment to a two-state solution

Biden also reaffirmed the enduring ties between the Palestinian and American peoples and underscored his commitment to a two-state solution on the 1967 lines with land swaps mutually agreed by the Palestinians and Israelis.

## NEWS DESK

BETHLEHEM: US President Joseph Biden affirmed during a meeting today with President Mahmoud Abbas in Bethlehem his commitment to a two-state solution on the 1967 lines, and the importance of direct negotiations leading to an independent, sovereign, viable, and contiguous Palestinian state alongside Israel. Speaking during a meeting with President Mahmoud Abbas at the presidential headquarters in Bethlehem, south of the West Bank, Biden also underscored the importance of having two states, Palestine and Israel, enjoying secure and recognized borders, allowing the two peoples to live side-by-side in peace and security. President Biden highlighted a number of initiatives the United States is undertaking to support the Palestinian people, and discussed encouraging regional governments and the international community to assist the Palestinian people.

Biden also reaffirmed the enduring ties between the Palestinian and American peoples and underscored his commitment to a two-state solution on the 1967 lines with land swaps mutually agreed by the Palestinians and Israelis. The US President emphasized his belief that the Palestinian people deserve to live lives of dignity and opportunity, to move and travel freely; to feel secure in their commu-



nities; and to give hope to their children that they will one day enjoy the same freedom and self-determination of their neighbors. Biden further reiterated the importance of fostering a political horizon, and noted the United States stands ready to work with Palestinians, Israelis and regional stakeholders toward that goal. President Biden said that in order to create the conditions for negotiations, it was

important for all parties to avoid unilateral measures. President Biden reaffirmed the need to preserve the historic status quo at the holy sites in Jerusalem, recognizing the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan's crucial role as custodian. During his visit to Augusta Victoria Hospital in occupied Jerusalem, Biden announced his plan to make a new, mul-

ti-year US contribution of up to \$100 million to the East Jerusalem Hospital Network which provides specialized services including oncology, dialysis, neonatal intensive care, maternity and ophthalmology services, and specialized emergency services. To boost Palestinian businesses and improve connectivity for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, Biden affirmed his commitment to accelerate the long-overdue transition from 3G to 4G in the West Bank, and from 2G to 4G in Gaza by the end of 2023. President Biden underscored the need for a more independent, efficient and reliable experience for Palestinians in their travel abroad, including allowing Palestinians 24/7 access to the Allenby Bridge by September 30, 2022. President Biden announced an additional \$201 million for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) to continue providing vital services to Palestinian refugees in the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. President Biden announced that Israel intends to convene the Joint Economic Committee with the Palestinians. Under the Oslo Accords, the Committee is in charge of discussing the common economic issues between the Palestinians and Israelis. It last met in 2009. President Biden announced that the United States has allocated \$15 million in new food security assistance to the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

## Indonesia to intensify defence co-op with France

JAKARTA: Defense Minister Prabowo Subianto called attention to the need to intensify defence and strategic cooperation between Indonesia and France. "Our cooperation must be expedited to achieve comprehensive strategic cooperation, which includes joint development and production, capacity improvement, and investment," Subianto stated while attending the commemoration of French National Day, commonly known as Bastille Day, upon invitation from French Ambassador Olivier Chambard here Thursday (July 14). In his press statement received here, Friday, the minister remarked that relations between Indonesia and France have been firm since 1950, when both countries established diplomatic ties. Indonesia and France have intensified economic cooperation in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and on priority agendas to address global challenges on energy and food resilience issues, he noted. "Relations between Indonesia and France will grow stronger in the future, and our residents will enjoy its fruits," Subianto affirmed. The minister also conveyed Bastille Day greetings to the French government and people. "Representing the Indonesian government and the people, I convey my Bastille Day greetings to the



French government and people," he remarked. Earlier, Subianto also commended France as a strategic partner of Indonesia in terms of the geopolitical and geostrategic aspects. "France is Indonesia's main strategic partner in the geopolitical and geostrategic aspects," Subianto stated while receiving the visit of Chief of Staff of the French Air and Space Force General Stéphane Mille at the Defense Ministry office on Monday (July 11).

Subianto stated that France has a strategic role to maintain peace as well as security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. He also lauded the French government's support to modernize Indonesia's military equipment and weaponry system and was confident that the acquisition of French military equipment and weapons will enhance Indonesia's defence capability through technology transfer and bilateral cooperation. - ANTARA

## Tokyo to host 2025 world champs

## SPORTS DESK

EUGENE: The 2025 World Athletics Championships will return to Tokyo, the sport's global governing body announced Thursday. The World Athletics Council confirmed that Tokyo would stage the championships for the second time after beating out competition from Kenya, Poland and Singapore. It means Tokyo's Olympic Stadium will get the chance to host a major athletics event in a packed venue, four years after staging the pandemic-delayed Olympic games in an empty arena. "Within an extremely strong field of candidates to host the World Athletics Championships 2025, Tokyo offered a compelling bid," World Athletics president Sebastian Coe said in a statement. "I hope this will be a shining light for Japan as they celebrate 100 years of the Japanese Association of Athletics Federations (JAAF) in 2025, by bringing world-class athletics back to the people in Tokyo." Tokyo last hosted the World Championships in 1991, in an event best remembered for American long-jumper Mike Powell's world record-breaking leap of 8.95m (29ft 4.4in) to eclipse Bob Beamon's long-standing 1968 mark.

## Iran vows 'harsh, regrettable' response after US-Israel declaration

## FOREIGN DESK

TEHRAN: Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi warned Thursday of a "harsh and regrettable" response, hours after US President Joe Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid issued a joint declaration against Iran. Speaking at a public meeting in the western city of Kermanshah, Raisi said any "mistake" on the part of the US or its allies in the region will see a "harsh and regrettable" answer from Iran. The Iranian president said the interventions of foreign powers in the region only result in "crises and destabilization," while describing Iran's military power as a "security factor." Raisi's remarks came shortly after Biden and Lapid in a joint declaration on Thurs-

day reaffirmed their resolve to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. "The United States stresses that integral to this pledge is the commitment never to allow Iran to acquire a nuclear weapon, and that it is prepared to use all elements of its national power to ensure that outcome," read the statement dubbed the Jerusalem Declaration. Without dropping any names, Raisi said some countries in the region have become "transits of insecurity and terrorism" from the West to this region, adding that Iran will "not accept insecurity and crisis" in the region. Repeating what he said in a Cabinet meeting on Wednesday, he said normalization deals between Israel and some regional states "will not bring security" to Israel. In 2020, Israel signed US-sponsored agreements to normalize relations with

the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco. Biden's visit to the region, his first since taking office last year, will also take him to Saudi Arabia. It comes amid indirect talks between Tehran and Washington in Doha, mediated by the EU, to de-escalate tensions and revive the 2015 nuclear accord. The talks have been affected by some key disagreements between the two sides, mainly over the de-listing of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and the guarantee of Iran's economic benefits from the agreement. In an interview with an Israeli television channel on Wednesday, Biden ruled out the possibility of removing IRGC from the foreign terrorist organizations list even if that kills the deal, but said the use of force against Iran will be the "last resort".

## We are ready for Sri Lanka challenge: Babar Azam

## MONITORING DESK

GALLE: Pakistan will be marking return to Test cricket after more than three months when they take on hosts Sri Lanka at Galle International Cricket Stadium tomorrow in the first of the two Tests. Though Pakistan returned with a series win 2-1 the last time they toured the island nation in 2015, Sri Lanka, following their comeback win against Australia at the very same venue, promise to pose a tough challenge to the visitors. Pakistan captain Babar Azam, however, feels Pakistan are well prepared for the challenge. The two matches are of significance for both sides as they form part of the ICC World Test Championship. Sri Lanka, following their series levelling win earlier in the week, are sitting third on the nine-team table with 54.17 win percentage points, while Pakistan, with 52.38, are just a rung below. Babar is the top run-getter for Pakistan in the current ICC World Test Championship cycle with 682 at an average of 62. He has made a century - that second innings 196 in that epic draw against Australia in Karachi - and five half-centuries. The bowling charts are dominated by tall pacer Shaheen Afridi who has 37 scalps - including two five-fers - at 18.02 runs per dismissal. Pakistan arrived in Colombo on 6 July. They had the final phase of their preparations

in the city where they also played a warm-up match against Sri Lanka Cricket XI to help them acclimatise to the conditions. "Our preparations have been very good and we are ready for the Test series," Babar said while speaking to PCB Digital ahead of a practice session on the eve of the Test series. "The warm-up match helped us in getting used to the Sri Lankan conditions, and our camps in Rawalpindi and Lahore also played a role in preparing us for the series. We have worked hard and put in the effort." Galle's is considered one of the most iconic cricket stadium around the world. At its one end, towers the Galle Dutch Fort and the close proximity of the Indian Ocean ensured cool sea breeze and scenic view. While the conditions here have generally favoured the spin bowlers, a tinge of grass, according to Babar, will also provide assistance to the pacers. Pakistan, recently, have shown strength in all facets with their batters, bowlers - spinners or pacers - and fielders stepping up on crucial moments. The Pakistan captain says this has made his life easy. "I am incredibly proud of this team as a captain. Every player in this side is taking responsibility and trying to finish the game for Pakistan. Whether it is our bowlers or batters, they make sure that they put in all of their efforts and that makes my life easy. We will give our best in this series." Speaking about the side's time in Sri Lanka so far, Babar said: "So far our experience in this country has been really good.



## SC to hear...

FROM PAGE 01

(NAB) laws. The bench will hear the petition on July 19. The three-member bench will be headed by the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial and include Justice Aijazul Ahsan and Justice Mansoor Ali Shah. Earlier in June, the former prime minister challenged the amendments in the National Accountability (Amendment) Act (XI) of 2022. In his petition filed under article 184 (3) of the constitution, Imran Khan named the federal government and NAB as respondents. PTI chief said that the recent amendments were in violation of the Constitution. The petition claimed that the amendments have had the "effect of virtually eliminating any white-collar crime, committed by a holder of public office, as prosecutable offence." The petition said that the amendments were against the basic rights enshrined in articles 9, 14, 19A, 24, and 25 of the constitution while the amendments in sections 2, 4, 5, 6, 14, 15, 21, 23, 25 and 26 of the law were in contradiction with the Constitution. The former PM prayed to the court to declare the amendments void.

## Türkiye a...

FROM PAGE 01

of the failed coup attempt, the speaker said Türkiye indeed is today's role model for the developing democracies in the world and added that "When the roots of democracy are linked by electorates in terms of homogeneous progress and prosperity. Where the people are not left at the mercy of narrow-minded interests, but where a democratic state is seen as their guardian and protector. If therefore goes to the division and acumen of President Erdogan. That under his leadership, the Turkish democracy has evolved to bring stability, strength, and prosperity to the country and the nation". He also paid tribute to martyrs who lost their lives in defense of Türkiye's democracy. He expressed that Pakistan and Türkiye shared goals of democracy & stability. Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf further stated that this day reminded us of the memorable victory of the Türkiye's democracy over the dark forces of regression and repression as it was this glorious day when the entire Türkiye nation stood like a rock side by side, it selected popularly chosen leader President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The cowardly attempt was made to detract from its chosen path of democracy, people's rules, and people's progress, he added. He congratulated Dr. Mehmet Façaci, Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye, on behalf of the entire nation on this 5th anniversary.

## July 17 will...

FROM PAGE 01

adding that the PTI government would have turned the city into relics if it had stayed another year. It is not a war between a Lion and Bat or PML-N or the PTI but a war for the development of Lahore city. She said Lahore belonged to Nawaz Sharif and will remain to him in future too. She said that PTI's Punjab chief minister Usman Buzdar cannot be seen in the public rallies of PTI because he did nothing for the province. Maryam lambasted the PTI leadership and went on to say that the opponents will be chased away from the field and those who have a bad eye on Lahore will have to return with disappointment. "Imran Khan himself was the biggest puppet and he had kept Usman Buzdar as a puppet and now he begging the votes from the person about which in past he used to say that the biggest dacoit," Maryam said while lashing out at Imran Khan. Maryam Nawaz said that now as the PML-N has come into power in Punjab, they would set the record for developments in Lahore, like the past. She added that Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shahbaz got the city's roads and streets cleaned within 24 hours after Eidul Azha. While applauding the Punjab CM performance, Maryam said during the occasion of Eid, Punjab CM Hamza worked day and night and cleaned the roads of the cleaned the city within 24 hours.



## Briefs

## Donald Trump's first wife Ivana dies aged 73

AGENCIES

NEW YORK: Ivana Trump, Donald Trump's first wife and mother of his three eldest children, died on Thursday at the age of 73, the former president announced. Ivana Trump "passed away at her home in New York City," Donald Trump wrote on his social media platform Truth Social. He did not provide a cause of death but the New York Times reported that law enforcement officials were investigating whether she fell down the stairs at her Manhattan apartment. A spokesperson for the New York Police Department told AFP in an emailed statement that officers responded to a call at her address on the Upper East Side at around 12:40 pm (1740 GMT). "Upon arrival, officers observed a 73-year-old female unconscious and unresponsive. EMS (emergency medical services) responded to the location and pronounced the victim deceased at the scene," the spokesperson said. The statement added that "there does not appear to be any criminality" and that the city's medical examiner will determine the cause of death.

## Sadr supporters mass in Iraq prayer rally

WEB DESK

BAGHDAD: Hundreds of thousands of Muslim worshippers loyal to Shiite leader Moqtada Sadr attended a Friday prayer service in Iraq's capital, in a display of political might to revive stalled talks on government formation. The enormous turnout came despite scorching heat and the Shiite cleric not being there in person - an indication of his status as a political heavyweight, as well as a key religious authority.

The midday prayer, on Al-Falah Avenue in Sadr City, was instead led by a Sadr ally who took aim at rivals from other Shiite factions, including a powerful ex-paramilitary network. "We are at a difficult... crossroads in the formation of the government, entrusted to some we do not trust," said Sheikh Mahmud al-Jayashi, reading Sadr's sermon. Some factions have shown themselves to "not be up to the task", he contended. Sadr's bloc won 73 seats in the October 2021 election, making it the largest faction in the 329-seat parliament. But since the vote, talks to form a new government have stalled and the oil-rich country remains mired in a political and socioeconomic crisis, despite elevated global oil prices. The various Shiite political factions, representing Iraq's largest demographic, remain unable to agree on a new prime minister. Sadr initially supported the idea of a "majority government" which would have sent his Shiite adversaries from the pro-Iran Coordination Framework into opposition.

## Ambassador Masood calls for boosting Pak-US cultural ties

On his part, Dr Taylor briefed the Ambassador on the rich collection maintained by the Smithsonian Asian Cultural History Programme on Pakistan, particularly on Kashmir

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Masood Khan, Thursday called for strengthening cultural ties between the two nations to promote people-to-people exchanges on the back of the existing cultural affinities and linkages. The Ambassador made these remarks while talking to Dr Paul Michael Taylor, Head of the Asian Cultural History Programme of the Smithsonian Institute, the world's largest museum, education, and research complex, according to an embassy press release. During the meeting at the embassy, the Ambassador highlighted the important role of cultural and people-to-people exchanges in strengthening bilateral relations, noting that the 75th anniversary of the establishment of Pak-US diplomatic ties this year provided an excellent opportunity to showcase the close cultural linkages between the two countries, the press release said. He added that through such exchanges the



people of two countries could better understand each other's perspectives and cultures. On his part, Dr Taylor briefed the Ambassador on the rich collection maintained by the Smithsonian Asian Cultural History Programme on Pakistan, particularly on Kashmir.

He said that he had frequently travelled to Pakistan and was interested in working on the rich cultural heritage of the region. Dr Taylor also shared his earlier collaboration with Lok Virsa on a multi-year museum and archival capacity building project as well as his ongoing collabora-

tion with International Resource Centre (IRC) and Maati TV in Lahore on a series of programmes encouraging local production of films in Central and South Punjab. The Ambassador said that the Embassy was keen to work and collaborate with the Smithsonian Institute in different cultural fields, by facilitating bilateral exchanges and organizing events to promote rich Pakistani culture in the United States. In this regard, he invited the Smithsonian Institute to partner with the Embassy to mark the 75th Anniversary of the establishment of Pak-US diplomatic ties. Dr. Taylor welcomed the idea and conveyed his interest in collaborating with the Embassy to mark this important milestone. Dr Taylor also spoke about the various fellowships and research opportunities offered by the Smithsonian Institute for graduate, pre-doctoral, or post-doctoral students. He said that there was very little interest from Pakistan in these fellowships and that he looked forward to have more participation from Pakistani applicants in these programmes.

## Canada approves first covid vaccine for babies

FOREIGN DESK

TRENTON: Canada has given the green light for those aged 6 months to 5 years to receive coronavirus vaccinations, following a scientific review that found the vaccine "safe and effective," Health Canada announced Thursday. "After a thorough and independent scientific review of the evidence, the department has determined that the vaccine is safe and effective at preventing COVID-19 in children between 6 months and 5 years of age," the Public Health Agency of Canada tweeted.

The approval is for the Moderna vaccine and it is to be administered at a strength one-quarter the size of an adult dose. Since it is the first time a coronavirus vaccine in Canada has been approved for the age group, Health Canada said it will keep a close eye on the reactions of those who are vaccinated. The agency ordered the manufacturer to provide constant details on the results of vaccinations. All the reasoning and scientific findings that led to the approval for the group are laid out on the Health Canada website.

The agency said trials demonstrated that the vaccine administered to the group had similar results as the inoculation in 18- to 25-year-olds. The approval means that about 2 million children are now eligible to be vaccinated. Two doses are to be administered one month apart, both at the quarter adult strength. There can be mild side effects, Health Canada said, including pain, sleepiness and a loss of desire for food. Other side effects but not as common included a tolerable fever and swelling of the spot where the dose was administered, aching muscles and an upset stomach.

## Italy's govt on shaky ground ahead of new confidence vote

AGENCIES

ROME: Italians woke to political uncertainty Friday amid an unprecedented government crisis that has put Mario Draghi's future as prime minister on tenterhooks and raised the spectre of snap elections. The premier of Europe's third-largest economy will have until Wednesday to shore up political support in a bid to save his coalition government tackling numerous challenges, from soaring inflation to the war in Ukraine. Italy's technocrat leader, the former head of the European Central Bank, has significantly raised the profile of his country on the world stage and within Europe. The crisis comes at a crunch time for the country, which risks losing billions in EU post-recovery funds if the rollout of key structural reforms is threatened. But he has presided over an unruly coalition of Italy's top political parties, save for the far-right Brothers of Italy, that has become increasingly fractious in advance of general elections planned for early next year.

## '2016 defeated coup showed a landmark resistance'

FOREIGN DESK

ANKARA: The defeated July 15, 2016 coup attempt marked an unprecedented resistance in Turkish history, said the country's president on Friday, marking the sixth anniversary of the defeated putsch. Saying that in the years since Türkiye took necessary measures to ward off similar threats, Recep Tayyip Erdogan said in a video message: "We responded to the powers that unleashed not only FETO, but also other terrorist groups against Türkiye, not by retreating, but by leaping forward." Erdogan stressed that the main significance of July 15 for Türkiye is that it symbolizes a landmark glorious resistance of the Turkish people following decades of recurrent coups. Since 2016, Turkish history has been effectively divided into two eras, "before and after July 15," he explained, proving the maturity of country's democracy while making sure that "the power of the national will is understood." "We ensured July 15 was enshrined in history by declaring it Democracy and National Unity Day," he added, using the formal name for the annual holiday.

Adding that Türkiye addressed the



weaknesses that paved the way for coups and tutelage by adopting a presidential system of governance, Erdogan said that after it thwarted efforts to derail the country by coup bids and terrorist groups, Türkiye also pushed back attempts to undermine it through the economy. In an April 2017 referendum, Turkish voters approved a shift to a presidential system, and Erdogan was elected president under the new system the following year.

FETO and its US-based leader Fetullah Gulen orchestrated the defeated coup, which left 251 people dead and 2,734

injured. Ankara also accuses FETO of being behind a long-running campaign to overthrow the state through the infiltration of Turkish institutions, particularly the military, police, and judiciary. The attempt by FETO to overthrow the government began around 10 p.m. local time (1900GMT) on July 15, 2016, and was thwarted by 8 a.m. the next day. Standing against the threat, the Turkish people courageously showed the world that they would not tolerate any attempt to thwart their will as expressed through their democratically elected government.

## Pak-China joint naval exercise Sea Guardians 2022 held in Shanghai

ISLAMABAD: The bilateral Naval Exercise Sea Guardians-2022 between Pakistan and Chinese Navy was held at Shanghai, China on Friday. The naval drill was second exercise of its series, and the first exercise was held at Karachi in 2020, a Pakistan Navy media release here received said.

The newly commissioned Pakistan Navy Ship TAIMUR participated in the exercise along with Chinese Navy assets including frigates, corvettes, submarines, fighters and surveillance aircraft and auxiliary ships. Sea Guardians series of naval exercises between Pakistan and China is a manifestation of strong bilateral military relations which promotes safe and sustainable maritime environment in the region.

The exercise provided an opportunity to both navies to further hone their professional skills, mutual learning and interoperability. The regular conduct of bilateral and multi-national exercises by Pakistan Navy are indicative of Pakistan Navy's resolve to maintain good order at sea and close relations with all friendly navies. It is expected that joint naval exercise with China will further enhance bilateral relationships and cooperation between the two countries in general and navies in particular. - APP

## Pakistan calls for \$1 trn debt relief for developing countries

AGENCIES

NEW YORK: Pakistan has called for a debt relief of \$1 trillion debt relief for the debt-ridden developing countries besides creation of a Global Debt Authority and an Independent Credit Rating Agency for the purpose. Speaking at the Ministerial Roundtable in New York at the United Nations Headquarters on Thursday, Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal also called for a "Marshall Plan" to mobilize unfulfilled Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitments. He said an estimated \$1 trillion in annual investment was needed?70% being deployed in developing countries?in order to ensure a transition to sustainable infrastructure globally, according to a message received here.

Delivering his speech at the Ministerial Roundtable titled "Accelerating achievement of the SDGs by 2030: addressing



on-going crises and overcoming challenges", the minister said the world was facing a triple crisis: Covid-19, Climate Change, and Conflict. Covid-19 has reversed a decade of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). After many decades of steady decline, extreme poverty is on the rise. It is estimated that 255 million full time jobs have been lost. Global economic contraction has reached 5% and for many developing countries 15 to 20%, he added. The minister said the current war in Ukraine and the accompanying restrictions has been coup de grace for the poor: prices have spiraled; food and related commodities, including fertilizers, are in short supply and unaffordable for the poorest people and the poorest countries. The looming climate catastrophe has already increased the development cost for many developing countries, he said adding that this was happening in the backdrop of unsustainable debt burden, high borrowing cost, and hyperinflation.

## New leader must tackle Islamophobia within UK ruling party

We want to see that across the political spectrum, but certainly in the Conservatives with the leadership election coming up

WEB DESK

LONDON: The new British prime minister must treat "systemic" Islamophobia in the ruling Conservative Party seriously, according to the head of the UK's leading Muslim organization. As the party searches for outgoing Premier Boris Johnson's successor, whoever wins "must represent everybody and they have to make sure that they do that fairly," said Zara Mohammed, secretary general of the Muslim Council of Britain. "We'd like to see these new candidates actually take this issue seriously, because it is quite deep-seated," she said in an exclusive interview published by the British newspaper Metro on Thursday. "We found over 300 cases, as well as senior members of the party themselves complaining about the problem." She emphasized the need for "a commitment to zero tolerance on Islamophobia - a party pledge that there will be action where there are Islamophobic comments, whether that is dismissal, whether that is

disciplinary." The party leadership must make clear that such behavior is "totally unacceptable," she added. Mohammed did not discuss any one of the five candidates left in the race for the premiership, but did call out Johnson for his "alarming radio silence" on the issue and comments comparing women who wear the burqa to "letterboxes and bank robbers." "We've yet to see any apology on that. I think the impact that had on Muslim women was real," she said.

"We did see a spike in hate crime, particularly against Muslim women who did wear the burqa or the veil after that, and even a confidence in racists and bigots feeling that they were entitled to say such things or do things like that." She said Muslim communities felt there was a lack of "effective outreach" by Johnson's government. "I think is a time for us to see a leadership that is inclusive, that is willing to work with Muslim communities and all communities. We want to see that across the political spectrum, but certainly in the Conservatives with the leadership election coming up," she said.

## G20 finance chiefs warns of food catastrophe

NEWS DESK

BALI: Group of 20 finance ministers and central bank chiefs from top economies met in Indonesia Friday for talks on the fallout from Russia's invasion of Ukraine, with the host warning them failure to tackle energy and food crises would be catastrophic. The two-day meeting on the resort island of Bali started under the shadow of a war that has roiled markets, spiked food prices and stoked breakneck inflation, a week after Moscow's top diplomat walked out of talks with the forum's foreign ministers. In her opening remarks, Indonesian Finance Minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati called on ministers to work together with a spirit of "cooperation, collaboration and consensus" because "the world is watching" for solutions. "The cost of our failure is more than we can afford," she told delegates. "The humanitarian consequences for the world and for many low-income coun-

tries would be catastrophic." Top global finance figures, including US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, will discuss the rebound from the coronavirus pandemic. But the impact of the Ukraine war - weighing on an already brittle global recovery - will top the agenda. A day before the meeting, Yellen set the tone, calling Russia's war in Ukraine the "greatest challenge" to the global economy and saying members of Putin's government "have no place" at the talks. "We are seeing negative spillover effects from that war in every corner of the world, particularly with respect to higher energy prices and rising food insecurity," she said. Yellen is expected to press G20 allies for a price cap on Russian oil to choke off President Vladimir Putin's war chest and pressure Moscow to end its invasion while bringing down energy costs. Both Russian Finance Minister Anton Siluanov and Ukrainian Finance Minister Serhiy Marchenko are participating virtually in the meeting. Yellen in April led a multinational walkout of

finance officials as Russian delegates spoke at a G20 meeting in Washington. No communique was issued at the end of that meeting. It is unclear if a similar walkout will take place at this meeting, after no foreign minister walked out last week, but Yellen would not be drawn on if they would repeat their joint action. There is also unlikely to be a final communique issued when talks end on Saturday because of disagreements with Russia. G20 chair Indonesia - which pursues a neutral foreign policy - has refrained from uninviting Russia despite Western pressure. Italy and Canada's finance ministers are in attendance, but Chinese Finance Minister Liu Kun and Britain's new Finance Minister Nadhim Zahawi are only attending virtually. International Monetary Fund chief Kristalina Georgieva will appear in person after saying Wednesday the global economic outlook had "darkened significantly" because of Moscow's invasion.

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**Briefs**

**Europe heatwave: Thousands escape wildfires**

WEB DESK

LISBON: Residents and holidaymakers have fled towns and villages in France as fires are whipped up by high winds and tinder-dry conditions in several countries in Europe. More than 10,000 people have been forced to leave the south-western Gironde region in the past few days. Dozens of fires are burning in Portugal and Spain where temperatures have surged above 40C.

At least 281 deaths in the two countries were linked to the heatwave. Several towns in western Spain have been evacuated. The head of France's firefighters' federation has warned of the impact global warming is having on civil protection. "It's firefighters, civil security who deal with the effects on a daily basis - and these effects aren't in 2030, they're right now," said Grégory Allione.

Heatwaves have become more frequent, more intense, and last longer because of human-induced climate change. The world has already warmed by about 1.1C since the industrial era began and temperatures will keep rising unless governments around the world make steep cuts to emissions. Firefighters in Spain fought to protect the town of Monsagro as fires erupted further south in the Monfragüe national park, home to rare species of birds. The main N-5 route in Cáceres just east of the park was cut off when a forest fire reached the road.

Temperatures were set to top 40C in large areas of western Spain as well as Portugal on Friday. At Pinho in the north, 47C was recorded on Thursday, a record high for July in mainland Portugal. However, forecasters in Spain said temperatures would begin to fall on Friday.

**KS Relief dispatches 3000 food bags for flood affectees**

ISLAMABAD: King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KS Relief) has dispatched emergency relief trucks carrying 285 tons loaded with essential food items to Balochistan to meet the needs of flood affected people. As many as 3000 food packages would help 21000 flood affected people living in six different districts of Balochistan including Lasbela, Khuzdar, Quetta, Pashin, Killa Saifullah and Qilla Abdullah, said a press release on Friday. Each food package weighted 95 kg contained all the necessary food items comprising 80 Kg flour, 5 liters cooking oil, 5 Kg sugar and chickpea. The food bags had been distributed in collaboration with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and local government of Balochistan. - APP

**ANP announces support to MQM in LG elections**

DNA

KARACHI: more than 30 years old enmity has been ended on Friday as the Awami National Party (ANP), a strong voice of the Pakhtun vote bank in Karachi announced support for Mutahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) in upcoming local government elections in the city. The ANP Sindh head Shahi Syed and MQM leader Waseem Akhtar held a joint press conference and announced to support each other in LG polls. Shahi Syed while addressing the media persons said that Karachi is the highest tax-paying city in the country and they will contest local body elections together with the MQM. Waseem Akhtar while talking to the media thanked the ANP for supporting his party, the MQM's candidates.

# Thai embassy inaugurates wall painted with Pakistani truck art



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Thailand Chakkrid Krachaiwong painting the wall. - DNA



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Thailand Chakkrid Krachaiwong and his staff looking at the wall painted with Pakistani truck art. The 236 feet long wall was painted in two week. - DNA

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Royal Thai Embassy in Pakistan launched a new wall of 70th anniversary of mark the Pakistan-Thai relation which combines Pakistan and Thai cultures. Ambassador of Thailand Chakkrid Krachaiwong along with the embassy staff formally

inaugurated the wall in the presence of members of Pakistani mass media. The wall is 236 feet long and 10 feet high and painted by Pakistani artists from Peshawar. It took the artist to paint the entire wall in just two weeks. Ambassador of Thailand while talking to media on the occasion told that the wall has been painted in connection with the 70 years of Thailand-Pakistan diplomatic

relations. He said that more celebrations in this regard have been planned in other cities as well. A grand reception shall also be organized somewhere in September in this regard. The ambassador further said, Thai nationals, especially the youth have been showing huge interest in visiting Pakistan. They love to explore natural beauty of the Northern Areas of Pakistan besides visiting the Buddhist

places located in various parts of Pakistan. He said, over 200 Thai nationals are residing in Pakistan, mostly the students who are perusing their studies in various Pakistani universities. While giving the trade figures the ambassador said that the trade between the two countries has picked up considerably thus taking the annual trade figure to 1.8 billion US dol-

lars. During the pandemic, he said, these figures witnessed a decrease however it was encouraging to note that the trade activity is back on the track. He said the Thai Airways had already resumed its operations from Pakistan facilitating people from both countries. The flow of tourists on both sides has increased manifold after resumption of the direct flights.

## Pakistan needs to reframe regional connectivity push

DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) has suggested that the policymakers should reframe Pakistan's regional connectivity push to improve the economy and tackle the back-breaking inflation instead of relying on the traditional old policies. PBF Vice President, Usman Kaira said look at India and China, which despite their border and other disputes, have a thriving bilateral trade that has now touched the figure of \$125bn. Likewise, China and the US maintain a robust trade and investment relationship despite the onset of strategic competition between them.

Kaira while speaking at seminar said what Pakistan needs is a change of mindset. Nothing should matter more to our policymakers than the socioeco-



conomic well-being of our people, which in turn would enhance our national security. The world is changing rapidly. Nations have learned that cooperation and competition can coexist as long as there is mutuality of benefit. No confidence-building measure is more potent than bilateral trade as it can help reduce mutual distrust and

position countries to address tougher issues on the bilateral agenda. In economic terms as well, low transportation costs, availability of road and rail links, and socially identical consumer bases provide a clear edge to trading with neighbours. The economic activity thus generated provides our traders access to vast regional markets.

We need a whole new approach to positively engaging with all our neighbours in securing for our traders more opportunities of balanced and mutually beneficial trade and investment opportunities, in the larger interest of economic security of the people of Pakistan. In due course, trade and investment ties can become a building block towards durable peace in South Asia. PBF official also said Pakistan is sitting on huge trade potential that remains largely untapped.

## Monsoon torrential rains cause 186 deaths

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Monsoon torrential rains causing multiple risks and hazards have resulted in 186 deaths and injured 181 individuals so far since June 14 across the country. The country received abnormal rainfall during the prevailing monsoon season with record precipitation in various parts of the country especially Sindh and Balochistan. The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Friday issued a daily situation report of the damages and losses reported across the country due to heavy monsoon rains. The report mentioned that almost six deaths were reported in various districts of Sindh province due to heavy monsoon rains. In Sindh province's District Badin two males died due to electrocution and three perished to lightning strike. In District Sanghar, a male died and three got injured due to a windstorm. In Tharparker, 21 Goats died due to lightning strike in Islamkot area. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), due to heavy rains in Lower Chitral, 20 houses got partially damaged, in District Swabi, 15 houses partially and a house got completely damaged.

## Petroleum dealers announce nationwide strike

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Fill the tanks of your motorcycles and other vehicles as the Petroleum Dealers Association has announced an indefinite strike before Monday, July 18. The union has summoned a session regarding the strike and negotiations with the government over the dealer's margin. Petrol pumps cannot operate under the current margin, they claim. Pakistan Petrol Dealers Association (PPDA) President Asif Gujjar, Information Secretary Jahanzeb Malik and Secretary General Chaudhry Noman Majeed announced an indefinite strike from July 18. The petroleum dealers demanded that their working capital is triple but the volume of business is the same as before so the profit margin should be increased by six per cent. The petrol dealers had announced to stage a nationwide strike on July 18 if the government failed to fulfill their demand of fixing the dealer margin at 6%. They also announced that they will continue the strike and will not open petrol pumps till their demands are fulfilled. "Right now we receive only 3.90 per cent margin after-tax deduction," they explained. The association said that the minimum wage of an employee has reached Rs25,000 and prices of other commodities were also increased. The dealers said that the margin should be increased up to 6% due to the increase in the expenditures.

## US to resume Int'l Space Station flights with Russia

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: The United States said Friday it would resume flights to the International Space Station with Russia, despite its attempts to isolate Moscow over the invasion of Ukraine. "To ensure continued safe operations of the International Space Station, protect the lives of astronauts and ensure continuous US presence in space, NASA will resume integrated crews on US crew spacecraft and the Russian Soyuz," US space agency NASA said in a statement. NASA said that astronaut Frank Rubio would fly with two Russian cosmonauts on a Soyuz rocket scheduled to launch on September 21 from Kazakhstan, with another astronaut, Loral O'Hara, taking another mission in early 2023. In a first, Russian cosmonauts will join NASA astronauts on SpaceX's new Crew-5 which will launch in September from Florida with a Japanese astronaut also on the mission. Another joint mission on the SpaceX Crew-6 will fly out in early 2023, NASA said. The move comes despite the European Space Agency earlier this week terminating its relationship with Russia on a mission to put a rover on Mars, infuriating Russian space chief Dmitry Rogozin who banned cosmonauts on the ISS from using a European-made robotic arm.

But hours before NASA's announcement, President Vladimir Putin dismissed Rogozin, a firebrand nationalist and ardent backer of the Ukraine invasion who once quipped that US astronauts should get to the space station on trampolines rather than Russian rockets. NASA said that the International Space Station was always designed to be operated jointly with participation from the space agencies of the United States, Russia, Europe, Japan and Canada. "The station was designed to be interdependent and relies on contributions from each space agency to function. No one agency has the capability to function independent of the others," it said.

## KSA opens airspace to 'all carriers' in gesture to Israel

AGENCIES

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia announced Friday it was lifting restrictions on "all carriers" using its airspace, an apparent gesture of openness towards Israel ahead of US President Joe Biden's arrival. The civil aviation authority "announces the decision to open the Kingdom's airspace for all air carriers that meet the requirements of the authority for overflying", it said in a statement on Twitter.

The United States has hinted in recent weeks that more Arab nations could take steps to improve ties with Israel. All eyes have been on Saudi Arabia, where Biden will travel Friday afternoon despite a previous vow to treat the kingdom as a "pariah" over the 2018 murder and dismemberment of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi. Biden, who began his regional tour in Israel Wednesday, is to travel directly from the Jewish state to Saudi Arabia - becoming the first US president to fly from there to an Arab

nation that does not recognise it. In 2017, his predecessor, Donald Trump, made the journey in reverse. Riyadh has repeatedly said it would stick to the decades-old Arab League position of not establishing official ties with Israel until the conflict with the Palestinians is resolved. But the kingdom did not show any opposition when its regional ally, the United Arab Emirates, established diplomatic ties with Israel in 2020, followed by Bahrain and Morocco under the US-brokered Abraham Accords.



NEW YORK: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal is meeting with members of the European Parliament on the sidelines of Un HLPF 2022. - DNA

## SL seeks way forward after president quits

MONITORING DESK

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka is seeking a way out of political and economic chaos after its President Gotabaya Rajapaksa resigned and fled the country. Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe was sworn in as temporary leader on Friday and has the ruling party's backing to take the role permanently. This makes him the favourite when a new president is chosen next week, but may prove unacceptable to protesters. Mr Rajapaksa fled to Singapore, sparking celebrations in the street. He and his family have been blamed for a deep economic crisis,

with Sri Lankans facing acute shortages of food, fuel and other basic supplies. Businesses and shops reopened in the capital, Colombo, on Friday morning after a curfew was lifted, but soldiers could still be seen on major roads. At the same time, thousands of people were back in long queues outside petrol stations. The process of parliament electing a new president will begin on Saturday, with MPs expected to take a vote on 20 July. After being sworn in as interim leader, Mr Wickremesinghe promised to act quickly to put a democratically elected president in place. "I will take immediate steps to establish the rule of law and peace in the country.

I accept 100% the right to peaceful protests. But some are trying to do acts of sabotage," he said. Given the governing party has a majority, MPs are thought likely to back Mr Wickremesinghe, who has close links with the Rajapaksa family. But whether Sri Lanka's public would accept this is another matter, because Mr Wickremesinghe's resignation as PM was a key demand of protesters. Earlier this week, crowds stormed the former prime minister's compound, clashing with security forces. A demonstrator, Manuri Pabasari, told the BBC at the time that a protest rally against Ranil Wickremesinghe was expected in the

coming days. "He has no people's mandate [and] is a well known Rajapaksa supporter," she added. "I mean the new president and the new prime minister should be not a Rajapaksa supporter." Meanwhile, Singapore says the ousted president Gotabaya Rajapaksa did not ask for political asylum when he arrived there. The former president, who arrived with his wife and two bodyguards, no longer has legal immunity as a head of state and his position is now more precarious as he tries to find a safe country to shelter in. He is expected to stay in Singapore for some time before possibly moving to the United Arab Emirates, Sri Lankan security sources told AFP news agency.

## Trump to make first return to Washington

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: Former President Donald Trump will make his first return later this month to the US capital since leaving the office for what is being billed as a "major policy speech," an organization announced on Thursday. The ex-president is expected to deliver closing remarks on the last day of the two-day America First Agenda Summit on July 26, a conference hosted by a pro-Trump group. Trump's speech comes as the House of Representatives committee probing the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection continues to hold hearings digging into the events of that day, during which Trump's supporters stormed the US Capitol in a bid to prevent President Joe Biden from assuming office.