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SCO plays significant role among member states: Uzbek envoy

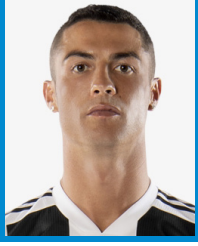
Detailed News On Page-04

Sino-Pak FMs meetings show close relations

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Ronaldo 'happy to be back' for Man Utd

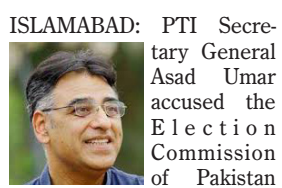
Detailed News On Page-06



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PTI files plea in IHC: Asad Umar

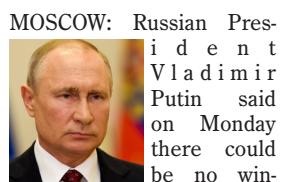
DNA



ISLAMABAD: PTI Secretary General Asad Umar accused the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) of becoming a part of the PDM alliance on Monday after he filed a petition, on his party's behalf, in the Islamabad High Court against the electoral body's decision to accept the resignations of 11 members of the National Assembly. "A petition has been submitted in the Islamabad High Court against the election commission accepting the resignations of 11 members of the assembly of their choice," the PTI leader said on Twitter.

No one can win a nuclear war

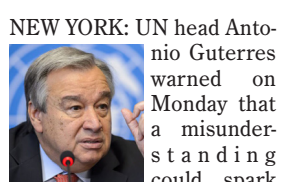
NEWS DESK



MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Monday there could be no winners in a nuclear war and no such war should ever be started. Putin made the comment in a letter to participants of a conference on the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT), more than five months into his war on Ukraine. "We proceed from the fact that there can be no winners in a nuclear war and it should never be unleashed, and we stand for equal and indivisible security for all members of the world community," he said.

UN chief warns of 'nuclear annihilation'

DNA



NEW YORK: UN head Antonio Guterres warned on Monday that a misunderstanding could spark nuclear destruction as the United States, Britain and France urged Russia to stop "its dangerous nuclear rhetoric and behaviour." At the opening of a key nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) conference in New York, Guterres warned that the world faced "a nuclear danger not seen since the height of the Cold War".

PTI's Prohibited Funding ECP all set to announce verdict today

Security around the Red Zone tightened; Earlier the ECP said it would announce verdict in August

SHUJAAT HAMZA / DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) Monday said PTI's foreign funding case verdict – which was reserved on June 21 – will be announced today at 10am. The election commission today released the cause list for the prohibited funding case. According to the cause list, the verdict will be announced by a three-member bench led by Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja. The decision to announce the verdict comes after a Financial Times exposé revealed that the PTI received funding from Wootton Cricket Club belonging to Abraaj founder Arif Naqvi. The funds were generated through a charity match and an Arab personality also pitched in a large sum of money. The FT report provided ammunition to the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), and they demanded an early announcement of the verdict – in the case which was filed in 2014 by Akbar S Babar. Earlier, ECP officials, on the condition of anonymity, told that the election commission will announce the foreign funding verdict during

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PTI to protest outside ECP

KHAYYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan said that intra-party elections would be in the PTI after the general elections by using technology in order to ensure transparency and meritocracy in the party since PTI became the largest political party of the country. Speaking at the party's national council here on Monday, Imran Khan stressed the need for working on the party's ideology as he said that he realised in these four months that some of the party members do not know about its ideology. He stated that the PTI chose its leaders through the Insaf Students Federation (ISF) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa by holding elections within the federation. "We are going to follow the same electoral

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Imran announces intra-party elections

Claims PTI to win next polls with two-third majority; says PTI to protest outside ECP on Thursday for CEC's resignation


ISLAMABAD: PTI Chairman Imran Khan addressing the National Council meeting, on Monday. – DNA

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan said that intra-party elections would be in the PTI after the general elections by using technology in order to ensure transparency and meritocracy in the party since PTI became the largest political party of the country. Speaking at the party's national council here on Monday, Imran Khan stressed the need for working on the party's ideology as he said that he realised in these four months that some of the party members do not know about its ideol-

ogy. He stated that the PTI chose its leaders through the Insaf Students Federation (ISF) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa by holding elections within the federation. "We are going to follow the same electoral process as that of ISF to choose leaders based on merit," he added. He said that PTI has become a big party as leaders like Murad Saeed have emerged in PTI through ISF. Comparing his party with the PML-N and PPP, Imran Khan said that there was no concept of merit within these parties due to which they shrunk fast and reduced to some specific pockets.

PTI Chairman recalled that the PTI government tried its best to introduce Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) to ensure free and transparent elections but the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja's sabotaged all their efforts to secure the system of rigging for PPP and PML-N. However, he claimed that despite all these cabal of crooks gathered against PTI, his party would get a two-thirds majority in the next elections, as these corrupt rulers exposed before the people within few months. Barring the coalition government, Imran Khan said that these parties were not interested in rectifying the economy or reducing inflation but were only interested in obtaining the NRO-II,

Continued on Page 06



RAWALPINDI: Wouter Plomp, Netherlands Ambassador to Pakistan pays a farewell call to General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at GHQ. – DNA

Dutch envoy pays farewell call on COAS
Army Chief lauds services of the outgoing ambassador

NEWS DESK

RAWALPINDI: Wouter Plomp, Netherlands Ambassador to Pakistan paid a farewell call to General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at GHQ. During the meeting, matters of mutual interests, regional security situation and bilateral cooperation in various fields were discussed. COAS said that Pakistan values its relations with the Netherlands and we earnestly look forward to enhance mutually beneficial multi-domain relations based on common interests. He also thanked visiting dignitary for his services and appreciated his contributions for fostering strong ties between the two countries. The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's role for regional stability and ensured to play his role for further improvement in diplomatic cooperation with Pakistan at all levels.

FS, Sri Lankan HC discuss ties

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood Monday received High Commissioner of Sri Lanka Wijewickrama at his office here and during the meeting they discussed matters of bilateral interest. The foreign secretary reaffirmed Pakistan's support and solidarity for brotherly Sri Lankan people. He stressed importance Pakistan attached to its multi-dimensional relations with Sri Lanka and reiterated Pakistan's resolve to further deepen this valuable partnership.

IMF programme

Politicians led COAS to intervene Ch. Shujaat Hussain says everything is fine in Punjab


STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: PML-Q senior leader Chaudhry Shujaat Monday blamed politicians after the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa intervened in the economic matters of the country by contacting a US official and requested the early dispersal of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) funds. "Why was there a need for the army chief to interfere?" Shujaat questioned while addressing a press conference flanked by Tariq Bashir Cheema in the federal capital after recent political activities in the province that took a toll on the economy of Pakistan. Last week, Gen Bajwa reached out to the US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman on a phone call to help Islamabad secure an early dispersal of \$1.2 billion in

funds under an IMF loan programme, Nik-kei Asia reported.

Commenting on the developments that took place in the largest province over the last few weeks in the wake of the Supreme Court's verdict on the chief minister's election, Shujaat said: "Everything is fine and everything will remain fine."

The former prime minister said that he wanted to speak about various issues, including the economic crisis and the allegations levelled against him, among others.

"Speaking truth has become a sin these days," Shujaat said, adding that the public, as well as the politicians, hurled filthy abuses at him and his sons.

'Attempts are being made to defame my sons' Regarding his sons and their involvement in political matters, the PML-Q leader – who was recently removed from his party position following the letter controversy during the CM's election – said: "Attempts are being made to defame my sons, they have taken all decisions after consulting me and I am proud of them." He further added that those who levelled allegations against him and his sons have "no standing." "Politicians are being blamed for

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Lt. Gen Sarfraz Ali on board

Army helicopter goes missing

Six people including corps commander 12 Corp, 2 Brigs, 2 Majors, DG Coast guard on board

RAWALPINDI: A Pakistan Army aviation helicopter en route from Quetta to Karachi with important personalities aboard has gone missing on Monday,

the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) confirmed in a tweet. Taking to Twitter, the military's media wing said that the aviation helicopter was



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PLA, Pak Army brothers in arms, says Army Chief – Page 08

PM orders strict action over unavailability of food

BUREAU REPORT / DNA

QILA SAIFULLAH: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday ordered strict action against the provincial administration over negligence in ensuring the availability of food and drinking water at the tent city set up to accommodate the flood-affected people. The prime minister issued the directive during his visit to the tent city in the Khusnob area of Qila Saifullah district, saying that negligence over relief and rescue operations would not be tolerated. Talking to journalists, PM Sharif expressed regret over the plight of displaced persons who faced unavailability of edible items at relief camps and were left with no other option but to travel back to their homes to get food. He said loopholes had been identified regarding the lack of a record-keeping system at the medical relief system at camps and stressed addressing the issue at the earliest. He expressed grief over the death of eight children at the relief camps and extended condolences to their families over their loss.

The prime minister also directed the authorities concerned to ensure the disbursement of compensation money to the flood-affected people of Balochistan within 24 hours. He said residents of partially or completely damaged houses would be given similar compensation of Rs 500,000. He mentioned that torrential rains led to heavy loss of lives and infrastructure in Balochistan, for which the federal government was determined to extend every possible assistance to the provincial government. He asked the National Disaster and Management Authority (NDMA) and Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA)

to pace up relief and rescue operations to best facilitate the victims and conduct a joint survey of damaged houses and crops. Chief Minister Balochistan Abdul Quddus Bizenjo said though the



provincial government had ensured the availability of food rations for one month for the tent city, however, said, an inquiry would be conducted to find out the cause of unavailability of food and water at the relief camps. He said the District Commissioner of any flood-affected area, where negligence was reported, would be suspended immediately. Federal Minister for Housing Maulana Abdul Wasay said the government would make every effort to rehabilitate the displaced people due to floods. Chief Secretary Balochistan Abdul Aziz Aqeeli and Chairman NDMA Lieutenant General Akhtar Nawaz briefed the prime minister about the damage incurred by torrential rains in Balochistan.

It was informed that four camps with medical facilities had been set up for flood-affected people and a tube well system in the area was functioning with solar energy to meet the water needs. It was highlighted that in 30 years, Balochistan witnessed an average of 500 percent more rains after the pre-monsoon spell commenced on June 13. The briefing told that so far, 136 deaths had been reported with 70 injured. As many as 1,100 persons received minor injuries and were given first-aid. Around 200,000 acres of agricultural land were inundated while 20,500 people were shifted to safe places. Also, the connectivity of Motorway M-8 and the Quetta-Karachi national highway was restored. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif arrived in the provincial capital of Balochistan on a day-long visit to oversee relief operations in the flood-affected areas. Federal Ministers Sardar Israr Tareen, Marriyum Aurangzeb, Maulana Abdul Wasay, Nawabzada Shahzain Bugti, Minister of State Muhammad Hashim Notezai, Member of National Assembly Salahuddin Ayubi, and Chairman NDMA accompanied the prime minister.

Briefs

Youth
commits
suicide

FAISALABAD: A youth committed suicide over domestic dispute in the area of Millat Town police station. Rescue 1122 spokesman said on Monday that 27-year-old Muhammad Rizwan resident of Mohallah Shah Abad Millat Road became dejected over some domestic dispute and ended his life by shooting himself in the head. Meanwhile, Rescue 1122 found corpse of a 50-year-old unknown woman lying near GTS Chowk and handed over both bodies to the police for further action, he added. – APP

Over 8.77m
people
vaccinated
in Faisalabad

FAISALABAD: Over 8.77 million (8,773,897) people have so far been vaccinated against COVID-19 in the district. bDistrict Health Officer Dr Ataul Mun'im said on Monday that 4,723,773 citizens were injected first dose while 3,965,212 were administered the second dose of vaccine. He further said that 39,873 health workers were also given first dose while 45,039 received the second dose of vaccine. He said that sufficient stock of coronavirus vaccine was available in the district. As of now 90,852 first doses and 60,568 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. In order to facilitate the people these centers had been established in various areas of the city including Allied Hospital, District Headquarters Hospital, Government General Hospital, Faisalabad Institute of Cardiology, Government General Hospital Samanabad, Children Hospital, Sports Complex Samanabad, Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Jaranwala, Samundri, Tandlianwala, Chak Jhumra, Sports Complex Chak Jhumra, Sports Complex Jaranwala, Government General Hospital Chak 224/R-B, New Building RHC Khurrianwala, New Building THQ Samundri, New Building THQ Tandlianwala, Social Security Hospital Madina Town, Wapda Hospital, Rural Health Centers Mureed Wala, Chak 174-JB, Chak 134-JB, Chak 229/R-B, Chak 65-GB, RHC Lundianwala Jaranwala, RHC Khurrianwala Jaranwala, Pindi Sheikh Musa, Kanjwani, Mamukanjan, RHC Chak 400-GB, RHC Chak 153/R-B, RHC Chak 374-GB and Chak 469-GB, he added. He further said that timing of these vaccination centers was 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. except Sports Complex Samanabad center which would remain open round the clock. – APP

Rivers
Indus, Kabul
run in low
flood:FFC

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Flood Commission (FFC) on Monday said currently rivers Indus and Kabul are flowing in "Low Flood" at Tarbela-Kalabagh, Kalabagh-Chashma, Chashma-Taunsa, Taunsa-Guddu and Guddu-Sukkur and at Nowshera and Warsak respectively. According to daily FFC report all other main rivers of Indus River System (Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi & Sutlej) are flowing normal. The combined live storage of country's three major reservoirs is 6.684 million acre feet (MAF). Yesterday's Well-Marked Low-Pressure Area over Southern Punjab (around DG Khan Division) has moved Southwards and lies over Northeastern Balochistan, however it has weakened into low and is likely to weaken further. At present, trough of Westerly Wave lies over Kashmir and Adjoining area with seasonal low continues to prevail over Western Balochistan. Weak moist currents from Arabian Sea are penetrating into upper parts of Pakistan upto 5000 feet. According to Flood Forecasting Division (FFD) has predicted scattered thunderstorm/rain over D.G. Khan Division of Punjab and Kohat, Bannu and D.I Khan Divisions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for the next 24 hours. – APP

Calls for increase in advertisement rates

APNS Federal Committee
slams campaign against PIO

Committee expresses dissatisfaction over distribution of ads; says APNS member publications especially periodicals being ignored

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Committee of the All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) in a meeting while expressing reservations about the distribution of government ads, observed that the APNS member publications were constantly being ignored. The committee further remarked that the way non-APNS publications were being accommodated rather on a regular basis, was indeed a source of disenchantment for the member publications. The Federal Committee which met with Gauhar Zahid Malik in chair also condemned vilification campaign against the Principle Information Officer (PIO) Mobashar Hassan adding the APNS committee, despite its reservations over distribution of ads, stood behind the PIO and will not be part of any negative campaign. The committee termed the campaign baseless and false. It observed that the Federal Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb during her last interaction with the APNS Executive Committee and in the presence of the Federal Information Secretary and the PIO had categorically stated to look after the periodicals properly, however, the committee members noted that nothing had been done so far in that regard. There are certain periodicals that have not got even a single ad ever since this government has taken over, it was noted during the meeting and there was an urgent need to hold a meeting with the PIO as soon as possible and take up these issues with him. The committee also held a threadbare discussion on the problems



ISLAMABAD: Members of the APNS Federal Committee posing for a picture after the meeting. – DNA

faced by the industry these days and suggested a number of ways to tackle them. Chairman of the committee Gauhar Zahid Malik pointed out that the prices of the printing materials had sky-rocketed and yet the government was still to announce any relief measures. The committee called upon the government to immediately announce an increase in the advertisement rates and other incentives in order to prop up the print media industry. The committee members raised the issue of lack of cooperation from the offices of the President and the Prime Minister adding the print media journalists hardly got any invitations from these offices. The

committee resolved to take up the issue with the relevant quarters. The committee extended its full support to the government's efforts regarding relief and rehabilitation operations in the flood-hit areas. It was also resolved during the meeting that the print media would continue to play its constructive role in highlighting miseries and plight of the flood-affected people in Balochistan and other areas of the country. The committee was informed that efforts were being made to get appointment with Prime Minister for resolution of long-standing issues. It was also suggested that the government should award "grant loans" to the print media industry and these loans

could be settled in ads. This will serve as breather for small newspapers, it was noted by the committee members. The committee also expressed concerns that the government was providing almost zero-business to print media which should be looked into urgently. In view of the rising cost of newsprint, ink, labour and other expenses, the government should announce a generous relief package for the industry. The meeting was chaired by Gauhar Zahid Malik while those who attended the meeting included Sheikh Danish Iftikhar, Khushnood Ali Khan, Tahir Mughal, Wasim Ahmed, Ansar Mahmood Bhatti, Rukhsana Saulat Saleemi and Tahir Jamil.

Food outlets
sealed for
unhygienic
conditions

The DC has said that district administration of the provincial capital is active and paying consecutive visits to bazaars.

PESHAWAR: District administration Peshawar has sealed the Afghan Saddaqt Juices (Arbab Road), Islamia Restaurant and Peshawari Ice Cream during raids on various restaurants on University Road, said a press release issued here on Monday. On the directives of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Peshawar, Shafiqullah Khan, Additional Assistant Commissioner (AAC), Zainab Naqvi inspected various restaurants on University Road during Sunday night. During the inspection, she sealed Afghan Saddaqt Juice (Arbab Road), Islamia restaurant, Peshawari Ice Cream and Baitul Arab Restaurant over unhygienic conditions in their kitchens while the proprietor of University Tikkah Hut was arrested. The DC has said that district administration of the provincial capital is active and paying consecutive visits to bazaars. He directed the inspection of bazaars on a daily basis during both day and night and took stern legal action over violations of hygienic principles. – APP

Pakistan Navy rescue and relief
operation continue in Baluchistan

DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan Navy Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief (HADR) operations continue in differ-

ent areas of Balochistan. In the recent heavy rains spell and flash floods, Pakistan Navy through utilizing its resources is providing support to Civil Administration of Balochistan in undergoing

rescue and relief operations. Pakistan Navy has set up a tent village at Bela near Uthal to provide shelter to the locals who have lost their homes in the flash floods. Food and health facilities are

being provided to the displaced persons at the tent village. Moreover, free medical camps have been established in the area to provide first aid and free medical facilities to the locals. A dedicated team of doctors and paramedical staff is providing treatment and free medicines to aggrieved populace. PN helicopters continued their operations in transporting ration bags, cooked food and relief goods at far-flung rural areas of Lasbela Distt. Pakistan Navy, along with civil government and various philanthropic organizations is providing continuous assistance to the flood stricken people while transitioning to rehabilitation operation in the worst affected areas. Relief operation in Balochistan is a practical manifestation of PN's resolve to extend all out support to fellow countrymen in the hour of need.

Senate urges
nation to help
flood victims

ISLAMABAD: Senators in the upper on Monday urged the nation to come forward in support of the flood affectees, who need their help in testing time particularly in Balochistan province. In his ruling, Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani said that the whole nation should come forward and take part in the relief work to help brethren facing hardships due to floods and rains. Talking on point of order, Senator Kauda Babar said that this time people were going through very difficult situation due to torrential rains and flash floods in Balochistan. He said that a number of link bridges were destroyed in floods and there was urgent need of distributing relief goods in various parts of Balochistan province. He said that the whole nation should come forward to help flood affectees. Senator Kauda Babar said that media should highlight the hardships of the people going through testing time.

Taking part in debate, Senator Bahramand Khan Tangi said that Prime Minister on visit to flood hit areas, adding that we all people as a nation should come forward to help those who were going through testing times due to flash floods. Senator Manzoor Kakar said that flood have caused damages and losses in the whole country. He appreciated that Prime Minister of Pakistan Shehbaz Sharif on visit to flood hit areas. However, he suggested that Joint Investigation Team (JIT) should be constituted to probe breach in dams. He said that more lives and property losses were caused due to the breach of these dams. Federal Minister for Water Resources Khurshed Shah said that he support the suggestion of constituting JIT as dams funding were given by federal government. He said that JIT must be constituted to probe it. Senator Tahir Bizenjo said that agriculture loans should be rightten off and compensates the losses of the people in flood hit areas. He appreciated the Prime Minister for visiting Balochistan province to meet flood affectees. Senator Azam Swati said that we should provide maximum support to the flood victims. Leader of the House in the Senate Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar said that in this hour of grief and calamity, we stood with people facing hardships due to floods in Balochistan and others parts of the country. – APP

HSH launches its second
campus in Peshawar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Hashoo School of Hospitality Management has launched its Peshawar Campus by partnering with Institute of Management Sciences, Peshawar (IMSciences) to reinforce the resolve of the government to promote hospitality and tourism in KP Province. In this regard a signing agreement was held between HSHM and IMSciences at Pearl-Continental Hotel Peshawar. The event was attended by a number of dignitaries from KP Government, IMSciences and Hashoo Group. HSHM, Pakistan's pre-



mier Hospitality and Tourism Management Institute by Hashoo Group, has been actively nurturing talent in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry by imparting knowledge, skill sets and hands-on experience since September 2021. HSHM as an approved study cen-

tre for Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality (CTH) which is delivering a gold standard international curriculum developed in collaboration with market leaders in hospitality and tourism. IMSciences is a highly reputed government owned autonomous institute which was found in 1999. Catering to a large number of students, it is ranked 1st in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Management Sciences, and holds its strong position at number 4 in business studies by HEC. HSHM and IMSciences have joined hands to bring this valued educational program in Hospitality and Tourism, to the youth of KP and surroundings. With seasoned faculty and academic excellence offered by IMSciences, HSHM is offering a 2+1 years Associate degree/ Diploma leading towards pathways to numerous countries leading to a BSC Hons Degree from abroad at a very economical cost.

A joker ruined
the society: Marri

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Saftey and Central Information Secretary of PPPP Shazia Atta Marri while criticizing on Pakistan Tehreke-Insaf leadership said that a joker has ruined the country's society on the basis of foreign prohibited funding and PTI chief Imran Khan has promoted the culture of abuse and immorality in Pakistan. She said that delay in the announcement of judgment in PTT's foreign funding case is tantamount to delay in justice. "Is Election Commission of Pakistan is under pressure", She questioned. She further said that Imran Khan has been caught red-handed in foreign funding case and a person like Imran Khan is blaming on others who had been involved in every evil and fraud. PTI chief Imran's own children are not living in Pakistan, that's why he has no interest in the welfare and development of the country. She added that Imran Khan has destroyed the society and economy of Pakistan through foreign fundings and he is using pressure tactics to prevent the Election Commission of Pakistan to announce its verdict on foreign funding case. – DNA

Resolution of Kashmir issue
imperative for regional peace

FAISALABAD: World leaders should play their effective role for the resolution of Kashmir issue as it was vital for a durable peace in the region. In a statement issued here on Monday, Member Punjab Assembly (MPA) Ali Abbas Khan said that India was using force to crush voice of Kashmiri people who were struggle for their right of self-determination for the last seven decades. He said that Indian atrocities had crossed all boundaries in Kashmir valley where innocent Kashmiris were being killed brutally just to deprive them of their fundamental rights of freedom. He said that Kashmir was an integral part of Pakistan and Pakistani nation would continue its moral, political and diplomatic support to Kashmiri people till their freedom. The United Nations should play its due role for early resolution of Kashmir issue for a durable peace in the region, he added. – APP

CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Maintenance Division-I

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders are hereby invited on percentage basis on NIT cost from the contractors duly enlisted with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) in appropriate category and having valid PEC license for the year 2022-23 for work as detailed below: -

S No.	Name of Work	NIT Cost	Earnest Money	Tender fee	Date & time of receiving of tenders	Date & Time opening of tenders
1	Repair / maint of H No. 11/4-E, St.51, F-6/4	Rs.704,091/-	Rs. 21,500/-	Rs.1,000/-	17-08-2022 At 11:30 AM	17-08-2022 At 12:00 Noon
2	Repair / maint of H No. 4/1-E, St.50, F-6/4	Rs.918,627/-	Rs.28,000/-	Rs.1,000/-	17-08-2022 At 11:30 AM	17-08-2022 At 12:00 Noon
3	Repair / maint of H No. 1/2-E, St.54, F-6/4	Rs.969,713/-	Rs.29,500/-	Rs.1,000/-	17-08-2022 At 11:30 AM	17-08-2022 At 12:00 Noon
4	Repair / maint of H No.35-I, St.10, F-6/3	Rs.1,940,519/-	Rs.58,500/-	Rs.1,000/-	17-08-2022 At 11:30 AM	17-08-2022 At 12:00 Noon

- Tender form / documents can be purchased on cash payment (non refundable) for the works mentioned above from the office of Deputy Director Maintenance Division-I, CDA. Last date for submission of applications for purchase of tender forms / documents is 15-08-2022 up to 12:00 Noon. The tender documents from S. No. 01 to 04 will be issued to the contractors upto 16-08-2022.
- Application on original letter pad for issuance of tender documents shall accompany the name address(s), signature of the contractor, valid enlistment / renewal of the firm with the PEC, attested copy of CNIC, professional tax certificate, active Income tax and GST Certificate and at least three number of work order in last two financial year i.e 2021-20 and 2021-22.
- The owner of the firm should submit the application and collect the tender documents by himself. In case of representative, copy of CNIC along with general / special power of attorney attested through respective court must be attached with the application. The attorney holder must be legitimate and should not be the employees of any Government / semi Government institute.
- Earnest money in the shape of call deposit generated only from firms account bearing name of firm in favour of Deputy Director Maintenance Division-I CDA from local scheduled bank of Islamabad must accompany with the application. Without call deposit, no application for issuance of tender will be entertained. Cash / cheque will not be accepted.
- Tender for the works mentioned at S.No.1 to 3 will be received and opened by Dy. Director Maintenance-I, CDA in his room No.154, Old Naval Headquarters, G-6, Islamabad and tender for the work mentioned at S.No.04 will be received and opened by Director Maintenance, CDA in his room No.152, Old Naval Headquarters, G-6, Islamabad in the presence of contractors or their authorized representatives who care to attend.
- The contractors who are interested to participate in above mentioned tenders, they will have to submit their experience certificates of completed works of similar nature during the last two financial year i.e 2020-21 and 2021-22 while submitting application, others wise tender will not be issued.
- The contractor will submit the documents as per item No.16 of instruction of tender documents along with their tender, without which tender will be liable for rejection.
- The relative of a tendering authority should not be entertained for participation in the tenders.
- The bid security of all bidders should be deposited in CDA's bank account and same should be returned after the acceptance of the contract with the successful bidder.
- In case the total bid amount is less than 10% below the NIT amount, the bidder shall submit call deposit as performance Security equal to the difference between NIT amount and total quoted amount less 10% of NIT amount. That is required Performance Security=NIT amount- total bid amount-10% of NIT amount. This call deposit shall be in addition to the earnest money for the work and shall be deposited at the time of submission of bids. Bids not carrying the performance security shall be rejected.
- The performance security of the successful bidder shall be released after completion of the project.
- PEC certificate 2022-23 & Professional Tax Certificate in original will be seen before issuance of tender.
- CDA may reject all bids or proposals at any time prior to acceptance of bid proposals. CDA shall upon request communicate, to any contractor or supplier who submitted a bid / proposal, but is not required to justify those grounds.
- This notice may be seen at CDA Website, www.cda.gov.pk and PPRA Web Site, www.ppra.org.pk

DEPUTY DIRECTOR
Maintenance Division-I

PID (I) No.622/22

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



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



Airlines	
Turkish Airlines.....	8494949



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



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Edhi Ambulance.....	115
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WASA Rawalpindi.....	5555489
CAA.....	9281092



Hospitals	
CMH.....	5611111
MH.....	5611116
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RGH.....	9290301-7
Holy Family.....	9290322-7
PIMS.....	9261170-79
Polyclinic.....	9218300-09
Shifa International.....	4603666



Departments	
CDA.....	9221334-43
CDA.....	9208301-04
Met Office.....	9250360-6
RDA.....	5555864
TMA.....	5770886
Cantonment Board.....	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan	
Corporation.....	9209224
Potohar Town.....	9209224
Rawal Town.....	5773343
Water Tank	
Islamabad.....	0321-5744480

Devastating Monsoon rains kill over 430 people

The NDMA also ensured relief activities across the country to assist the provincial disaster management authorities (PDMAs). The NDMA provided 2,400 tents, 4,000 mosquito nets and 2,900 tarpaulins to PDMA Balochistan

ISLAMABAD: The sporadic prolonged spell of heavy monsoon rains have killed 434 people and 24,420 livestock while 605 individuals got injured and 36,469 houses damaged so far in various parts of the country. The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) issued a daily 24-hour situation report that detailed various damages and losses reported across the country due to unprecedented rainfall and flash flooding. The report highlighted that in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP)'s Bajaur District, heavy rain partially damaged 13 houses whereas in Charsadda District on July 29, heavy rains injured three persons, four cattle got perished and six houses got fully and 25 houses

got partially damaged. In Dera Ismail Khan District, heavy rain on July 29 caused 16 houses partially damaged whereas in Malakand District death of three persons was reported along with seven houses partially damaged owing to heavy rain. The damages reported in Mardan District, due to heavy rain, resulted in partial damage to 14 houses, along with two houses fully damaged, and also 24 kanals maze crops got damaged. In Mohmand District, death of a person was reported along with a dozen of houses partially damaged after massive rains. In Nowshera District, heavy rainfall partially damaged a house. In South Waziristan District, two children got injured and a house partially got dam-

aged amid increased rainfall. In Swabi District, two womwn got injured and two houses got partially damaged during monsoon rain. In Swat District, two cattle died and a cattle farm got damaged by large scale rain. In Punjab's Multan District, monsoon rains wounded a child and partially damaged a house. In Jehlum District, a child was reported to be drowned in the river during rains. In Gilgit Baltistan (GB)'s Ghizer District, five houses got completely damaged due to heavy rains whereas in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK)'s Mirpur District a child was reported to be drowned in the river during rain. The NDMA also ensured relief activities across the

country to assist the provincial disaster management authorities (PDMAs). The NDMA provided 2,400 tents, 4,000 mosquito nets and 2,900 tarpaulins to PDMA Balochistan. The PDMA Sindh handed over 4,189.5 kilograms (kgs) relief items containing 40 Ration Bags, 76.5 Kg Cooking Oil, 400 Anti Snake Vaccines and Medicines and Medical Supplies to Air Force Authorities for further dispatch to Balochistan which was in addition to 600 tents sent earlier for the flood affectees of Uthal, Balochistan. Moreover, the rehabilitation activities were underway as the restoration work at Lunda Bridge at Uthal and Gaddani Bridge was in progress in Lasbela District. – APP



ISLAMABAD: A beautiful view of cloudscape during monsoon spell in the Federal Capital. – APP

President directs FBR to undo unjust taxation



ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has rejected 30 identical representations filed by the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) against the decision of the Federal Tax Ombudsman and directed FBR to stop charging excessive tax deductions from wages of the hired lecturers at the withholding stage. While upholding FTO's decision, the President observed that the withholding Income Tax at the rate of 20% over the monthly salary of Rs. 36,000 of lecturers, provisionally hired on semester-to-semester basis, was unlawful and an act of maladministration on the part of FBR. The President directed FBR to ensure that hired lecturers of Post Graduate College for Women, Bannu or other such educational institutions were not burdened with excessive tax deductions at the withholding stage. He further directed Regional Tax Officer Peshawar to reprocess the instant cases under relevant legal provisions and issue necessary clarifications and instructions to all withholding agents to implement the decision of the President and report compliance within 45 days. The President rejected FBR's arguments that the payments made to hired lecturers fell under the definition of "Services" which attracted withholding tax at the rate of 20%. He observed that under Section 12 read with sections 149 and 153(1)(b) of the Income Tax Ordinance, 2001, the wages received by hired employees under any of the forms of employment i.e., regular, ad-hoc, temporary, daily wages, contingency etc. would be treated as "Salary" and would liable to taxation as "Salary Income". He said the hired lecturers were under Master-Servant Relationship with hiring institutions as in the cases of regular, ad-hoc, temporary, hired, daily wages, contingency staff, and the law saw their wages at par with Salary pay and, therefore, their wages could not be excluded from the ambit of Salary taxation. – DNA

Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed assumes charge of Chairman HEC

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed has assumed the charge of Chairman, Higher Education Commission (HEC) on Monday. He has previously served as Chairman HEC from 2014 to 2018, Executive Director HEC from 2013 to 2014 and as Member (Operations and Planning) HEC from 2005 to 2011, said a news release issued here.

Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed has played a key role during the last two decades to formulate and implement reforms in the higher education, be it increase in

the access to university education, strengthening quality assurance systems, convincing federal and provincial governments to raise funding for higher education, development of universities' infrastructure, promoting national and international collaborations and faculty, researchers and universities, steps to stop and discourage illegal practices in the higher education sector, and a number of other initiatives.

Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed has also served as Deputy Director General, Islam-

ic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) based in Rabat, Morocco, where he was responsible for Direct-ates of Education, Science, Culture and Communication, ICPSR, CPID (Planning and Strategic Division) and ISESCO Regional Centres.

With a Bachelors and Masters of Science from University of Agriculture, Faisalabad and Masters in Business Administration and PhD from University of California, Riverside, USA, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed has over three decades of edu-

cational development and management experience at national and international level that includes teaching, research, administration, policy development, linking educational research to industry / commercialization, introducing entrepreneurial approaches to education and a diverse range of educational development programmes. His distinguished career is enriched with diverse academic, research and administrative experience both in public and private sectors of higher education in Pakistan and abroad. – APP

Call to make serious efforts to boost economy: PIAF

ISLAMABAD: PIAF chairman Faheem Ur Rehman saigol on Monday stressed the need to adopt a holistic approach aimed at developing all economic, agricultural and industrial sectors in order to support the growth of the country. He said that there is a need to devise a comprehensive strategy to promote the industry on immediate basis which will not only support the manufactures but also increase our export. He said that the caution of the Fitch and Moody's Rating Agencies have also consistently been raised by the business community, urging the authorities that instead of passing on the blame to the previous governments' miss-governance a serious and sustained attempt should be made to strengthen the economy, slashing current expenditure and raising revenue from direct taxes which still account for less than 35% of all projected collections.

Faheem Ur Rehman saigol said that more concerning is Moody's projection that the central bank would continue to increase rates over 2022 because of ongoing elevated inflationary pressures. There is elevated inflation that can be laid at the doorstep of the Fund's prior conditions due to three reasons. First, the policy rate in this country has little if any impact on headline inflation, which was 21.3 percent for June but does impact on core inflation that registered 11.5 percent for June while the weekly sensitive price index 33.12 percent for the week ending 14 July 2022. In other words, raising the policy rate to check headline inflation is unlikely to bear fruit for such a linkage does not exist in this country. Second, inflation is also imported due to the eroding rupee which has been taking a severe battering attributable to rising political uncertainty but it is also partly due to an undervalued rupee. PIAF Chairman said that the rise in the policy rate will impact on the input costs of the large-scale manufacturing sector that is a significant contributor to not only the GDP, which has an impact on tax collections, but also to employment levels. The Fund's insistence on taxing more, a part of the Finance Act 2022, would erode their purchasing power considerably. – DNA

US Embassy holds English language conference

“This event is another opportunity for the US and Pakistan to celebrate 75 years of diplomatic relations, but more importantly to celebrate 75 years of friendship,” said Mr. Tarver to the OPEN Alumni

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Acting Country Public Affairs Officer of the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad Aaron Tarver concluded the 3-day OPEN Alumni Conference 2022 with more than 500 English language professionals from across Pakistan. The conference theme, “Fostering Intercultural Competence (ICC) in the EFL Classroom,” promoted ICC as an essential aspect of English language teaching and learning. It was offered in a hybrid mode with 60 alumni participating in person in Islamabad and others joining virtually. The conference offered 25 interactive sessions, led by English Language Specialist from the United States Dr. Lynn Zimmerman and Pakistani English language teaching experts, enabling participants to learn different tools and techniques to instill intercultural knowledge, attitudes, skills, and awareness in the English language teaching context. Addressing the conference attendees, Tarver recognized the incredible work

of the Pakistani English teaching community and acknowledged their enthusiasm, motivation, and perseverance towards their own professional growth, which has moti-

vated the United States to provide \$24 million to fund English language programs. “This event is another opportunity for the United States and Pakistan to celebrate



75 years of diplomatic relations, but more importantly to celebrate 75 years of friendship,” said Mr. Tarver to the OPEN Alumni. “We are collaborating closely on many valuable projects across the spectrum – supporting Pakistan's goals to be a more prosperous and healthier nation through trade and investment, entrepreneurship support, and long-standing support in public health, including providing over 60 million COVID vaccine doses, and of course, education. You and your students are the exciting next chapter of that relationship,” he said. The Online Professional English Network (OPEN) program offers virtual learning opportunities to foreign English language educators, professionals, and learners worldwide. OPEN promotes the mutual exchange of culture and provides free access to teaching and learning materials which can be reused, adapted, and shared with others. OPEN professional development opportunities are developed by U.S. academic institutions and experts in the field of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).

OGRA reduces LPG price by Rs29.56 per 11.8-kg cylinder

ISLAMABAD: Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) on Monday issued a price-revision notification of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) for August, decreasing the commodity price by Rs29.56 per 11.8-kilogram cylinder. According to the notification, the authority reduced the locally produced LPG price by Rs2.50 per kilogram. After the revised price, the LPG cylinder would be sold in the open market at Rs2,571.41 in August, which was available at Rs2,600.97 in July. Whereas, the per Metric Ton (MT) LPG rate has been fixed at Rs217,916.22 for the current month. The commodity sale price per MT was Rs 220,421.22 during the last month. – APP

Four held for possessing illegal weapons

RAWALPINDI: Police have arrested four arm holders and recovered illegal arms, ammunition from their possession during crack-down, informed police spokesman.

Rata Amral police arrested Ali Haider and recovered 01 pistol 30 bore from his possession while Naseerabad police held Hammad and recovered 01 pistol 30 bore from his possession.

Similarly, RA Bazar Police arrested Umar Shaukat and recovered 01 pistol 30 bore from his possession.

Following operation, the Taxila police arrested Mohammad Dildar and recovered 01 pistol 30 bore from his possession.

Police have registered separate cases against all accused and further investigation was in progress.

SSP Operations Waseem Riaz Khan appreciated the performance of police teams adding that crack-down against those possessing illegal weapons will be accelerated. – APP

Diamond Jubilee celebrations begin

RAWALPINDI: The diamond jubilee Independence Day celebrations have kicked off in the garrison city of Rawalpindi as the vendors and shopkeepers are witnessing surge in the number of customers buying celebration items.

The Independence Day preparations are on the rise in the city as the vendors have set up stalls for the sale of colourful bunties, national flags, banners and pictures of national heroes who struggled day and night to achieve a common goal of a separate homeland for the Muslims.

The citizens are playing national songs to revive national spirit that give the message of national cohesion. On the Independence Day, the national flag will be hoisted at important public buildings to celebrate the day in a befitting manner. Sweets will be distributed among the poor whereas special prizes will be awarded for best decoration and illumination of their buildings on the occasion of Independence Day. The educational institutions will also conduct special programmes including speech, debate, essay writing, singing, and painting competitions to mark the day. – APP

President grieved over Justice Abbasi's death

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday expressed grief over the death of Justice Raja Shahid Mahmood Abbasi of Lahore High Court. The president prayed for peace of the departed soul and strength for the bereaved family to bear the loss with fortitude. – APP

Briefs

PAF urges nation to avoid aerial firing

DNA

ISLAMABAD, The Pakistan Air Force (PAF) on Monday released a public awareness message urging the masses to avoid aerial firing on festivities and joyous occasions that poses risk to the security and safety of the pilots, precious aircraft and fighter jets. The awareness message issued by the PAF Spokesman with a brief video message of over a minute stressed the people to play their role as responsible countrymen in protecting the invaluable assets of the Pakistan Air Force that used to get affected due to aerial firing. "The aerial firing during wedding ceremonies and joyous festivals like the independence day not only causes loss of human lives but also sometimes harm the aircraft, which can cause significant damage to the defence capability of the country," it said. The PAF spokesperson message underlined that aerial firing was a punishable offense and as patriotic citizens it was our duty to avoid it.

Miftah assures businessmen of resolving their issues

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Miftah Ismail here on Monday assured business community of addressing their apprehensions regarding taxation on electricity bills. Talking to delegation of Markazi Tanzeem-e-Tajaran Pakistan headed by its President Muhammad Kashif Chaudary at Finance Division, the minister assured them of resolving their issue. The delegation comprised of Sharjeel Mir, Zia Ahmed Raja and Tahir Taj Bhatti, said press statement issued by finance ministry. Miftah acknowledged the contribution of business community in the economic development of the country and assured them that the government would take every required step to facilitate and support this community. Earlier, president Markazi Tanzeem-e-Tajaran Pakistan apprised the minister about the issues being faced by the business community especially related to taxation on electricity bills. The delegation requested the finance minister to resolve their issues as this community plays a significantly positive role in the economic development of the country. The delegation thanked the minister for cooperation and addressing their concerns positively. – APP

“Sab Say Pehlay Pakistan” flag rally held

RAWALPINDI: Punjab Arts Council Rawalpindi on Monday organized the “Pakistan First” artist flag rally in connection with the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of Pakistan. The rally started from Benazir Bhutto Road and culminated at PAC, led by Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmed. Dozens of artists, including Anjum Khabibi, Yar Muhammad Khan, Raja Abdul Sattar, Arshad Khan, and Anjum Abbasi, participated in the rally. On this occasion, artists, citizens and students of the Arts Council sang national songs. The rally participants carried the Pakistan flag and chanted slogans Pakistan Zindabad. Addressing the participants, Director of Arts Council Waqar Ahmed said there was no substitute for freedom worldwide. “We should be grateful to Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Allama Iqbal, and other heroes of the Pakistan movement due to their sacrifices; we are enjoying liberty today,” he added. He said that Allama Iqbal dreamed of an independent Islamic state in the subcontinent, and Quaid-e-Azam made it possible with utmost dedication and hard work. He added that Pakistan would soon emerge as a major economic power in the world. Assistant Director Punjab Arts Council Muhammad Sulaiman, while speaking, said that Pakistan’s Independence Day gave us a message of happiness. – APP

SCO plays significant role among member states

The Ambassador said that the eradication of poverty and economic development will be the main focus of this conference, which will provide an opportunity for mutual cooperation and dialogue to the member countries

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan, Aybek Arif Usmanov on Monday said that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) block had a significant role in economic and trade integration between the member countries. He said this year, Uzbekistan took over the chairmanship of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which had a lot of challenges ahead of it. As the chair of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Uzbekistan was hosting the annual summit 2022 of the SCO Heads of State Council on September 15-16 in Samarkand, the Ambassador of Uzbekistan told APP here. Economic and trade relations among the members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization are very important, which will lead to economic and trade integration among these countries, he said. The Ambassador said that the SCO meeting has been held in Uzbekistan since September 15 this year. In the upcoming conference, transit trade and commercial cooperation between members will be

very important topics which will be discussed in different sessions. He said that member countries will also talk about establishing industrial zones and in this regard, the first industrial zone of SCO countries will be established in the city of Samarkand, Uzbekistan. He said that for the first time, discussions on the promotion of digital transformation and poverty reduction in the member countries will be available to the member countries to benefit from the experiences of others. The Ambassador said that the eradication of poverty and economic development will be the main focus of this conference, which will provide an opportunity for mutual cooperation and dialogue to the member countries. He expressed the hope that the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif, would participate in the SCO conferences exclusively. The Uzbek Ambassador said that Pakistan and Uzbekistan have a very important role to play in providing trade and economic integration to the SCO member countries,

which will usher in a new era of economic integration in all member countries. He said that SCO member countries could play a key role in global and regional economic and trade integration in the current scenario.



The SCO has important member countries in terms of geo-economic and geopolitical position, including developed economies, which can play an important role in the development of global and regional economies through this organizational platform, he said. The Ambassador said that technology, information technology and renewable energy would be the major topics at the SCO summit this year which would help in reshaping trade and economic relations between the member countries. There will also be sessions on telemedicine at the Summit this year, which has led to the introduction of many facets in the medical field after Covid-19, which could open up new avenues for economic cooperation in the member states, he said. He said that at the same time, member states were likely to sign agreements on renewable energy. The Ambassador said that the leadership of the SCO countries, including the Central Asian countries, was now fully committed to the economic and trade integration of the member countries and increase in bilateral trade and economic activities. Ambassador Usmanov said that facilities and road and rail links were very important in bilateral and transit trade which would increase economic activities in SCO countries. In response to another question,

he said that the implementation of the Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) between Pakistan and Uzbekistan was going on and bilateral trade would develop through it. The Ambassador said that negotiations would be held every year to review the PTA between the two countries to make it more productive for both sides. He further said that the two countries used to have online discussions in this regard, in which the process of discussion on tariff rationalization continues. He said that at this time mutual trade barriers and customs issues were major issues in both countries and for resolving these issues both of the countries were working on a mechanism. In response to another question, he said that a transit trade agreement had been signed between Pakistan and Uzbekistan during the last year, which had a very important role in promoting mutual trade. Related to this, the transport and logistics sector was also important in which the governments of the two countries were in negotiations for improvement. – APP

Capital's air quality healthy

ISLAMABAD: The air quality of the federal capital after rainy weather turned healthy on Monday as abnormal spell of monsoon rainfalls lashed out various parts of the country have helped reducing the pollution. Director General Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA) Farzana Altaf Shah told APP that the agency controlled air emissions from the industrial area that resulted in improved air quality for citizens to breathe safe air. The air quality was recorded healthy as suspended particles were noted below permissible limits in the atmosphere alongwith the pollutants' ratio due to consistent rainy weather and reduced vehicular traffic on roads. The air quality data has been collected by Pak-EPA which monitors air pollutants ratio for 24 hours based on three intervals of eight hours of data collection from different locations. – APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Republic of Korea Suh Sangpayo hosted lunch for the newly-arrived High Commissioner of Australia Neil Hawkins. – DNA

APHC reiterates call for observing 5th August as Exploitation Day

ISLAMABAD: All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, while reiterating its call for a complete shutdown, civil curfew and large-scale protest demonstrations on 5th August, the Exploitation Day, appealed to the people to offer special prayers for the success of the ongoing freedom movement. According to Kashmir media service, the incarcerated APHC Vice Chairman, Ghulam Ahmad Gulzar, in a special message from Srinagar Central Jail said that 05 August is one of the most tragic, painful and darkest days of modern Kashmir history and the Kashmiris will always observe it as exploitation day, day of mourning and a black day. It was on 05 August in 2019 when RSS-backed fascist gov-

ernment led by killer of humanity Narendra Modi usurped political, social, religious and all other basic rights of Kashmiris, turned IIOJK into a big open-air prison, he added. He termed the August 5 action as AN attack on Kashmir's unique identity, culture, demography and fundamental rights by Hindutva forces. The APHC leader deplored that the RSS-backed Modi government was hell-bent on turning Jammu and Kashmir into a graveyard and wasteland for imposition of its devil Hindutva ideology. He said the Hindutva forces have started the settler-colonial project by bringing administrative changes in the disputed region which started with the introduction of new domicile law. APHC General Secretary,

Molvi Bashir Ahmad Irfani in a statement in Srinagar that slavery is a curse and Kashmiris will prefer martyrdom over Hindutva slavery. He maintained Kashmir is an internationally recognized disputed territory and scrapping its special status is not only a violation of the United Nations resolutions on Kashmir but also a blatant violation of international law. Molvi Bashir Irfani said that the motive behind abrogation of Articles 370 and 35-A was to change the demography of the territory and turn it into a Hindu state. He said that abolition of special status was followed by coercive administrative steps which include domiciles to thousands of Indian Hindus, amendment in land laws and setting up of soldiers' colonies in the territory. – APP

AIOU commences admission in merit-based programs

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University has commenced admissions in merit-based programs offered in the first phase of autumn 2022 semester including BS, MBA, MS/MPHil and PhD and the deadline for the submission of admission application form is August 22, 2022. According to admission department, prospectuses and admission forms for these programs are available online on the university website (www.aiou.edu.pk) and admission can only be applied via online mode. These entry tests will be conducted in university's academic complex from August 26-31, 2022. First and second merit lists will be displayed on the university website on Sept 5 and Sept 12 respectively.

Applications for Chevening Scholarships open Aug 2

ISLAMABAD: Applications for Chevening Scholarships to study in the UK are open between 2 August and 1 November 2022, with applications to be submitted via chevening.org/apply Chevening Scholarships are awarded to individuals from all backgrounds who can demonstrate that they have the leadership potential, commitment and skills required to create positive change. The scholarship offers full financial support for scholars to study for any eligible master's degree at any UK university whilst also gaining access to a wide range of exclusive academic, professional, and cultural experiences. Since 1983, over 50,000 professionals including 2000 from Pakistan have had the opportunity to develop in the UK through Chevening. There are more than 1,500 scholarships on offer globally for the 2023/2024 academic year, demonstrating the UK's ongoing commitment towards developing the leaders of tomorrow. Acting British HC to Pakistan, Andrew Dalgleish, said: "If you are someone who is passionate about driving change, whether on a local or global scale, if you want to be the best at what you do and if you have the imagination to inspire others, then a Chevening Scholarship could be the perfect opportunity for you. We ensure diversity and opportunity for all. Your age, race, gender, religion and cultural background do not matter to us. We want to see that you have energy, curiosity, compassion, a clear vision for your future and the ability to achieve your goals. If this sounds like you, then you are very likely to fit in with our community of over 50,000 alumni worldwide. There is a lot to gain from submitting a thoughtful application, so if you have what it takes to be a Chevening Scholar, I would encourage you to apply before the 1 November deadline." – DNA

NHA holds 38th meeting of National Highway Council

The council directed NHA to extend all possible assistance to provinces and provincial departments engaged in relief and rescue operations during recent rains and floods situation throughout country

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications and Postal Services Mr. Asad Mahmood presided over the meeting of National Highway Council Supreme body of National Highway Authority, held at Ministry of Communications today to seek ways and means to further accelerate the relief and rescue operations being undertaken in affected parts of the country by National Highway Authority and Ministry of Communications. The council directed the National Highway Authority to extend all possible assistance to the provinces and provincial departments engaged in relief and rescue operations during recent rains and floods situation throughout the country. In any emergent situation all the resources of the National Highway Authority require to be utilized to facilitate the people in distress. Besides, on recommendations of the NHA Executive Board the National Highway Council reviewed financial and administrative affairs of the Authority and took decision with regard to prevailing conditions of rains and subse-

quent floods. The National Highway Council accorded approval for necessary amendments in rules and regulation for extending support by NHA to the provincial departments, working for relief of flood affectees. Federal Secretary Communications/Chairman National Highway Authority Capt (R) Muhammad Khurram Agha, senior officers of Ministry of Communications and National Highway Authority participated. Addressing the meeting, Federal Minister of Communications and Postal Services Mr. Asad



Mahmood said, human life is the most precious and that it will be a source of pride for us, if the construction machinery, vehicles and other available resources of the NHA are utilised to facilitate the floods affected people on humanitarian grounds. He said, rescue and relief operations will continue till the situation is normalized. It is worth mentioning, that the engineers of the NHA stopped flood waters by placing embankment in Tank Region of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa which led to saving thousands of people

and hundreds of establishments. Federal Minister for Communications and Postal Services Mr. Asad Mahmood expressed deep sense of gratitude to the construction experts and engineers of the Authority for timely action in emergency. Practical advancement was also made in the meeting with regard to regularization of NHA's Contract Employees in light of orders of Supreme Court of Pakistan and High Court as well. The meeting accorded approval of the regularization of employees who come up to the criteria. This long standing complicated issue of NHA's Contract Employees has been solved now. Regularization of such employees will not affect the privilege and promotion of the regular employees of the Authority. The NHC also approved to create special cadre for the employees to be regularized. Mr. Asad Mahmood was of the view to follow the philosophy of facilitating human beings. He said, every official is not living alone, but through employment he is earning bread for his whole family. We desire to continue the employment of the officials, he added.

US, China, UK remain top 3 destinations of Pakistani exports

ISLAMABAD: United States (US) remained the top export destinations of Pakistani products during the twelve months of fiscal year (2021-22), followed by China and United Kingdom (UK). Total exports to the US during July-June (2021-22) were recorded at \$6798.982 million against the exports of \$5030.724 million during July- June (2020-21), showing a growth of 35.14 percent, according to State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) data. This was followed by China, wherein Pakistan exported goods worth \$2781.480 million against the exports of \$2043.887 million during last year, showing an increase of 36.08 percent. UK was the at third top export destination, where Pakistan exported products worth \$2200.007 million during the months under review against the exports of \$2048.293 million, showing growth of 7.40 percent, SBP data revealed. Among other countries, Pakistani exports to UAE stood at \$1842.961 million against \$1488.127 million during last year, showing an increase of 23.84 percent while the exports to Germany were recorded at \$1747.967 million against \$1512.776 million last year, the data showed. During July-June (2021-22), the exports to Holland were recorded \$1486.798 million against \$ 1118.342 million whereas the exports to Italy stood at \$1085.675 million against \$774.658 million. Pakistan's exports to Spain were recorded at \$1149.474 million against the exports of \$801.702 million while the exports to Afghanistan were recorded \$552.518 million against \$983.314 million during last year. – APP

CTP to deploy 1191 officials during Muharram

RAWALPINDI: City Traffic Police (CTP) have finalised all the arrangements for Muharram under a comprehensive traffic plan formulated on the directives of Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Rawalpindi Naveed Irshad to ensure security of the mourning processions. According to duty officer, there would be a complete ban on parking of any vehicle or pushcart on the routes of the processions. The CTP had finalized a traffic plan for Muharram ul Haram under which nearly 1191 traffic officials including nine DSPs, 72 Inspectors, 820 Traffic Wardens and 290 Traffic Assistants would perform duties on city roads to control the traffic flow during Muharram. Special arrangements would also be finalized for 7th and 10th Muharram processions, he added. He said, Traffic Police Officers and Wardens had also been directed to take action against rules violators. Fork lifters would also move with Muharram processions, he informed. He said, the CTO had directed the wardens to remove all kinds of encroachments from the processions routes besides keeping a vigil on suspected persons and things. Entry of vehicles on the route of the processions would be blocked by erecting barricades and other hurdles, he added. He informed that Traffic Police officials would be deployed along with district police personnel to ensure security of the mourners. – APP

ANF recovers over 68 kg narcotics

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) and ANF Intelligence while conducting an operation managed to recover over 68 kg narcotics besides netting an accused. According to an ANF Headquarters spokesman, ANF Intelligence conducted a raid near Islamabad Motorway Interchange and managed to recover 68 kg narcotics including 36 kg opium and 32.400 kg charas from a Honda City car. The spokesman informed that ANF also arrested an accused namely Muhammad Musa Ishaq. A case has been registered against the accused while further investigation is under process. The spokesman informed that accomplices of the accused would also be sent behind the bars. – APP

UAE could be the next space pioneer

SULTAN Al Neyadi's selection for a six-month stay at the International Space Station (ISS) in 2023 proves the UAE has long-term ambitions in the so-called final frontier. It would be apt to call the UAE a modern space pioneer post the pandemic, and it has been a short journey of just 50 years to get to this achievement.

What's commendable is that the first manned space flight and Mars Hope mission were launched during the peak of the pandemic when the world was in disarray and chaos spilled across borders. But three years was all it took to get there, though the build-up to these big events had been taking place for a decade. By launching these space and planetary missions, the leadership and mission planners were confident in the country's ability to surmount challenges, in this case, a full-blown health crisis that had swept through the world and had affected millions of people. The UAE, in fact, thrives during difficult times, as it has shown during the pandemic. It acted quickly at home with vaccines while not taking its eyes off things above, like the stars and planets. A higher calling beckoned.

There were new worlds to conquer and the coronavirus would not be allowed to scupper developments in the quest for knowledge. The country only recently earmarked \$820 million in investments in space and satellites.

While some superpowers have stepped back from their space exploration due to cutbacks in funding, the UAE is soaring ahead with plans to build a city on Mars by 2117. By sending more humans into space and partnering with global agencies, the UAE is learning and delivering on the promise of space, and the technologies developed for these missions could be put to use for applications here on earth. The country has forged partnerships with the US, Russia, Japan, and even private players like Elon Musk's SpaceX. A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket will take Al Neyadi to the ISS next spring where he will spend half a year with astronauts from other countries. For the UAE, space spells new life and is the start of a long odyssey.

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Trouble making proposed visit

DESPITE the stern warnings of multiple parties, there has been growing speculation that United States House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi might visit Taiwan during her Asian tour that began with a stop in Singapore on Monday.

If she makes the visit, she will be doing so despite US President Joe Biden reassuring the Chinese leader in their talks on Thursday that the US policy on Taiwan has not changed, and the US strongly opposes unilateral efforts to change the status quo or undermine peace and stability across the Taiwan Straits. And despite the Pentagon advising her it would not be a good idea. The hoopla surrounding the possibility of her visiting the island and the glee of the anti-China politicians in Washington all point to the worrying fact that the troublemaker is being encouraged to make trouble beyond her remedy.

Her visit would constitute a grave challenge to China's sovereignty and territorial integrity. It would seriously violate the one-China principle the US committed to in the three communiques that are the foundation for diplomatic relations between the two countries, and thus belie Biden's reassurances. The whole world knows which side is eating its own words, which side is stirring up trouble, and which side is taking unilateral actions to change the status quo of the Straits.

China has full legitimacy in international law to take all necessary means to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity. The US' flexing its military muscles – no matter how many aircraft carrier strike groups it has sent to the region – will only consolidate China's resolve to accelerate reunification. Should Pelosi visit Taiwan, it will be a watershed event in cross-Straits relations as well as Sino-US relations. On the one hand, it would take no more evidence to prove that the secessionist-minded Tsai Ing-wen administration on the island is incurably deluded.

On the other, the Biden administration would lose Beijing's trust by challenging the latter's redline again. The separation of powers in the US by no means makes Pelosi's Taiwan trip excusable.

If she does visit the island, it will deal a heavy blow to the already precarious Sino-US ties and add even more uncertainties to the already volatile global situation. No force can stop China from achieving national reunification between Taiwan and the Chinese mainland. National reunification has never been a matter of yes or no, but a choice of path and time. If Washington tries, through such a provocative move as Pelosi's visit to the island, to test Beijing's tolerance of how far it can push the redline, it will soon know how badly the move has backfired.

AU has a responsibility to help protect Tunisia's democracy

Adem K Abebe

In Tunisia, Saied simply disregarded the processes of reform outlined in the 2014 constitution and unilaterally adopted his own process, which allowed him to avoid any stringent requirements...

ON July 25, exactly one year after Tunisia's maverick President Kais Saied sacked the prime minister, dissolved the parliament, suspended the much-celebrated 2014 constitution and started to rule by decree, Tunisians voted to approve a draft constitution proposed by him that critics warn will help entrench his one-man rule. With less than 30 percent turnout, there are serious questions about the legitimacy of Monday's referendum. Nevertheless, the deep divisions within the opposition and the public's ever-growing disillusionment with the political system mean Saied may face little resistance as he moves to further consolidate his power. Now, as they watch with worry Tunisia's democratic backsliding identified by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, many are questioning what the international community, and especially the African Union (AU) – which counts among its objectives promoting "democratic principles and institutions" on the continent – could have done and can still do to keep the North African nation on the path towards true democracy. Throughout the past year, as President Saied sacked judges, jailed opposition politicians and stifled public debate on the drafting of the new constitution, the AU chose to remain silent. Indeed, after the president's July 25, 2021 power grab, the continental union released only one brief and vague statement on the situation in Tunisia, expressing its commitment to the "Tunisian constitution", "promotion of political dialogue" and "the need to respond to the legitimate aspirations of the Tunisian people".

In fact, in February 2022, it signalled that it is mostly unconcerned with President Saied's actions by making the country a member of the AU Peace and Security Council – a powerful body charged with, among other things, monitoring compliance with constitutionalism and responding

to unconstitutional changes of government. It seems the AU opted not to prioritise Tunisia's concerning, but so far thankfully non-violent, democratic backsliding and instead focused its meagre resources on countries that are experiencing grave political instability, economic devastation and conflict. But this was undoubtedly a mistake. The fact that Tunisia is still relatively stable compared with many other nations on the continent does not mean its drift away from AU's declared democratic standards should be ignored.

The AU should have at least sought to engage Tunisian authorities, the opposition and civil society groups, to ensure compliance with the principle of national consensus in constitutional reform processes established in the African Charter for Democracy, Elections and Governance – an instrument Tunisia signed that reflects established AU standards on constitutionalism. By intervening in Tunisia's much criticised constitutional reform process, the AU could have shown that it is treating all member countries equally and addressed criticisms of hypocrisy that have long been undermining its credibility. Furthermore, by holding Saied to account for his attempt to rewrite the constitution through dubious practices, it could have demonstrated that it is indeed serious about upholding continental standards for constitutional change. The continental standards for constitutional change require (1) legality and compliance with the letter and spirit of constitutional rules for reform, (2) a genuinely consultative and participatory process, including, possibly, a referendum, (3) a free and stable political environment, and (4) a deliberative process that eschews unilateral decisions and instead necessitates inclusion beyond a single dominant person or political group.

In Tunisia, Saied simply disregarded the processes of reform outlined in the 2014 constitution and unilaterally adopted his own process, which allowed him to avoid any stringent requirements for the referendum, for instance, in the form of a minimum turnout requirement. Moreover, despite purported efforts to allow Tunisians to submit their views, the process did not involve genuine participation and deliberation. Active AU monitoring and diplomatic engagement and an offer to provide comparative advice and technical support could potentially have contributed to ensuring a genuinely participatory and deliberative process. The AU has yet again squandered an opportunity to define itself as a union of rules, rather than merely a club of incumbents. In addition to potentially legitimising one-man rule, Tunisia's new draft constitution could set the stage for a president for life. While the constitution establishes a two-term limit on presidents, it does not clarify whether Saied's current term would count, or whether he would be entitled to two additional terms, potentially enabling him to stay in power until 2035. Moreover, the constitution allows the president to extend his term in cases of "imminent danger", which the presi-

dent will have the authority to define, with practically no or limited legislative or judicial check on such determination. Saied's track record so far and his proclivity to elevate his personal vision over the terms and spirit of the constitution mean Tunisians may now be bracing for a potential president for life. But the AU can still take action to prevent this scenario. It can engage Tunisian authorities to clarify their position and pressure them to confirm that the new constitution would not reset the presidential term count. As a member of the AU Peace and Security Council, Tunisia has a heightened moral responsibility to uphold the spirit of alternation of power imbued in continental standards.

Beyond the concentration of power in the office of the president, the most defining aspect of Tunisia's new constitution is perhaps its minimalism. The text outlines a government architecture but leaves details for further legislative regulation. What is left out includes important details regarding the organisation and mandate of the second legislative chamber and its relations with the first chamber, the electoral commission, the judiciary, the judicial council, and the constitutional court. The new parliament, which is due to be elected in December, will therefore have tremendous potential to shape the organisation of these critical bodies and to preclude the president's grip on their independence. This means the upcoming legislative election may provide an important opportunity for Saied's opponents to limit his consolidation of power – and put the breaks on his perceived efforts to entrench one-man rule in the country. Indeed, if opposition parties manage to rally the supermajority that boycotted the constitutional referendum and translate that into legislative seats, it could allow them to temper the personalisation of power. Given the overwhelming number of voters who boycotted the constitutional referendum, it is unlikely for Saied to secure in the December elections the parliamentary majority he needs to fully codify a one-man rule.

This means the AU can still move to help put a stop to Tunisia's democratic backsliding. It can offer technical support to all parties and enable the newly elected legislature to advance democratic goals as it passes the many laws needed to operationalise the new constitution. It can also insist that the new Tunisian government complies with continental standards regarding principles of separation of powers and effective and autonomous courts and other democracy promotion institutions. The AU has a legal and moral responsibility to reduce the prospects of instability and insecurity in Tunisia. By standing up for democracy and rule of law in Tunisia, the continental body would not only help Tunisians sustain the democratic gains they made in the past decade, but also show the entire continent that it is indeed serious about holding its members to the standards of constitutionalism it set.

– *Courtesy: Al Jazeera*

5 reasons why the upcoming OPEC+ meet will be an ordinary affair

Wael Mahdi

However, the OSPs for September are expected to rise, according to a survey by Bloomberg that included refiners and traders. At least those in Asia are expecting Saudi Aramco to raise its OSPs to them

BY now, the speculations are high on the outcome of the OPEC+ alliance's meeting on Aug. 3. The widespread belief now is that the alliance will raise production by more than planned on the back of US President Joe Biden's visit to Saudi Arabia and his call for oil producers to increase production to lower oil prices.

I think this meeting will be an ordinary meeting for the OPEC+ ministers and their allies. Therefore, no surprises are expected from the Kingdom, the only country in OPEC+ with the spare capacity today to calm down prices. **The reasons for this are as follows:**

First, OPEC+ is not in the mood to raise production.

Biden visited the Kingdom last month hoping to strike a deal to open the taps, but he is set to be disappointed, OPEC+ sources have told Reuters.

The news agency is reporting that the group will consider keeping oil output unchanged for September, saying a modest increase would be discussed.

Second, the Kingdom will not make any incremental increases in output outside of OPEC+.

Speaking at an Arab News Japan roundtable on July 19, the Kingdom's Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan described dialogue in the alliance as "quite robust" and that it is "responding as needed to the requirements of the oil markets." He emphasized that the Kingdom would not act alone and will coordinate with other producers in the alliance, including Russia.

Third, the Kingdom – and most of OPEC+ – does not see supply shortage as the issue behind high oil prices.

"We don't see a lack of oil in the market; there is a lack of refining capacity," the Saudi foreign minister added in the same roundtable. This limits the possibility

ty that the Kingdom will increase oil production in September if it sees the root cause for the high oil prices is the inability of consumers to process more oil.

Fourth, if the Kingdom wants to encourage more customer demand, it must consider cutting monthly official selling prices.

However, the OSPs for September are expected to rise, according to a survey by Bloomberg that included refiners and traders. At least those in Asia are expecting Saudi Aramco to raise its OSPs to them.

Fifth, the market situation is still unclear when it comes to demand.

The oil price structure is still in backwardation, which means that the market is expecting shortages in the short term but surpluses in the long term.

This situation indicates that the market does not see enough demand by the end of the year to consume the increases in supply.

It makes sense to consider the prospects of a recession due to high inflation and high interest rates.

If we look carefully, the market suffers from geopolitical factors and other structural issues.

It is not an issue of demand and supply alone.

If there are not enough investments in oil production and refining, and there is an ongoing war that resulted in the boycott of Russian supplies, then OPEC+ has limited tools to fix the problems.

It would be highly logical for the alliance to move with caution and not make big moves and promises when no one can predict when a recession will kill the demand or how many Russian oil barrels would not be lifted due to the sanctions.

I guess we can all see the writing on the wall unless OPEC+ makes a surprise, which is very unlikely.

– *Courtesy: Arab News*

Russia softens its attitude on Ukrainian grain corridor

Yasar Yakis

Third, Russia and Ukraine produce roughly a third of the world's total grain output. Many Middle Eastern countries rely on these two countries' agricultural products. The financial scope of the deal is estimated to be about \$10 billion. The agreement will transform Ukrainian agricultural products into cash at a time when the country needs every penny

BEFORE a breakthrough was achieved in July to open a grain corridor from Ukraine, Russia had been dragging its feet over allowing shipments of Ukrainian grain to international markets. It first objected to making a deal because sea mines had been laid outside the Ukrainian harbors. After painstaking efforts, a deal was signed in Istanbul in the presence of UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Turkey received merited applause for its role in securing the deal. Without an open communication line between Erdogan and Russian President Vladimir Putin, this agree-

ment could not have been reached easily. Several points have to be underlined in this context. First, Russia did not resist the pressure of the international community that direly needed grain. Blocking the deal would have damaged Moscow's image due to it being such an important humanitarian issue. On the other hand, Russia did not agree to this deal only for selfish purposes. In exchange for its consent, it drew advantages from the softening of economic sanctions imposed on it by the US and EU. Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Rudenko has since said that, if the obstacles on Russia's grain exports are not removed entirely, the Istanbul deal will be doomed to collapse.

Second, the flexibility demonstrated by Russia on this subject may set a good precedent. If the war drags on, we may need similar shows of flexibility. The Kremlin refused to make a direct deal with Ukraine, so two identical agreements were signed: One between Turkey, Russia and the UN and another between Turkey, Ukraine and the UN. So, both parties maintained their political positions, but the controversy was eliminated.

The two warring countries are, after all, the main but indirect actors in the same deal; therefore, they have to interact in one way or another. For instance, Ukraine has said it will need about 10 days to get the ports ready. This exercise will also require some sort of coordination between the Russian and Ukrainian authorities. Therefore, we may hope that similar cases of coordination might lead to a relative slackening of the rigid attitudes between them.

Third, Russia and Ukraine produce roughly a third of the world's total grain output. Many Middle Eastern countries rely on these two countries' agricultural products. The financial scope of the deal is estimated to be about \$10 billion. The agreement will transform Ukrainian agricultural products into cash at a time when the country needs every penny. Furthermore, if the grain is not exported, there will be no space to store this year's harvest.

Estimates of the quantity of the grain to be exported vary between 22 and 28 million tons, which is enough to supply basic food to many countries that are short of bread. If the grain corridor was to remain blocked,

prices would go up even further and the main sufferers would again be the relatively poor countries. On the other hand, the arrival on the market of such a huge volume of grain will ease prices and this will have a positive effect all over the world.

Fourth, the deal brought to the forefront the importance of an international convention signed in Montreux, Switzerland, in 1936. This convention authorizes Turkey to block, in case of war, the passage through the Turkish Straits of any navy ships. But an agreement has now been reached between Russia and Ukraine providing for the inspection of merchant ships. The ships will be inspected in Istanbul to find out if they are carrying weapons on their way back to Ukraine.

This question has reopened in Turkey a debate on whether the Montreux Convention is an important document. Officials from Turkey's ruling AKP party, including the speaker of the parliament, have made statements to the effect that this multilateral convention could be abrogated if necessary. The AKP probably opened this debate with a view to belittling founding father Kemal Ataturk's achievement.

Only last year, a group of 103 retired admirals issued a statement bringing the importance of the Montreux Convention to the attention of Turkey's domestic audience. The government immediately initiated a public prosecution against these admirals "for having conspired against the state security and the constitutional order."

Fifth, until recently, Turkey's name was more frequently mentioned in negative contexts in the international arena. The balanced role that it is now trying to play has brought some success. It has also brought together the Russian and Ukrainian foreign ministers in Antalya and delegations of the two countries for ceasefire negotiations in Istanbul. These two initiatives did not lead to a breakthrough, but it was worth trying. Unlike the first two attempts, the grain corridor deal is likely to hold. One can only hope that this deal opens the way for other similar initiatives in the future.

– *Courtesy: Arab News*

Briefs

ECP all set to announce verdict today

FROM PAGE 01
the first week of August. The sources said that the PTI would only harm itself if it files a reference against CEC as certain matters which were earlier hidden from public view would be revealed during the hearings. They said that the ECP is a constitutional body and will continue to follow the constitutional path. "The ECP will not bow to any blackmailing and will not come under any pressure. No political party is a favourite of the election commission neither nor any is non-favourite. Those who are following the law are standing with the ECP." When the attention of these sources was drawn to the announcement of PTI Chairman Imran Khan to file a judicial reference against the ECP and the CEC, they said that this was an attempt to create a smoke screen ahead of the verdict. The investigations into international money laundering have been completed, they added. PTI hid funds worth millions of rupees from ECP: report The PTI hid funds worth millions of rupees from the ECP, the report of an ECP scrutiny committee probing the party's funds revealed on January 4.

Imran announces intra-party elections

FROM PAGE 01
ending corruption cases against themselves worth Rs. 1,100 billion. He went on to say that senior leaders of both PML-N and PPP had been criticizing each other since 1988 and joined hands instantly to topple well-performing PTI government because their only motto was to preserve the looted money since they have no ideology and are only hungry for power. Imran Khan said that the imported government imposed through foreign conspiracy had lost its credibility both nationally and internationally to an extent that the Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa has to now request for the IMF loan. He demanded that an emergency should be imposed in the country at this time so as no one should send money abroad, adding that those who could have stopped the conspiracy are also responsible for what is happening in the country because he was not ousted due to corruption rather all economic indicators showed that the PTI government was performing exceptionally well on all fronts.

Army helicopter goes missing

FROM PAGE 01
on a flood relief operation in Lasbela, Balochistan when it lost contact with air traffic control (ATC). "Six individuals were on board, including Commander 12 Corps who was supervising flood relief operations in Balochistan," the tweet said, adding that a search operation is underway. According to details available, Corp Commander Quetta Lieutenant General Sarfaraz Ali, who was supervising the flood relief operations in the province, was also on board. The civil authorities and the Pakistan Army are currently busy with relief programmes in the province as the heavy rain spell has wreaked havoc there, claiming 147 lives. According to the details, Major Syed was the pilot while Major Talha was the co-pilot of the helicopter. The Director-General of Coast Guards Brigadier Amjad, Engineer Brigadier Khalid, and chief naik Mudassar were also on board. Following the incident, the district administration said that a helicopter crashed in the vicinity of the Sassi Punnu Shrine, located near the Windar area. Expressing concern over the disappearance of the helicopter, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif tweeted: "The disappearance of Army Aviation helicopter from Balochistan is alarming. The entire nation prays to Allah Almighty for the safety, security, and return of these sons of the country who came out to help the flood victims. Insha Allah."

Thousands welcome Lionesses in London after Euro-2022 win

"The legacy of the tournament was already made before that final game - what we've done for women and young girls who can look up and aspire to be us"



DNA

LONDON: Thousands of people waved flags and cheered in London's Trafalgar Square as England's Euro 2022 winning team were celebrated by a big crowd on Monday. England beat Germany 2-1 in extra time at Wembley to seal their first victory in a major women's football tournament. The team appeared on stage with manager Sarina Wiegman, lifted the trophy in front of the crowds and sang a rendition of Sweet Caroline. Ex-England player Alex Scott hosted it and led a chorus of Three Lions. "I think we've partied more than we've played football in the last 24 hours," said captain Leah Williamson. Confetti and sparklers

went off as England lifted the trophy. Fans who could not get into Trafalgar Square stood on the steps of the National Gallery. Williamson said: "I think England have hosted an incredible tournament and we've changed the game in this country and hopefully across Europe and across the world. "But we said we wanted to make our legacy about winning and that's what we did. "The legacy of the tournament was already made before that final game - what we've done for women and young girls who can look up and aspire to be us." There were a few tired faces and lots of sunglasses as the Lionesses partied until 4am with champagne and cocktails at their plush hotel in West London. Ex-England ace Alex Scott intro-

duced the heroes on to the platform as skipper Leah Williamson, manager Sarina Wiegman, goalscorers Chloe Kelly and Ella Toon as well as Lucy Bronze and Jill Scott all spoke passionately about the victory and the impact it will have on the nation. But before long, just after the trophy was passed around and lifted up to massive cheers, it descended into another sing-song, kickstarted by the Wembley anthem Sweet Caroline.

Kelly was right at the thick of the party while Rachel Daly grabbed the microphone for her very own solo - then Scott pretended to interview the trophy with a red England bucket hat on. Bleary-eyed hero Kelly appeared outside the England hotel with her partner Scott Moore this morning and



told The Sun it was an "amazing" night. Wiegman told the Lionesses YouTube channel: "Crazy. Lot's of drinking, lots of dancing. "English people can drink! So a little bit too much alcohol, I think. "But that's OK. We are enjoying it. When you have this accomplishment it is really good to have a party."

Captain Williamson arrived at the hotel carrying a huge speaker but emerged "a little bit rough" on Monday with the iconic trophy in her hands. And she kept it safe for the coach journey from Teddington to Trafalgar Square, where thousands of fans - especially kids on school holidays - gave them a deserved heroes' reception. A record crowd for a European Championships match - men's or women's - were

in attendance at Wembley. A whopping 87,192 crammed into the national stadium on Sunday evening to watch Chloe Kelly's dramatic extra-time winner - prompting wild scenes inside the ground and across the nation. A peak audience of 17.4million watched the game on BBC One last night as Gabby Logan fronted the brilliant coverage. That is the most people to tune in for a women's football match in UK history - and the biggest TV audience of the year to date. Millions more piled into fan parks, pubs and lounges to take in the memorable occasion as Sarina Wiegman's side really did bring football home. Wembley broke into utter bedlam when Kelly poked home with ten minutes to go.

Africa excluded from Monkeypox vaccine distribution race

The organization is also working with several member states that have larger vaccine reserves to make some of their supplies more accessible to countries that do lack tis access

DNA

CAIRO: WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean Region Ahmed al-Mandhari has repeatedly stated that "no one is safe until everyone is safe." This statement, which he was keen to mention in many press conferences held by the regional office since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, underscores the importance of the fair distribution of vaccines to eliminate the virus. The World Health Organization may find itself obliged to launch similar appeal to address the unfair distribution of the monkeypox vaccine. Moves by rich countries to buy large quantities of monkeypox vaccine, while declining to share doses with Africa, could leave

millions of people unprotected against a more dangerous version of the disease and risk continued spillovers of the virus into humans, The Associated Press quoted public health officials as warning in a report on Saturday. Critics fear a repeat of the catastrophic inequity problems seen during the coronavirus pandemic. "The mistakes we saw during the COVID-19 pandemic are already being repeated," said Dr. Boghuma Kabisen Titanji, an assistant professor of medicine at Emory University. While rich countries have ordered millions of vaccines to stop monkeypox within their borders, none has announced plans to share doses with Africa, where a more lethal form of monkeypox is spreading than in the West. To date, there have been more than 22,000 monkey-

pox cases reported in nearly 80 countries since May, with about 75 suspected deaths in Africa, mostly in Nigeria and Congo. On Friday, Brazil and Spain reported deaths linked to monkeypox, the first reported outside Africa. Spain reported a second monkeypox death Saturday. "The African countries dealing with monkeypox outbreaks for decades have been relegated to a footnote in conversations about the global response," Titanji said. Scientists say that unlike campaigns to stop COVID-19, mass vaccinations against monkeypox won't be necessary. They think targeted use of the available doses, along with other measures, could shut down the expanding epidemics that were recently designated by WHO as a global health emergency.

Yet, while monkeypox is much harder to spread than COVID-19, experts warn if the disease spills over into general populations - currently in Europe and North America it is circulating almost exclusively among gay and bisexual men - the need for vaccines could intensify, especially if the virus becomes entrenched in new regions. On Thursday, the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention called for the continent to be prioritized for vaccines, saying it was again being left behind. "If we're not safe, the rest of the world is not safe," said Africa CDC's acting director, Ahmed Ogwell. Although monkeypox has been endemic in parts of Africa for decades, it mostly jumps into people from infected wild animals and has not typically spread very far beyond the continent.

Ronaldo 'happy to be back' for Man Utd

DNA

MANCHESTER: Cristiano Ronaldo played 45 minutes as he made his first Manchester United appearance in 12 weeks during a 1-1 pre-season draw with Rayo Vallecano at Old Trafford on Sunday and later proclaimed: "Happy to be back". The 37-year-old Portugal forward, who missed the club's pre-season tour to Thailand and Australia for personal reasons, reportedly wants to leave the club he rejoined last year. Former Real Madrid and Juventus star Ronaldo finished as United's top scorer last season with 24 goals. But the campaign as a whole was a huge disappointment for the club, with a sixth-place finish in the Premier League meaning they missed out on qualification for the Champions League. Ronaldo was left out of United's squad for Saturday's friendly with Atletico Madrid in Oslo. But, commenting on a post on a fan page about him missing the game in Norway, Ronaldo wrote Friday: "Domingo o rei joga" which translates as "Sunday the king plays". Ronaldo applauded fans on both sides of the ground as he led the team out for their pre-match warm-up on Sunday. The veteran forward had one clear chance during his 45-minute appearance but drove over the bar after running on to Donny van de Beek's lay-off. After the match, Ronaldo posted a photograph of himself playing in the game on his Twitter feed beneath a caption of "Happy to be back". Erik ten Hag, United's new manager, told the club's website: "It was a mixture between experience and youth (today). "You saw the attitude was really great, really the intention to co-operate. They fight and work for each other. That was positive." New signings Christian Eriksen and Lisandro Martinez both featured for an hour in a game set up by Ten Hag for the players who did not have major roles in Saturday's 1-0 defeat by Atletico. Amad Diallo, who was on loan at Rangers last season, gave United lead early in the second half when the 20-year-old Ivory Coast winger fired in the rebound after a shot from Alex Telles had been saved.

Iran says 'optimistic' after EU proposal for nuclear deal

TEHRAN: Iran said Monday it remains "optimistic" about a possible revival of the 2015 nuclear deal after the European Union tabled a proposal aiming for a compromise in the talks stalled since March. "We remain optimistic that the negotiation process will lead us to a logical and reasonable outcome," foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani said at his weekly news conference. The comment comes after the EU foreign policy chief and coordinator of the nuclear talks between Iran and world powers, Josep Borrell, last Tuesday submitted a new draft text and urged the different sides of the negotiations to accept it or "risk a dangerous nuclear crisis". Negotiations in Vienna began in April 2021 to restore the deal, but have stalled since March amid differences between Tehran and Washington on several issues. The two sides negotiated indirectly through the European Union coordinator in a bid to bring the US back into the deal and to lift sanctions on Iran, on the basis that Tehran would return to its nuclear commitments. Qatar hosted indirect talks end of June between the United States and Iran in a bid to get the Vienna process back on track, but those discussions broke up after two days without any breakthrough. Borrell said the draft text includes "hard-won compromises by all sides" and "addresses, in precise detail, the sanctions lifting as well as the nuclear steps needed to restore" the 2015 pact. "The Iranian side has carefully reviewed the text and presented its views," Kanani said. - DNA



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Netherlands to Pakistan Wouter Plomp calls on Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Syed Faisal Ali Subzwari. - DNA

Commonwealth Games- 2022

Haider Ali finishes fifth in Commonwealth Games 2022

BIRMINGHAM: Pakistan's Haider Ali lifted overall 355kgs to finish fifth in 81kg category of weightlifting event in the Commonwealth Games 2022. Haider started off well, lifting 135kgs in his first attempt in snatch. Confident Pakistani weightlifter thereafter decided to lift 140kgs to make his position strong. But, he failed to do so in the next two attempts, finishing snatch round with a best of 135kgs. In the clean and jerk round, Haider successfully lifted 161kgs to start off on a strong note. However, his confidence shattered in the next attempt as he failed to lift 169kgs. The Pakistani contestant was strong enough to lift 170kgs to finish on a high note. England's Chris Murray created a Commonwealth Games record by lifting overall 325kgs and bagged Gold. Kyle Bruce of Australia (323kgs) and Nicolas Vachon of Canada (320kgs) won Silver and Bronze respectively. - DNA

Nasir Iqbal loses pre-quarterfinal

BIRMINGHAM: Pakistan's Nasir Iqbal lost to England's James Willstrop in the round of 16 of the Men's Singles squash event in the Commonwealth Games 2022. Nasir had defeated his compatriot Tayyab Aslam after he retired hurt during round of 32 match. He was up against England's Willstrop, who was making his 200th cap for England, becoming the highest capped English squash player of all time. Willstrop turned out to be a formidable opponent for Nasir as he beat the Pakistani squash player in three straight sets, with scores of 6-11, 4-11, and 7-11. On Friday, Pakistan women's squash players Anna Fayaz and Faiza Zafar both lost their respective round of 32 matches in the Women's Singles category. - DNA

Jahanara sets new national record

BIRMINGHAM: Jahanara Nabi improved her own national record but failed to qualify for the next round of Women's 100m Freestyle in Commonwealth Games 2022 here on Monday. Jahanara clocked 1:01.51 to complete her heat in Women's 100m Freestyle. Her previous national record time was 1:02.05. The female swimmer failed to advance to the next stage as she finished 40th out of 55 swimmers. On the other hand, Bismah Khan clocked 1:02.59 to finish 47th in the same event. Another Pakistani swimmer Mishaal Ayub also failed to make it to the next round of the Women's 100m Breaststroke event. She completed her heat in 1:22.12 to finish 26th out of 28 swimmers. So far, all Pakistani swimmers failed to qualify for the next rounds. - DNA

PTI to protest outside ECP

FROM PAGE 01
process as that of ISF to choose leaders based on merit," he added. He said that PTI has become a big party as leaders like Murad Saeed have emerged in PTI through ISF. Comparing his party with the PML-N and PPP, Imran Khan said that there was no concept of merit within these parties due to which they shrunk fast and reduced to some specific pockets. PTI Chairman recalled that the PTI government tried its best to introduce Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) to ensure free and transparent elections but the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja's sabotaged all their efforts to secure the system of rigging for PPP and PML-N. However, he claimed that despite all these cabal of crooks gathered against PTI, his party would get a two-thirds majority in the next elections, as these corrupt rulers exposed before the people within few months.

Berating the coalition government, Imran Khan said that these parties were not interested in rectifying the economy or reducing inflation but were only interested in obtaining the NRO-II, ending corruption cases against themselves worth Rs. 1,100 billion.

He went on to say that senior leaders of both PML-N and PPP had been criticizing each other since 1988 and joined hands instantly to topple well-performing PTI government because their only motto was to preserve the looted money since they have no ideology and are only hungry for power. Imran Khan said that the imported government imposed through foreign conspiracy had lost its credibility both nationally and internationally to an extent that the Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa has to now request for the IMF loan.

He demanded that an emergency should be imposed in the country at this time so as no one should send money abroad, adding that those who could have stopped the conspiracy are also responsible for what is happening in the country because he was not ousted due to corruption rather all economic indicators showed that the PTI government was performing exceptionally well on all fronts. However, Imran Khan said that the current abysmal economic situation of the country clearly indicated that they never came with a plan or a roadmap to stabilise the economy due to which the country was inching towards a default, as today the coalition government has made Pakistan the fourth country in the world nearing default.

The PTI chairman said that the public is certainly under the burden of inflation due to the incompetent and power hungry rulers who were busy in waving the corruption cases filed against them. Comparing his party government's performance with the coalition government, he said that record tax revenue was collected during PTI's tenure, adding that the external deficit was \$500 million in March and now it is \$2.6 billion.

Imran Khan said: "Inflation in our government was 17 per cent and today it has reached 38 percent. The PTI Chairman said that his government provided the most jobs during the Covid-19 crisis. "During our government, petrol was available at Rs150 and diesel at Rs144 and today the prices of petrol are low in the world but the price of petrol in the country is Rs227 and diesel is Rs244," he added.

Politicians led COAS to intervene

FROM PAGE 01
the economic destruction in the country," he said, adding that the allegations levelled against them involve talks about bribery. "I have always supported the truth and will continue to do so," he maintained. "Act wisely" Regarding Chief Minister Pervez Elahi and his support for the PTI, Shujaat urged him [Elahi] to act wisely and stop making a mockery of the family. "I invite him to return to his residence," he said, stressing that they [PTI] conspired to divide the party as well as the family.

Briefs

1st shipment of Ukraine grain set to leave Odessa

ANKARA: The first shipment of Ukrainian grain was set to leave the port of Odessa on Monday under a deal aimed at relieving a global food crisis following Russia's invasion of its neighbour. "The departure of the cargo ship Razoni flying under the flag of Sierra Leone and loaded with maize will leave the port of Odessa bound for Lebanon at 08:30 am (0530 GMT)," the Turkish defence ministry said in a statement.

It was expected to reach the mouth of the Bosphorus on Tuesday at around midday, according to Yoruk Isik, an expert on ship movements on the Bosphorus Strait and in the region. Other convoys would follow, respecting the maritime corridor and the agreed formalities in line with the agreement reached with Russia on July 22, the ministry said. According to the Marine Traffic website, the Razoni was still docked in Odessa at 0500 GMT. Built in 1996 and measuring 186 metres (610 feet) in length and 25 metres in width, the vessel has capacity of 30,000 tonnes.

On July 22, Ukraine and Russia signed a landmark deal with Turkey and the United Nations aimed at easing a global food crisis caused by blocked Black Sea grain deliveries. Turkey formally opened a special joint coordination centre to oversee the exports in Istanbul last Wednesday, which is being staffed by civilian and military officials from the two warring parties and delegates from Turkey and the UN. — APP

Kentucky flood death toll hits 28

JACKSON: Kentucky's governor predicted bodies will continue to be found "for weeks" as the death toll from devastating flooding rose Sunday to 28 and rescuers embarked on a long and grueling effort to locate victims. Some areas in the mountainous region are still inaccessible following the flooding in the state's east that turned roads into rivers, washed out bridges and swept away houses. Off-and-on rain plus poor cell phone service are also complicating rescue efforts.

"This is one of the most devastating, deadly floods that we have seen in our history... And at a time that we're trying to dig out, it's raining," Governor Andy Beshear told NBC's "Meet the Press." "We're going to work to go door to door, work to find, again, as many people as we can. We're even going to work through the rain. But the weather is complicating it." — APP

UN chief 'outraged' after peacekeepers killed 2 people

NEW YORK: United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is "outraged" over a "serious incident" that occurred Sunday in which members of the UN Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) shot dead two people and injured 14 others in the town of Kasindi, on the border with Uganda, according to his deputy spokesman. "The Secretary-General is both saddened and dismayed by the loss of life and serious injuries sustained during this incident," a statement issued by Farhan Aziz Haq, the deputy spokesman, said Sunday night. Tensions between the people in restive eastern Congo and the UN peacekeeping force have risen dramatically in the past week, with nearly 20 killed in protests calling for the force to leave the region for reportedly failing to protect them from armed groups. Guterres also offered his deepest condolences to the affected families, the nation's people and the Congolese Government and wished the injured a speedy recovery. In a communique, the Special Representative and Head of MONUSCO, Bintou Keita, said that soldiers of the Intervention Brigade of the MONUSCO force, returning from leave in their home country, opened fire at the border post for "unexplained reasons". — APP

Serbian president calls for dialogue with Kosovo

"I believe we will have good news. I hope that this will be de-escalated tomorrow and that we will reach peace with new compromise solutions, he said

Russia calls, 'respect Serbs in Kosovo'

DNA

MOSCOW: Russia on Sunday called on Kosovo, as well as the US and EU, to stop "provocations" and to respect the rights of Serbs in Kosovo. Kosovo's new rules on the reissuance of personal documents and license plates for local Serbs constitute another step toward their expulsion from Kosovo, claimed Maria Zakharova, spokeswoman for Russia's Foreign Ministry. "Such a development of events is more evidence of the failure of the mediation mission of the European Union. This is also an example of what place Serbia has been prepared for in the European Union by offering Belgrade to de facto put up with the lack of rights of its compatriots," she added. The tension between Serbia and Kosovo rose on Sunday ahead of a new Kosovar law set to come into effect Monday, making it mandatory for everyone, including Serbs living in Kosovo, to have a Kosovo ID card and plate. According to local media, air raid sirens were heard along near the Kosovo/Serbian border as Kosovo is set to restrict border crossings. Albin Kurti, Kosovo's prime minister, blamed the president of Serbia for increased tension and possible border conflicts between Serbia's Army and the Kosovar police, decrying planned "fear" and threats in neighboring Serbia.

FOREIGN DESK

BELGRADE: Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic called for dialogue to resolve issues with Kosovo following a meeting with the General Staff of the Armed Forces as tensions continued to simmer over alleged conflicts at the Serbian border. "It is extremely important for us that the dialogue continues and that we begin to resolve things peacefully," said Vucic. Vucic said they begged international representatives to do everything possible to stop the tensions at the Kosovo border. "I believe we will have good news. I hope that this will be de-escalated tomorrow and that we will reach peace with new compromise solutions, he said. He said Serbia will probably face its biggest political fight in the coming days. "I want to thank those who supported Serbia...I especially want to thank the representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, who reacted in a very correct way," said Vucic. He added that efforts are being made to calm tensions. "No matter how difficult it is, there will be no surrender and Serbia will win," said Vucic. Meanwhile, the government of Kosovo has reportedly decided to postpone its decisions on Serbian ID cards and license plates for a month after the increased tensions. Tensions between Serbia and Kosovo rose Sunday ahead of a new Kosovar law set to come into effect Monday, making it mandatory for everyone, including Serbs living in Kosovo, to have a Kosovo ID card and license plate. According to local media, air raid sirens were heard along the Kosovo/Serbian border as Kosovo was set to restrict border crossings. Gunfire had been reported in some unspecified locations in northern Kosovo, but Kosovar police issued a statement saying there is no official information that anyone was injured.

Turkiye stresses need of peace in Balkans

DNA

ISTANBUL: Türkiye's foreign minister held separate phone calls Sunday with his Kosovar and Serbian counterparts as tensions between Serbia and Kosovo continued to rise. Mevlut Cavusoglu stressed that "common sense must prevail" in the region, according to a statement by the Turkish Foreign Ministry. Underlining the importance that Türkiye attaches to peace and stability in the Balkans, Cavusoglu said Ankara is ready to do its part to reduce tensions. Tension between Serbia and Kosovo rose on Sunday ahead of a new Kosovar law set to come into effect Monday making it mandatory for everyone, including Serbs living in Kosovo, to have a Kosovo ID card and plate. According to local media, air raid sirens were heard along near the Kosovo/Serbian border as Kosovo is set to restrict border crossings. Albin Kurti, Kosovo's prime minister, blamed the president of Serbia for increased tension and possible border conflicts between Serbia's Army and the Kosovar police, decrying planned "fear" and threats in neighboring Serbia. Serbia's Defense Ministry issued a statement alleging that the Kosovar government is spreading disinformation, including through fake social media accounts. It added that the Serbian Army had not "in any way entered the territory of Kosovo."

Indonesia halts corn imports except for industries

ANTARA

JAKARTA: Indonesia has stopped the imports of corn except for that used as raw material for industrial purposes, such as for producing sweeteners and other items, Agriculture Minister Syahrul Yasin Limpo stated.

"I would like to inform that we are no longer importing rice and corn, except corn used for industrial needs, including for producing sweeteners and others," Minister Limpo stated at the Presidential Office, here, Monday.

On Monday meeting, President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) instructed ministers to increase corn production, both for raw materials and post-harvest products, including those that had undergone the cultivation process, Limpo remarked. The increase in production is in the form of land intensification and extensification. As for post-harvest production, the Agriculture Ministry will make several efforts, such as building post-harvest support facilities, such as silos and dryers. "Hence, of course, this effort will help to reduce toxins in the corn and also to maintain the water content at above 14-20 percent to meet the needs of the industry market," he remarked. He later noted that corn production in Indonesia currently surpassed 18 million tons. The production will continue to be increased in an effort to meet the domestic requirements, including the industry. The government will also strive to increase corn exports.

"I can see that in 100 days from now, if we work hard, including following the order of Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs (Airlangga Hartarto) to prepare farmer groups, land intensification, and land extensification, we can achieve that. God willing, we will ready the concept in the next one or two weeks," Limpo stated. On the same occasion, Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs Airlangga Hartarto said the government will encourage corn production in new lands in Papua, West Papua, East Nusa Tenggara, Maluku, North Maluku, and North Kalimantan.

California sees largest fire of year

CALIFORNIA: California is experiencing its largest fire this year, with crews fighting to contain it. Thousands have been forced to evacuate their homes. The McKinney wildfire has ripped through the state's dry terrain, with strong winds and lightning storms expected to complicate the battle. California has already seen multiple fires this summer. The previous largest fire of the state this year, the Oak Fire, had broken out in mid-July. The fire spanned roughly 80 square miles (207 square kilometers) just two days after erupting in Siskiyou County, according to a Sunday incident report. Its cause is still unknown. Trees were lit up on California Highway 96, which was closed, and thick smoke covered the area. The fire remained "0% contained," said the Siskiyou County Sheriff's office in a Facebook post. The McKinney Fire was burning out of control in Northern California's Klamath National Forest, said US Forest Service spokesperson Adrienne Freeman. "The fuel beds are so dry and they can just erupt from that lightning. These thunder cells come with gusty erratic winds that can blow fire in

Pakistan, Germany sign agreement for RRMiC

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The signing ceremony for the project named "Regional Infrastructure Fund - II for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Resilient Resource Management in Cities (RRMiC)" was held between both government of Pakistan and Federal Republic of Germany in the Ministry of Economic Affairs on Monday. According to the press release, Mian Asad Hayaud Din, Secretary Ministry of Economic Affairs, and Sebastian Jacobi, Country Director KfW (German Bank for Development) signed the agreement.

Government of Germany, through the KfW Development Bank, will provide a grant of Euro 17.5 million to the Government of Pakistan for the project. This is also to be noted that Pakistan has been a recipient of German Development Assistance since the founding of German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in 1961. The total development assistance encompassing both technical and financial cooperation since 1961 amounts to 3.8 billion.

With the funds provided by the German Government, KfW Development Bank will support the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in investments in community infrastructure, improvements in capacity and service delivery, citizen participation and equality and consultant and contingency services in two districts of KP province.

every direction," Freeman said. Governor Gavin Newsom declared a state of emergency on Saturday, and said the fire which started on Friday had "destroyed homes and threatened critical infrastructure." More than 2,000 residents were under evacuation orders, according to the California Office of Emergency Services (OES), mostly in Siskiyou County. Highway 96 and McKinney Creed Road southwest of the Klamath River were closed to the public, CalFire said. Fire fighting forces were sent from nearby Oregon to assist in containment efforts, the Oregon State Fire Marshall said, as the Klamath National Forest is also dealing with the Kelsey Creek Fire. A second, smaller fire to the west was sparked by dry lightning on Saturday. A third fire, which was on the southwest end of the McKinney blaze, prompted evacuation orders for around 500 homes Sunday, said Courtney Kreider, a spokesperson with the Siskiyou County Sheriff's Office. Fires were also reported in the states of Montana and Idaho. California, which is facing a punishing drought, still faces further months of fire season. In recent years, California and other parts of the western United States have been ravaged by massive wildfires. Scientists say climate change has made conditions warmer and drier in the past 30 years, and such extreme weather conditions are expected to become more frequent and destructive. — Agencies



The purpose is to introduce an integrated, multi-sectoral, resilient, and sustainable water and solid waste management with a participatory approach in selected tehsil towns. Sebastian Jacobi, Country Director KfW stated that KfW is actively supporting the Government of Pakistan in the Governance Sector. These efforts will result in bringing sustainable and lasting positive impact in the lives of the deserving

communities in the country and help mitigate the challenges arisen due to poverty and infrastructure damage due to natural disasters. Mian Asad Hayaud Din, Secretary Ministry of Economic Affairs expressed gratitude to the Government of Federal Republic of Germany for supporting the people of Pakistan through the projects. He further stated that the investments will lead to a better and healthy future for the generations to come.

ASEAN FMs to push for tougher action on Myanmar

PHNOM PENH: Malaysia is set to lead a push for tougher action on Myanmar when a regional bloc of foreign ministers meet this week, as anger mounts at the junta for stonewalling crisis resolution efforts. The 10-country Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) - which has spearheaded so far fruitless diplomatic efforts to restore peace - last week condemned the junta's execution of four prisoners. Myanmar has been in chaos since a putsch in February last year and the death toll from the military's brutal crackdown on dissent has passed 2,100, according to a local monitoring group. Ministers meeting in Phnom Penh from Wednesday are expected to lament the lack of progress on ASEAN's "five-point consensus" plan, agreed to in April last year, which called for an immediate end to violence and dialogue between the junta and coup opponents. As well as voicing "deep concern" about recent developments and calling for restraint, the ministers will also demand "concrete actions to effectively and fully implement the Five-Point Consensus", according to a draft communique obtained by AFP.

Thousands rally in Sudan to demand civilian rule

DNA

KHARTOUM: Fresh demonstrations erupted in Sudan on Sunday to demand the restoration of civilian rule in the country. Thousands of protesters rallied in the capital Khartoum, with demonstrators blocking a number of roads with barricades and burning tyres, according to an Anadolu Agency reporter. Security forces shut roads leading to the Presidential Palace and the headquarters of the Sudanese Military Command in the capital. Demonstrations were also reported in the cities of Bahri and Omdurman and the eastern city of Kassala. Protesters held banners condemning the military rule and demanding the restoration of civilian rule in Sudan. Sunday's protests were called by the former ruling Forces of Freedom and Change coalition and the Resistance Committees, which spearhead the current wave of demonstrations against the military. Sudan has been in turmoil since last October, when the military dismissed Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok's transitional government, a move decried by political forces as a "military coup." More than 100 people have been killed in protests against the military since then, according to Sudanese medics.

Bulgaria to hold early elections on Oct. 2

DNA

SOFIA: Bulgaria will hold snap elections on Oct. 2, the country's president's office said on Tuesday, as the third and final attempt to form a government in the country failed last week. President Rumen Radev also dissolved parliament and appointed Galab Donev to lead a caretaker government. The Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP), which on July 18 was given the mandate to form a government, officially returned it to the president on July 28. The elections will be the fourth in two years for the country, which has been marred by political instability since Prime Minister Kiril Petkov's government was toppled in a no-confidence vote in June.

Govt urged to subsidize paper industry

DNA

KARACHI: Abid Nisar, Former Vice Chairman, All Pakistan Paper Merchants Association, Former Chairman, Import & Anti-Smuggling subcommittee KCCI has appealed to the government to give subsidy to the paper and printing industry to save it from destruction, and said that the value of the dollar has reached a high level and the crisis has intensified due to the profiteering of the local paper mills, while the prices of books, copies have skyrocketed due to the increase in paper prices, due to which the majority of students will be deprived of textbooks and copies despite the start of the new academic year and the dream of making the nation educated will not be fulfilled. Abid Nisar pointed out that due to the huge increase in the price of paper, textbooks and copies have become so expensive that they are beyond the reach of the common man, so the government should think about this. "The government should subsidize the paper and printing industry so that students can get textbooks and copies at reasonable prices and avoid wasting their academic year, he said," adding that the cost of doing business has already increased enormously due to high electricity rates, continuous increase in the value of the dollar, and now political instability also caused difficulties for the business community. He was of the view that the exports are decreasing, but the government does not care, rather the politicians are only bent on sinking the economy in the circle of the chair. In view of the serious economic crisis and the current situation of the country, the business community is worried about how the business will run in the coming days?

Indonesian Youth shows support toward Azerbaijan



NEWS DESK

JAKARTA: The Model OIC conference, simulating the session of Standing Committee on Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC) was organized by the Indonesian Youth Council and the OIC Indonesian Youth Organization, with the support of the Eurasian Regional Center of Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum (ICYF-ERC), as well as with the partnership of the People's Consultative Assembly of the Republic of Indonesia, on July

30-31 in the building of the legislative body of Republic Indonesia (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat). It should be noted that the conference was held as the conclusion of the Model OIC Academy of International Relations, which lasted nearly two months.

More than 50 students from Indonesia's leading universities participated in the simulation games on the topic "Economic Recovery: Consequences of the Covid-19 Pandemic". Representatives of a number of leading ministries and state institutions of Indonesia, which will

host the next summit of the G20, which will be held in Bali in November 2022 and will host the theme of "Recover Together, Recover Stronger", participated in the opening and closing ceremony of the Model OIC simulation games. Speaking at the opening ceremony of the event, Vusal Gurbanov, Acting Director General ICYF-ERC, spoke about the importance of the Model OIC events held at both the national and international levels since 2011, at the initiative of the institution represented by this program, and emphasized the

leadership ability of young people in the OIC space. He emphasized the role he played in the strengthening of the Muslim youth, including the importance of supporting such measures aimed at increasing diplomatic skills and unity among Muslim youth in the future.

At the opening ceremony, among others, the Vice Speaker of People's Consultative Assembly Hidayat Nur Wahid, the Vice Chair of Interparliamentary Cooperation Mardani Ali Sera, the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy of Indonesia Sandiaga

Salahuddin Uno, the Senior Advisor to the Minister of Cooperatives and SMEs of Indonesia Rulli Nuryanto, the Indonesian National Police Representative Mayendra Eka Vardhana, Deputy Assistant at the Ministry of Human Development and Culture of Indonesia Dr. Katiman, Co-Chair of Indonesia Young 20 Budi Sugandi, Project Coordinator of the Model OIC Project Ellena Pangestu Kavarera, President of OIC Youth Indonesia and MOIC Country Coordinator to Indonesia Astrid Nadya Rizgita, Chairman of Indonesia National Youth Council and ICYF Vice President Asian Region Tantan Taufiq Lubis, Director of Social Culture and International Organization of Developing Countries at Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia Penny Devi Herasati, an employee of the Indonesian Ministry of Human Development and Culture Maman Vic and wished good luck to the participants of the festival by giving congratulatory speeches. Astrid Nadya Rizgita, Chairperson of OIC Indonesian Youth Organization, expressed her gratitude to the Indonesian government officials and ambassadors for their support to this event.

Briefs

Myanmar
military
extends
emergency
rule

DNA

YANGON: Myanmar's military regime has extended its emergency rule until 2023 as the country remains riven by internal fighting following last year's coup. The junta seized power last year after overthrowing Aung Sung Suu Kyi's democratically-elected government. The military has promised to hold "free and fair" elections in the future.

But on Monday it said it needed more time to stabilise the country. Emergency rule gives it more powers to detain people. Many in Myanmar are sceptical the military will hold multi-party elections or transfer state power to an elected government. General Min Aung Hlaing's regime first extended emergency rule last August and, under the powers granted by the order, he also appointed himself prime minister.

In his remarks reported by state media, he also said the country's electoral system should be reformed by combining the first past the post system, under which Ms Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) won convincingly in the 2020 election, with proportional representation. The influence of "powerful parties" had drowned out other political voices, he said. The army - known as the Tatmadaw - launched the coup after alleging there had been massive voter fraud in the 2020 election, in which the NLD got more than 83% of the vote.

Pelosi to visit
Taiwan, says
Taiwan media

AGENCIES

TAIPEI: Several Taiwan media outlets reported late on Monday that U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi will visit Taiwan on Tuesday and spend the night in Taipei, citing unidentified sources. China has warned that its military would never "sit idly by" if Pelosi were to visit Taiwan, the self-ruled island claimed by Beijing. The Liberty Times newspaper said Pelosi was scheduled to visit Taiwan's parliament on Wednesday morning before continuing her Asia trip. The United Daily News, also citing unnamed sources, said "related officials" were told to receive Pelosi, who is set to arrive in the capital Taipei on Tuesday evening at the soonest and spend the night there. Taiwan's foreign ministry said it has no comment on reports on Pelosi's travel plan and no further information to share with media.

India
announces 1st
Monkeypox
death

DNA

NEW DELHI: India confirmed its first monkeypox death on Monday, possibly also marking the first death from the disease in Asia.

The health ministry in the southern Indian state of Kerala said that a 22-year-old man died on July 30 after tests that "showed that the man had monkeypox."

However, it is not yet confirmed whether monkeypox was the cause of the death. Spain reported two monkeypox-related deaths last week with another recorded in Brazil. The World Health Organization declared it a global health emergency on July 23. Symptoms of fatigue and fever "The person reached Kerala on July 21 but visited a hospital only on July 26 when he displayed fatigue and fever," Kerala's Revenue Minister K Rajan said. He added that the government had put 21 contacts into isolation, but said none of them were showing any symptoms. The man had recently returned from the United Arab Emirates, where he had tested positive, according to Kerala's Health Minister Veena George.

PLA, Pak Army brothers
in arms, says Army Chief

The Army Chief was the chief guest on the commemoration ceremony of the 95th Anniversary of the founding of the PLA held at the General Headquarters (GHQ) where Ambassador of China Nong Rong, officials from the Chinese Embassy and officers from tri-services of Pakistan attended event, an ISPR media release said



DNA

RAWALPINDI, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa while celebrating the 95th anniversary of the founding of Chinese Peoples' Liberation Army (PLA) on Monday said the PLA and Pakistan Army are brothers in arms and our relationship will continue to contribute towards safe-

guarding our collective interests.

The Army Chief was the chief guest on the commemoration ceremony of the 95th Anniversary of the founding of the PLA held at the General Headquarters (GHQ) where Ambassador of China Nong Rong, officials from the Chinese Embassy and officers from tri-services of Pakistan attended the event, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) media release said.

The COAS felicitated PLA and lauded its role in China's defence, security and nation building. Highlighting various facets of the deep rooted ties between the two states, militaries and the people, the Army Chief said, "Pakistan China relationship is unique & robust that has proven its resilience in the face of challenges."

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador of China thanked the COAS for hosting

reception on the eve of the PLA's 95th Anniversary. The Chinese Ambassador said, "China & Pakistan are iron brothers, all-weather friends & strategic partners. The recent meeting of China-Pakistan Joint Committee of Cooperation held at China has setup an important platform for military collaborations which will serve effectively for military-to-military relations between the two countries."

Biden calls on Russia, China to
enter nuclear arms control talks

DNA

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden called Monday on Russia and China to enter nuclear arms control talks, saying that Moscow in particular has a duty to show responsibility after its invasion of Ukraine. In a statement, the US leader reiterated that his administration is ready to "expeditiously negotiate" a replacement to New START, the treaty capping intercontinental nuclear forces in the United States and Russia, which is set to expire in 2026. "Russia should demonstrate that it is ready to resume work on nuclear arms control," Biden said. "But negotiation requires a

Iran capable of creating
nuclear weapons

TEHRAN: Tehran has technical means to develop nuclear weapons, however, there is no such goal on its agenda, Vice President and Head of the Atomic Energy Organization Mohammad Eslami said on Monday. "Iran has technical opportunities to create a nuclear bomb, however, such a program is not on the table," the Fars news agency quoted him as saying. The official noted that the accusations of the aspiration to develop nuclear weapons are groundless. "These false accusations are being promoted by Israel with the support of anti-revolutionary forces in order to fool the public opinion," he asserted. According to Eslami, "constructive cooperation has been established between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA - TASS) which works without fail." "All our actions [on the development of the nuclear program] are being implemented within the framework of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons under the IAEA's control," he noted. - DNA

willing partner operating in good faith. And Russia's brutal and unprovoked aggression in Ukraine has shattered peace in Europe and constitutes an attack on fundamental tenets of international order."

Turning to China, which has been bolstering its much smaller nuclear arsenal, Biden said the communist state has a duty as a permanent member of the UN Security Council "to engage in talks that will reduce the risk of miscalculation and address destabilizing military dynamics." "There is no benefit to any of our nations, or for the world, to resist substantive engagement on arms control and nuclear non-proliferation," Biden said.

New Zealand fully
reopens borders

AUCKLAND: New Zealand's borders are fully open for the first time since March 2020, when they shut in an effort to keep out Covid-19. Immigration authorities will now begin accepting visitors with visas and those on student visas again. Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern called it an "enormous moment", adding it was part of a "cautious process". Most visitors will still need to be fully vaccinated, but there are no quarantine requirements.

The country's maritime border has also reopened, with cruise ships and foreign recreational yachts now allowed to dock. New Zealand first announced a phased reopening plan in February. It allowed vaccinated citizens to return from Australia that month, and those coming from elsewhere to return in March. In May, it started welcoming tourists from more than 50 countries on a visa-waiver list. "We, alongside the rest of the world, continue to manage a very live global pandemic, while keeping our people safe," said Ms Ardern in a speech at the China Business Summit in Auckland on Monday. - DNA

Inflation soars to 24.9%,
highest in 14 years in Pak

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Inflation in the month of July 2022 has reached the historic high at 24.9% on year-on-year basis as prices of electricity soared by 86.7%, ghee 74% and cooking oil by 72.5% when compared to the prices of these commodities in July 2021. As per the figures provided by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) on Monday, the 24.9% inflation is the highest ever year-on-year rise since November 2008. In the previous month of June, Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation remained 21.3% and 8.4% in July 2021. On month-on-month basis, it increased by 4.3% in July 2022 as compared to an increase of 6.3% in the previous month and an increase of 1.3% in July 2021. According to the PBS, vegetables became 24% more expensive in the month of July when compared to the prices in June. In a period of one month, Dal Chana became expensive by

13.8%, onion by 13.6%, potatoes by 10.8% and gram flour by 10%. In July, wheat prices were increased by 9.75%, Dal Mash by 9.3%, and Dal Masoor by 9%. In one month, tea prices soared by 8.98%, egg by 8%, and cooking oil by 7.6%. In the month of July, electricity prices were jacked up by 39.35%. Flour became expensive by 6.3% and ghee by 5%. In one month, the motor fuel prices were increased by 7.35%. If compared on year-on-year basis, the motor fuel prices rose by 94.42% in July 2022 as compared to July 2021. Electricity became 86.7% expensive this year as compared to the last year. Liquefied gas prices rose by 45.6%, stationery 34.8%, Dal Masoor 92.4%, onion 89.4%, mustard oil 81.95%, ghee 74%, cooking oil 72.5%, chick peas 67.4%, chicken 59%, wheat 45%, Dal Chana 43.2%, vegetable 40.4%, fruit 39.2%, gram flour 37.5%, Dal Mash 35.6% and rice prices increased by 31.2% in July 2022 as compared to July 2021.



ISLAMABAD: Riina Kionka, EU Ambassador to Pakistan calls on Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Hina Rabbani Khar. - DNA

Sino-Pak FMs meetings fully demonstrate close ties

State Councilor Wang also stressed the need for the Pakistani side to have a speedy investigation into the April 26 terrorist attack and hold perpetrators accountable

DNA

BEIJING: A Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson said on Monday that three bilateral meetings between Chinese State Councilor Wang Yi and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in three months fully demonstrated the close ties between China and Pakistan. "You are rightly saying that. This fully demonstrates the close ties between China and Pakistan," Zhao Lijian said during his regular briefing while responding to a question about the meeting between Wang Yi and Bilawal Bhutto on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) council of foreign ministers meeting held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan last week. He said that at the SCO foreign ministers meeting State Councilor Wang Yi met with Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto. The two foreign ministers had an in-depth exchange of views on deepening our all-weather strategic cooperative partner-

ship, advancing political cooperation, pursuing high-quality Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) cooperation, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) cooperation and stepping up cooperation in various fields, including in multilateral occasions, he added. The spokesperson said that during the meeting, Wang Yi stressed that the Chinese side would firmly support Pakistan in safeguarding sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, supporting Pakistan in exploring a development path suiting its national conditions to realize solidarity, stability, and prosperity. "We also support Pakistan's role in regional, international affairs and we will have in-depth communication and jointly build a closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in a new era,"

he added. He said that China supported Chinese business investment in Pakistan and the Chinese side was ready to import more good quality agricultural products. Both the countries agreed to they would resume and gradually expand air links and personnel exchanges in an orderly manner. State Councilor Wang also stressed the need for the Pakistani side to have a speedy investigation into the April 26 terrorist attack and hold the perpetrators accountable. Foreign Minister Bilawal said that the Pakistani side would always take Pak-China all-weather strategic partnership and friendship as a cornerstone for its foreign policy and firmly stand with China in issues concerning China's core interests and major concerns. The Pakistani side will also advance CPEC construction to show new Pakistan speed and they will also

enhance the security work for CPEC, he added. The two foreign ministers also discussed international issues including the Afghan issue, he said. Meanwhile, Pakistan Ambassador to China, Moin ul Haque has termed the third bilateral meeting between the two foreign ministers in three months as a manifestation of the strong China-Pakistan All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership. This is the third bilateral meeting between the two foreign ministers in three months. These frequent high-level exchanges are a manifestation of the strong China-Pakistan All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership, Ambassador Haque said in a tweet. It may be mentioned that on May 22, the two leaders met in Guangzhou, the capital city of South China's Guangdong Province when Foreign Minister Bhutto Zardari visited China at the invitation of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi. It was Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto's first official visit abroad since assuming office in April.

Arab League
calls for
strengthened
boycott
of Israel

DNA

CAIRO: The Arab League's assistant secretary-general has called for the strengthening of the Arab boycott of Israel as an effective tool to confront the Israeli occupation. Saeed Abu Ali made his comments at a meeting with Arab delegates at the organization's general secretariat in Cairo.

"This meeting comes as the Israeli occupation authorities are still continuing their systematic campaign of aggression against the Palestinian people, their sanctities and their property," he said. "These ongoing crimes require the intervention of the international community, especially the (UN) Security Council and regional and international organizations, to assume their responsibilities and stop the policy of double standards," he added.

"Hundreds of relevant international resolutions ... calling for stopping the aggression against the Palestinian people and ending the Israeli occupation" have been issued but not implemented, Abu Ali said. He called for pressure, primarily economic, to force Israeli compliance. The head of the Palestinian delegation at the meeting, Muhanad Al-Aklouk, urged states, parliaments and civil society to join a boycott similar to that against apartheid South Africa. Abu Ali praised the Norwegian government's decision to label the products of Israeli settlements on occupied Arab territories.

US issues
fresh Iran
sanctions

DNA

WASHINGTON: The United States on Monday imposed sanctions on Chinese and other companies it said were used by one of Iran's largest petrochemical brokers to sell tens of millions of dollars' worth of Iranian products to East Asia, as Washington continues to crack down on Iranian oil sales to the region. The US Treasury Department in a statement accused the designated companies of being used by Iran's Arabian Gulf Petrochemical Industry Commercial Co. to facilitate the sale of Iranian petroleum and petrochemical products from Iran to East Asia. The United States imposed sanctions on six companies on Monday, according to the Treasury website, the latest salvo in its stepped-up effort to enforce US sanctions designed to slash Iran's revenues from oil and petrochemicals. The action freezes any US-based assets and generally bars Americans from dealing with them. Those that engage in certain transactions with the firms also risk being hit by sanctions.

Several dead
in Libyan
fuel truck
explosion

DNA

TRIPOLI: At least six people were killed and dozens injured when a fuel truck exploded in southwestern Libya, medics have said. The precise causes of the blast on Monday were not clear. It happened when a crowd flocked around the tanker as it headed to resupply a petrol station in the Bent Bayyah district. A stampede occurred, followed by a massive explosion that set several cars on fire, according to images posted online.

An official at the main hospital in Sebha, southern Libya's main city, said six people had died. The hospital's management said on Facebook that "more than 50 wounded were admitted to Sebha hospital", without indicating the number of deaths. Many of the wounded were in a critical state, said a security source in Sebha, hundreds of kilometres south of the capital Tripoli. Interim Prime Minister Abdulhamid Dbeibeh tweeted that his government was "closely following" the incident.