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Zelenskiy warns of 'ugly' attack to spread fear, despondency

Detailed News On Page-08

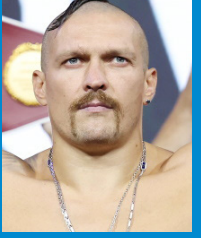
UAE says upgrading ties with Iran

Detailed News On Page-08



Usyk retains heavyweight championship

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

PM grieved over tragic Türkiye accidents

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday extended condolences to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, on behalf of the government and people of Pakistan, over loss of lives in traffic incidents. On his Twitter handle, the prime minister expressed his deep grief and sorrow over the news of the loss of precious lives and the injuries to dozens as a result of traffic incidents in Türkiye. The prime minister also condoled with the bereaved families over their losses.

FM Bilawal Europe visit cancelled

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari visit to Europe has been cancelled. According to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, FM Bilawal was to undertake visit from today. During this visit besides consolidating and expanding bilateral cooperation with these important partners, the visit was to provide a valuable opportunity to further strengthen Pakistan's engagement with Europe and to share perspective on regional and global issues. The Foreign Minister will also be expected to sign a 'Green Framework Engagement' agreement with Denmark, focusing on Climate Change Cooperation, a priority area of the government.

'No one allowed to malign forces'

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi said no one is allowed to malign armed forces and such elements must face the music as per law. Talking to newsmen in Wah Cantonment on Sunday, he said maligning armed forces, judiciary and others institutions is against the constitution. The Minister said the entire nation stands united with the armed forces for security and stability of the country.

Nine soldiers martyred in road mishap

Local police say truck fell 500 feet down the ravine, injuring four others

OUR CORRESPONDENT

MUZAFFARABAD: At least nine soldiers were martyred and four injured when their truck plunged into a ravine in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) on Sunday morning, military and witnesses said. The truck – part of a military convoy – was heading towards Mang Bajri in Bagh district when the incident occurred near Shujaabad, some 12 km before its destination, at about 4am on Sunday, military officials said. "There were 13 soldiers, including the driver, on board the truck and seven of them were martyred on the spot while the rest were injured," a military official said on condition of anonymity as he was not authorised to speak to media. The injured were evacuated to a hospital in Rawalakot, where two of them succumbed to their wounds, he said. Local police said that the truck fell 500 feet (150 metres) down the ravine. Road accidents frequently occur in the hilly areas of AJK and are mostly blamed on narrow roads with negligible safety measures as well as careless driving. In November last year, a bus plunged into a ravine in AJK killing 22 passengers. The truck was part of a military convoy but was ahead of other vehicles when it fell down the road shortly after the Shujaabad police post, according to post in-charge Muhammad Altaf.

PM, COAS review flood relief operations

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Sunday was briefed about the ongoing rescue and relief operations being carried out by the Pakistan Army in telephone conversations with Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa and National Disaster Management Authority's (NDMA) chairperson Lt Gen Akhtar Nawaz. In a telephonic conversation with COAS Gen Bajwa, the prime minister talked about the situation of flood affectees and relief and rehabilitation operations in the flood-hit areas, especially in Sindh. According to the PM Office, the premier stressed upon acceleration of the efforts. The army chief apprised the prime minister of the army's full cooperation in the process while PM Shehbaz appreciated the army's cooperation and passion. Observing helicopters to be helpful in the operations since the linking roads

Continued on Page 06

'PTI's Gill 'torture drama' concocted'

Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah says those who spread hatred against institutions would be brought to justice



SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Rana Sanaullah Khan on Sunday rejected allegations of torture on PTI leader Shahbaz Gill in police custody and made it clear that the coalition government did not believe on any kind of torture. Addressing a press conference here, Rana Sanaullah Khan said that PTI Chairman Imran Khan had started propaganda that police tortured his chief of

staff Dr Shahbaz Gill during the custody. He said that PTI on the behest of Imran Niazi launched condemnable campaign over the Lasbella incident by leveling heinous allegations on the families and martyrs of the Pak Army. He said that PTI leveled such allegations against the state which even were not leveled by enemy state Afghanistan. On August 8, Dr Shahbaz Gill, in continuation of previous allegations, appeared on a television with a fixed plan and aired comments against the Pakistan Army on Imran Khan's agenda. Shahbaz Gill had everything planned with the private television channel, from when they will call him, to how long the conversation will run. According to details, on August 9, a First Information Report (FIR) was registered against Shahbaz Gill over his remarks and Islamabad police arrested him over instigating Army Officers to not obey the orders of the high command. He said that politicians at many times had talked about the intervention of the establishment in the politics but not a single person had ever stated that

Continued on Page 06



HYDERABAD: A girl trying to reach her destination by using a make-shift boat as rain inundated most parts of the Hyderabad city. – DNA Photo Jan Ali Laghari

Pakistan rejects India's false allegations

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Sunday categorically rejected the recent spate of "false terrorism-related assertions" made by India in which some detached alleged incidents are being distorted and presented as a so-called "terror" plot against New Delhi. In a statement, Foreign Office spokesperson Asim Iftikhar Ahmed said a section of the Indian media has reported that India had intercepted a message from a 'Pakistani' WhatsApp number as well as seized an 'empty boat' in Maharashtra along with some weapons. Some segments of the Indian media have deceitfully sought to link these to the preposterous claims about a so-called 'Mumbai style' attack being planned, he added.

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PTI wins NA-245 by-poll

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: PTI has won the NA-245 by-poll in Karachi with the MQM-P coming behind as the unofficial results poured in on the National Assembly seat that fell vacant after the death of Aamir Liaquat Hussain, who was elected on a PTI ticket in 2018. The polling process started at 8am and continued till 5pm today (Sunday). However, the polling time was extended by an hour at Polling Stations 55, 143 and 144. Aamir Liaquat beat Dr Farooq Sattar in 2018 after securing 56,673 votes.

'Why I was ousted', Imran asks 'neutrals'

Says his struggle against this corrupt system will continue



IRSHAD ALI

RAWALPINDI: Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan on Sunday

asked the "neutral" why he was ousted through a "foreign-funded" vote of no-confidence in parliament, saying that his only crime is that he has not accepted the "imported" government. "Now Pemra is also in the game. What has Imran Khan done?"

Continued on Page 06

Imran booked for threatening judge, police officials

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: A first information report (FIR) was registered against former prime minister Imran Khan under the Anti-Terrorism Act for threatening an additional sessions judge and senior police officers of the Islamabad Police at a rally in

Continued on Page 06

Gill tortured in a CIA cell, says Fawad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Senior PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry on Sunday claimed that party chairman Imran Khan's chief of staff Shahbaz Gill was "tortured in a CIA cell". Addressing a press conference of his own in response to one held by Minister for Interior Rana Sanaullah, Chaudhry said that the torture of political prisoners cannot be condoned under any circumstances. "I'm surprised that Rana Sanaullah didn't learn anything from the torture inflicted on him in the past," Chaudhry said, expressing disbelief at how the allegations that PTI has been repeating about Gill being "tortured" are being so easily "dismissed".

Chaudhry said that Sanaullah is acting nowadays as the "mouthpiece of the army". He complained that Imran Khan and party lawyers were not allowed to meet Gill. "Why aren't they letting anyone meet Gill if he is in good health?" he asked also asking: "Why are they avoiding inquiry if the [Gill] wasn't tortured?" Reiterating his proposal from yesterday, he said that PTI demands the formation of an independent commission comprising Saad Rafique, Mustafa Nawaz Khokhar, Shireen Mazari and others. "The judge who doesn't consider torture a serious issue has no right to serve the post," he said. Chaudhry said that PTI will file a case against Islamabad inspector general, deputy inspector general and the lady magistrate.

Political climate turning rough in Pakistan!!

Pakistan is still looking for a true leader who could steer this country out of crises. From the available lot of politicians, there seems nobody who could take on this challenge head-on

Comment

ANSAR M BHATTI



Park went a step ahead by replacing the word Neutrals with the Establishment in his criticism of those who, according to him, got him out of power. The former prime minister came down heavily on the Establishment for what he called 'its collusion with his opponents' to get him out of the government. Imran continued spilling the beans when he said the Establishment people and the Intelligence agencies used to come to him and show him files of corruption of PML N and PPP leaders. It was after that evidence that he built all his narrative against these parties. But when he came to power, he was surprised that

despite having so much solid evidence against these people why they could not be apprehended. He then alleged that it was revealed upon him that these people remained untouchables because of support from some big-wig from the Establishment. Imran Khan's new posture vis-a-vis the Establishment, on one hand, speaks volumes for his frustration emanating from the fact that the noose is being tightened around him in order to get him disqualified and on another the way his confidante Shahbaz Gill is being treated in the police custody. To begin with, the PTI chief chose to distance himself from Gill statement but as things transpired, he and the PTI deemed it in the fittest of things to stop trolling Gill and instead decided to stand behind him with full force, simply because the PTI leaders have realized that the buck would not stop to Shahbaz Gill only. In the due course other PTI die-hard workers may also be picked up and meted out similar treatment. PTI-Establishment face-off is ostensibly a dangerous trend for both stakeholders and the country as well. As we all know, the armed forces of Pakistan are rightly

believed to be the only organized and disciplined intuition of the country. The forces used to be the pride of all Pakistanis and they still are. PTI-Establishment tussle unfortunately may not serve anybody's purpose. It is the myth of the Establishment that has served as a unifying factor in this country therefore this myth should not be broken. It is quite a serious matter when we see a leading political party and its leader challenging this myth, even if he may have some genuine grounds to do that. At the same time this is also true that Imran Khan is not the only one who is doing this, even those who are in power these days, too spared no efforts in discrediting the Establishment, whenever they got a chance. Imran's case is nevertheless different. He is not only a popular leader but is considered as a clean man as well as compared with the leaders of the other political parties. And when somebody standing on a pedestal, passes comments against an individual or for that matter an institution, his comments carry immense weight and credence. People usually tend to believe such persons even if they are not telling the whole truth. The

emerging situation thus requires immediate and earnest efforts on the part of the stakeholders in order to address the fault lines before they grow deeper and jolt the entire system. Pakistan celebrated its 75th independence day a few days ago with pomp and show and great enthusiasm. The government, on the occasion, arranged a musical-cum-cultural show attended by the leading dignitaries. Reports suggest a huge sum of money was spent on that show, which according to many, had nothing to do with the independence of Pakistan and thus a great sum was squandered, especially when the country was already undergoing financial upheavals. It is quite disappointing that we would like to celebrate all such occasions with huge fan-fare but never like to follow what our forefathers had said to make this country a welfare and modern state. Countries that got independence with us or even after us have gone far ahead in terms of socio-economic and human development while we are still groping in the dark. And why is it so? Only because we have never tried to break the shackles of feudal-

ism; imperialists mindset and dictatorial approach. Why our arch rival India stands out prominently in the comity of nations viz-a-viz Pakistan? Only because from the very beginning it did not allow these absurdities to make inroads into the Indian polity. Pakistan is still looking for a true leader who could steer this country out of crises. From the available lot of politicians, there seems nobody who could take on this challenge head-on. Imran Khan, after his disappointing 4-year term in office, is trying again to grab the highest office. For many, he still may be the better choice provided he makes some earnest efforts to learn from his past mistakes. He needs to bridge the gap between his words and deeds. Problem with our political leaders is that when they are in the opposition they present themselves as great reformers and democrats but as soon as they enter the power corridors, they immediately forget everything and start behaving like dictators and autocrats. This trend has to be reversed. Only then the country can start its march towards true democracy, welfare and an all inclusive state.

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Briefs

Government earmarks Rs.37.5 bln for flood hit people: Mari

SANGHAR: Federal Minister of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Shazia Mari on Sunday said that Federal Government has earmarked Rs.37.5 billion for the rain and flood hit people, Rs.25,000 would be paid to 1.5 million families under Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP). She expressed these views while talking to the media after visiting rain-hit areas of Sanghar. Shazia Mari said "After issuance of notification for declaring different districts calamity hit, the Sindh government would submit a report to National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) after which payment will be made to rain-hit families through BISP's database and system."

The Federal Minister said that recent rains caused havoc and destruction in Sindh including Sanghar district which has also been badly affected. She said "Financial assistance to rain-victims to be ensured through a systematic way and database to be used for ascertaining status of destitute families and no illegal deduction from allocated amount will be tolerated and action will be taken against agents and staff found negligent in this regard."

Earlier, addressing a press conference with Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah Shazia Mari said that in the 2011 flood we stood with rain-hit people and provided relief to deserving families. She expressed gratitude to ASif Ali Zardari who in his tenure had personally visited rain-hit areas and issued Pakistan Cards and Watan Cards to people, however the Sindh Government was also taking sincere efforts to provide relief to rain-hit people on priority basis.

The Sindh Chief Minister has clearly stated that every rain hit person would be provided ration on an equitable system and strict action would be taken against persons found guilty in this regard, She said. - APP

4 dacoits arrested, weapons recovered

FAISALABAD: The police have arrested four alleged dacoits and recovered illicit weapons and other items from them. A police spokesman said here on Sunday that City Samundri police conducted a raid in Chak No. 470-GB and arrested two alleged dacoits, Rehan and his accomplice, who were wanted to the police in a number of dacoity, robbery and other cases. Meanwhile, Sargodha Road police also nabbed two alleged robbers - Faisal and Nazim - from Green Town and recovered motorcycles, illicit weapons, cash, mobile-phones and other items from them. The police sent the accused behind bars while further investigation was under progress, he added. - APP

73 booked for attacking Fesco offices

FAISALABAD: The D-Type Colony police have registered a case against 73 people on the charge of attacking the Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (Fesco) offices here. A police spokesman said here on Sunday that Asad Shoaib, a security constable, filed a complaint that around 73 people including Mian Mehmood staged a demonstration against increase in their electricity bills and attacked the Fesco Sub-division People's Colony offices. They damaged furniture in addition to creating hindrance in office work. The police registered a case against the attackers and started investigation, spokesman added. - APP

Pak Air Force relief operation continues in flood-hit areas

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In the current unprecedented monsoon rain spell, Pakistan Air Force continues to provide humanitarian assistance and

disaster relief support to the people stranded in flash floods affected areas of Nurwah, Madadpur, Kot Magasi, Mauripur, Sohbatpur, Habib Kot, Fatehpur, Sadiq Pul, Fazilpur and Hajipur. On the special instructions of Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed

Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force, Emergency Response teams of PAF are working round the clock to provide rations to people trapped in their homes. During the operation hundreds of flood affectees have been evacuated to

safety. Additionally, all available resources are being utilized to provide treatment and medicine to the flood affectees at the field medical camps established by Pakistan Air Force. Pakistan Air Force has always remained at the forefront in extend-

ing humanitarian assistance during natural calamities. Relief operation in South Punjab, Balochistan and Sindh areas is a practical manifestation of PAF's resolve to extend all out support to fellow countrymen in the hour of need.

**ETEA conducts entrance test for admissions**

PESHAWAR: The entrance test for admissions in public and private sector engineering colleges and universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) was conducted simultaneously on Sunday at Peshawar, Mardan, Abbottabad, Swat, Malakand, Kohat, and Dera Ismail Khan Centres. The test for the academic session 2022-23 was conducted by the Educational Testing and Evaluating Agency (ETEA) of the provincial government. Around 6,880 candidates, including 572 females, from KP, erstwhile FATA, AJK and Gilgit Baltistan appeared for the test. The result will be announced on August 22 (Monday) and uploaded on ETEA website (www.etea.edu.pk). - APP

Jordan's Princess Sarah Zeid arrives in Pakistan

KARACHI: The Princess of Jordan Sarah Zeid, who is also the World Food Programme (WFP) Ambassador and Special Advisor on Nutrition, arrived in Pakistan Sunday morning. At Karachi's Jinnah International Airport, she was received by Sindh Minister for Poverty Alleviation Shazia Marri and Karachi Administrator Murtaza Wahab. Princess Sarah will meet Sindh Chief Minister and other officials during her visit. She will also visit a nourishment center in Nawabshah. Princess Sarah is a humanitarian and maternal and newborn health activist. She married U.N. Commissioner on Human Rights Prince Zeid bin Ra'ad Zeid al-Husseini, a Jordanian prince on 5 July 2000 in Amman. Princess Sarah Zeid is working with the World Food Programme to increase awareness of the specific needs, vulnerabilities and contribution of women, girls, children and newborns in humanitarian and fragile settings. - DNA



KARACHI: The Princess of Jordan Sarah Zeid, who is also the WFP Ambassador and Special Advisor on Nutrition, arrived in Pakistan. She was received by Minister for Poverty Alleviation Shazia Marri. - DNA

Business community to provide jobs to 475 rehabilitated drug addicts

PESHAWAR: The business community of Peshawar has committed to provide employment to 475 rehabilitated drug addicts for their better future and to prevent them return towards addiction. They said this in a meeting with Commissioner Peshawar Division, Riaz Khan Mehsud in the chair, said a press release issued here on Sunday. The meeting was attended by the representatives of the Tazim-e-Tajir, Anjuman-e-Tajir, Tajir Insaf Group, Hotel & Restaurants' Association, Petroleum Association and Peshawar Cantonment Tajir Association. Those who attended the meeting were included Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Dr Ihtesham-ul-Haq, General Manager (GM) KP Economic Zones Development & Management Company (EZDMC) Ishfaq Afridi while the trading commu-

nity was represented by Malik Meher Elahi, Haji Mohammad Afzal, Shahid Khan, Mujeeb-ur-Rehman, Abdul Majid, Habibullah Zahid and others. On this occasion, the representatives of the traders' associations expressed full confidence in the efforts of the Commissioner Peshawar, Riaz Khan Mehsud for the rehabilitation of drug addicts and assured him full cooperation in provision of employment to them. The ADC Dr Ihtesham-ul-Haq said that 1200 drug addicts were being rehabilitated in public and private sector rehabilitation centres during Narcotics Free Campaign launched on May 25, 2022. These drug addicts are now completely detoxicated and would be handed over to their families on August 25, 2022. Out of the total 1200 rehabilitated drug addicts 475 belongs to Peshawar and other parts of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while 725 other hail from Punjab, Sindh, Azad Kashmir and neighbouring country Afghanistan. The rehabilitated addicts of Punjab, Sindh and Azad Kashmir would be handed over to their families through Deputy Commissioners of their concerned districts and the responsibility of the provision of employment to them is also given to them. Addressing the meeting, the Commissioner Peshawar appealed the trading community for provision of employment to 475 rehabilitated drug addicts to enable them to earn livelihood for themselves. In response to the request of the commissioner, the representatives of the trading community unanimously announced to employ the rehabilitated drug addicts on the basis of their academic qualification. On

this occasion, the president, Hotel & Restaurants' Association, Habibullah Zahid pledged to provide employment to maximum number of 200 persons followed by Umar Pharmacy, which promised employment for 100 persons. Similarly, Haji Mohammad Afzal, president Anjuman-e-Tajir announced to look after two minor children. The representatives of other traders' associations committed the provision of employment to the remaining persons. Furthermore, the representative of the KPEZDMC announced that the company has decided the provision of paid internship to graduates. In this connection, another joint meeting of the trading community and district administration is scheduled tomorrow wherein the list of the rehabilitated persons would be handed over to them and they would be employed on basis of the same serial number. - APP

Weather variations posing threats to humans, wildlife

PESHAWAR: Emerged as a silent killer, the climate change's erratic weather variations have started posing serious threat to humans beings, wildlife and aquatic resources in developing countries including Pakistan due to its geographical placement, emissions of hazards gases, deforestation and rapid population growth. Losing about 27,000 hectares of forests per year especially in the community and private lands of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit Baltistan, Pakistan has witnessed substantial changes in the weather patterns including untimely rainfall, increase in temperature, heatwaves, drought and floods in recent years causing an adverse effects on human life, wildlife and aquatic re-

sources besides converting fertile lands into deserts affecting agriculture productivity. According to National Forest Policy 2015, Pakistan has one of the lowest forest covers in the world where only five percent of its areas were under the green gold, and was losing about 27,000 hectares forests per year due to deforestation, urbanization and rapid population growth. The yesterday's flash floods at Shishikoh valley in Lower Chitral and Balochistan that claimed many lives, destroyed standing crops and orchards besides irrigation and communication channels were apparently caused by the climate change. The devastation of 2010 flood, worst drought during 1999-2003, cyclones in Karachi

and Gawdar coasts in 2008, Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GOLFs) including Atabad Lake in Gilgit Baltistan, Chitral and July 28, 2021 flood in Islamabad, Murree's snowfall tragedy 2021 and human losses in recent floods in Balochistan have testified that Pakistan was most vulnerable to climate change. Muhammad Mumtaz Malik, former Chief Conservator Wildlife Department told APP that Pakistan was among 10 countries mostly vulnerable to climate change. Terming climate change as a silent killer, he said it was converting fertile agricultural lands into deserts, drought, water scarcity and flash floods owing to the weather's vulnerabilities in the region. - APP

Int'l summer workshop on regional connectivity begins

German Ambassador-Designate to Pakistan remarked: The European Union (EU) serves as a great example for the importance and potential of regional integration. For me, youth plays an important role in shaping the relationships between countries

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: At the opening of the International Summer Workshop (ISW) on August 19, 2022, speakers highlighted the importance of regional connectivity, stability, and peace for sustainable development in the Pakistan-Afghanistan and the broader South and Central Asia region. The event marked the inauguration of the 10-day long exchange and dialogue program, organized by Hams Seidel Foundation (HSF) Pakistan and the National Dialogue Forum (NDF), for young students from Afghanistan and Pakistan. Ms. Shazia Fatima Khawaja, Special Assistant of the Prime Minister of Pakistan on Youth Affairs, in her keynote address said: A peaceful, stable and prosperous Afghanistan will be in benefit of the region and advantageous for Pakistan. For all this to happen, it is important for both Afghanistan and Pakistan to support each other and develop a relationship that will benefit the people on each side. Mr. Alfred Grannas, the German Ambassador-Designate to Pakistan, in his first informal public appearance, remarked: The European Union (EU) serves as a great example for the importance and potential of regional integration. For me, youth plays an important role in shaping the relationships between countries. Mr. Thomas Seiler, Chargé d'Affaires of the EU Delegation to Pakistan saw a link between the ISW and the EU's own efforts for Indo-Pacific cooperation. He pointed out

the potential of regional connectivity - also in areas that are often forgotten such as vocational training. Mr. Shehryar Khan, Executive Director, NDF, welcomed all participants on behalf of the NDF and said: We hope that these seeds of cooperation that we are planting today, will develop into cultural and civic relationships that will serve as the foundation for stronger people-to-people relations in the region. Dr. Steffen

Kudella, the Resident Representative of HSF Pakistan, said: Sustainable development is a form of intergenerational ethics, and therefore it is a choice. Dear students, this makes you the most precious resource of the Pakistan-Afghanistan region! Because you own the future. There is no sustainable political development of this region without you. The event aims to bring together diverse group of young socio-political multi-

pliers from the South and Central Asian region (including Afghan refugee students) and to provide them with the opportunity to exchange political, economic, social and cultural perspectives on regional challenges, and to understand the effects of new developments on their countries. This year, 27 young leaders from Afghanistan and Pakistan are attending the immersive and interactive ISW with a thematic focus on

peace and stability through regional connectivity. The interactive workshop will feature key policymakers, academics, journalists, and subject specialists for an engaging session and intensive intellectual exchanges. The opening ceremony was attended by a diverse audience including diplomats, professors, civil society activists, journalists, and representatives of different national and international organizations.

**12 more test positive for Covid-19 in Faisalabad**

FAISALABAD: As many as 12 people were tested positive for COVID-19 in the city during the last 24 hours.

According to the health department spokesperson, 381 coronavirus tests were conducted in public as well as private sector labs during the same period.

He said that total active cases in Faisalabad were 149 while 29,044 patients had so far recovered from the disease.

He said that 119 beds were allocated at the Allied Hospital, 52 at the DHQ hospital and 150 at Government General Hospital Ghulam Muhammad Abad for COVID-19 patients. At present, six patients were under treatment at the Allied hospital. He further said that 143 confirmed patients were isolated at their homes in the city. - APP

PRCS handed over two ambulances to BHUs

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Red Crescent Society Merged Areas (PRCS-MA) on Sunday handed over one well equipped ambulance each to Basic Health Unit (BHU) Baloch Kot and BHU Chagmalai, district South Waziristan.

In a statement, the Chairman PRCS-MA, Asif Khan Mehsud handed over both the ambulances during a ceremony that was attended by Brigadier Syed Qasim Mehmood commander of sector headquarters in South Waziristan and elders of the area. Speaking on the occasion, Asif Khan said that the PRCS initiated different endeavors in the health sector and successfully operated nine BHUs in merged districts. He said more than 86,000 health and hygiene kits and masks have been distributed during COVID-19 pandemic as well.

He said that the Pakistan Red Crescent Society Merged Areas run BHUs were providing best healthcare facilities to people including expert medical staff, free-of-cost medicine, psycho-social support, ambulance services, playgrounds and Child-Friendly Spaces (CFS) with delivery rooms. The area people of Baloch Kot and Chagmalai appreciated the efforts of Pakistan Red Crescent Society Merged Areas for establishing the Basic Health Unit and said that women now have easy access to these healthcare centers. They expressed satisfaction for providing them all the facilities under one roof and urged for providing these services to other areas of the merged districts. - APP

EIB recovers 30 kg ice, 8kg heroin

PESHAWAR: Adviser to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Excise, Taxation and Narcotics Control Khaliq-ur-Rehman on Sunday said that Excise Intelligence Bureau (EIB) has recovered 30 kilogram of ice and 8 kilogram heroin during a major operation in district Khyber.

In a statement issued here, he said that the provincial government was determined for cleansing of the society from the curse of drugs. Acting on a tip-off, EIB, Excise Officers conducted a joint raid in Nogzi Baba area of Khyber district and recovered a large quantity of drugs from an empty house.

During a search of the fortress-like house, four sacks were recovered and after checking 30kg ice and 8 kg heroin were found in them. Adviser Excise appreciated the performance of the officers and also announced reward for conducting successful major operation in Khyber district.

The Excise Department registered a case in Peshawar police station and started further investigations. - APP

National Days and Armed Forces Days

AUGUST

Aug 01/ CHINA	Armed Forces Day
Aug 01/ SWITZERLAND	National Day
Aug 01/ LEBANON	Armed Forces Day
Aug 01/ SYRIA	Armed Forces Day
Aug 4/ BUKINO FASO	National Day
Aug 09/ SINGAPORE	National Day
Aug 15/ DPR KOREA	Independence Day
Aug 15/ INDIA	Independence Day
Aug 15/ POLAND	Armed Forces Day
Aug 17/ INDONESIA	Independence Day
Aug 24/ UKRAINE	Independence Day
Aug 25/ URUGUAY	Independence Day
Aug 30/ TURKEY	Armed Forces Day
Aug 31/ KYRGYZ	Independence Day
Aug 31/ MALAYSIA	National Day

Hotels & Restaurants

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



Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....	8494949
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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
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Rawalpindi.....	9270601-20



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CAA.....	9281092



Hospitals

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



Departments

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

Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....	0321-5744480
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ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf witnessing a paintings exhibition at the Parliament House. The exhibition featured paintings of Shabbir Ahmad Zia, instructor Calligraphy National Council of Arts, Pakistan. Shabbir briefed the National Assembly Speaker about his works. – DNA

SAARC Chamber calls upon US to unfreeze Afghan forex reserves

Leader of the delegation Shabbir Ahmad said all reserves held overseas were meant to facilitate international trade and stabilize financial sectors. He said "The people of Afghanistan are sole proprietor of these foreign reserves and US decision is one sided and doesn't match with international law"

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry Iftikhar Ali Malik Sunday urged the US to unfreeze all foreign reserves of Afghan instantly otherwise, economic crisis caused by draining coffers could trigger ever bigger catastrophe in memory in war ravaged country. Talking to a delegation of traders from Mardan Shabbir Ahmad, he said "Pakistan's principled position on the frozen Afghan foreign bank reserves remains that these are owned by the Afghan nation and these should be released."

"The utilization of Afghan funds should be the sole sovereign decision of Afghanistan," he added. He said Pakistan has been advocating for the release of Afghanistan's frozen money all along so that the economic crisis facing the war torn country could be addressed on top priority. He said humanitarian catastrophe in Afghanistan and its economic crisis were inextricably linked. Iftikhar Ali Malik again urged the international community especially western countries and US to play constructive role in alleviating the sufferings of innocent Afghans and emphasised that "time is the essence". He said "Actually frozen reserves are not

meant for humanitarian aid but to back up the country's currency, help in monetary policy and manage the country's balance of payment. He said even Taliban and their opponents came together to criticise Biden decision as unjust and unfair." He said "No other country can make such confiscation decisions arbitrarily another country's reserves." Leader of the delegation Shabbir Ahmad said all reserves held overseas were meant to facilitate international trade and stabilize financial sectors. He said "The people of Afghanistan are sole proprietor of these foreign reserves and US decision is one sided and doesn't match with international law."

He said even Human Rights Watch's John Sifton categorically cautioned that "directing \$3.5 billion to humanitarian assistance for Afghan may sound generous but it should be remembered that the entire \$7 billion already belonged to the Afghan people". While concluding he said that "No power in the world except Allah can undo law of nature" and said it's high time to provide solace to grief stricken Afghans without loss of time otherwise history would take its course. He thanked Iftikhar Ali Malik an octogenarian prominent trade leader of South Asia for sparing time for holding brain storming and thought provoking session for orientation of traders.

National sports policy to be finalised in consultation with all stakeholders: Mazari

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Inter Provincial Coordination (IPC) Ehsan ur Rehman Mazari said on Sunday that the federal government would work in conjunction with all stakeholders to finalise the new national sports policy. "The new sports policy is aimed at promoting and improving standard of sports in the county and for that input from all stakeholders is a must. Hence, we will take them on board before giving it a final shape," Mazari told APP. The former IPC Minister Dr Fehmida Mirza time and again had vowed to introduce the new Sports Policy but it never got materialized, as Pakistan Sports Board (PSB), Pakistan Olympic Association (POA) and National Sports Federations were not on the same page. But Mazari said he had taken charge of the office to put things on track. "I'm here to deliver. I want an inclusive sports policy

that has ownership and involvement of all the stakeholders. I have asked Secretary IPC to keep everyone on board for that. No one should complain that their input was not taken while formulating the policy rather they should feel honoured that they have a say in the overall development and promotion of sports in the county," he said. The minister believed that the more input the National Sports Federations, sports associations, POA and other stakeholders would give, the better the policy would be. "Then, we will take this inclusive sports policy to the cabinet for approval. Hopefully, it will get a go ahead signal from there soon" he said. To a question about differences between the previous government and POA, Mazari said Lt Gen (R) Arif Hasan became POA President through an election process.

"I believe in close working relations between PSB and POA for the betterment of sports in the county. The PSB and POA are on the same page. I also had a fruitful meeting with both POA secretary and president. I told them that we all are working on the same agenda which is to make Pakistan's name shine at all forums so we all should work jointly on it." Speaking about the performance of Pakistani athletes in the recently-held Commonwealth Games and Islamic Solidarity Games, he said it was heartening that Pakistani athletes has started to excel at the international level. "I'm very much satisfied with the performance of the athletes who raised the country's flag at the Commonwealth Games. However, I was expecting more from the athletes in Islamic Games at Konya but unfortunately some of our players got injured. Weightlifter Nooh Dastagir Butt was also not fully fit due to an injury. Had he been fully fit he would have repeated his Commonwealth Games' feat in the Islamic Games." He said the medal winners of the Games would be getting the cash rewards very soon. "The gold medal winners will get five million rupees, the silver medalist two million rupees, while the bronze medal winner will pocket one million rupees. I'll make sure they get cash awards without any delay," he said. – APP

PIDE forms a Power Commission

No government has taken the power sector with the urgency it deserves, and no serious research has gone into understanding the issues

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's power sector has been in crisis for years. Too many players in the system confuse each other to cumulate losses and give subsidies while at the same, the circular debt is rising continually. Surprisingly, no government has taken the power sector with the urgency it deserves, and no serious research has gone into understanding the issues. Whatever decisions are made are at the advice of international financial institutions, who do not understand the local dynamics of the problem. Energy is a chronic problem that eight governments have not been able to solve. Due to mismanagement and weak

governance in the power sector, massive transmission & distribution losses occurred (Rs. 473 billion during 2021, out of which Rs. 402 recovered through tariff and Rs. 71 billion was added to circular debt). Our decision-makers' lack of informed long-term vision has led to distribution inefficiencies, expensive fuel mix, and rising capacity payments. The results are unreliable electricity supplies, unaffordable electricity, and increasing business costs. The demand-supply gap has evolved over the years from deficits to excess installed capacity. Still, there is a shortage of cash flows to import fuel and supporting infrastructure to run it, leading to power outages. According to a Press Release is-

sued from the Pakistan Institute of Development, it was stated that to research all these issues and more, under the guidance of Vice-Chancellor Dr. Nadeem ul Haque, the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) has formed a 'PIDE Power Commission'. The commission comprises power sector experts with decades-long experience in the sector. The members of the Commission include Engr. Tahir Basharat Cheema, Former MD, PEPCO; Engr. Salis Usman, General Manager Power Planning, NTDC; Engr. Mujahid Islam Billah, Ex. CEO, FESCO; Mr. Basharat Ali, CFO, PEPCO; Engr. Sajad Haider Syed, Dy. Manager, NTDC; Engr. Masood Akhtar, Former GM, NPCC; Engr. Azhar Iqbal, Director Finance, PEPCO; Engr.

Adnan Riaz Mir, GM, Monitoring, PP&MC; and Engr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, Ex GM, NPCC. With contributions from the experts in the Commission, a major study is underway at PIDE. This soon-to-be-launched study would provide deep insights into various segments of the power sector, providing workable, sustainable, and integrated solutions to the power sector woes. According to PIDE, more than 60 percent of electricity is produced by thermal sources providing costly electricity in Pakistan. Further, the tariff mechanism adopted provides electricity charges across categories, time of use and sanctioned load, etc., creating inefficiencies and making electricity expensive for productive sectors (industry and

businesses) of the economy. Additionally, Pakistan is among the top thirty countries globally with relatively high tariff rates. Due to long-term agreements with guaranteed capacity payments to thermal generation companies, switching to cheaper indigenous energy sources is impossible in the short to medium term. Therefore, the complex tariff mechanism needs to be revised to reduce electricity prices in Pakistan. The sector is about to implement a wholesale market model (CTBCM), demanding significant tariff reforms. There should be fair pricing, where each consumer pays according to their consumption on a progressive trend, i.e., the more per unit energy is consumed, the more consumer pays on average.

AIOU to close admissions today

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has set August 22 (Monday) as the last day of admissions in merit-based programs including certificate courses, BS, MBA, MS/MPhil, and Ph.D. offered in semester autumn, 2022. 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. The online admission procedure is presented in the prospectuses in detail. Admissions to BS, 1.5 and 2.5 year MBA (New Scheme) programs will be granted purely on merit basis whereas the candidates will appear in entry test to qualify for admission in Commonwealth of Learning (COL) MBA/MPA, MS/MPhil and PhD. These entry tests will be conducted in the university's academic complex from August 26-31, 2022. First and second merit lists will be displayed on the university website on September 5 and September 12 respectively. On the other hand, deadline for depositing fee for the first and second merit lists will be September 9 and September 16 respectively. Transparency in the entire admission procedures will be strictly ensured on the special directives of VC, AIOU, Prof Dr Zia Ul-Qayyum. It is pertinent to mention here that admissions for Matriculation and FA programs will continue till September 6.

Railways leased out 4,687 acres

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways has leased out around 4,687 acres of its land during the last four years with the aim to transform the department into profitable entity by generating more revenue. The leased-out land was located in seven divisions including Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar, Quetta, Rawalpindi Multan and Sukkar, an official of the Ministry of Railways told APP. He said Pakistan Railways (PR) had also decided to accelerate its ongoing anti-encroachment operation against land grabbers across the country to recoup its land from different individuals, groups and even business organizations using it for residential, commercial and agriculture purposes for decades.

"The encroachment operation will be launched with the assistance of Railway Police and district administrations of the relevant provincial governments," he added. He said that the PR had retrieved over 500 acres precious land worth billions of rupees from illegal occupants under its anti-encroachment operation across the country. The government was taking steps to retrieve encroached land, adding that a detailed survey was being carried out to identify the encroached land, illegally occupied by individuals or various government departments he said. The official said that First Information Reports (FIRs) were being lodged and cases being registered and sent to PR Judicial Magistrates for expeditious trial.

The issue regarding illegal occupation and possession of the department's land by government departments and institutions had also been taken up with the relevant departments, he added. He said that the department owned 167,690 acres of land across the country, out of which 90,326 acres was in Punjab, 39,428 acres in Sindh, 28,228 acres in Balochistan and 9,708 acres in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. To a question, he said that PR had started special master level classes in railway engineering department in collaboration with Pak-Austria Fachhochschule Institute of Applied Sciences (PAFIST) to enhance the capacity of its engineers and technical staff. The classes had been organized through the Pakistan Railways Training Academy Walton, Lahore. A special cell for foreign training had also been set up at the Ministry of Railways. – APP

Briefs

Marriyum grieved over demise of Nayyara Noor

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Sunday expressed deep grief and sorrow on the death of Pakistan's legendary singer Nayyara Noor. In her condolence message the minister said she was saddened to hear the news of Nayyara Noor's death. Paying tributes to the deceased, she said Nayyara Noor was the shining star on the horizon of Pakistan showbiz industry. In the soulful voice of Nayyara Noor, the popular national song "Watan Ki Matti Ghawah Rehna" still resonated in the ears, said the minister. She said that Nayyara Noor had sung numerous songs on Radio Pakistan and Pakistan Television. Referring to her demeanour, Marriyum Aurangzeb said Nayyara Noor was a simple and modest woman, her outward appearance was a great example of simplicity. The void created by the death of the great singer in the showbiz industry will never be filled, she remarked. She prayed to Allah Almighty to rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear this loss with fortitude. - APP

NDMA issues flash flooding alerts

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has advised all the provincial and federal ministries concerned and emergency departments to ensure beforehand arrangements to cope with the moderate flash flooding predicted in rivers and nullahs of Eastern Balochistan. According to the NDMA advisory, the Flood Forecasting Division has forecast moderate flash flooding in the Rivers and Nullahs of Eastern Balochistan during next 24 hours and heavy flooding after 24 hours. It added that 'Medium to High Level Flooding' is expected in River Kabul at Nowshera and tributaries of Rivers Kabul and Indus till tomorrow (Monday). - APP

Illegal housing societies directed to stop ads

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) has directed illegal housing societies to stop advertisements as without getting the requisite No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the authorities concerned, advertisement, marketing and development of any housing project is illegal. According to RDA spokesman, the Authority had lodged First Information Reports (FIRs) against seven illegal housing schemes on violation of the rules and directed them to stop illegal advertisements as the civic body did not issue NOCs. He said, Metropolitan Planning and Traffic Engineering (MP&TE) Directorate RDA on the directives of the Director General, RDA Capt. (r) was taking action in accordance with the law against illegal housing schemes. He informed that the authority had lodged FIRs and also issued notices to the sponsors of the seven illegal housing schemes including Capital Valley Mouza Thallian, Islamabad Golf City Mouza Thallian, Pearl Enclave Mouza Thallian, AL-Madina Valley Girja Road, The Countryside Farms Chak Beli Khan Road, Prism Town Gujar Khan and New Metro City Gujar Khan, Rawalpindi. The RDA had also advised the general public not to invest in illegal housing schemes, he said adding, moreover, the sponsors had also been warned to immediately stop the marketing of unapproved/illegal housing schemes and contact the civic agency to get formal approval of the schemes as per law otherwise strict legal action would be taken against the rules violators. The spokesman said that the MP&TE directorate had also sent letters to the Director (Cyber Crimes), FIA with a request to take necessary action to check the illegal advertisement on social media. - APP



ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Shakil Munir visited the Italian embassy and met with Ambassador Andreas Ferrarese and Deputy Head of Mission Roberto Neccia and the Defence Attache. - DNA

Dearth of teaching staff at FDE disrupting academic activities

Students strength is over 1200 and college is facing severe shortage of regular faculty in the subjects of Physics, Biology, Computer Science, Islamic Studies, Psychology, Maths, Statistics, Pakistan Studies and Economics department

ISLAMABAD: Students of the capital city have geared up to head back to their colleges with the start of a new academic session but there aren't enough teachers to welcome them. According to an official source, the posts of lecturers and assistant professors at Federal Government Colleges under the ambit of the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) have been lying vacant for a long thus disrupting academic activities. An Associate Professor at Islamabad Model College for Girls (Postgraduate) F-7/2 said it is so difficult to engage the huge size of classes with one or two teachers. There is only one teacher each in the subjects of History, Education and Political Science in the college when we need three teachers in each of the disciplines. The Department of Pakistan Studies has two and the Urdu department has only three teachers to teach over 1800 students of all sections of intermediate classes. "We have been facing a vast faculty shortage for a long but unconcerned and indifferent attitude of the concerned authorities is responsible for burnout of teachers result-

antly compromising on quality of lecture delivery", the Associate Professor said while talking to APP. F.G Home Economics College of Management Sciences F-11 is also facing a shortage of faculty. Currently there is no teacher in the most important subjects of English, Urdu, Pakistan studies. There is only one teacher in the subject of Computer and Economics. College is also in dire need of regular faculty in the specialized subjects of Home Economics. A teacher at Islamabad Model College for Girls Humak said the college has no regular teachers in Chemistry, Education and Sociology. Students strength is over 1200 and college is facing severe shortage of regular faculty in the subjects of Physics, Biology, Computer Science, Islamic Studies, Psychology, Maths, Statistics, Pakistan Studies and Economics department. FDE has recently transferred our Assistant Professor of Urdu to a model college to accommodate daily wage teachers which is in sheer violation of the regulations, norms and nomenclature. She was also working as Vice Principal and Drawing and Disbursing Officer in the col-

lege and sharing extra-teaching hours because her college was badly short of staff. Unfortunately this unjust and unfair transfer has given birth to a new practice. Islamabad Model Postgraduate College H-8 is also facing a severe shortage of faculty in History, Political science, English and Maths. Islamabad Model College for Boys H-9 needs faculty in the subjects of Physics, English and Computer Science. FDE has set a ridiculous target of 1000 enrollment for Islamabad Model College for Girls I-14/3 when the college has no teachers in the subjects of Biology, Chemistry, Statistics, Economics, Education, Arabic and Civics. College has one regular lecturer for Maths, one for Physics, One for Urdu and One for geography. Similarly Islamabad Model College for Girls (Postgraduate) G-10/4 has one teacher in each of the subjects of History, Political Science and geography. College will not offer the subject of Home Economics in this session because of non availability of teachers. Islamabad Model College for Girls, Bhara Kahu has currently one regular teacher in each subjects of Chemistry, Phys-

ics, Biology, Computer Science, Urdu, Education, Maths, Statistics and has no faculty in the subjects of English, Islamic Studies, Pakistan studies and economics. Islamabad Model College for Girls (Postgraduate) F-7/4 is also facing a shortage in many subjects particularly in English. There is no teacher at Islamabad Model College for Girls I-8/3 in the subjects of Pakistan studies and Political science. There is a dire need of teachers in the subjects of English, Islamic Studies, Statistics and Chemistry. This leaves the teachers vulnerable to burnout compromising the quality of teaching. Talking to APP, President Federal Government College Teachers Association, Dr Rahima Rehman said that unfortunately F.G colleges have been badly ignored by the authorities. There is no separate director for F.G colleges who could understand the issues of these colleges which are different from other educational institutions. She urged the authorities at FDE to appoint a separate director for F.G colleges who could understand the issues of F.G colleges. - APP

'Govt to facilitate Pakistani Zaireen'

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Sajid Hussain Turi wrote a letter to Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari for the provision of basic facilities to Pakistani pilgrims going to Iraq and Iran. The Minister also requested to formulate a comprehensive policy for pilgrims which was the need of the hour keeping in view the rising number of devotees visiting the sacred places in Iran and Iraq. On the occasion of Arbaeen (40 days after Ashura), millions of pilgrims go to Iraq every year to visit the mausoleum of Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) where the pilgrims were facing a lot of difficulties in obtaining visas for Iran and Iraq, said Minister Sajid Turi. "Some people go to Iraq and Iran under the pretext of pilgrimage and do not return home and lived there illegally for the sake of jobs which is totally unfair as it create problems for others." The Minister said that the genuine pilgrims were facing difficulties due to such a handful of people. - APP

Ministry completes 3,564 low cost houses

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Housing and Works has completed as many as 3,564 low cost housing units of the Workers Welfare Fund (WWF) and 18,499 of the Akhuwat Foundation (AF) under the low cost housing project of the federal government. Around 150,712 low cost housing units were under construction all over the country under different housing projects launched with help of provincial governments, sources in the Ministry of Housing and Works told APP. They said the balloting for 1,508 low cost housing units of WWF in Zone-V, Islamabad, 4,000 low cost housing units of LDA City Lahore, 2,000 units of Farash Town, CDA, Islamabad, 839 housing units of Raiwind, Sargodha and Chiniot and 300 low cost housing units of PHA Housing Scheme, Jalozai, Nowshera, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been conducted. - APP

Estate Office vacates over 2,817 properties

ISLAMABAD: The Estate Office, Ministry of Housing and Works have so far vacated over 2,817 government properties from illegal occupants and handed over to the entitled persons across the country. The Capital Development Authority and other relevant departments of the provincial governments have helped the Estate Office to vacate government properties," sources in the Ministry of Housing and Works told APP. They said that the Ministry was also considering to take action against the encroachments and illegally constructed structures in government residences in the federal capital. A punitive action would be taken against the construction of extra rooms by the employees and their kith and kin, who lived in the government allotted houses, they added. - APP

Open kacheries best forum to settle issues

Consumers of IESCO Region should participate in these open Kachery for registering complaints / suggestion to power related issues

DNA

ISLAMABAD: IESCO management and field formations have always tried to address the issues of esteemed customers on priority basis while at the same time ensuring the provision of best services to them. In the same spirit and with a sense of professional responsibility, IESCO has issued a schedule of open Kachery in all operational circles. According to the details, Islamabad Circle (G-9 Sub Division IESCO, Islamabad), Rawalpindi City Circle (Near Taj Hall, Peshawar Road Opposite KTM Grid Station Rawalpindi), Rawalpindi Cantt Circle (Near Bakra Mandi Rest House Dhamiyal Road Rawal-

pindi), Attock Circle (Wah Cantt Sub-Division, Near Frobils School, GT Road Wah Cantt), Jhelum Circle (Union Council Thathi Office, Tehsil Gujar Khan) and Chakwal Circle (IESCO Azhar Shaheed Sub-Division) Superintending Engineers will hold Open Kachery on Tuesday, August 23, 2022 from 09:00 AM to 11:00 AM and will issue necessary instructions to resolve the issues of consumers on the spot. IESCO Chief Executive Officer Dr. Muhammad Amjad Khan will monitor the open Kachery. Consumers of IESCO Region should participate in these open Kachery for registering complaints / suggestion to power related issues. For more information call Islamabad Circle on 051-9260194, Rawalpindi City Circle on 051-9292675, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle on 051-9293048, Attock Circle on 051-4950343, Jhelum Circle on 0544-920276 and Chakwal Circle on 0543-668500.

Iesco issues power suspension notice

ISLAMABAD: According to Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO)'s spokesman,

System Maintenance/Development Work is in process. Therefore power supply of below mentioned feeders/areas will be temporary suspended as per given schedule: On 22 nd August, From 08:00 am to 12:00 Noon, Muslimabad, Gulzar Shaheed, Quidabad, Ahsanabad, Pirwadhai, Dhok Hasu Feeders, From 06:00 am to 2:00 pm, Chachoi, Anguri, T&M, Shahpur, Bahria Golf City, Desto, Treat, Mangal, Pirwadhai, Dhok Hasu Feeders, From 09:00 AM to 2:00 PM, Dhala Feeder, From 07:00 AM to 12:00 Noon, Bhara Kahu, NIH, T&M, Golf City, Treat, Westridge, Rajabad, Golra, Dhok Chowdhrya, New Race Course, Charing Cross, Modern Flour Mill, Shamsabad, Chhapran feeders and surroundings will be closed. IESCO management apologizes to its esteemed customers for the power outage. If the work is completed ahead of time, the power supply can be restored even before the scheduled time and the surrounding power will be cut off. - DNA

Pak largest export sector under threat

ISLAMABAD: Former President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICC) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt on Sunday said cotton production is falling in all major cotton producing and exporting countries because of extreme weather. At least a twenty percent decrease in international cotton output is expected, which is a big threat to the textile industry of dozens of countries including Pakistan, Bangladesh, Vietnam and China, he said. Shahid Rashid Butt said that the situation in various countries is continuously deteriorating due to extreme heat, lack of water, untimely rains and some other factors. India, the country that produces the most cotton in the world, has been forced to import cotton due to the fall in production, US, the world's largest cotton exporter is to see a drop of 28 percent in cotton output while production in Brazil, the world's second-largest cotton exporter, is expected to drop by 30 percent. Heat waves in China are making the situation critical and rains in Australia and Pakistan are ruining the cotton crop, he added. Due to these conditions, the price of cotton in the international market has increased by 30 percent and a further increase is expected. The high price of cotton is increasing the cost of doing business, he said, adding that Pakistan should take steps to ensure the supply of cotton to textile mills to save its largest export sector. Mr. Butt said that Pakistan is the fifth largest producer of cotton in the world, with an average production of 1,350 metric tonnes. The current cotton production in the country is just about half of what it was producing until a few years ago and is expected to decrease further in the next few years because of official inattention. - DNA

Team save dreams carries out tree plantation drive

"He who plants a tree, plants a hope" - Lucy Larcom

HAYAH BAHRONI

ISLAMABAD: Nature is God's most beautiful creation. It facilitates the growth, development and nourishment of all its creatures. In order to pay tribute to our country on the 75th Independence Day of Pakistan, Team Save Dreamshosted a plantation drive on 13 August, 2022 in collaboration with Environment Wing of Capital Development Authority and Team Wefixers under the banner "Muhm Shajre-Sayadar". Considering the manifold benefits of trees, including that they provide us with oxygen, have given rise to sustenance, absorb unpleasant odors as well as harmful gases from the air and filter it, protect us from dangerous ultraviolet rays, provide us with food, give shelter to various species

of animals; and the pivotal role played by trees in preventing soil erosion, maintaining ecological balance and most importantly in reducing the effects of global warming and environmental changes, made us realize that it was about time that we initiate a project preserving the beauty of our capital city, Islamabad. The drive "Muhm Shajre-Sayadar" was inaugurated in the presence of Miss Javeria Maqbool, Deputy Director Environment Wing, CDA. A total of 150 trees, including Lagerstroemia Indica, PongamiaPinnata commonly known as Sukh-Chayn, Bauhinia Variiegata and Cassia Fitsula, were planted by

the 15 enthusiasts of two teams at the event site; the grounds of Convention Center, Islamabad. 50 of these were provided to us by Team Wefixers and 100 were provided by CDA Environment Team, who not only allotted us the site to carry out the event smoothly, but also provided us with their team of profes-

sional gardeners. A Letter of Gratitude was also presented by our team to Miss Javeria Maqbool who in return honoured our team members namely; Hayah Bahroni, Rafia Ali, Ayesha Siddique, Noor-ul-Huda, Omama Basit, Mohammad Ibrahim, Abdullah Siddique, Humayal Ahmed and QasimWaqar; with

Letters of Appreciation acknowledging our hard work towards this noble cause. Ecological disruptions or imbalances can lead to droughts, flooding and numerous other calamities and natural disasters that can cause immense harm and destruction to life and property alike, which is why it is imperative that we save trees and conserve them, so as to be able to maintain a balance in the ecosystem and ensure overall health and harmony. To make that happen, we must plant more and more trees to neutralize the damage already done. It's about time that we all break the mold and start planting because the solution to saving Mother Earth; which is being destroyed at the hands of its own children by deforestation, littering and spilling oils & fuels into its once clear rivers and oceans; is to grow trees. Today, let us all make a pledge that we will actively contribute in giving rise to a healthy, green, clean, prosperous and self-dependent Pakistan, and that we will take at least one small step to protect our environment by PLANTING TREES. Let's all Save Trees and Save Dreams.



Ukraine war: fighting on multiple fronts

A SPATE of explosions in Crimea has bolstered the mood in Ukraine. While Kyiv has been coy in discussing the incidents publicly, dropping heavy hints but not explicitly taking credit, unnamed officials have been busy briefing reporters. On 9 August, nine or more Russian warplanes appear to have been destroyed at the Saky airbase on the peninsula that Russia annexed in 2014. Then, on Tuesday, blasts were reported at an ammunition site and airfield. Russia blamed "sabotage". On Thursday night, there were reports of more explosions at the major Belbek airbase, as well as a blaze at a munitions depot inside Russia.

All these are a much-needed fillip for Ukrainian morale. A senior presidential adviser has said that there is "strategic deadlock". Though the picture in the country's south is muddled, Russian forces appear largely stalled. But Ukraine is massively outgunned and Russia continues to gain ground in the east, albeit slowly and with serious losses, by pounding away with heavy artillery and no regard for the cost to Ukrainian civilians or its own forces.

Additionally, wars are only partially fought on the battlefield. Kyiv also needs to kindle renewed purpose at home and maintain national unity as the relief and pride at holding off the initial Russian onslaught inevitably fades, and grinding economic, social and psychological pressures take their toll. It needs to rattle the confidence of Moscow – which this week replaced the commander of its Black Sea fleet – and lower the morale of Russian forces. Russia felt safe in Crimea, with its tourists sunning themselves on the beaches. Now they have been filmed fleeing the sands, with plumes of black smoke visible in the distance.

Finally, Kyiv needs a sense of fresh momentum to maintain support elsewhere. The story of a plucky, courageous underdog staving off a vicious invasion was enough to create a wave of public and political support across Europe this spring. As fuel prices keep rising and winter approaches, sympathy and solidarity will ebb, and politicians are likely to become correspondingly warier of extending their support to Ukraine and punishment of Russia.

It has also been clear from the beginning of the conflict that a less confident Vladimir Putin may be more dangerous. On Thursday, Moscow snubbed the call from the UN secretary general, António Guterres, visiting Ukraine, for a withdrawal of military equipment and personnel from the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, Europe's largest. Russia seized the plant this spring and the two countries have accused each other of shelling the site. Ukraine has warned that Russia may plan to stage a "provocation" there or to stop generating electricity – which could increase the risk of an accident. Mr Putin knows that the weaponisation of a nuclear plant would be crossing a new frontier. But brinkmanship is itself a danger, bearing the risks of unintended disaster. Whatever confidence Kyiv has gained from the damage in Crimea, it will not mistake events this week as offering respite.

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Europe must avoid trade war with China

IS a trade war likely to break out between China and Europe? This is a dangerous topic that the public opinion in Europe, including Germany, has been hyping up. China and Europe in recent years have been the major trading partner of each other, and weathered many storms together. With a highly complementary industrial chain and great economic interdependence, it stands to reason that the trade war should not have become a serious topic in Europe's China policy discussion. However, some media have portrayed an "upside-down world" for Europeans: High economic dependence between China and Europe is not a dividend but "risk" for the continent, while others say Europe must prepare for a conflict with China.

It must be pointed out that for Europe, the damage these public opinion countercurrents would bring cannot be ignored. At present, the European economy is facing multiple challenges including the Russia-Ukraine conflict, energy crisis, high inflation, repeated COVID-19 outbreaks, and lasting periods of high temperatures and droughts. At a time Europe should cherish peace, an external environment favorable to development and mutually beneficial partners, some people in the continent intend to artificially create conflicts with China. Is it just simply because China has become increasingly important for European interests, the continent therefore must decouple from, guard against and repulse China? It's impossible for a normal person not to eat because he is afraid of being choked. It's even less likely that he will smash the rice bowl.

There are indeed many things that are troubling Europe and have provided a breeding ground for various extremist views. China, which is far away from Europe, has become a target for some people to vent their dissatisfaction. But none of the above-mentioned problems are caused by China. And it's the wrong way to ease the anxiety by poisoning China-Europe mutual trust foundation and undermining China-Europe economic cooperation. In recent years, the US has exerted a strong traction on Europe over major geopolitical issues. The result is the US benefited, while Europe fell. Now, Europe needs to sort out domestic affairs and figure out how much of its anxiety around China really comes from China, and how much comes from surrendering strategic autonomy to the US.

Former German chancellor Helmut Schmidt reportedly said Germany should be careful not to be the moral apostle of the world. This sentence also applies to the entire Europe today. A number of European economists recently told media that people need to separate political differences from normal trade and China deserves due respect, warning Europe against short-sighted actions. Their reminder is targeted as public opinion in Europe is showing worrying tendency. Some of the content seem to be copied from the US. But Europe is not a state of the US. This important fact cannot be ignored by the Europeans, otherwise, it's easy to fall into a big hole specifically dug for Europe.

India's 'Partition Within': Plight of Indian Muslims

Irfan Shahzad Takalvi



As India and Pakistan complete 75 years of partition and independence from the British, a 'partition within' is clearly visible in India of today, between the Hindu majority and the Muslim minority. While one Pakistan got separated, several others have been created within India that was left behind

RELLEASE of 11 convicts of Bilkis Bano case, hateful remarks by BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma and her shameless defense by her party as well as destruction of homes and properties of protesting Muslims are only some of the recent most examples. Muslims of India have always been treated as second class citizens by majority Hindus, over past seven and a half decades of partition of the sub-continent. However, the suppression of

Indian Muslims has increased manifold since Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) took power in 2014, and Narendra Modi became Prime Minister.

In this eight years' period, Muslims have been forced to convert, attacked for keeping cows and eating beef – even lynched and killed for this 'crime' as BJP has banned consumption of beef in several states of India. However, even if the links to beef are not established, Muslim are routinely pressurized to convert (in the name of retuning to 'original' religion Hinduisms); Muslims girls are forcibly married; Muslims' businesses and employments are targeted; and even on small personal or village / street level crimes the whole localities of Muslims are torched. Muslims have been lynched to death, and a huge number of them have been put behind bars in false cases.

Hard-liner Hindu have also been accusing Muslims of following 'love Jihad' that means marrying Hindu girls after trapping them in love; they have been accused of extremism and harboring / supporting terrorists as well as having sympathies for Pakistan – and simply, by blaming them for having ill-feeling, hate, or contempt towards Hindu religion or their thousands of gods and goddesses. In this way, actually, the Hindu majority and particularly the BJP – which is the political offshoot of the extremist Rashtriya Swamisevak Sangh (RSS) – have been venting their own hatred and anger against the Muslims.

RSS and majority of BJP cadres are actually following declared policy of Hindutva, or Hindu-ness – under which they target that every citizen living in India – Hindustan or Maha Bharat (Greater India) should 1) be ethnically Indian; 2) be religiously Hindu, and 3) speak Hindi / Sanskrit. Hindu extremist groups have over past few years made it clear that they can accept those living in India only if they adhere to the above three

conditions of Hindutva.

Under the Citizenship Law passed on December 11, 2019, Muslims living in India for hundreds of years and for decades after independence from Britain in 1947 are now being asked to prove the grounds – through documents – that they have a right to live in India as citizens. This is impacting tens of millions of Indian Muslims. When Muslims took to streets to protest this draconian law, the protestors were tortured, killed, their houses burnt and properties looted – rapes and sexual molestations committed against Muslim women and girls – in the period of December 2019 and January 2020. Most of such atrocities took place in Delhi neighborhoods with police shielding the Hindu mobs – even participating in torture and killing of Muslims. International independent media have recorded several proofs of this. International rights groups, as well as US' and European government bodies have expressed concerns over this and the US Congressional Commission on religious freedom has even recommended putting India on blacklist for subjugation of freedom of religion.

Ironically, in past couple of years, the outbreak of CoronaVirus gave extremist Hindus a new pretext to target, oppress and subjugate Muslims, all across India. It all started when in March 2019, several members of Tableeghi Jamaat (TJ) that gathered in a mosque in New Delhi, contracted virus and it further spread through their onward interactions.

It was a natural phenomenon of how a pandemic takes shape. However, extremist Hindus – including those in power at central and state level – used this opportunity to further increase ill-founded and baseless anger and hatred against Muslims. They forwarded this conspiracy theory that Muslims have willfully spread the virus to infect and kill Hindus. They

also accused Muslims of willfully infecting food, water, and other items so that Hindus can be infected – terming this as 'corona Jihad' being followed by Muslims. Hindu political and social leadership – including sitting legislators from ruling BJP in states as well as in central legislatures – called upon their Hindu followers to boycott Muslims businesses and works.

In many cases, Muslims were violently attacked under suspicions of spreading virus – beaten, lynched, and even killed in some instances that were reported widely in Indian and international media. Police and law enforcing agencies joined the Hindu mobs and enforced strict blockades in Muslims localities, properties, households, and workplaces as well as mosques and shrines – where Muslims have been subjected to torture and severe punishment in the name of lockdowns and isolations. Muslim leadership made it clear that Hindus used this opportunity to drive Muslims out of certain localities and businesses. A large segment of Indian media also shamelessly engaged in support of Hindu majority in this drive. Even some hospitals blatantly refused to admit Muslim patients of corona-virus; only on nationwide protests they allowed Muslims to be admitted; yet, in separate wards.

The inherent hatred against Muslims in India has manifested itself time and again. It would not be wrong to say that several 'mini Pakistans' have been created within India of today due to continuous inhuman treatment inflicted upon the Muslim Indians. Authorities in India must ensure that Indian Muslims are treated, not only in letter but also in practice and spirit, as equal citizens. That is must for social cohesion of a country as big as India.

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Saudi-Egyptian World Cup bid could make Qatar's experience look like a cakewalk

James Dorsey

Saudi hubris was evident in this month's sentencing of 34-year-old Leeds University PhD candidate Salma al-Shehab, a mother of two, to 34 years in prison for following and retweeting dissidents and activists on Twitter. Mr. Bin Salman's willingness to shoulder the risk is likely to be rooted in an analysis of Qatar's experience that suggests that, on balance, the Gulf state's hosting of the World Cup will prove to be a success...

AT first glance, a potential bid by Saudi Arabia and Egypt, two of the world's worst human rights violators, together with Greece, to host the 2030 World Cup sounds like an invitation to a perfect public relations fiasco. That is undoubtedly true if one looks at Qatar three months before its World Cup kicks off in November. Coverage of the Qatar World Cup in independent media remains harshly critical of the Gulf state's final preparations for the tournament and migrant worker and human rights record, despite significant

legal and material reforms. Moreover, human rights groups continue to confront Qatar with legitimate demands such as an improved compensation system for workers who suffered serious harm, including death, injury, and wage theft. Even so, Qatar's rough public relations ride over the last 12 years since it won in late 2010 its World Cup hosting rights, despite having been responsive to criticism, may prove to have been mild compared to what likely awaits Saudi Arabia and Egypt, if and when they submit a formal bid to FIFA, the world soccer governance body. Greece, too is likely to be taken to task for partnering with the two autocracies.

Saudi Arabia has wanted to host a World Cup for some time as part of a concerted effort to establish itself as a regional sports hub, eclipsing Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. Sports is one pillar of a larger endeavour to position the kingdom as the Middle East's commercial and political centre of gravity. Moreover, as the custodian of Mecca and Medina, Islam's two holiest cities, Saudi Arabia is already a major religious point of reference.

The sports effort also aims to boost Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's creation of an entertainment sector that caters to youth aspirations, contributes to the diversification of the country's oil export-based economy, and helps project the kingdom as forward-looking and cutting-edge rather than secretive and ultra-conservative as it was perceived for much of its existence.

By partnering with Greece and Turkey, Saudi Arabia hopes to enhance its chances of winning the bid in a competition that is likely to be dominated by multi-country proposals. The bid's strength is that it would be tri-continental, Asia, Africa, and Europe. Other potential contending partnerships include Spain and Portugal; England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Ireland, and Wales; a North African combination of Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria; and a joint South American effort by Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, and Paraguay. Romania, Greece, Bulgaria, and Serbia have also expressed interest in banding together. Partnering could allow Saudi Arabia to circumvent

FIFA's likely hesitancy to award the tournament to a Middle Eastern country as sole host for the second time in a decade. The potential alliance with Egypt and Greece follows an earlier apparently failed attempt to team up with Italy for a World Cup bid.

Saudi Arabia's willingness to risk the kind of scrutiny that Qatar was exposed to is rooted in a degree of hubris on the part of Mr. Bin Salman and an evaluation of the Qatari experience. Mr. Bin Salman has been encouraged by the willingness of leaders like US President Joe Biden, French President Emmanuel Macron, and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson to put behind them the unresolved 2018 killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul and the arrest of scores on often flimsy charges and welcome the crown prince back into the international fold. By the same token, Mr. Bin Salman has nothing to fear from non-democratic members of the international community like China and Russia and much of the Global South that either sit in glasshouses, do not want to align themselves with US and European lip service to the defence of human rights, or opportunistically don't want to get on the wrong side of Saudi Arabia.

Saudi hubris was evident in this month's sentencing of 34-year-old Leeds University PhD candidate Salma al-Shehab, a mother of two, to 34 years in prison for following and retweeting dissidents and activists on Twitter. Mr. Bin Salman's willingness to shoulder the risk is likely to be rooted in an analysis of Qatar's experience that suggests that, on balance, the Gulf state's hosting of the World Cup will prove to be a success, despite continued negative press in Western media, provided that it pulls off the tournament without significant glitches.

However, Saudi Arabia and Egypt's human rights records are far more egregious than Qatar's, which is hardly commendable by any measure. Like the kingdom and Egypt, Qatar is an autocracy with a legal infrastructure that fortifies the emir as the country's absolute ruler. Like the potential 2030 World Cup bidders, Qatar lacks freedom of the press and assembly, outlaws extra-marital sex,

and refuses to recognize LGBT rights. But unlike Saudi Arabia and Egypt, Qatar's jails are not populated by political prisoners or offenders of anti-LGBT laws. Human rights groups estimate that Egypt keeps 60,000 political prisoners behind bars. Egypt and Saudi Arabia, which has enhanced the rights and opportunities of at least some women, eased gender segregation, and lifted bans on modern entertainment such as music, dancing, and cinema. Have often targeted LGBT communities for domestic political gain. Human Rights Watch has repeatedly charged that Egyptian authorities "arbitrarily arrest" LGBT people and "detain them in inhuman conditions, systematically subject them to ill-treatment including torture, and often incite fellow inmates to abuse them."

Going to extremes, Saudi Arabia, amid a push to encourage tourism, launched "rainbow raids" in late 2021 on shops selling children's toys and accessories. Authorities focused on clothing and toys, including hair clips, pop-its, t-shirts, bows, skirts, hats, and colouring pencils "that contradict the Islamic faith and public morals and promote homosexual colours that target the younger generation," according to a commerce ministry official.

Earlier, the kingdom banned Lightyear, a Disney and Pixar animated production, because of a same-sex kiss scene, and Disney's Doctor Strange in the Universe of Madness, in which one character refers to her "two mums." The litany of Saudi violations of fundamental rights includes a ban on non-Muslim houses of worship even though the kingdom has recently emphasized inter-faith dialogue and welcomed Jewish visitors, including those with a double nationality of which one is Israeli, as well as Christian religious leaders. As a result, the headwinds a bid involving Saudi Arabia and Egypt is likely to encounter could make Qatar's experience look like a cakewalk. Qatar has demonstrated a degree of dexterity in dealing with its World Cup critics, a quality that the Saudi crown prince and Egyptian general-turned-president Abdel Fattah al-Sisi have yet to exhibit.

Briefs

PM, COAS review flood relief operations

FROM PAGE 01

between Sindh and Balochistan provinces had been eroded, the prime minister directed for provision of helicopters in the province. General Bajwa also informed that he had issued special direction to the commander southern command over the relief activities in Balochistan.

The premier directed the relevant authorities of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) to immediately distribute support funds among the flood affectees of Sindh. On the other hand, NDMA Chairperson Lt Gen Akhtar Nawaz apprised the PM of the latest situation of rainfall and floods in Sindh including the cooperation extended during the ongoing rescue and relief operations in two provinces and measures taken so far.

'PTI's Gill 'torture drama' concocted'

FROM PAGE 01

army officers should not obey the orders of the high command. He said that any state or institution could never allow anyone to spread such kind of allegations. He said that Shahbaz Gill was produced before the judicial magistrate within 24 hours of his arrest and he (Shahbaz) did not utter any word regarding torture and misbehave before the Magistrate and media.

On August 11, a medical board examined the health of Dr Shahbaz Gill and declared him normal and fit and not mentioned any sign of torture while Shahbaz Gill also did not lodge any complaint about torture before the medical board. On August 12, Shahbaz Gill was sent to jail on judicial remand.

"I can confirm as the interior minister that no torture was carried out against Gill during the police custody," he said and added the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) as party always opposed and condemned any kind of torture as it was clear violation of the constitution. The whole leadership of the PML-N was put behind bars during the tenure of Imran Khan. He said that Imran Khan should sought apology from the nation over his acts during his tenure.

He said that Shahbaz Gill remained in Adiyala Jail from August 12 to 17 and Shahbaz Gill never stated that he was tortured. Terming the PTI's narrative as drama, he said that the victim (Shahbaz Gill) had never stated that he was tortured or sexually abused. He said that the whole nation condemned the anti-state propaganda of Imran Khan about the martyrs and due to this campaign PTI was severely damaged.

He said that PTI did not own the statement of Shahbaz Gill and diverting the issue started new drama of torture on Shahbaz Gill. Referring to yesterday speech of Imran Khan where he attacked Islamabad's Inspector General (IG), deputy inspector general (DIG) and Additional District and Sessions Judge Zeba Chaudhry, Rana Sana said that a case should be registered against Imran Khan for inciting the public against state officials who were only fulfilling their duties, per the law.

He clarified that police interrogated Shahbaz Gill over his remarks but there was no torture during interrogations. The whole drama was launched to divert the attention of the nation from the controversial statements made by Gill as well as the hateful social media campaign against the Lasbela copter crash martyrs.

He said that Shahbaz Gill did not file any application before any institution, authority or court regarding torture or sexually abuse. He said that the interior ministry had prepared a report on Imran Khan's speech and sought an opinion from the Law Ministry, Attorney General for Pakistan and the Advocate General Islamabad whether a separate case should be registered or clubbed it with the ongoing case registered against Shahbaz Gill. He made it clear that the government would not allow Imran Khan to divert nation's attention with the false propaganda.

Ukraine's Usyk shatters Joshua in heavyweight rematch

"I give this victory to my country, to my family, to my team and to all the military who are defending the country," he told the 12,000-seat King Abdullah Sports City Arena in Jeddah

SPORTS DESK

JEDDAH: Ukraine's Oleksandr Usyk won his rematch against Anthony Joshua by split decision in Saudi Arabia on Sunday to set up a potential unification bout with Britain's Tyson Fury. The former cruiserweight world champion, who dismantled the holder in London last year, faced an improved Joshua but outboxed him once again in just his fourth heavyweight bout.

Usyk, now unbeaten at 20-0, immediately called out Fury, who announced his latest retirement earlier this month but has signalled his willingness to resume his career. Victory over the 6ft 9ins (2.06m) Fury would unite all four heavyweight belts and constitute a crowning glory for the sublime Ukrainian, a former outstanding amateur and Olympic heavyweight champion.

"I'm sure that Tyson Fury is not retired yet," Usyk told the crowd. "I'm convinced he wants to fight me. I want to fight him. If I'm not fighting Tyson Fury I'm not fighting at all."

The fight was watched on free-to-air TV by millions of Ukrainians living under the Russian invasion. Usyk signed up to fight for his country before accepting the rematch. "I give this victory to my country, to my family, to my team and to all the military who are defending the country," he told the 12,000-seat King Abdullah Sports City Arena in Jeddah. An angered Joshua hurled down Usyk's belts and peppered his post-fight speech with expletives despite the presence of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, de facto ruler of the deeply religious country.



"I just spoke from my heart. It has been so tough," Joshua said afterwards, adding: "It takes real strength and tonight there's a little crack in the armour." The judges scored it 113-115, 115-113 and 116-112 for Usyk as Joshua narrowed the gap but was still found wanting.

"It was an incredible performance - he's just too good," said Joshua's promoter Eddie Hearn.

"You saw the reaction from AJ, that was from a human who wanted to win so badly, with so much pressure on his shoulders. I think he just exploded because he lost and he was devastated." Joshua, the 6ft 6ins (1.98m) two-time world champion, is left staring at an impasse in his career after his third defeat in his 12th straight title fight left him with figures of 24-30. Joshua, accused of hesitancy in their first fight in London, was the early aggressor by round two as he repeatedly landed his big right hand. A heavy right hook stung Usyk in round three and Joshua was continuing to find the jab as the Ukrainian's busy footwork opened up gaps. A low blow from Joshua left Usyk wincing in the fifth and another backed

him onto the ropes in the sixth but the tricky southpaw came firing back with some lightning combinations.

A flurry to the body put Usyk back on the ropes in the eighth and Joshua had the Ukrainian hanging on in the ninth after a right-left hook combination as the fight came alive. But Usyk came storming back after the bell with a succession of clean shots as Joshua took some serious punishment despite landing a massive right of his own. The mesmerising Usyk increased his control in the closing stages, slipping punches and landing quick combinations as Joshua searched in vain for the knock-down. Earlier on the card, Somali-born Briton Ramla Ali knocked out the Dominican Republic's Crystal Garcia Nova in round one in the very first women's professional boxing match in Saudi Arabia.

Tsitsipas beats Medvedev to reach Cincinnati final

WEB DESK

NEW YORK: Top-ranked Daniil Medvedev committed 11 double-faults in falling to Stefanos Tsitsipas 7-6 (8/6), 3-6, 6-3 in the semi-finals of the ATP and WTA Cincinnati Masters.

Tsitsipas won only his third match against Medvedev after losing seven and also defeated a reigning number one player for only the second time in 12 career attempts.

Fourth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas has edged world number one Daniil Medvedev 7-6(6) 3-6 6-3 in an absorbing semi-final at the Cincinnati Open to set up a summit clash with Borna Coric after the Croatian's 6-3 6-4 win over Cameron Norrie. Medvedev on Saturday helped seal his own fate in the sixth game of the final set as he double-faulted four times to hand his Greek opponent to a 4-2 lead. Tsitsi-



pas will play for the title on Sunday against Croatian Borna Coric, who returned to an ATP Masters final for the first time in four years by defeating Britain's Cameron Norrie 6-3, 6-4. Tsitsipas won only his third match against Medvedev after losing seven and also defeated a reigning number one player for only the second time in 12 career attempts. The fourth seed put a winner into the corner on the

first of three match points to earn the final. "I knew I would have a difficult task in the third set," Tsitsipas said. "He made it a very physical match, very demanding."

"But I took advantage of his missed first serves. They gave me time to think of my next move clearly. I was very calm and concentrated on every single task." World number 152 Coric, who missed a year of play with shoulder problems

and only returned to the tour in March, advanced in 91 minutes in a match delayed for hours by an afternoon of rain. On the women's side, Petra Kvitová outlasted Madison Keys 6-7 (6), 6-4, 6-3 on Saturday to reach the Western & Southern Open final.

The 32-year-old Kvitová had never advanced to the semifinals in 10 prior appearances in the Cincinnati tournament. It is Czech's 40th career final, and she'll face another surprise entrant in Frenchwoman Caroline Garcia, the first qualifier to reach the final in Cincinnati.

Kvitová almost didn't make it out of the first round, having to save a match point against last year's finalist, Jil Teichmann. She also needed three sets to beat fifth-ranked Ons Jabeur in the third round. Keys, the 2019 champion in Cincinnati, defeated three grand slam winners this week, but couldn't close out Kvitová.

Pakistan secures clean sweep over Netherlands

ROTTERDAM: Pakistan skipper Babar Azam, Naseem Shah, and Mohammad Wasim Jr starred as the touring party beat the Netherlands to secure a clean sweep in the last ODI of the series here at Hazelaarweg Stadium on Sunday. Opting to bat first, Babar helped a struggling Pakistan reach 206 runs before restricting the hosts to 197 runs. Naseem and Wasim were sensational as they collectively topped the batting line-up of the Netherlands. Naseem claimed five wickets, while Wasim took four wickets to help their side win the match by nine runs. Opening batter Vikramjit Singh scored a half-century before getting out to Wasim. While his partner Max O'Dowd only scored three runs, Musa Ahmed and Bas de Leede failed to deliver with the bat, scoring 3 and 11 runs, respectively. Meanwhile, middle-order batter Tom Cooper was excellent for the Netherlands and smashed 62 runs in 105 balls but it wasn't enough to help his side win. Teja Nidamanuru scored 24 runs, and Logan van Beek played eight runs innings. Earlier, An all-round bowling display helped the Netherlands bowl out Pakistan for 206 runs. - DNA



Palestinians reject campaign against President Abbas

RAMALLAH: The Palestinian presidency and the rest of the factions rejected the ongoing campaign by Germany and Israel against Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. The campaign was launched against the backdrop of remarks in which Abbas compared crimes committed by Israel against Palestinians to the Holocaust. The spokesman for the Palestinian presidency, Nabil Abu Rudeineh, expressed strong disapproval of the incitement campaign against Abbas by various parties. He stressed that this "persistent vicious campaign" aims to undermine the Palestinian cause, the Palestinian people's rights and Abbas's national plan, which won't give up Jerusalem and its Islamic and Christian sanctities at all costs. He denounced the double standard practiced internationally, citing the world's silence on the brutal crimes the Israeli occupation had committed and continues to commit on daily basis, whether by killing children, storming cities, or attacking the headquarters of human rights institutions, and other unfortunate crimes. During his visit to Berlin last week, Abbas accused Israel of committing "50 Holocausts" in response to a question about the upcoming 50th anniversary of the attack on the Israeli team at the Munich Olympics by Palestinian militants. Standing alongside German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Abbas referred to a series of historical incidents in which Palestinians were killed by Israelis in the 1948 war that accompanied the creation of the state of Israel and in the years following.

"From 1947 to the present day, Israel has committed 50 massacres in Palestinian villages and cities, in Deir Yassin, Tantura, Kafr Qasim and many others, 50 massacres, 50 Holocausts," said Abbas. His remarks were met with outrage in Israel and the West, particularly Germany. He issued a statement calling Nazi Germany's Holocaust, in which 6 million Jews were killed, "the most heinous crime in modern human history." - DNA

Sensational Modric strike helps Real Madrid see off Celta

MADRID: A stunning strike by Luka Modric helped Real Madrid on their way to a 4-1 victory at Celta Vigo on Saturday as the reigning Spanish champions made it two wins from two in La Liga this season. Modric curled home from outside the box just before half-time to put Carlo Ancelotti's side back in front after Karim Benzema's early penalty had been cancelled out by Inigo Aspas, who converted a spot-kick at the other end. Vinicius Junior and Federico Valverde added further goals in the second half while Eden Hazard had a late penalty saved as Madrid built on their La Liga season-opening 2-1 win at Almeria and joined Real Betis and Osasuna on six points at the top of the fledgling standings.

"He is a fantastic leader for us. He scored the most important goal of the game because he put us back ahead and after that the game was a bit more simple for us," Ancelotti told Onda Cero radio of Modric, who received an ovation from the home crowd in Galicia. "That is something very special, when fans of other teams acknowledge you and applaud you. It's lovely," the Croatian told Real Madrid TV. Real took the lead inside the opening quarter of an hour at Balaidos, Benzema slotting in a penalty after the referee penalised Celta's Peruvian midfielder Renato Tapia for handball following a VAR review.

Yet Celta won a penalty of their own midway through the first half as Eder Milla blocked a Goncalo Paciencia header with his arm, and veteran striker Aspas - who scored

18 times last season - made no mistake from the spot. Franco Cervi then crashed a shot just wide as Celta threatened to go in front against a Real side playing their first game since agreeing to sell midfielder Casemiro to Manchester United. However, Modric was back in the starting line-up and made it 2-1 three minutes before the interval, collecting possession in space 25 metres from goal and advancing before curling a tremendous shot high into the net from the edge of the D. Real's class told after the break, as Modric sent Vinicius away to round goalkeeper Agustin Marchesin and slot in the visitors' third goal in the 56th minute.

It was 4-1 before the midway point in the second half, with Vinicius trying to pick out Benzema only for the Frenchman to slip, allowing the arriving Valverde to plant a low first-time shot into the far corner. It could have been worse for Celta as Madrid won another penalty late on when Benzema was fouled in the box by Hugo Mallo. Benzema left the spot-kick for Hazard, who had come on as a substitute, but the Belgian's kick was saved by Marchesin. That, remarkably, was the seventh penalty in three matches in La Liga on Saturday, with Borja Iglesias scoring twice from the spot as Betis won 2-1 at Real Mallorca earlier. Golden State Warriors coach Steve Kerr was among the crowd watching as Iglesias gave Manuel Pellegrini's Betis a ninth-minute lead in the Balearic Islands after a handball by Mallorca's Rodrigo Battaglia was penalised following a VAR review. - Agencies

Women, Men hockey trials on Aug 23

Maria Samin Jan said that both Men and Women players in the age of 15-year to 25-year of age would be eligible to participate

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: Women and Men Hockey trials under Prime Minister Youth Talent Hunt Program kicking off from August 23 at the Austro-Turf of the Islamia College Ground for Men and Abdul Wali Khan Sports Complex Charsadda for Women. Director General Sports University of Peshawar and former international gold medalist athlete Bahre Karam and Deputy Director Sports and national athlete

Maria Samin Jan have been nominated as head of the trials committee by the Higher Education Commission, Islamabad.

Both Bahre Karam and Maria Samin Jan paid a visit to the venues Islamia College Peshawar and Abdul Wali Khan Sports Complex Charsadda on Sunday to check the overall preparations for the Men and Women Hockey trials under the Prime Minister Youth Talent Hunt Program. Talking to APP, Maria Samin Jan said that both Men and Women players in

the age of 15-year to 25-year of age would be eligible to participate. The hockey aspirants, both male and female, players have been advised to bring their form-B/CNIC, two passport size photos, last certificate of the education qualification, if any, to ascertain their age well before the trials.

A trials committee would look into the trials separately for Men and Women at two different venues - Islamia College Peshawar and Abdul Wali Khan Sports Complex Charsadda where in players from Peshawar

Region would take part, Maria Samin said.

Maria Samin, Deputy Director Sports Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University was nominated by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) as head of the Women Hockey trials under Prime Minister Youth Talent Hunt Program for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. She disclosed that soon after the trials Prime Minister Youth Hockey League would also be conducted first at the provincial level wherein all the selected players from across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa would participate and later on at

national level wherein a team of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa would take part in the National Hockey League. She said the trials would be held in different dates like Peshawar on August 23-24, 2022 at Abdul Wali Khan Sports Complex Charsadda, Mardan on August 27, 28, 2022 at Astro Turf of the Mardan Sports Complex, Swat on August 31 and September 1, 2022 at Mekan Bagh, Mingora Hockey Ground, Hazara on Sunday and Monday on September 4-5, 2022 at Abbottabad Police Hockey

Ground, and Bannu on Thursday and Friday (September 8-9, 2022) at Qazi Mohib Hockey Complex. It is open for all age between 15-year-old to 25-year-old. Director General Sports University of Peshawar Bahre Karam when contacted termed the trials very vital for the promotion of hockey in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in particular and in the country in general. He said without promotion of hockey at the grassroots level, Pakistan could not achieve its lost glory in the world of hockey.

Pakistan rejects India's false allegations

FROM PAGE 01

Separately, the Indian media have also reported that the Indian intelligence and border forces were on high alert for possible 'cross-border infiltration' attempts along Rajauri, the spokesperson said, adding that all this is nothing but continuation of the sinister Indian design to yet again raise the "terrorism" bogey to malign Pakistan.

He warned that India must recognise that no amount of its false propaganda can deter Pakistan from exposing India's brutalisation of the Kashmiri people in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The spokesperson also urged the international community to take immediate cognizance of the fact that India is yet again resorting to classic 'false flag' methods to advance its sinister designs and that this could have serious implications for peace and security in the region.

'Why I was ousted', Imran asks 'neutrals'

FROM PAGE 01

His only crime is that he is not accepting this imported government," he said while addressing a public gathering at Liaquat Bagh in Rawalpindi. Imran revealed that people who come to his residence to support him get calls from agencies, asking why they were there. "I want to ask whether you are neutral or not. If not then why are you damaging this country so much? Why do you want to stand with these people (the current government)? Do you think the nation will believe these people who have been looting this nation for the past 30 years," he questioned.

He said that when police resorted to violence on PTT's May 25 rally, they were informed that they had orders to do so. "It means they were under pressure from the neutrals," he added.

Imran said that the chief election commissioner is giving all his verdicts against PTI as they wanted to disqualify him but when they seek information they get replies that they are under pressure from the "boots". "Now in Shahbaz Gill's case, police say they are under pressure... whatever is happening in Pakistan will be blamed on you," he said while addressing the "neutrals".

During his address, a video clip was also played in which Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz leaders can be seen issuing statements against the military and judiciary. Imran asked why Shahbaz Gill is being treated any differently. "I'm saying all this today because I know their plan. I know what Mr Y is planning but let me tell you today that Imran Khan will not budge even if you throw me in jail... I will never go abroad... I will live and die in this country." He said whatever is being planned including his disqualification will damage Pakistan.

Imran booked for threatening judge...

FROM PAGE 01

F-9 Park to "terrorise" the police officials and the judiciary. The main aim of the intimidation was to prevent the police officers and the judiciary from carrying out their legal obligations, says the FIR. The FIR states that Imran Khan's speech was aimed to spread unrest and terror among the people.

A day earlier, PTI chief Imran Khan warned that he would "not leave" Islamabad's inspector-general, deputy inspector general, and female magistrate, vowing to file cases against them for torturing Shahbaz Gill. "We will not spare the IG and DIG," he said while addressing a public gathering at the F-9 park. The former prime minister called out Additional District and Sessions Judge Zeba Chaudhry, who last week had approved Gill's two-day physical remand at the request of the capital police, and said she too should prepare herself as the case will also be registered against her. The PTI chief passed the remarks while leading a rally in Islamabad from Zero Point to F-9 Park in support of incarcerated leader Shahbaz Gill.

Briefs

Covid-19 cases rise in Kunduz

AFGHANISTAN: The number of COVID-19 cases has constantly risen in the northern Kunduz province with more than 700 people testing positive in the province over the past one month, a health official said Sunday.

"We have registered 727 positive cases of COVID-19 in Kunduz province over the past one month," head of the province's health department Mohammad Shafiq Sadeq said at a meeting with local hospital staff. Warning of the fast spread of the virus in the province, Sadeq urged the public to follow health guidelines and wear masks when going outdoors. He also called upon the people to take vaccine shots against the virus.

Only a 30-bed hospital is available for providing medical treatment to COVID-19 patients in Kunduz province, and 65 patients have been hospitalized there, Sadeq added. More than 7,700 people have reportedly died from COVID-19 in Afghanistan since January 2020.

Ukraine slams Russian envoy's tweet

DNA

VIENNA: A Russian envoy in Europe has been criticized for a tweet targeting Ukrainians. "No mercy to the Ukrainian population!" said Russia's Permanent Representative to the International Organizations in Vienna Mikhail Ulyanov in a tweet that has since been deleted. It was in response to a post by President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy thanking US President Joe Biden for another military aid package for Ukraine.

Ukraine's Foreign Ministry spokesperson called Ulyanov's words as a call to genocide. "Russia's Ambassador Mikhail Ulyanov is calling for the elimination of the Ukrainian nation. This genocidal language must not be tolerated. We call on the entire diplomatic community in Vienna to boycott Ulyanov, and on the host country, Austria - to declare him persona non grata," said Oleg Nikolenko.

The Austrian Foreign Affairs Ministry also issued a response, saying it supports free expression but opposes such aggressive discourse.

India: Death toll swells to 38

NEW DELHI: The death toll due to flash floods and landslides amid torrential rains has risen to 38 in the northern and eastern parts of India during the past two days, said media reports on Sunday. Most of the deaths - 22 took place in the northern hilly state of Himachal Pradesh, followed by six deaths in the eastern state of Odisha, four each in Uttarakhand and Jharkhand, and two in Indian-occupied Kashmir. Himachal Pradesh's death toll is feared to rise, as six people are still missing while 12 were injured in separate incidents of house collapse and landslides. - APP

RCCI holds conference in Thailand
Traders need to tap \$3 trillion ASEAN market

Thailand can play a significant role in providing economic and trade opportunities to Pakistan by connecting it with market



DNA

RAWALPINDI: Thailand can play a significant role in providing economic and trade opportunities to Pakistan by connecting it with the ASEAN (Association of SouthEast Asian Nations) market. The share of ASEAN countries in world trade is around twenty five percent, Pakistan's trade volume with ASEAN countries is only around seven billion dollars which is very low in terms of potential.

These views were expressed by the speakers on the occasion of the 34th Achievement Awards ceremony and conference organized by the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) in Bangkok, Thailand. The aim of the awards and business conference was to increase trade relations between the ASEAN countries and to bring the business community and private sector of Pakistan and Thailand closer. Ms Arada Fungtong, representative from the Prime Minister

office and Department of International Trade Promotion, Ministry of Commerce, Thailand (DITP) who was the chief guest on the occasion lauded RCCI's efforts for promoting trade ties between the two countries. She also agreed and appreciated the recommendations and suggestions including opening a DITP office in Pakistan. RCCI president Nadeem Rauf in his keynote address said that the ASEAN region with its significant economic power, vast natural resources,

and dynamic workforce, has a huge development potential which needs exploration in the better interest of all member nations. There are vast opportunities for mutual trade in many sectors, including marble, medicine, automobile, construction, seafood, tourism and clothing, he added. Group leader Sohail Altaf, Vice President Talat Awan, Chairman Usman Shaikat, former presidents, executive members, Thai Officials and trade delegations and representatives of prominent busi-

ness personalities and organizations in various fields were also present on the occasion. Chamber President Nadeem Rauf has said that about one and a half hundred businessmen, institutions and government representatives from Thailand including Pakistan participated in the Awards and Business Opportunities Conference. He said that there are fraternal relations between Pakistan and Thailand, tourism, especially the tourism of religious places, is very important, many signs and

relics of Buddhism are still present in Pakistan. The two countries also share a deep connection with each other under the Gandhara civilization, he added. He urged Thai investors to look into the opportunities concerning construction and real estate, tourism and hotel industry as Pakistan is a huge market in terms of Electronics and Automobiles. Pakistan's exports also include Seafood, Cotton cloth, fabrics, Plastic materials, Granite, Marble and spices, Fruits, frozen juices, he said.

Russia used hypersonic missiles in Ukraine

DNA

MOSCOW: The Russian army used Kinzhal hypersonic missiles three times in Ukraine, said the Russian defense minister on Sunday. Speaking to Russia's Rossiya-1 TV Channel, Sergei Shoigu said Kinzhal has been used three times in special military operation with excellent results.

He stated that these missiles were launched against important targets in Ukraine. Kinzhal is a Russian nuclear-capable hypersonic air-to-surface ballistic missile with a range of more than 2,000 kilometers (1,242 miles). It has the ability to perform evasive maneuvers at every stage of its flight.

The Russian army has been using the 5th generation Su-57 fighter jet in Ukraine, Shoigu added. Russia's war on Ukraine, which began in February, has left thousands dead or wounded, and forced 6 million people to flee abroad.

Moscow calls its actions a "special military operation" to "demilitarize" and "denazify" Ukraine. For Western countries, however, it is a war of aggression and they have imposed severe sanctions in response, including a ban on Russian state media, asset freezes, as well as excluding banks from the SWIFT international payment system.

Last stator hoisted successfully at Suki Kinari

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The last stator frame at the Suki Kinari hydropower project has been hoisted successfully and lowered into the unit pit. The stator weighed 335 tons and the task was completed with the help of bridge cranes. The project has four electricity generation units with a combined capacity of 884 megawatts, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Sunday.

The run-of-river facility is one of the early-harvest clean energy projects under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Gezhouba Group, China is implementing the project at around \$2 billion. Also, the 5-kilometre-long relocated portion of National Highway 15 (N-15) is open to traffic. The existing portion of N-15 will submerge in the reservoir of the Suki Kinari hydropower project; therefore, the new road was constructed at a higher elevation. The new road also has a 411-metre-long tunnel. The project is expected to complete by the end of 2023 or mid 2024, an official said.



BERN: Pakistan ambassador to Switzerland, Aamir Shouket hosted the annual general meeting of Swiss Pakistan Society at Pakistan House Bern. Embassy will be organizing series of events to promote Pakistan in Switzerland in the coming months. - DNA

German economy increasingly dependent on China

BERLIN: According to a report prepared by the German Economic Institute (Institut der Deutschen Wirtschaft, IW), the country's economy became more dependent on China in the first half of 2022. Direct investment and its trade deficit are reaching new heights, despite political pressure on Berlin to pivot away from Beijing. Simultaneously, the growth of German exports to China has significantly slowed down, which economists explain with a trend toward more local production in the Chinese market. "The German economy is much more dependent on China than the other way round,"

said Jürgen Matthes, the author of the study. Beijing's lukewarm stance on the Ukraine war and its aggressive military posturing toward Taiwan have placed German business doing business in China under scrutiny. "Yet despite these dangers and problems, economic interdependencies with China have been moving in the wrong direction at a tremendous pace in the first half of 2022," said Matthes. China's share of German imports rose to 12.4 percent in the first half of 2022, compared with only 3.4 percent back in 2000. German imports of Chinese goods, in turn, have surged in value terms by 45.7 percent year-on-year in the comparable period of the first six months. Germany's trade deficit with the country had leapt to almost EUR 41 bn by mid-2022. The IW predicts that the trade gap will only grow. The study also found that German investment in China amounted to around EUR 10 bn between January and June, far exceeding the previous peak half-year value recorded since the turn of the millennium of EUR 6.2 bn. - Agencies

Pakistani actor shines in Chinese film industry

XI'AN: A Pakistani actor Anees Qadir shines in Chinese film industry, it was reported by China Economic Net (CEN) on Sunday. Armed with military armour and a rifle, a foreign soldier collaborates with his Chinese counterparts to fight against villains in a street lined with high-rise buildings. This is a scene in a Chinese scientific film entitled The Infinite Block, which was recently released on Tencent Video and iQIYI, two popular streaming websites in China. Anees Qadir, a Pakistani actor based in China's north-western city of Xi'an. Four years into the Chinese entertainment industry, Anees has performed in five Chinese TV series and four Chinese films. The Infinite Block, the third film he participated in, carries special importance as he plays the second lead role in it, Anees told China Economic Net (CEN). "In the film, I had this leading role as a foreign soldier, and it involved a lot of actions and fight scenes," the Pakistan actor noted, "but I managed to finish the shooting even though I never learned kungfu." But lead roles do not come lightly, as per the Pakistani actor. Starting out as an aeronautics engineering student at a top university in Xi'an, Anees made the foray into the advertisement industry as a model upon graduation before venturing into the film industry with his first role in a Chinese documentary film. "Before coming to China, I worked as a radio broadcaster RJ on FM 105 for three years where I started my media career," he told CEN. - DNA

Indonesia to be largest digital economy in SE Asia

ANTARA

JAKARTA: Minister of Cooperatives and SMEs Teten Masduki has asked noodle and meatball soup vendors to join online business given that Indonesia is expected to become the largest digital econ-

omy with potential reaching Rp4,500 trillion, in Southeast Asia by 2030. "Hence, Mr. President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) understands very well that our huge digital economy in Southeast Asia must also be enjoyed by meatball soup vendors," he said here on Sunday. Masduki said the President

asked him to guide meatball noodle soup vendors to enter the digital ecosystem to grow their businesses further. By 2024, the government is targeting 30 million micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to enter the digital market, including 19.5 million MSMEs in 2022.

New Zealand temporarily changes immigration rules

FOREIGN DESK

AUCKLAND: New Zealand will make temporary changes to its immigration rules seeking to hire thousands of extra workers to plug a labor shortage. Immigration Minister Michael Wood said on Sunday. Wood said the government was aiming at temporarily doubling numbers under the working holiday visa scheme. The visa scheme allows people to enter and work from New Zealand for a period of up to 12 months, or sometimes even more, if they're from select countries like the UK or Canada. By throwing open more working holiday visa slots, New Zealand is hoping for 12,000 extra workers over the year. "These measures are about providing immediate relief to those businesses hardest hit by the global

worker shortage," Wood said in a statement. Michael Wood said there would be relaxation of wage rules for skilled migrants in key sectors like aged care, construction, infrastructure, meat processing, seafood and adventure tourism so these businesses are slowly able to build necessary skills in the country. Wood announced a temporary extension of working holiday visas by six months and an opportunity for those who previously held the visa but didn't travel to New Zealand because of COVID. "COVID brought the world to a standstill," Wood said, adding that a workers' crunch was being felt most by New Zealand's hospitality and tourism sectors that traditionally rely on international workers. While COVID had a major impact on international

travel around the world, New Zealand's response was unusually draconian by global standards. The isolated and remote islands closed their borders almost entirely during the pandemic, hoping to keep the virus out altogether, but ultimately failed in this goal. It finally reopened on July 31 this year. New Zealand's unemployment rate remains at record lows, at around 3.3% in the second quarter which runs from April until June, according to Statistics New Zealand. Annual growth in private-sector wages increased at the same time to 3.4% in the second quarter, their most rapid increase in 14 years. The Reserve Bank of New Zealand last week lifted the official cash rate by 50 basis points to 3.0% in a seventh straight hike to rein in inflation.

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Briefs

Japan mulls long-range missile deployment

DNA

TOKYO: Japan is considering the deployment of 1,000 long-range cruise missiles to boost its counterattack capability against China, the Yomiuri newspaper has reported. The missiles would be existing arms modified to extend their range from 100 kilometres to 1,000 km, the daily said on Sunday, citing government sources.

The arms, launched by ships or aircraft, would be stationed mainly around the southern Nansai islands and capable of reaching the coastal areas of North Korea and China, the Yomiuri said. Representatives from Japan's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the report.

Japan, which interprets its war-renouncing postwar constitution to mean it may use its military only for self-defence, has stepped up its military spending and taken a more assertive strategy in recent years. But it has refrained from deploying long-range missiles, among its limits on weapons that can strike targets on foreign soil. Regional tensions ratcheted up this month after a visit by Nancy Pelosi, speaker of the US House of Representatives, to Taiwan, which is self-ruled but claimed by China.

Daughter of Putin ally killed by car bomb

WEB DESK

MOSCOW: The daughter of ultra-nationalist Putin ally Alexander Dugin was killed by a car bomb near Moscow overnight. Daria Dugina died after a suspected explosive device on the car she was driving detonated, investigators from the Moscow region said in a statement. TV footage showed investigators collecting debris from the roadside where the explosion happened. They have opened a murder case and are considering "all versions" of events. A spokesperson for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has denied any responsibility for the incident. Dugina's car exploded on Saturday evening as she drove home from a cultural festival that she had attended with her father.

"This was the father's vehicle. Darya [normally drove] another car but she took his car today, while Alexander went in a different way," Andrey Krasnov, Dugin's friend and the head of the Russian Horizon social movement, told Russia's state-owned TASS news agency. "He returned, he was at the site of the tragedy. As far as I understand, Alexander or probably they together were the target." Alexander Dugin is an ultra-nationalist ideologue who is seen as a key architect behind the current worldview of top Kremlin lawmakers. He is also seen as having influence over President Vladimir Putin himself — even being called "Putin's brain" by Western media — but some Russia watchers have downplayed Dugin's influence in recent months.



ISLAMABAD: Mr. Yves Manville, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of France, delivered a lecture on Relations and Motivations of a Diplomat to the participants of the 42nd SDC, at the Foreign Service Academy of Pakistan. — DNA

Ukraine warns of 'ugly' attack to spread fear

"We must all be aware that this week Russia could try to do something particularly ugly, something particularly vicious," Zelenskiy said

NEWS DESK

KIEV: President Volodymyr Zelenskyy urged vigilance ahead of Wednesday's celebrations of 31 years of Ukraine's independence from Soviet rule, as shells rained down near Europe's biggest nuclear plant and Russian forces struck in the south and east. Ukrainians must not allow Moscow to "spread despondency and fear" ahead of the Aug. 24 events, which also mark six months since Russia began its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Zelenskyy said in his nightly video address on Saturday. "We must all be aware that this week Russia could try to do something particularly ugly, something particularly vicious," Zelenskyy

said, Reuters reported. In Russia, the daughter of an ultra-nationalist Russian ideologue who advocates Russia absorbing Ukraine was killed in a suspected car bomb attack outside Moscow on Saturday evening, Russian state investigators said on Sunday. They said Darya Dugina, daughter of prominent ideologue Alexander Dugin, was killed after a suspected explosive device detonated on the Toyota Land Cruiser she was travelling in, and they were considering "all versions" when it came to working out who was responsible. read more The nightly curfew in Ukraine's second-largest city, Kharkiv, regularly hit by Russian shelling, will be extended for the entire day on Wednesday, regional Governor Oleh Synehub told residents

on the Telegram messaging app. As the war that has killed thousands and forced millions to flee heads for its half-year mark, Ukrainian military and local officials reported more Russian strikes overnight on targets in the east and south of the country. Ukraine's general staff said on Facebook early on Sunday that over the past 24 hours Russian forces had conducted several attempted assaults in Donbas. The eastern border region controlled in part by pro-Moscow separatists has been a prime target of Russia's campaign in the past months. In the south, Russian forces conducted a successful assault on a village of Blahodatne at the border between Kherson and Mykolaiv regions. The city of Mykolaiv was hit with multiple S-300 mis-

siles early on Sunday, regional governor Vitaliy Kim said on Telegram. The area on the Black Sea coast has seen some of the fiercest fighting of the past weeks. To the northeast, the city of Nikopol, which lies across the Dnipro river from Zaporizhzhia, Europe's biggest nuclear plant, was shelled on five different occasions overnight, regional governor Valentyn Reznichenko wrote on Telegram. He said 25 artillery shells hit the city, causing a fire at an industrial premises and cutting power to 3,000 residents. The fighting near the Russian-controlled plant and Saturday's missile strike at the southern Ukrainian town of Voznesensk, not far from the country's second-largest nuclear plant, revived fears of a nuclear accident.

Russia says it destroyed missiles at HIMARS depot

DNA

MOSCO: Russia said on Sunday that its Kalibr missiles had destroyed an ammunition depot containing missiles for US-made HIMARS rocket in Ukraine's southeastern Odesa region, while Kyiv said a granary had been hit. Russia's defense ministry said sea-based Kalibr missiles had destroyed a depot that also housed Western-made anti-aircraft systems. A spokesman for Odesa's regional administration said two missiles had been shot down over the sea, but that three had struck agricultural targets. There were no casualties, the spokesman, Serhiy Bratchuk, said on Telegram. An explosives expert and investigators were working at the granary, he said. Reuters was not able to immediately verify the battlefield reports. Russia's defense ministry also said its forces had destroyed two M777 Howitzers in combat positions in the Kherson region, and a fuel depot in the Zaporizhzhia region that it said was storing more than 100 tonnes of diesel fuel.

Five fishing boats with over 70 missing in Bangladesh

DHAKA: At least five fishing boats with more than 70 fishermen in Bangladesh's southern coastal district of Barguna have been missing since Friday night due to a strong storm, according to local authorities. The fishermen went to the Bay of Bengal for catching Hilsa (Elish) fish, which is the national fish in Bangladesh, while the gusty storm swept over the southern sea, a common place to catch Hilsa fish in Bangladesh, India, and Myanmar. — APP

UAE says upgrading relations with Iran

Ambassador to Iran, Saif Mohammed Al Zaabi, would return to Tehran "in coming days", more than six years after the Gulf Arab state downgraded ties with the Islamic Republic

MONITORING REPORT

DUBAI: The United Arab Emirates said on Sunday that its ambassador to Iran, Saif Mohammed Al Zaabi, would return to Tehran "in coming days", more than six years after the Gulf Arab state downgraded ties with the Islamic Republic. The move is in line with UAE efforts to strengthen relations with Iran "to achieve the common interests of the two countries and the wider region", the foreign ministry said in a statement. The UAE downgraded its ties with Iran after Saudi Arabia severed its own relations with Tehran in January 2016. The move followed the storming of the Saudi embassy in Tehran by Iranian protesters after Riyadh executed a prominent cleric. After years of animosity on different sides of geo-political rivalries, the UAE started re-engaging with Tehran in 2019 following attacks in Gulf waters and on Saudi energy sites amid heightened tensions after Washington quit global powers' nuclear pact with Iran. Last year Saudi Arabia moved to improve ties with foe Iran with five rounds of direct talks so far. This has come at a time when Gulf Arab states are closely eyeing efforts to revive the 2015 nuclear pact, which they deem flawed for not addressing Iran's missiles programme and behaviour. Though Riyadh and Abu Dhabi want an end to Tehran's push for dominance in the region, they also want to contain the tensions as they focus on economic priorities. The UAE has business and trade ties with Iran stretching back more than a century, with Dubai emirate long being one of Iran's main links to the outside world. Fellow Gulf state Kuwait earlier this month appointed its first ambassador to Iran since 2016. Then, in solidarity with Riyadh, it had recalled its envoy to Tehran while maintaining relations as part of a balanced foreign policy. In a significant warming of official Israeli-UAE relations, Israel and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) formally agreed in August 2020 to "normalise" relations in a United States-brokered deal that also requires Israel to halt its plan to annex parts of the West Bank, including the Jordan Valley. A joint statement issued by the UAE, Israel and the United States said that the three countries had "agreed to the full normalization of relations between Israel and the United Arab Emirates". The signing ceremony was held on 15 September 2020.

Flash floods kill 20 in eastern Afghan province

KABUL: Heavy rains triggered flash floods in the eastern Afghan province of Logar, killing at least 20 people and destroying more than 3,000 homes, officials said Sunday. The rains lashed several areas of the province on Saturday, injuring more than 30 people in addition to those killed, the provincial governor's office said. The floods also destroyed dozens of canals and about 5,000 acres of agricultural land, mainly orchards, the statement said, with about 2,000 livestock also killed. Scores of Afghans die every year from floods and torrential downpours, particularly in impoverished rural areas where poorly built homes are often at risk of collapse. Security forces and charity organisations were evacuating people to safe areas after their houses were destroyed, the provincial government said. Government spokesman Bilal Karimi, in a separate statement, urged the international community to provide aid. "We urgently request the international community... to join hands with the Afghans at this critical time and (to) spare no effort to help the victims," Karimi said. The country's meteorological department said more heavy rains and floods were expected across 21 provinces in the coming days. Foreign aid and disaster relief schemes have been dramatically reduced since the Taliban stormed back to power in August last year. Western nations are wary that any assistance could be commandeered by the Taliban and used to consolidate their grip on Afghanistan. — Agencies

NDMA issues flash floods warning

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Sunday advised all concerned provincial and federal ministries and emergency departments to ensure prior arrangements to cope with flash floods predicted in rivers and nullahs of Eastern Balochistan. According to the NDMA advisory, the Flood Forecasting Division (FFD) has forecasted moderate flash flooding in the rivers and nullahs of Eastern Balochistan during the next 24 hours and heavy flooding after 24 hours. It added that 'medium to high-level flooding' is expected in Kabul River at Nowshera, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) and tributaries of rivers Kabul and Indus, in Sindh, till Monday. Moreover, 'high level and above flooding' is likely in the hill torrents of Dera Ghazi Khan Division, Punjab, in the next 24 hours.

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