



Islamabad POST

Saturday, August 27, 2022

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

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The UAE, an ideal investment destination: UAE Ambassador

Detailed News On Page-05

Vienna talks at final stages, says Iran FM

Detailed News On Page-08



Benzema sets sights on Ballon d'Or, World Cup

Detailed News On Page-06



Briefs

Army Chief reaches Karachi

DNA

ISLAMABAD: General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) has reached Karachi where he was briefed about flood situation in Sindh and Balochistan and response measures to help flood victims. COAS will visit army troops busy in rescue and relief efforts in Sindh and Balochistan. Army Flood Relief centre has been established at Headquarters Army Air Defence Command Rawalpindi to oversee, coordinate National Flood Relief efforts across the country in coordination with Military Operations Directorate. Flood Relief Centres being established in various parts of the country to assist collection, transportation and distribution of flood relief goods to flood victims in various provinces. Army troops are shifting people to safer places, providing shelter, meals and busy in medical care to flood affectees

Khan will not tender apology

DNA

ISLAMABAD: PTI's senior leader Fawad Chaudhry has said that former prime minister Imran Khan will not tender an apology to the Islamabad High Court (IHC) in a contempt of court case. The former information minister, according to The News, also stated that it is "really sad" that a full bench is hearing this case. In response to a query regarding Khan's remarks about the female judge, Fawad questioned if they [the court] should not feel ashamed of such an act. A larger bench of the IHC earlier this week Tuesday issued a show-cause notice to Khan after taking up contempt of court proceedings against him for threatening Additional Sessions Judge Zeba Chaudhry during a public rally.

Holiday Notice

The office of Daily Islamabad POST shall remain closed on the eve of Ashura on August 08 and 09 therefore there will be no newspaper on August 09 and 10. - Editor

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Flood situation

Shehbaz sensitizes diplomats

The Acting Ambassador of France Yves Manville welcomes appointment of Pakistan ambassador to France

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday interacted with members of the diplomatic community in Islamabad to sensitize them about the damages caused by floods across the country.

Another picture on Back Page

8 diplomatic representatives including the UAE, France, Canada, Turkey, USA, UK, UN, Kuwait spoke on the occasion and assured the prime minister that they will take up this issue with their respective headquarters. The Acting Ambassador of France Yves Manville while speaking on the occasion assured the prime minister that he will talk to his headquarters and inform them about the situation on ground. He also congratulated the new designated ambassador to France Ambassador Asim Iftikhar, who was there along with the Foreign Secretary and several ministers. As part of efforts to mobilize all resources, the prime minister met Islamabad-based ambassadors, high commissioners & senior members of diplomatic corps to

Continued on Page 06

'Construction of dams inevitable'

Instructs party volunteers to help flood victims

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan made it clear that the sole solution to prevent the catastrophes caused by flood was to construct dams. Speaking to media in D I Khan, during his visit to flood-hit areas districts Dera Ismail Khan and Tank on Friday along with Chief Minister Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Mehmood Khan, Imran Khan expressed grief over the loss of lives and properties across the country due to the massive floods. During the visit, PTI Chairman met the flood victims and reviewed the relief and rehabilitation activities in the flood-hit areas. Imran Khan stated that the authorities concerned were currently estimating the damages in the flood affected areas and the people would

PM announces Rs 15 bln grant for Sindh

NAZIR SIYAL

SUKKUR, The federal government will provide a grant of Rs 15 billion to the Sindh government to overcome the heavy losses of lives and infrastructure in the wake of the massive destruction caused by flash floods. Talking to reporters flanked by Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah and federal ministers including Bilawal Bhutto and Syed Khurshid Shah here at Sukkur Barrage, the prime minister said the situation demanded rising above politics and helping the flood victims overcome their miseries. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who earlier took an aerial view of the inundated areas of Sukkur, Rohri, Khairpur, Faiz Ganj, Kot Diji, and Thari Mir Wah, expressed serious concern over the loss of lives and infrastructure caused by the floods.

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be provided all possible help. PTI Chairman said that the feasibility of Tank Zam Dam has been done, as its construction would not only help avert the damages caused by

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif briefing the diplomats about the flood situation in Pakistan. - DNA

IMF program may be in jeopardy

KP Finance Minister withdrew his commitment of providing provincial surplus for this fiscal year

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Finance Minister Taimur Khan Jhagra Friday withdrew his commitment of providing provincial surplus for this fiscal year, putting the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) programme at stake.

News on Back Page

In a letter to Finance Minister Miftah Ismail, Jhagra said that the provincial government had signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in the "greater national interest." However, the KP finance minister refused to implement the IMF conditions and cited several reasons for withdrawing the commitment which includes a budget allocation for the former Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA), commitment to monthly net hydel profits (NHP) transfers, monsoon flooding etcetera. 1. Perhaps most importantly, to resolve the budget allocations for ex-FATA, which, in the absence of an updated NFC award, are decided at the discretion of the federal government. 2. To commit to monthly NHP

Continued on Page 06

Rains death toll crosses 930

NDMA predicts more rains in the affected areas

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: The torrential monsoon rains across the country on Friday inflicted further lives and property losses as the total death count in various incidents reached 937 and 1343 individuals got injured since the onset of the rainy season. The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) issued a 24-hour situation report released on routine basis that accounted overall life, property, and infrastructure losses incurred by the heavy rains lashing out various parts of the country. The heavy rains caused roof collapse incident in Balochistan caused deaths of four children including two children died in Zhob and one child perished each in in Duki and Chaghi whereas three children got injured in Duki. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's some 13 perished due to flash floods various districts including four males in Lower Kohistan, one female each in Lakki Marwat and Lower Dir, five children in Upper Dir, one child each in Swat and Lower Kohistan. However, due to roof collapse one male in North Waziristan, one female in Lakki Marwat and a child passed away in Dera Ismail Khan whereas seven individuals got injured

Continued on Page 06

KP govt declares emergency

BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has declared an emergency in Swat after the scale of devastation caused by extreme flooding in the district reached out of control following record rains. Provincial authorities are facing difficulty in rescuing affected families from hill stations of Swat, Dir, and Chitral, Geo News reported on Friday. The state of emergency will be in effect until August 30 for relief efforts in flood-affected areas of Swat, a notification by the KP relief department stated. KP CM Mahmood Khan has directed the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) to expedite relief activities in the area besides timely provision of grocery, cooked food and other items to the affectees. According to the district administration, communication bridges in Matta, Sukhra, and Lalko in Swat have also been damaged.

EU provides EUR 10 mln for quality education

This is the second payment of a EUR 42 million grant made available through budget support by the European Union under the DEEP

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The European Union is disbursing nearly PKR 2.2 billion (EUR 10 million) to the Government of Sindh to strengthen the implementation of provincial education policies. This is the second payment of a EUR 42 million grant made available through budget support by the European Union under the Development through Enhanced Education Programme (DEEP). This direct financial support creates opportunities to accelerate access to quality education for all children in the Sindh province, as a foundation for future training and skills development and engagement in productive employment. The programme fully

aligns with the Sindh School Education Sector Plan & Roadmap 2019-2024 with a focus on priority reform areas in governance, enrolment and teaching quality. UNICEF provides complementary technical assistance to strengthen the Sindh School Education and Literacy Department's (SELD) responsive capacity and systems to plan, manage and deliver quality and equitable education. The Sindh Minister of Education, Mr. Syed Sardar Ali Shah, highlighted, "Education continues to be one of the key priority areas for Government of Sindh. We aim at improving access to equitable, inclusive and quality education for all to realize their fullest potential and contribute to the development of society and economy, thus creating sense of nationhood, incul-

cating values of tolerance, social justice and democracy. SELD has come a long way in remodeling the edifice of education in collaboration with the Donors, development partners and civil society. The contribution of European Union in the shape of Development through Enhanced Education with budgetary support allocation of 42 million Euros is quite commendable. This will not only help in carry out the activities of Education Sector plan 2019-24, but also bring forth the quality education in Sindh." "Education and learning are fundamental to development and growth. We welcome the latest reform implementation measures by the Government of Sindh; these include the updated

Continued on Page 06

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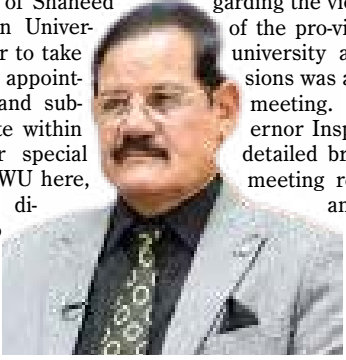
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Ghani for action against illegal appointments

PESHAWAR: Acting Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mushtaq Ghani on Friday directed syndicate of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University (SBBWU) Peshawar to take action against illegal appointments in the varsity and submit its report to Senate within 30-day. Presiding over special senate meeting of SBBWU here, the Acting Governor directed the Syndicate to look into the matter of illegal appointment in the light of the inquiry reports of the Higher Education Department, Governor Inspection Team, Model Statutes of the university and the University Act.



On the occasion the inquiry report of the Higher Education Department regarding the violation of the powers of the pro-vice chancellor of the university and the illegal decisions was also presented in the meeting. The chairman Governor Inspection Team gave a detailed briefing to the senate meeting regarding the details and recommendations of the inquiry report. Chancellor SBBWU also exceeded the authority by ignoring merit in various appointments.

The meeting related to the inquiry report of the Department of Higher

Education was told that the Pro Vice Chancellor also exceeded his authority and made administrative appointments. In the Senate meeting, it was unanimously decided to send both the inquiry reports of the Governor Inspection Team and the Department of Higher Education to the Syndicate of the said University and directed the Syndicate to take action on the inquiry reports. Chairman Governor Inspection Team Ahmed Hasan, Special Secretary Higher Education Department Rashid Pineda Khel, Acting Principal Secretary to Governor Saiful Islam, representatives of Finance and Establishment Departments, High Education Commission, VC SBBWU and other members of Senate were present in the meeting. - APP

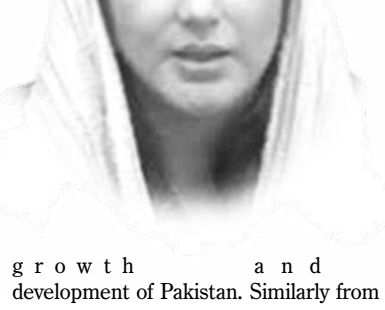


LAHORE: Hafiz Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, Special Representative for PM on inter faith harmony talking to media at Lahore. - DNA

Jahan Ara Watoo appointed as VP PBF

ISLAMABAD: Jahan Ara Watoo, a politician and human right advocate has been appointed as Vice President of the Pakistan Business Forum (PBF). She had been affiliated with Ministry of Human Rights and also worked as Regional Advisor in Saarc body. Besides, she has attended different courses in National Defence University (NDU). On the appointment, Jahan Ara Watoo said the establishment of PBF was much needed for the real advocacy forum towards government. She highlighted the importance of effective public-private dialogue in planning and implementation of economic reforms, especially as government planning around the world has become participatory, collaborative and market-oriented in nature. PBF Vice President recommends to intended as broad policy suggestions and brings to

the fore some points for deliberations between public and private sector stakeholders on how to build strong, effective, sustainable and contribute to the economic growth and development of Pakistan. Similarly from



the perspective of the public sector, the government needs to set up institutional mechanisms for public-private dialogue where bureaucracy can effectively engage the private sector on matters relating to both short- and long-term economic/ business policymaking and its implementation. She further said we PBF would ensure to overcome this bridge and initiate a non political economic dialogue with the stakeholders which is vital for our economic transformation. On flood situation; Watoo demanded that provincial governments should provide financial assistance to flood affected under livestock and housing, immediately providing them with tents, mosquito nets, mosquito spray, food and drink equipment, digging drains and ensuring drainage of water from villages and crops. -APP

Ashrafi for APC to meet flash flood situation in country

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Special Representative for Interfaith Harmony and Middle East Hafiz Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi on Friday said there should be an immediate All Parties Conference (APC) to meet the prevailing flash flood situation in the country. Addressing a press conference, Ashrafi who is also the chairman of Pakistan Ulama Council said the current flood situation required a united response from the political and religious parties. He said the nation, philanthropists, volunteers and political and religious parties' workers should come forward along with Pakistan Army to help the flood victims. He also urged the Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi to play his role with the national unity and consensus to help the flood affected people. In addition, Ashrafi said, "We thank Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates for the announcement

of financial support and investment in the country." He said the Arab-Islamic countries were friends of Pakistan adding they should not be involved in the internal politics of the country. He also clarified that the prime minister and his delegation did not meet any Israeli during the recent visit to Qatar. The Pakistan's stance on the Palestine issue was very clear and laud and no one could change it. The establishment of an independent and autonomous Palestinian state was the interpretation of the stance of Pakistan and the Islamic world, he added. Ashrafi urged the Arab, Muslim brotherly countries and the world to play their role to help the flood affected people in Pakistan because the current flash flood situation was more disastrous than the past floods and natural calamities in the country. He said the government of Pakistan

alone could not deal with this sad and painful situation, where millions of the people were affected by the flash flood across the country. He said the non-government organizations and charitable bodies, carrying out welfare activities in the country, should be allocated areas for welfare activities so that they could serve their countrymen effectively and efficiently. He said the role of the Pakistan Army in the current flood situation was commendable. Ashrafi said the way, nation unitedly fought for the end of terrorism and extremism after the Army Public School, Peshawar tragedy, it needed the same spirit and courage, to cope with the prevailing flood situation in the country. He proposed all the political and religious leaders to suspend their political activities for one month and help the flood victims with national and religious spirit. - APP

Flood badly affects communication system: Farah Shah

The provincial govt under the leadership of chief minister was making a policy to counter climate change in effective manner

ISLAMABAD: Spokesperson of Balochistan government Farah Azeem Shah Friday said the heavy rains and flood has badly affected the communication system and destroyed many roads, bridges and railway track in the province caused major difficulties to reach out all affected areas. The power full floods has disconnected Balochistan from the rest of the country as all road and railway network connecting Balochistan has been damaged in most parts in the province. The blocked road caused immense trouble not only for the travellers but also for local people, she said while talking to a private news channel. The provincial government has issued the direction to identify the losses and damages and rescue the people on war footing basis, she said adding that the government has also released money in order to help them immediately so that they would not suffer difficulties. Farah Azeem said that at least 250 people including children and women have been killed in rain incidents of Balochistan and thousands were injured. She said the provincial government under the leadership of chief minister was making a policy to counter climate change in effective manner. Farah said, Balochistan government was taking efforts to provide relief items and rehabilitation of the flood-affected people within limited resources. Farah said the district administration and disaster management authority was conducting survey to come

across the actual loss due to flood in the area. She said the rescue teams were vigilant for any emergency situation in region round the clock and local administration was facing a huge challenge to cope up with the situation arising after the heavy downpour and flash floods. The PDMA rescue teams are present in the area and are providing rescue services to people stranded in the flood-hit areas and the chief minister had directed the immediate rescue of the people trapped in flood water, she concluded.

Flash flood sweeps away iconic hotel in Swat valley

A number of hotels and restaurants have been destroyed in the Swat valley due to flash floods. In Kalam, a well-known hotel was completely swept and the scenes were recorded on a camera. In a video that has gone viral, it could be seen that the iconic Honeymoon Hotel begins to crumble as water flow increases, and then the red multi-storey structure is washed away. In the video, people can be heard shouting, "Astaghfirullah, Astaghfirullah, Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar," as the building collapses within seconds. The destruction of another multi-storey was also captured on camera. A number of local tourists have reportedly been stranded in Swat valley during flash floods. - APP

KP govt to divert ADP funds for relief,

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Finance Taimur Salim Jhagra on Friday hinted at diverting the Annual Development Programme (ADP) for relief and rehabilitation work in flood affected areas. Addressing a press conference here at Peshawar Press Club, he said the provincial government had talked to the World Bank and other financial institutions for provision of aid to support the flood-affected people. He said that in case of the shortage of funds, the government would divert the ADP funds for rehabilitation of the flood victims, adding that the KP government had also written to the federal finance minister for provision of outstanding dues under the head of net hydel profits. He claimed the response of the KP government towards rehabilitation and reconstruction in flood-affected areas would be practical and more prominent than the other affected provinces. To a question regarding the expected outbreak of different diseases after floods, Jhagra said that the health system across the province was fully alert and ready to cope with any emergency. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey, Dr. Mehmet Pacaci called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Miftah Ismail at Finance Division. - DNA

Miftah Ismail welcomes Turkish investment

On the occasion, Dr. Mehmet Pacaci shared that the Republic of Turkiye has strong bilateral ties with Pakistan on various fronts

DNA

ISLAMABAD, AUG 26: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Miftah Ismail here on Friday welcomed Turkish investments in various fields in Pakistan and assured of full cooperation and facilitation in this regard. The minister was talking to Ambassador of the Republic of Turkiye, Dr. Mehmet Pacaci who called on him here, according to press statement issued by finance ministry. The meeting was

also attended by CEO Hayat Kimya Pakistan, Fatih Ustunel, CFO Hayat Kimya Pakistan, Onur Kilic, Chairman FBR and other senior officers. They exchanged views about the long-standing religious, cultural, political, economic and social ties between Pakistan and Turkey. The Finance Minister also highlighted the future potential areas for strengthening relations especially on business and investment fronts. Miftah apprised the ambassador that present government of Pakistan was undertaking multi-

ple structural reforms for facilitating the foreign investment in Pakistan. On the occasion, Dr. Mehmet Pacaci shared that the Republic of Turkiye has strong bilateral ties with Pakistan on various fronts. Recalling PM Shehbaz Sharif's visit to Turkey and his meeting with the Turkish investors, the Ambassador briefed the Finance Minister on extending Turkish investment in various sectors of Pakistan and stressed that Turkey aims at enhancing and strengthening the economic ties.

Timely delivery of justice vital: DPO

SAQIB MUSHTAQ

LODHAN: The newly appointed District Police Officer in Lodhran, Kashif Aslam, has taken charge of his post and started work. Request to continue After assuming charge, DPO Mohammad Kashif Aslam made a sudden visit to Model Police Station City Lodhran, inspected the City Police Station, Front Desk, Mall Khana. Checked the list of accused in custody and checked the records of Muharr office. Directed to further improve service delivery and perform duties diligently. It is your duty and duty to show respect to the soldiers who come to the police station. Investigating officers should complete investigation of cases expeditiously and on merit. SHOs ensure effective patrols so that public safety is our top priority. On this occasion, District Police Officer Lodhran Muhammad Kashif Aslam, in a special conversation with Frontier Post, said that timely delivery of justice to the citizens in the police stations will be the top priority. All resources will be used to defeat the criminal elements and control the street



crime. Lodhran will make the police a means of prosecution by developing modern information technology Citizens can feel free to come to the offices of all officers, including mine, for redressal

of law and order are our responsibility, which we will perform well. The civil society of Lodhran also spoke to Frontier Post regarding the appointment of the newly appointed District Police Officer and said that the former DPO Abdul Rauf Babar, for the first time in the history of Lodhran, has arrested more than 16 extremely dangerous gangs who killed young daughters during the incident. With the help of modern information technology, more than 16 robbers were killed by their own accomplices in the police encounter, corruption was controlled to sixty percent, Lodhran. Measures like ensuring free registration of FIRs in ten police stations, immediate dismissal of corrupt and irresponsible employees must be continued to ensure rule of law. Civil society representatives further said that for the first time in the history of Lodhran, police funds were not misused and no bogus bills were passed. Ex dpo Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani also stopped this series. It is hoped that the newly appointed District Police Officer Kashif Aslam will ensure the safety of the public by maintaining this professional decorum.

Chinese CG Zhao Shiren meets IGP

LAHORE: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Faisal Shahkar Friday said that the Punjab police was ensuring foolproof measures for the security of all foreigners, especially Chinese citizens, experts and investors, who came here for business or private purposes in different districts of the province. The IGP said, "We are taking all possible measures for the security of Chinese citizens' residences as well as working sites and offices". He said that the experiences of friendly country China would be benefited to increase the efficiency of the police force. Talking about the Special Protection Unit (SPU) responsible for the security of Chinese citizens, he said that the specially trained personnel of SPU were performing the security duties of Chinese citizens in all the districts of the province with full zeal. The IGP added that full security measures in this regard were being further improved with effective supervision. He expressed these views during a meeting with the Chinese Consul General (CG), Lahore Zhao Shiren at the Central Police Office (CPO). In the meeting, the security of Chinese citizens, experts and investors residing in Punjab was discussed. - 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

Emergency

Rescue (Police).....15

Bomb Disposal.....15

Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....1122 & 16

Emergency Ambulance.....1122

& Rescue Services.4451122

Motorway Police.....9266044

Motorway Police.....9270601-20

Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9222596

Rawalpindi.....9270601-20

Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115

PIAFlightInfo.....114

PIA Cargo.....9280979

Railway Inquiry.....117

Railway Exchange9270831-5

WASA Rawalpindi.....5555489

CAA.....9281092

Hospitals

CMH.....5611111

MH.....5611116

Cantt Hospital.....9270907-11

DHQ.....5556311-4

RGH.....9290301-7

Holy Family.....9290322-7

PIMS.....9261170-79

Polyclinic.....9218300-09

Shifa International.4603666

Departments

CDA.....9221334-43

CDA.....9208301-04

Met Office.....9250360-6

RDA.....5555864

TMA.....5770886

Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation

Corporation.....9209224

Potohar Town.....9209224

Rawal Town.....5773343

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Dr. Arif Alvi appeals to nation, expatriates to aid flood victims

The President called upon all governments and institutions, NGOs and volunteers to offer their expertise and leadership to rescue, evacuate, and rehabilitate the affected by providing them shelter, food and medical facilities

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has appealed to the entire nation, Overseas Pakistanis and the international community to come to the aid of flood victims who are in dire need of rescue, relief and rehabilitation due to the unprecedented rains and floods which has destroyed the lives and livelihood of people across Pakistan. He said that Pakistanis, who had already displayed remarkable philanthropic spirit in the past, will come forward once again and contribute generously

in cash and kind to support the rescue and relief efforts of the government and other relevant organizations. The President called upon all governments and institutions, NGOs and volunteers to offer their expertise and leadership to rescue, evacuate, and rehabilitate the affected by providing them shelter, food and medical facilities. The President also called upon the media to motivate the nation to donate the essential items identified by the government through formal channels set up or endorsed by the government in an organized and



disciplined manner which may include readymade food packets, nutritious and warm food, rice, dal, salt and oil and items of daily use, including matchboxes, candle packets, kerosene oil, solar lamps, polythene sheets, ground sheets, floor mats, tarpaulin, mosquito nets and blankets to the affected people to help them rebuild their lives. The President said that unprecedented rains and resultant floods had damaged roads, bridges and embankments, and disrupted communication and transportation infrastructure, making rescue and relief efforts an

uphill task. The President urged the international community to provide their expertise, hi-tech technology, and required machinery to the relevant government institutions to help restore infrastructure and provide their logistic and humanitarian support to help relevant government agencies cope with the enormous task of aiding the flood victims across the country. He expressed his confidence that like in the past, the nation would again come to the aid of the flood affected and would not rest until their complete rehabilitation.

Camps established for relief items' collection to flood-victims

Cash was not accepted in the camps, whereas only water bottles, clothes, blankets, mattresses, tents and other relief material may be deposited from 12pm to 12 midnight

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration has established relief camps at various locations in the city to mobilise philanthropists to arrange relief

items for flood-victims. The camps were set up at F-9 Park, near Munchies at F-6 Markaz and adjacent to MCB Bank at F-8 Markaz. People may deposit essential food items and relief

goods in these camps. Cash was not accepted in the camps, whereas only water bottles, clothes, blankets, mattresses, tents and other relief material may be deposited from 12pm to

12 midnight. Deputy Commissioner Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon has appealed the masses, philanthropists to come forward and help the rain and flood-affected people. - APP

CTP launch campaign against underage drivers

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi City Traffic Police (CTP) on Friday launched an operation against underage drivers and those not holding driving licenses. According to a CTP spokesman, CTP on the directives of Chief Traffic Officer, (CTO) Rawalpindi Naveed Irshad launched a campaign and took action in accordance with the law against the rules violators. He informed that the licenses of rickshaws, Qingqi, Suzuki vans, motorbikes, and private vehicle drivers would be checked during the campaign. - APP

'Khamoshiyan' gets nod of approval from netizens

Soon after release, the mesmerizing track by Kashan Admani and Asad Rasheed, grabbed fans as well as celebs' attention, as audience flooded YouTube comment section with likes and comments appreciating captivating track

ISLAMABAD: Dream Station Productions, finally unveiled first soulful track of Pakistan's new-age crime thriller 'Carma' featuring Adnan Siddiqui alongside the gorgeous Zhalay Sarhadi. According to Dream Station Productions official YouTube channel, "Khamoshiyan is a soulful love ballad from the thriller Carma highlighting the loneliness and longing felt after the loss of a relationship". Soon after release, the mes-

merizing track by Kashan Admani and Asad Rasheed, grabbed fans as well as celebs' attention, as audience flooded the YouTube comment section with likes and comments appreciating the captivating track. Celebrities from Showbiz fraternity including Kinza Hashmi, Nadia Hussain, Noor Hassan and many more gave a huge shout-out to much-talked-about film. Directed and produced by Kashan Admani, the

star-studded cast includes Adnan Siddiqui, Zhalay Sarhadi, Navin Waqar, Osama Tahir, Paras Masroor, Umer Aalam, Arjumand Rahim, Khaled Anam, Lili Casely, Vajdaan Shah, Emaan Khan, and Anum Gauhar. After receiving an overwhelming response from netizens, the track has caused a stir of excitement for much-awaited film releasing nationwide on 2nd September 2022. - APP

MolB employees will donate in PM's flood relief fund

ISLAMABAD: Officers and employees of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and its attached departments on Friday decided to donate voluntarily in the Prime Minister's Flood Relief Fund. On the Prime Minister's appeal, employees from grades 1 to 16 of the Ministry of Information and its attached departments will voluntarily contribute their one day's salary to the flood relief fund set up to help the people affected by the recent rains and floods, said a press release. All officers from Grade 17 to Grade 22 had decided to donate their 7 days salary to Prime Minister's Flood Relief Fund. The employees of the Ministry of Information and its attached departments stand with the government and the affected people in this difficult time. All the employees and officers of the Ministry announced to deposit the aid money in the Flood Relief Fund on the appeals of the Prime Minister and the Federal Minister of Information and Broadcasting for the rehabilitation of the flood affected areas and to help the flood victims. - APP

PTA introduces 9999 SMS code for flood relief donations

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) on Friday introduced a text-to-donate short code 9999 to enable the consumers donate their funds through mobile phone text to support the flood victims. The consumers would be required to write "fund" and send to the 9999 short code to donate Rs10 to contribute to the relief and rehabilitation activities in the flood-ravaged areas across the country. The PTA has already issued a notification in this regard to aware the masses about the easy donation method. The Authority has asked all the cellular network operators to update the National Disaster Management Authority regarding the received donations. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had appealed to the countrymen including the expatriates as well as the charity organizations to come up to aid the distressed people. - APP

NHMP, OGRA to formulate safety policy for vehicles' carrying hazardous material

ISLAMABAD: National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP) and Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) Friday agreed to formulate a robust policy for safe movement of vehicles carrying hazardous material. The decision to this effect was taken during a meeting between Inspector General (IG) (NHMP), Khalid Mahmood and Chairman (OGRA) Masroor Khan here. The representative from the department of explosives was also present on the occasion. It was mutually agreed that joint team shall conduct checking on motorways and highways to ensure that oil tankers, LPG bowlers, and other vehicles carrying hazardous material abide by the safety laws and regulations to avoid any untoward incident and safely move across the country. It was decided that other stakeholders like All Pakistan Oil Tankers associations shall be taken on board for use of latest technology in oil tankers for safety. IG National Highways and Motorway Police also briefed on recent initiatives taken to ensure safety of commuters on national Highways and Motorways. He apprised that National Highways and Motorway Police has increased safety briefing for oil tankers, LPG bowlers, and other vehicles carrying hazardous material on National Highways and Motorways. - APP



ISLAMABAD: A street vendors is selling clay made domestic stuff. - APP

Training course on halal products concluded

The authentication and confirmation of several products, including processed food and other items of daily use, and their Halal nature is a growing challenge globally along with the environmental contaminants, both biological and chemical, and non-halal ingredients which are prohibited for Muslims, are a matter of concern

ISLAMABAD: A five-day training course on "OIC/SMIIC Halal Products Standards and Testing" arranged by COMSTECH, OIC Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation with other partners, to encourage the harmonization of Halal standards used in OIC countries concluded at Islamic University in Uganda, Kampala on Friday. The course was organized in collaboration with the Standards and Meteorology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC) and Islamic University in Uganda. The authentication and confirmation of several products, including processed food

and other items of daily use, and their Halal nature is a growing challenge globally along with the environmental contaminants, both biological and chemical, and non-halal ingredients which are prohibited for Muslims, are a matter of concern. It is therefore, imperative for the Muslim countries to establish Halal testing standards and laboratories to ensure the 'Halal' status of the consumer products. In this context, the training course was designed to train the participants from African OIC member states about the procedures for adoption, implementation and use of the OIC/SMIIC Halal Food Stand-

ards, mainly: OIC/SMIIC 1:2019 - general requirements for Halal food, auditing of testing Labs in line with OIC/SMIIC 35 - conformity assessment, general requirements for the competence of laboratories performing Halal testing and the testing procedures standards such as test method for detection of porcine in food products (meat, processed food and gelatin). The objective of this training course was to encourage the harmonization of Halal standards used in the OIC countries and internationally by aiding in the adoption and use of the OIC/SMIIC Halal standards.

The aim of the training was to transfer knowledge and skills, and to develop the human capital, while bridging the knowledge gap and enlightening the compliance requirements set forth by the regulatory bodies in the OIC Countries. The training was attended by the participants both in-person and online. The Rector, Islamic University in Uganda, Prof. Ismail Simbwa Gyagenda, welcomed the participants and the experts. The Secretary General, SMIIC, Mr. Ihsan OVUT, the Coordinator General COMSTECH, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary addressed the inaugural session of the training. - APP

Dr. Ayesha will attend Int'l Women Leadership Program in US

ISLAMABAD: Prominent Kashmiri academician and Registrar University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (UAJK) Prof. Dr. Ayesha Sohail left for United States on Friday to attend Michigan State University's Visiting International Professional Program for "Pakistan Women Leadership in Higher Education". According to a press release, the program aimed to train women leaders in higher education to enhance their administrative capabilities in attaining senior leadership positions such as vice chancellor, pro-vice-chancellor, rector, or pro-rector. The participants of the training program will get the opportunity to network with women leaders at U.S. universities throughout the duration of the program. For the program, 25 university women leaders from diverse academic and leadership backgrounds across Pakistan have been selected among 200 applicants following a three-month selection process. The International Professional Program has been designed in collaboration with the National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE) and being funded by the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan. - APP

ANF recovers over 102 kg narcotics; arrests an accused

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting two operations managed to recover over 102 kg of narcotics besides netting an accused. According to an ANF Headquarters spokesman, ANF Intelligence conducted a raid on G.T.Road, in Akora Khattak and recovered 102 kg narcotics including 84 kg charras and 18 kg opium from secret cavities of a truck. ANF also arrested an accused namely Zaiib Gul resident of Mansehra. In another raid, conducted at a courier service office in Lahore, ANF recovered Ice drug 'absorbed' bed sheets being sent to Australia. The parcel was booked by Muhammad Asad resident of Muzaffarabad. Separate cases have been registered against the accused while further investigations are under process. The spokesman informed that accomplices of the accused would also be sent behind the bars. - APP

IESCO issues power suspension notice

DNA

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 27th August, From 06:00 AM to 02:00 PM, Beirut Gala, Darbar Mai Totti, Chirohi, Dana Bhal, Chirohi Dungi, Sri, City, Kariala, Jandrot Dabsi, Datot, Majajan, City II, Feeders, From 07:00 AM to 12:00 Noon, Bhara Kaho, NIH, T&T, Golf City, Treat, Misryal Road, Ameer Hamza, Radio Pak, Milatbad, Peshawar Road, Range Road, Shukriya, Smoot, Kangar, Islampur, Mandi Bhalwal, Feeders, On 28th August, From 09:00 AM to 01:00 PM, Abbaspura, Zubair Shaheed, Civil Line, ATM, Garmala, Gul Afshan, Langarpur, Jaddah, Mashin Mohalla, Kachhari, Ajmal Shaheed, Sanghui, PTC, Akram Shaheed, Nathwala, Salfar Shaheed, City Housing, CMH, Jakhar, Sanaullah Shaheed, Chip Bord, Kala Base, Chak Daulat, Industrial, Pakhwal, Boren, COD Kala, Bhagwal, Hsnot, Pediaal, Domeli Feeders, From 07:00 AM to 12:00 Noon, H-8/2 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.

SCO outlines steps to enhance cooperation

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Defence Ministers' Meeting held in Tashkent, Republic of Uzbekistan outlined further steps to enhance defence and security cooperation among the member states. According to a joint communique issued after the meeting, as usual, the ministers came together in a friendly and constructive atmosphere to engage in an exchange of views on the topical international and regional security matters. The participants noted that attempts to ensure one's own security at the expense of other countries were unacceptable. The developments currently unfolding around the world demonstrate that the emergence of a just multipolar world order based on the universally recognised principles of international law, multilateralism, as well as equal, shared, indivisible, inclusive and sustainable security cannot be reversed. The ministers praised the high level of mutual understanding among SCO member states and agreed to continue their cooperation to improve security and stability across the SCO space, including in terms of overcoming the negative consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The defence ministers believe that settling the situation in Afghanistan without delay is one of the key factors in preserving and strengthening security and stability within the SCO space. In view of the current socio-economic and humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, the defence ministers called on the international community and the SCO member states to step up their efforts to help the country overcome the socioeconomic and humanitarian crisis it is facing. The ministers firmly condemned attempts to revise the causes and outcomes of World War II, and to rehabilitate Nazi criminals and their accomplices, as well as promote neo-Nazi ideas. The ministers decided to hold a joint military counter-terrorist command post exercise Peaceful Mission 2023 in the Russian Federation on responding to new tactics used by international terrorists. Russia suggested that during this exercise, the interested parties focus on countering unmanned aerial vehicles, ensuring information security, and preventing terrorist attacks involving chemical and biological weapons. The SCO's ties with other international organisations are becoming instrumental in strengthening regional security. In this connection, Russia suggested considering the possibility of inviting military units from other international organisations, as well as troops and observers from friendly countries to take part in the Peaceful Mission exercise. The SCO heads of State and Government will meet in the Uzbek city Samarkand next month to discuss a variety of issues. Pakistan will also take part at the highest level. Given the potential of the SCO Pakistan needs to fully cash in on this potential by forging deeper partnerships with the member states.

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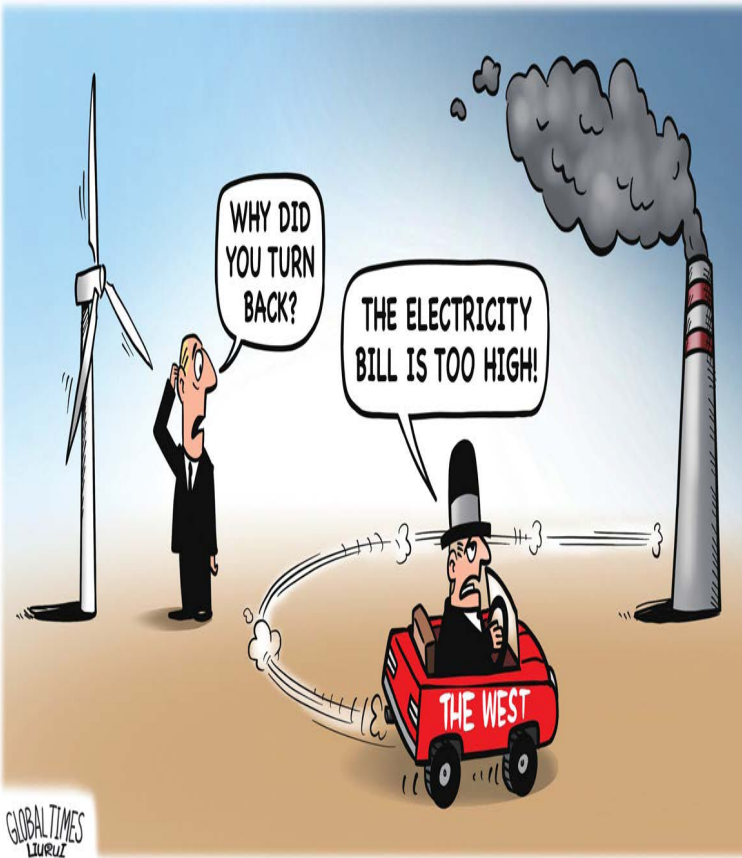
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Flood devastations

For the past one month, the people of Pakistan have been under the grip of the disaster, which is the heavy and continuous rains and the resulting flash floods, which have destroyed the settlements of the villages. Economic crisis can be dealt with in one way or the other, but dealing with heavenly and earthly disasters is not a human task. At present the situation is that two-thirds of the country is under the influence of rains and floods. Many areas including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Sindh, most districts of South Punjab and Azad Kashmir have been affected by this punishment. Due to heavy rains and floods, the worst damage happened in Balochistan province. Although the provincial government is playing an active role in helping the flood affected people with the support of the relevant government institutions, but due to the lack of an organized system, the government aid could not reach the people, while at some places the victims even protested. However, as always, this time also the most appreciable role played by the Pakistan Army relief teams in Balochistan and now seems to be engaged in rehabilitation and resettlement of the victims.

According to PDMA Sindh, 263 people have lost their lives since the onset of monsoon. 701 people were injured in various accidents. A meeting of the Disaster Management Ministerial Committee was held under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Punjab Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi, in which the relief activities in the flood-affected areas were reviewed. In the meeting, it was decided to increase the financial assistance for the families of those who died due to floods and rains. The Chief Minister said that the damage to houses, crops and livestock will be repaired. He said that the government will give 1 million rupees to the next of kin of each person who died in the flood, while declaring the affected areas as calamities and waived off water and tax. He said that in the current situation, the Punjab government will spare no effort to help its affected brothers and sisters. The most painful aspect of the scenario of flash floods and torrential rains in various provinces and districts of Pakistan is that our politicians (including both the government and its opponents) who claim public service, are nowhere to be seen. If you look at it, it was a kind of minor resurrection that took place in other regions of the country including Balochistan. Of course, no human or organization can compete with God's wisdom and power, but the same God has given man wisdom, understanding and consciousness, which provides guidance to excel in all kinds of trials and tests. Monsoon rains, floods and floods in rivers are not an event that happens after years in human history, but events of this kind are seen more or less every year. However, in some years their intensity and seriousness becomes less and in some years more. Due to the destruction of thousands of acres of crops, including wheat and rice, they will not be able to produce, due to which the gap between the demand and supply of agricultural commodities will increase greatly. Therefore, in view of the domestic needs, we will have to import commodities from foreign countries. So now is the time for the government to plan on priority basis to deal with the challenges. There will be a need for proper coordination between the federal and provincial governments. Since this is a matter of collective interest and national nature, the political parties should keep the political interests above the threshold and take such steps keeping the collective interest at the forefront so that we do not have to go through any more tests.

The UAE, an ideal investment destination

Hamad Obaid Al Zaabi



The UAE does not impose income tax on individuals and investors, with the exception of oil companies and branches of foreign banks. As a country with a free economic model since inception, it allows individuals and investors to freely repatriate their profits in entirety

With a stable and secure business environment and investor-friendly legislation, the UAE is an ideal destination for global investment. At the crossroads of major growth centers across the Middle East, Asia, and Africa, the UAE offers opportunities to quickly scale up operations to serve regional and international markets. Foreign investors can benefit from the UAE's logistics expertise and role as a regional hub for the Middle East, as well as its strong network of economic agreements, including 101 agreements on the avoidance of double taxation and 67 bilateral investment treaties. Investing in the UAE ensures sustainable future growth for multinational corporations,

SMEs, and private investors alike. In the World Competitiveness Yearbook 2021, the UAE ranked 9th globally, scoring high in government and business efficiency, economic performance, and infrastructure. Moreover, in the Global Competitiveness Report 2020, the UAE ranked second worldwide in ICT adoption, flexible work arrangements, digital skills, and digital legal framework.

Features of the UAE's economy include its strategic location, strong financial reserves, large sovereign wealth funds, solid international relations, consistent government spending on infrastructure, digital transformation, and innovation, progressive policy of economic diversification, multi-specialty free zones, and increased foreign direct investment. To further the development of a sustainable, diversified, and competitive knowledge-based economy, the UAE is focused on facilitating investments in a number of priority sectors. Moreover, the UAE offers its vibrant expatriate community the flexibility to do business anywhere in the country, including in its many free zones, industrial areas, and commercial buildings. The UAE's investment-friendly business regulations allow 100 percent foreign ownership in 122 economic activities across 13 sectors, and the country regularly hosts high-profile conferences, international exhibitions, and trade and investment events. The UAE also offers various incentives to investors with the aim of increasing the number of small and medium enterprises and startups in the country, with the government simultaneously eliminating barriers that hinder the flow of investments. Incentives include the following: 100% Company Ownership Investors of all nationalities can establish and fully own companies

in the UAE. This change came about based on the provisions of Federal Decree-Law No. 26 of 2020 on Commercial Companies, under which a foreign company wishing to open a branch and practice its activities in the UAE does not require the presence of a UAE national agent. 40 Free Zones for Company Incorporation More than 40 free zones allow tax exemptions and 100% ownership for foreign investors. The UAE also offers investors flexibility in selecting the most appropriate zone in which to establish their business. Free zones are located throughout the UAE, enabling investors to engage in a wide variety of economic activities. No Income Tax and Full Profit Transfer

The UAE does not impose income tax on individuals and investors, with the exception of oil companies and branches of foreign banks. As a country with a free economic model since inception, it allows individuals and investors to freely repatriate their profits in entirety. Golden Visa for Investors The UAE adopted a new visa system by granting long-term residence visas for durations that range from 5 to 10 years. Available to investors, entrepreneurs, and talented individuals, these visas allow expatriates and their family members the ability to live, work, or study in the UAE while enjoying the benefits of extended residency. Conclusion In addition to a desirable investment climate, the UAE also boasts a stable and secure environment that more than 200 nationalities call their home. Over 1.5 million Pakistanis reside in the UAE, which ranked first in the Arab world in the World Happiness Report 2020. As the second-safest country in the world (Global Finance Index 2021) and second-largest economy in the GCC and Arab world, the UAE remains the preferred destination in which to live and invest.

The writer is UAE Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Europe's fragile unity is fast passing its tipping point

Sal Ahmed

In France, the climate emergency has left water levels in some rivers at an all-time low, putting nuclear power plants out of commission, which need water to cool their systems. In Germany, low water levels in the Rhine river mean traffic of industrial goods has slowed, and barges can only carry a quarter of their capacity to ensure they are grounded on river beds

As Europe is hit by a drought, the worst in 500 years, there's surprising wisdom coming to the dry shores, reminding Europeans that their long-held grandeur might fast evaporate into a delusion. "If you see me, then weep," reads an inscription on a 'hunger stone', which recently appeared after water levels fell in the Elbe river in Germany. Found in European rivers, 'hunger stones' are markers from another time and age indicating water levels during previous historic droughts - their warn of famine and hardship, which is likely to follow when these stones become visible. In what appears to be a Biblical prophecy coming true, Europe has been gripped by massive wildfires, the worst drought in 500 years and record-breaking summer temperatures. The food and energy crises as a direct result of the Ukraine conflict are making things worse.

In France, the climate emergency has left water levels in some rivers at an all-time low, putting nuclear power plants out of commission, which need water to cool their systems. In Germany, low water levels in the Rhine river mean traffic of industrial goods has slowed, and barges can only carry a quarter of their capacity to ensure they are grounded on river beds. This has quadrupled shipping costs on the Rhine. As the Russia-Ukraine conflict hits the sixth-month mark, there's further hardship coming the way of Europe in the form of an exacerbated energy crisis and divided loyalties between member countries. Germany has already moved onto stage three of its gas emergency plan, which means the country will not have enough gas to provide for both industry and households. The German government, obligated by law to provide gas to households, is likely to ration gas supply to the industry.

While it is not clear to what extent hot water, electricity and heating will be available in countries like Germany, Austria, Italy or Hungary, it is abundantly clear that the crisis in Europe is pressing at the seams of European unity. Most European politicians, mindful of public backlash in their own backyards, are likely to not introduce strict gas usage regulations on their own people so that Germans can have a more comfortable winter. But Germany's waning economy is visible all across Europe. Rampant inflation in the Eurozone is further widening the cracks in the EU. Should the European Central Bank raise interest rates, it could plunge southern Europe into a new sovereign debt crisis akin to the 2010 upheaval. However, should that happen, many in southern Europe are not sure whether Germany will be able to bail them out again. Germany's industrial base is getting weaker and the population poorer; thousands of tenants have been reaching out to the renters' association, asking them to lobby the government to subsidise energy costs. In the summer, the German government introduced a populist nine Euro monthly train ticket valid for country-wide travel for three months only. That promotion stops at the end of August, and there are calls to extend it indefinitely, but the finance minister said there is no budget for that. In these conditions, if Germany has to bail out European countries, there will very likely be mass protests in the country, putting further pressure on the government and European unity. It is now a well-assumed idea that European solidarity is already past its tipping point. But could the energy crisis coupled with the climate crisis and global economic slowdown push it to breaking point? The answer is quite possibly, yes.

Source: TRT World

Taliban takeover of Kabul and TTP: Hard policy options for Islamabad

Mustansar Siam and Nirmal Muneer

The Taliban takeover of Kabul left hard policy options for Islamabad when it was extensively celebrated in Pakistan among religiously motivated groups. Islamabad was required to convince the Afghan Taliban to squelch TTP. However, Pakistan's ambivalent approach towards Tehreek Taliban Pakistan paved the way for the resurgent group to reorganize itself. Resultantly, TTP escalated terror activities in late 2021 and started challenging security forces demanding the reversal of the FATA merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Since the war on terror has announced, the region has undergone various tumultuous changes that caused political instability and economic slowdown and provided the much-needed

impetus to the religiously inspired elements. On August 30, 2021, the Pentagon announced that the last US flight carrying troops had left Afghanistan, concluding its longest war. Keeping aside the debate about who won in Afghanistan, it is a fact that the US and its ally's long stay in the country has fundamentally jolted its socio-economic and socio-political fabric. Resultantly, generations grew up knowing nothing other than the culture of guns, violence and bombs.

The Taliban's de-facto rule in Afghanistan faced various strategic, security, economic and ideological challenges. Additionally, the US withdrawal and Taliban takeover brought significant challenges to the foreign policy establishment of Pakistan and regional diplomacy. Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan lost momentum in 2018 when Noor Wali Mehsud appeared as its new emir. The terrorist organization was at its weakest point because it had almost lost all its territories in Pakistan and faced several internal organizational issues. Later, TTP, under Noor Wali Mehsud, reorganized and redefined his goals demanding an independent state in Pakistan's tribal areas. Muhammad Amir Rana, Pakistan's leading security analyst and director of PIPS, estimated that TTP aspirations were aimed at seeking its lost legitimacy among the tribes what they learned from the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM) nationalist agendas. However, the interesting point is about the demand of TTP, which is less religious and more political. The Taliban takeover of Kabul left hard policy op-

tions for Islamabad when it was extensively celebrated in Pakistan among religiously motivated groups. Islamabad was required to convince the Afghan Taliban to squelch TTP. However, Pakistan's ambivalent approach towards Tehreek Taliban Pakistan paved the way for the resurgent group to reorganize itself. Resultantly, TTP escalated terror activities in late 2021 and started challenging security forces demanding the reversal of the FATA merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. On July 26, eight Pakistani clerics were sent to Afghanistan to break the deadlock led by Mufti Taqi Usmani. Yet, the delegation failed to convince TTP to back from their demand of the reversal of the FATA merger. Pakistan's security policy establishment failed to handle outlawed TTP as it is negotiating from a position of strength. This new facet of TTP given recent developments indicates the reasons behind their definite stance: (a) failure to convince Afghan Taliban to squelch TTP, (b) ambivalent approach towards outlawed terror organization, (c) state's shifting policies and narratives, and (d) failure to counter TTP localization policy and nationalistic aspirations. The comeback of TTP in Waziristan will have serious repercussions on the internal stability and peace of the country. Neither Pakistan's economy can afford such instability, security, or foreign policy establishment, nor the country's nationals if TTP joins hands with the Islamic State-Khorasan province, which will make it more powerful. Pakistan's security policy establishment needs to outreach TTP and redefine its strategy to deal with the outlawed terror organization.

Mustansar Siam is a writer, columnist, political commentator and research scholar at the Department of Political Science, Government College University, Lahore.

Briefs

Shehbaz...

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sensitize them about scale of human tragedy," the prime minister wrote on Twitter. During the meeting, the representatives of the Economic Affairs Division and the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) briefed about current status of the challenge and response. The prime minister said that the ongoing rain spell had caused devastation across the country. The losses, though yet to be documented, are comparable to the flash floods of 2010, he added. He thanked the international community for their sympathies, condolences and pledges of support. "Together we will build back better," he commented. According to the PM Office, the international organizations and financial institutions had announced an immediate assistance of more than \$500 million for the flood victims on the prime minister's appeal. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also held a meeting with international donors to sensitize them about the prevailing situation. The representatives of the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, international financial institutions, development partners and donors attended the meeting. The officials of China, the United States and the European Union, agencies of the United Nations and World Health Organization also part of the meeting.

PM...

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Shehbaz said the grant by the federal government would help the Sindh government carry out relief and rehabilitation activities. He said the coalition government would make collective efforts to alleviate the sufferings of the flood victims, adding that it would leave no stone unturned to facilitate the people who faced unprecedented loss in the wake of floods. He mentioned that over 900 people died due to floods in the last few months, while the situation incurred a heavy toll on crops and livestock as well. He directed the relief and rescue staff to be available round-the-clock on duties to help the flood victims. He announced the disbursement of Rs 25,000 per household through Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) starting Friday and onwards and said in one week, around Rs 28 billion would be given to the affected people. Also, medical camps are on the alert to extend treatment to patients in the flood-hit areas, he added. He said Nestle Pakistan had donated 100 tonnes of clean drinking water, of which 80 tonnes and 20 tonnes were to be supplied to the flood victims of Sindh and Balochistan, respectively.

EU provides...

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school clustering policy and continuous professional development model for teachers as well as the increased digitalization of monitoring systems", commented the Ambassador of the European Union to Pakistan, Dr. Riina Kionka. "A lot, however, still remains to be done with an estimated 6 million children who are still out of school, of which over half are girls.

POA hails PM decision for revival of departmental sports

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Olympic Association (POA) has expressed its gratitude for the announcement of the lifting of the ban on departmental sports by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, saying that the Prime Minister has taken a big step for the revival of sports. According to Secretary General of Pakistan Olympic Association Muhammad Khalid Mahmood, the entire family of Pakistan Olympic Association thanks Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif for motivating and extending personal patronage to the national athletes who have recently represented Pakistan at the Commonwealth Games and Islamic Solidarity Games. "This interaction will be a source of great encouragement for all the Pakistani athletes", he said adding that POA appreci-

ates the Prime Minister for restoring sports in the governmental departments that provide athletes with employment opportunities, training facilities and other support that enable athletes to focus on their athletic development. He said that all medalists are associated with the Army Sports Director and WAPDA Sports Board and their continuous support to these athletes played a significant role in enabling them to give their best laurels for Pakistan. The Olympic Family of Pakistan appreciates the efforts of



Feder- al Minister of Inter Provincial Mazari for facilitating the athletes and recognizing the contributions of these athletes along with his resolve to recognize the significance of all stakeholders working hard ensure international participation of national athletes. "We however disappointed that the Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) once again has tried to undermine the efforts of the all-stakeholders like the Coaches, Federations, the

Benzema sets sights on Ballon d'Or and World Cup

NEWS DESK

ISTANBUL: For Karim Benzema, the UEFA men's player of the year prize is unlikely to be the last recognition he receives for his role in Real Madrid's memorabilia run to Champions League glory last season. The Ballon d'Or will surely follow in October, before he heads to the World Cup in Qatar with France in November and December with the aim of completing a truly remarkable career renaissance.

It is not long ago that Benzema, who will turn 35 the day after the World Cup final in December, was a pariah, frozen out of the France team for five and a half years because of his involvement in a blackmail scandal over a sextape involving his former teammate Mathieu Valbuena. The Lyon native went on trial late last year and was handed a one-year suspended prison sentence along with a fine of 75,000 euros (\$74,659). In June he decided not to appeal his conviction, eager to turn the page and keep the focus on football. Benzema scored an astonishing 44 goals in 46 games for Real last season, including 27 in La Liga as he ended the campaign as the top scorer in Spain's top flight by a distance. But his very best form came in the Champions League, in which he was also the leading marksman with 15 goals in just 12 appearances. Wearing the captain's armband, Benzema scored five times in the



group stage for Carlo Ancelotti's side, but the best was to come in the knockout rounds. He scored a stunning hat-trick in 17 second-half minutes in the spectacular last-16 comeback win over Paris Saint-Germain, and another away to Chelsea in the quarter-final first leg. It was also his extra-time goal in the return leg of that tie that nipped a Chelsea comeback in the bud, and he then scored three more goals over both legs of the semi-final against Manchester City, including an extra-time spot-kick in the return leg at the Santiago Bernabeu which

secured Real's spot in the final. "Football is difficult, there are moments when you are dominated and have to hang in there. At Madrid we never give up," said Benzema. He was not the standout player in the final itself, with Vinicius Junior scoring the only goal of the game and goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois in inspired form at the other end. Courtois was also nominated for the UEFA prize, along with Manchester City's Kevin De Bruyne, but there was little question of anyone other than Benzema being crowned. "What is most important to me is

to win collective trophies. If you do things well on the field, individual awards will follow," said Benzema. This season has already started with Benzema - who was a prodigious young talent at hometown team Lyon before moving to Real aged 21 in 2009 - scoring as Real beat Eintracht Frankfurt to win the UEFA Super Cup in Helsinki. The Ballon d'Or should be next, and then Benzema will set his sights on the World Cup, a trophy he missed out on winning with France in 2018 during his long international exile.

Wasim Jr ruled out of Asia Cup

DNA

LAHORE: Fast bowler Mohammad Wasim Jr. has been ruled out of the ACC T20 Asia Cup due to a left side strain. He had picked up the injury while practicing session on Wednesday. The bowler by the team medical staff, and MRI confirmed the diagnosis.

The findings were discussed with the PCB Medical committee, pending by a specialist physiotherapist was also reassessed before the England tour to Pakistan. Meanwhile, Hasan Ali, has been named as Wasim's replacement, which is subject to the Event Technical Committee's approval. As soon as the ETC approves Hasan as a replacement player, the bowler will depart for the UAE.

Hasan Ali was sought as a replacement player by the team management and the request was accepted by the chief selector. Hasan had been working on his bowling in the National High Performance Centre for the past three weeks and is presently in Rawalpindi, preparing for the National T20, which commences on 30 August.

More than 140 foreign players register for PJJ

LAHORE: The Pakistan Junior League received another shot in the arm as more than 140 players completed their registrations for the tournament through their respective cricket boards as well as clubs and professional representative submissions. The Pakistan Cricket Board has received a great response from cricket boards around the world who wholeheartedly appreciated and backed this unique concept of providing emerging cricket stars a world-class platform for displaying their talent and skills. South Africa and New Zealand cricket boards while offering their support for the PJJ were not in a position to nominate players for the first season as the event dates clash with the academic examinations of their eligible players. PCB has received player entries from eight Test playing (ICC full member) boards which include Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, England, Ireland, Sri Lanka, the West Indies and Zimbabwe. Besides the Test playing nations, the PCB has also received player nominations from Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Nepal, The Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Scotland and the UAE. Meanwhile, through the PJJ social media campaign more than 2500 videos were submitted by aspiring cricketers from all over Pakistan.



The videos are being assessed by PCB coaches and the final list of players selected from the campaign who would be added to the draft will be shared in due course. Players born on or after 1 September 2003 are eligible for the PJJ 2022 edition. The inaugural edition of the PJJ will be held at the Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore from 6 to 21 October. The final list of players eligible for the draft including foreign nominations will be shared before the draft. PJJ Tournament Director Nadeem Khan said on Friday: "We want to thank the cricket boards that have backed this unique concept that will potentially redefine the junior cricket landscape not only in Pakistan but around the world. "The Pakistan Cricket Board is fully focussed on delivering a quality event that will not

only provide a platform to teenage stars but will also inspire millions of children as well as aspiring cricketers in their early to mid-teens. "This event is a potential game changer for youth cricket and the strong nominations list received by the PCB is an indication of the interest of the cricketing world in the PJJ." "We appreciate the efforts of the IPC Minister Ehsan ur Rehman Mazari who has already expressed his resolve to work with all stakeholders for the promotion of Sport in the country", Khalid Said adding that POA is looking forward to this meeting with the Honorable Minister IPC in the coming weeks once he returns from his commitment and involvement with the flood relief operations. - APP

IMF...

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transfers based on the MoU signed between the federal government and the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2016. Incidentally, this MoU was signed during the previous PML-N. 3. For the federal government to immediately revive the National Finance Commission (NFC), so that these issues can be resolved more permanently. 4. For the federal government to also commit to immediately engage and resolve other financial issues with the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. These include but are not limited to; clearing outstanding liabilities to the Pakhtunkhwa Pakhtunkhwa Energy Development Organisation (PEDO); resolving the issues of energy wheeling; resolving the issue of WACOG, and the availability of natural gas to the province in line with Article 158; the financing of PESCO to develop transmission and distribution infrastructure in the province; and the commitment of the federal government to not delay execution of provincially funded PESCO and TESCO projects; and not substituting the Federal Excise Duty with the Petroleum levy without provincial consent, as this amounts to unilaterally reducing the size of provincial transfers from the total quantum of federal collections.

Rains death...

FROM PAGE 01

including a male in D.I. Khan, a female and four children in North Waziristan and one male got injured due to flash flood in Lower Kohistan. In Punjab's District Rajanpur, a female died due to drowning in high flow waters. In Sindh, 13 people perished including two men and two children died in Shaheed Benazirabad, two men and a child perished in Mitari, a man died in Tando Allah Yar, three women died in Nushero Feroze and two children died in Dadu during various incidents. There was no incident or loss to report in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan and Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT). In Gilgit Baltistan (GB), three roads were blocked including the Mujawir Road at Ishkoman Immit Valley, Hisper Valley Road and Ahmadabad Valley due to flash flood where restoration work was in progress as heavy machinery and staff were deployed on site.

'Construction ...

FROM PAGE 01

flood but would also help store the rainwater, which could become a valuable asset. He said that a dam should be built on Mount Sulaiman Hill. Imran Khan said that the PTI government was planning to build 10 dams across the country. "We can easily store water if we had dams," he added. Imran Khan said that rains have caused large-scale damage across the country including KP. Chairman PTI directed that Punjab and KP governments to provide immediate relief to the flood victims. He said flood victims should be helped without discrimination. He said that Sindh and Balochistan were the most affected by rains and floods, adding that the flood-hit families would not be left alone in this trying time. He directed the party's volunteers to help and serve the flood affected people.

Flood-hit hockey turf restored in two days

After removing the mud and filth, the turf appeared like new

PESHAWAR: The recently inaugurated hockey turf hit by heavy flood two days earlier, has been fully restored, Deputy Commissioner Swat Junaid Khan told APP here on Friday. He said due to heavy rain, the flood is increasing and it badly damaged the areas including the site of the turf, but with quick response of TMA teams, hockey players and officials of the district administration, 2 to 3 feet of mud was removed along with flood water from the turf. He said after removing the mud and filth, the turf appeared like new. The deputy commissioner also visited the site of the newly laid hockey turf that cost Rs 99.540 million with a double floor pavilion for spectators. He said

the debris and flood water dumped on the turf surface were immediately removed and now it was ready. He said, "The turf needed watering, which required electricity so the most suitable place was the city. We can hold national or international level events and that was the reason behind laying the hockey turf at Makan Bagh, the area which is already famous for various sporting facilities." The construction of the hockey ground with synthetic turf facility is part of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government's efforts to promote hockey by expanding facilities in the province, he said, adding, "The hockey ground will hold national and international competitions in Swat. We have taken more

measures to ensure the safety of our people, including those developed for the youth and for the promotion of sports in Swat." Regional Sports Officer Kashif Farhan appreciated the officials of the district administration, TMAs and the hockey players who worked day and night for the restoration of the turf and making sure it is playable again. Kashif said, "The only plain area inside the city was selected for laying of artificial turf because there is no place whatsoever in Swat where there are no hilly areas. Swat is a valley and it is famous for various streams, waterfalls, nullahs, and hilly areas. "We can not lay such facilities in the cities to ensure facilities to maximum number of youth." He also shared the flooded photos of the turf and photos of the lush green surface after completing the cleaning process in just two-days. - APP

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Briefs

Registrar office sends show-cause notice at Khan's address

ISLAMABAD: The registrar office Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Friday formally sent show-cause notice to the address of PTI's Chairman Imran Khan in a contempt case pertaining his threatening remarks about woman additional session judge. According to the notice, Imran Khan gave threatening and disgraceful statement against woman judge in his speech. The PTI chief had given the statement when the case was being heard by IHC. It seemed that the PTI head had given this statement to influence the court proceeding and get favorable verdict. Imran Khan had tried to create hurdle in way of justice through his speech, it added. The show-cause notice had asked the PTI chairman to appear before court on August 31, in personal capacity and explain that why a contempt of court proceeding shouldn't be initiated against him. It may be mentioned here that a larger bench headed by Justice Mohsin Akhter Kayani and comprising of Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb and Justice Baber Sattar had ordered to serve a show-cause notice to PTI head. - APP

India deports Emmy-nominated US journalist

DNA

NEW DELHI: The family of an American journalist of Indian-origin has alleged that he was deported to New York soon after he landed in Delhi on Wednesday night. Angad Singh, who produces documentaries for Vice News, was on a personal visit to India, his mother Gurmeet Kaur said. Mr Singh, who has made documentaries on India's Covid crisis and farmers' protests, was not given any reason why he was being sent back. The Indian government is yet to comment on the issue. "Angad sent a message after he landed at the international airport in Delhi," Ms Kaur told BBC Punjabi's Arshdeep Kaur. "Around 15 minutes later, he sent another message that immigration officials had confiscated his passport. Then, he was deported," she added. Mr Singh's family says that his work focuses on people's movements in various countries and that he has made documentaries on protests in many countries, including in Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, Myanmar, India and Pakistan. In India, he covered protests by farmers against agricultural laws - which were later repealed by the government - and made a documentary on Shaheen Bagh, an iconic protest site in Delhi that became a symbol of the widespread agitation against the country's controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

Air strike hits capital of Tigray region

DNA

ADDIS ABABA: An Ethiopian air strike hit the capital of Tigray on Friday killing four people, including two children, rebel spokespeople and humanitarian sources said, as the government vowed to "take action" against military targets in the war-torn region. Reports of an air strike on Mekele came just days after ground fighting resumed between government forces and rebels after a five-month lull, ending a truce and dashing hopes of peace talks. Kibrom Gebreselassie, chief clinical director at Mekele's Ayder Referral Hospital - the region's largest medical facility - told AFP that four people had died "by the time they arrived (at) the hospital". "Two of the dead are children," he said in a message, adding that nine others were injured in the bombing.



SUKKUR: PM Shehbaz Sharif interacts with flood affected families of Sukkur at Flood Relief Camp in Government Comprehensive School. - DNA

Extrajudicial killing: Pak summons Indian diplomat

Pakistan seeks a credible post-mortem report to determine the cause of death

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Friday summoned the Indian Charge d'Affaires in Islamabad to foreign ministry to lodge a strong protest on the extra-judicial killing of a Pakistani civil prisoner by Indian Occupation Forces in a fake encounter in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The Indian forces had extrajudicially killed Pakistani prisoner, Muhammad Ali Hussain, who had been jailed in Kot Bhalwal Prison in the IOJK since 2006. The Indian diplomat was told that Hussain's death under mysterious

circumstances at a location away from the prison, had once again substantiated Pakistan's long-standing position that Indian Occupation Forces in the IOJK are routinely involved in undertaking choreographed attacks and extrajudicial killings of Pakistani and Kashmiri prisoners. He was also reminded of the case of Zia Mustafa, another Pakistani prisoner, who was murdered by Indian authorities in a similar fake encounter last year. It was underscored that the narrative being spun that Muhammad Ali Hussain had allegedly attacked the security forces and attempted to escape when he was being taken to a suspected weapons' smuggling site

was not only fallacious but deceptive, the Foreign Office spokesperson said. He said the reality was that Hussain's death was nothing but cold-blooded murder. Pakistan's serious concerns over the safety, security and well-being of other Pakistani prisoners in Indian custody were also raised. While outright rejecting the implausible explanation proffered in the case of Muhammad Ali Hussain, Pakistan has demanded that the Indian government must immediately share the details of this particular incident. Pakistan sought a credible post-mortem report to determine the cause of death and undertake a transparent in-

vestigation to bring to account whoever is responsible for the murder of the Pakistani prisoner. "Government of India has also been called upon to ensure prompt and expeditious repatriation of the mortal remains of the deceased to Pakistan, as per the wishes of his family," the spokesperson added. Pakistan also reiterates its call to the international community to hold India accountable for its gross and systematic violations of international humanitarian law and ensure that Pakistani and Kashmiri prisoners under Indian custody are not expended as cannon fodder in the execution of India's nefarious designs in the IOJK.

China conducts fresh military drills around Taiwan

BEIJING: China has reportedly conducted military exercises around Taiwan as tensions grow over US provocations, including visits by top American officials to Taipei. Chinese state broadcaster CCTV, citing a spokesman for China's People's Liberation Army Eastern Theatre Command, reported on Friday that the drills are part of the routinized military operations put in place in response to the new situation in the Taiwan Strait. Recent visits by US officials to Taiwan have provoked China's anger, with Beijing calling them Washington's direct interference in its internal affairs. China has repeatedly warned that any threat against its territorial integrity is playing with fire and will be faced with the Beijing government's firm response. The military drills were carried out while Taiwan is pressing ahead with a plan to significantly increase its military budget for the next year. Taipei on Thursday unveiled a military budget of \$19.41 billion - nearly 15 percent of total government expenditure - for 2023, proposed by Taiwanese president Tsai Ing-wen's cabinet. The proposed budget needs approval by the island's parliament. According to Taiwan's Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics, the total budget includes funding for new fighter jets and other equipment to enhance naval and air capabilities. - DNA

Russia destroys US-made howitzer

MOSCOW: Russia's Defense Ministry says its forces have destroyed a US-made M777 howitzer gun which Kiev forces had used on a daily basis to shell the Russian-controlled Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant located in southeastern Ukraine. "During the last 24 hours, the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant was shelled twice by Ukrainian troops with large-caliber artillery pieces. As a result of the shelling, four munitions exploded in the area of the oxygen and nitrogen station, and one more in the area of the special building No. 1," Igor Konashenkov, an official representative of

the Defense Ministry, said at a daily briefing on Friday. Konashenkov noted that the Russian units managed to pinpoint and destroy the position of the US-made howitzer used by Ukrainian forces, from where the nuclear power plant came under artillery gunfire. The Russian ministry spokesman added that the howitzer had been positioned west of the town of Marganets in Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk region. Moscow has reprimanded Kiev for ordering Ukrainian forces to stage artillery attacks striking the nuclear power plant, describing the move as "nuclear terrorism." Zaporizhzhia, Europe's largest nuclear power plant, came under Russian control in March, though it is still operated by Ukrainian technicians working for Energoatom. - DNA

Vienna talks at final stages, says Iran FM

NEWS DESK

TEHRAN: Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian says talks to revive the 2015 nuclear deal and remove sanctions against Tehran are at the "final stages" but the United States needs to adopt a realistic approach. In a meeting with President of Zanzibar Hussein Mwinyi on Friday, Amir-Abdollahian said the outstanding issues in talks to revive the deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), can be resolved if the US acts realistically. The United States, under former president Donald Trump, abandoned the agreement in May 2018 and reinstated unilateral sanctions that the agreement had lifted. The talks to salvage the agreement kicked off in the Austrian capital of Vienna in April last year, months after Joe Biden succeeded Trump, with the intention of examining Washington's seriousness in rejoining the deal and removing its anti-Iran sanctions. Despite notable progress, the US indecisiveness and procrastination caused multiple interruptions in the marathon talks. Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi said on Sunday that his administration would not give up on the nation's rights in any negotiations, in a clear allusion to the ongoing talks on the JCPOA revival. He said the Iranian administration "will not



tie people's livelihood to any external factor and will persevere in its effort to solve the problems facing the country and people." Elsewhere in the meeting, Amir-Abdollahian, who is on a three-nation tour of Africa, submitted an official invitation from Iran's President Raisi to Mwinyi to visit Tehran. He said Iran is one of the world's leading countries in medicine, hi-tech industries, and other sciences, adding that Tehran is ready to share its know-how and technology with African countries. The top Iranian diplomat also voiced Iran's readiness for cooperation in oil and gas extraction. For his part, Mwinyi expressed Zanzibar's interest in investment and trade with Iran, saying his country enjoys great capacities in marine industries and fisheries.

Rupee extends losses against dollar

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan rupee on Friday depreciated by Rs 1.24 against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 220.65; against the previous day's closing of Rs 219.41. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollars in the open market were recorded at Rs 228 and Rs 230 respectively. The price of Euro increased by 74 paise and closed at Rs 220.04 against the last day's closing of Rs 219.30. The Japanese Yen gained one paise to close at Rs 1.61, whereas an increase of 34 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 260.11 as compared to its last closing of Rs 259.77. The exchange rates of Emirates Dirham and Saudi Riyal increased by 37 paise each to close at Rs 60.07 and Rs 58.75 respectively. - APP

Ambassador of Somalia calls on IIUI President

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Somalia, Shirwa Abdullahi Ibrahim called on Dr. Hathal Homoud Alotaibi, President, International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIUI) at his office at Faisal Masjid campus on Friday. During the meeting issues pertaining to mutual interests including promotions of education and enhancement of educational ties between higher education institutions of both countries were discussed. The Somali Ambassador lauded IIUI for its services to promote higher education and also appreciated the university's vision of disseminating peace and tolerance. He assured that he will be happy to strengthen bilateral educational ties between IIUI and Somali universities. He said IIUI is a source of attraction for a large number of students in Somalia. He thanked the IIUI President for taking a very good care of the Somali students at IIUI. IIUI President apprised the Ambassador of the university's scope, vision, new strategic plan, international students, recent activities and history. He said IIUI is eager to welcome and facilitate more Somali students. He opined that IIUI has a diversified cultural environment where a large number of countries being represented by foreign students. Dr. Hathal also briefed honorable Ambassador about the role of IIUI in maintaining peace and quality higher education. - APP

Iran slams Israel refusal to join NPT

DNA

TEHRAN: A senior Iranian diplomat has denounced Israel's continued refusal to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), stressing that establishing a Middle East region free of nuclear weapons is of utmost importance. Iran's ambassador and permanent representative to the United Nations, Majid Takht-Ravanchi, made the remarks while speaking to reporters on Friday on the sidelines of the Tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons held at the UN headquarters in New York. "The issue of the Middle East as a region free of nuclear weapons is one of the important discussions... because the Israeli regime, as the only possessor of hundreds of nuclear warheads, is not ready to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and place its nuclear facilities under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency," he said. He added that Israel's refusal to join the NPT comes as some countries are cooperating with the regime and have always supported it. He noted that Iran seeks to reach a consensus with the participants at the current NPT review conference but it has principles and certain measures must be carried out.

IMF to release tranche on Monday after Board Meeting

"They (Qatar) also showed their interest to invest in Pakistan's capital market"

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue Miftah Ismail Friday said the International Monetary Fund (IMF) would release the tranche (worth US\$1.17 bln) to Pakistan after its board meeting on Monday. Addressing a press conference here, the minister said Pakistan had already fulfilled all the requirements of the IMF and it is very likely that the board would approve the release of tranche on Monday (August 29). He said now the \$4 billion gap had been bridged as Qatar, UAE, and Saudi Arabia had also assured new investments and facility of getting oil on deferred payment for Pakistan. The minister said the visit of PM to Qatar remained successful as Qatar had agreed to make \$3 billion investment in Pakistan's various sectors. Further he also made it clear that there was no discussion or agreement of selling Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) or Roosevelt Hotel to Qatar saying that it was interested in getting only the management control of Pakistan's big airports. Qatar is also taking interest to invest in Pakistan's sea ports, LNG plants for which the prime minister had advised to hire an international advisor to get the actual



price estimation, he said adding that Qatar was also interested to invest in large scale solar firms. "The government is intended to install solar power plants with capacity of 8000 MW, as the solar energy would help generating cheaper electricity for the consumers", he added. "They (Qatar) also showed their interest to

invest in Pakistan's capital market." The minister informed that Saudi Arabia had announced \$1 billion investment in Pakistan along with providing oil on deferred payment. Similarly, he said UAE had also announced to invest primarily in government's shares worth \$1 billion. With respect to the public concerns over extra electricity bills

this month, the finance minister said the prime minister was very much worried over hike in the electricity bills. On IMF pressure we had to raise the prices of electricity for all kinds of consumers, he said adding that in May, the electricity demand was on peak due to unprecedented hot weather condition and for this reason the government had to run even the most expensive power plants run by the furnace oil which cost around Rs 59 per unit. He said the impact of that month's fuel price adjustment (FCA) was shown in current month. He said on the PM's advice, he talked to the IMF that Pakistan government would protect those consuming up to 200 units of electricity a month. He said the IMF had agreed to the Pakistan's request in this regard. Miftah Ismail added that 56% or 17.1 million out of around 30 million electricity consumers would be exempted from the fuel adjustment. He said the government would have to bear Rs 20 billion cost in this regard. He asked the such consumers not to pay the current bills as a new bill would be issued soon in which there would be no FCA. He informed that the PM had formed another committee which would deliberate upon giving FCA exemption to those consuming 200 to 300 units of electricity.