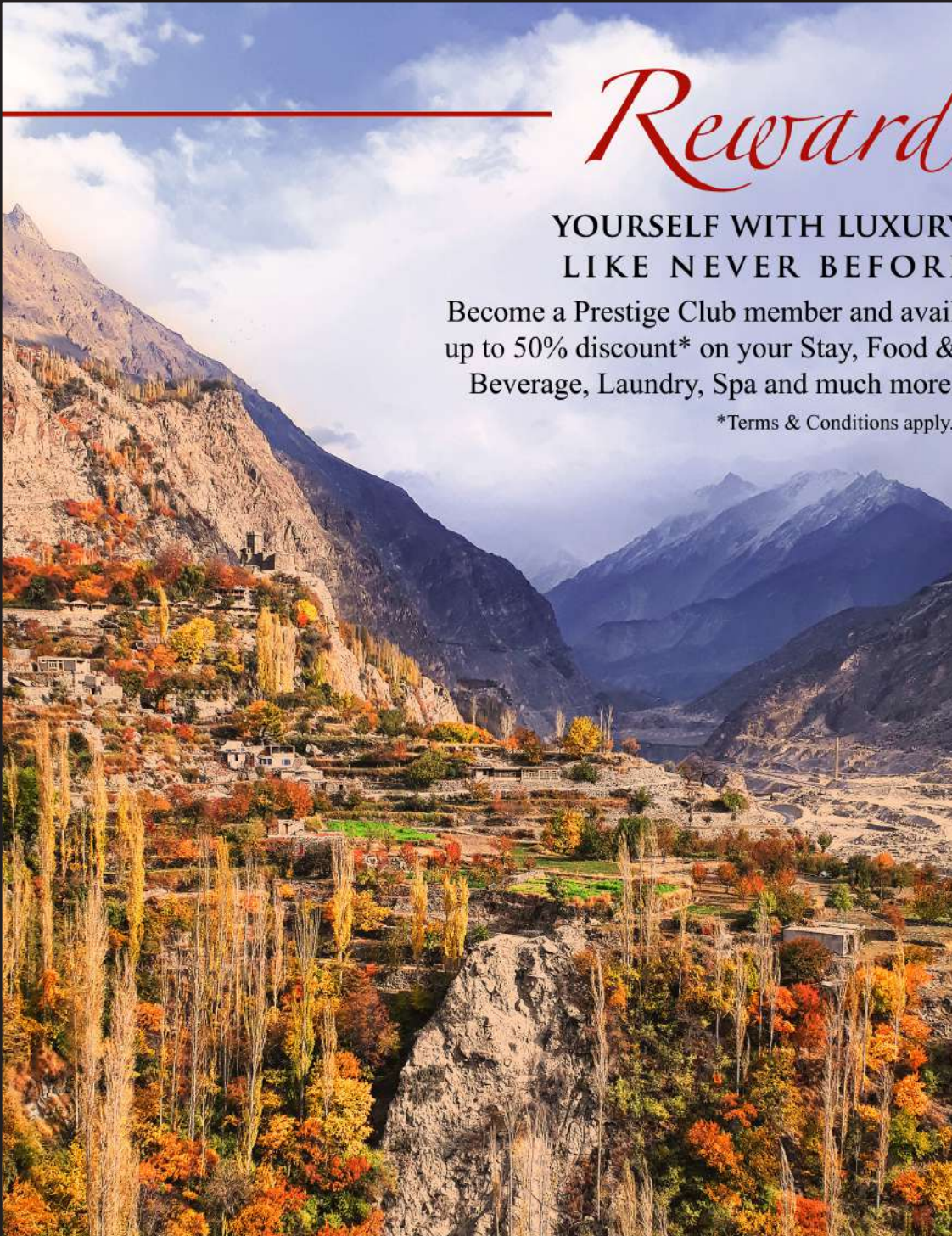




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# LB representatives asked to play role for climate change

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR ... For the past two decades, climate change has been causing problems for the entire world. Many countries of the world have prepared to face it, but Pakistan is still far away from this destination. We need to take steps to improve water bodies and reduce pollution. In order to avoid disasters like the current flood in the future. These views were expressed by Secretary Local Government Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mr. Zaheerul Islam while addressing a day long consultative workshop on "Local Government: Legislative Framework and Institutional Capacity for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation" here at Peshawar on Thursday. The Consultative Workshop was organized by Center for Peace and Development Initiative (CPDI) with support of Pakistan based Germany's Friedrich Nuamman Foundation. The aim of the workshop was to raise their awareness on the role of local governments in preventing climate change. The workshop was attended by selected representatives of local governments, government officials, civil society and media representatives from across the province. Besides others Mardan City Mayor Himayat Ullah Mayar, Swat's Shahid Ali Khan, Swabi's Ghulam Haqqani, and Bara Khyber's Maulana Kafel Ahmad were prominent. During the open session, almost elected representatives of local government institutions have informed that they are in

lack of funds and resources. Amongst them former Speaker Asad Qaisar's nephew Atta Ullah Khan was on top. All of them informed that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government is reluctant to provide them due resources and powers. Zaheer-ul-Islam secretary local government in his most detailed and comprehensive presentation said that a country like Egypt faced a seven-year drought twenty years ago because they had water reserves to use for 1,000 days. Whereas a large country like Pakistan has only eighteen days of water storage which is insufficient to combat drought. He said that the total number of dams in the world is more than 52 thousand in which 21 thousand dams are located in our neighboring country China but unfortunately Pakistan has only 87 dams so far due to which we not only have minor flood water. They are suffering losses due to water shortages, but they are also deprived of water storage at the time of need. Mr. Zaharul Islam said that our scientists need to research and work on how we can use the flood water for our benefit. can be used as He said that the current floods have destroyed agriculture along with infrastructure. This is likely to lead to food shortage and national insecurity in the near future. Prof. Dr. Sardar Khan, Vice-Chancellor of Kohat University, while giving his presentation, said that the share of transportation sector in the emission of harmful and toxic gases is 27 percent, electricity generators 25 percent, industry 24 percent and agriculture sector 12 percent. is more

than If we want to play a role in preventing climate change in Pakistan, we need to improve the system of checks and balances in all these sectors. can bring We need to reduce the use of chemical fertilizers and promote the use of natural fertilizers. Addressing the workshop, Mr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Executive Director of CPDI said that combating climate change is not the work of any federal, provincial or local government, but continuous efforts of all these governments and related institutions to achieve this goal. need of In this regard the importance of local governments is highest because the elected representatives of local governments are present everywhere in every village and they work day and night to alleviate the hardships of their local people. Because on the one hand, if they have the support of taking votes from their local people, on the other hand, there are young and dedicated people among them, if the government and non-government organizations can raise awareness among the local government representatives and increase their capacity. If serious efforts are made, a large-scale organized and experienced workforce can soon be released into the field to combat climate change. Whose roots are in the people and they can play an active role in solving public problems Moazzam Ali Janjua while addressing the workshop mentioned the places and potential fields and the existing laws that local government representatives can play a role in reducing the negative effects of climate change.



PESHAWAR: SAPM Engr. Ameer Muqam receiving initial consignment of relief items for flood effectees from Tajikistan's ambassador for Pakistan, Ismatullah Nazeer. - DNA

## Tajikistan hands over 80 trucks relief goods

Tajik envoy said that millions of people in Pakistan were affected by floods and the government and people of Tajikistan are with the Pakistani brothers in these difficult situations, adding that the government of Tajikistan will cooperate with its Pakistani brothers

### NEWS DESK

KHYBER: Tajikistan on Thursday handed over 80 vehicles loaded with relief goods to Pakistan to help the flood victims here at Jamrud NLC terminal. The vehicles carrying 500 tons of flour, 1000 tons of cement, 1000 tons of coal, 500 cartons of drinking water bottles and 2000 roof sheets were handed over by Tajik Ambassador to Pakistan Ismatullo Nasredin to the Prime Minister's adviser Amir Maqam in a ceremony attended by local and regional representatives. The relief goods would be transported to the flood affected areas where these would be distributed through World Food Program and NDMA. At the ceremony, Tajik ambassador said that these aids have been sent

by the government and people of Tajikistan so that Pakistan can serve and help the people of the Muslim brother country in this difficult time. Amir Maqam said that floods in Pakistan caused havoc in four provinces including Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan this year, in which 1400 people have died, thousands of people have been injured and millions of people have been displaced. Now the government under the leadership of Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif was taking pragmatic steps for relief, rehabilitation and resettlement in affected areas. He expressed gratitude to government and people of Tajikistan for extending support to their Pakistan brothers in this hour of tragedy. He said that Pakistani government enjoys strong bilateral relations and friendship with

Tajikistan and projects of electricity and gas supply with Tajikistan are in the pipeline. Tajik ambassador said that millions of people in Pakistan were affected by floods and the government and people of Tajikistan are with the Pakistani brothers in these difficult situations, adding that the government of Tajikistan will cooperate with its Pakistani brothers in every possible way. He urged international community to generously help the flood affected victims of Pakistan. He said there are strong brotherly relations between Tajikistan and Pakistan. Assistant Commissioner Jamrud Shakeel Ahmad Atmanzai, Pakistan Muslim League Sardar Azam Afridi, Imran Lala, Badshah Afridi, Syed Wali shah, Amanullah, Zarwali Afridi and a large number of officers of the relevant departments were present.

## Saqib elected unopposed President of RCCI



RAWALPINDI: Saqib Rafiq elected unopposed as President of the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) for the year 2022-23. The 3-member RCCI Election Commission consisted of Muhammad Badar Haroon, Rizwan Mashadhi and Zahoor Ahmad Malik announced the winners in a meeting held here on Thursday. The announcement of newly elected Senior Vice President Muhammad Hamza Sarosh and Vice President Faisal Shahzad were also made. Newly elected office bearers will take charge on October 1, 2022. According to the Election Commission no nomination papers were received against the said three members for three seats i.e President, Senior Vice President and Vice President hence the election commission declared the said candidates as winners. On this occasion, the group leader of Rawalpindi Chamber, Sohail Altaf, while congratulating the newly elected office bearers, said that the unparalleled success of all the members is a manifestation of the strong confidence of the businessmen and industrialists community of the region on the policies of Mian Parvez Islam Group. President RCCI Nadeem Rauf and former presidents and representatives of trade associations felicitated the newly elected office bearers and hoped that the new body will leave no stone unturned for the betterment of the business community. - DNA

### CM Mahmud criticizes federal govt

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan has expressed serious concerns over the indifference of the incumbent Federal Government regarding transfer of development funds for merged areas and payment of the Net Hydel Profit arrears adding that the Provincial Government would exercise all the political, constitutional and legal options to get the due rights of the province. Chairing a high level meeting held here on Thursday at Chief Minister House, the Chief Minister said that non-compliance of the commitments made by the Federal Government regarding provision of development funds for the current fiscal year is badly affecting the development programs of the province especially in merged areas which is unacceptable. Provincial Minister for Finance Taimur Saleem Jhagra, Chief Secretary Dr. Shehzad Bangash, Additional Chief Secretary Shahab Ali Shah, Principal Secretary to CM Amjad Ali Khan, administrative secretaries of concerned departments and other relevant officials attended the meeting. Matters related to the NFC award, arrears of Net Hydel Profit (NHP) and federal transfers were discussed in details during the meeting. CM regretted that the Federal Government is reluctant in providing development funds for NMDs.

## US embassy, QAU host American conference

Mushahid Hussain stated, "I am very happy we are moving beyond the narrow security driven policies that have shaped our relationship in the past couple of decades, to a more people-to-people ties

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Area Studies Centre for Africa, North and South America at Quaid-i-Azam University and the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad co-hosted a two-day conference on "Seventy-Five Years of U.S.-Pakistan Relations." The purpose of the conference was to commemorate the 75 years of bilateral ties between the two countries. Conference participants discussed ways to deepen and expand bilateral ties between the United States and Pakistan by exploring new avenues of cooperation in the fields of trade and commerce, climate change, energy, and educational exchanges. The Vice Chancellor of Quaid-i-Azam University, Professor Dr Muhammad Ali, expressed appreciation for the university's ongoing collaboration with the U.S. Embassy, and lauded the efforts of all those involved with organizing the 16th American Studies Conference, which has gathered distinguished Pakistani and American scholars for in-depth discussions about the bilateral relationship. He further stated, "the conference was a timely initiative by the Area Study Centre and the American Embassy in Islamabad, as the bilateral relations between our two countries are undergoing a transformation and adjusting to the evolving global realities where human security is becoming a focal point of international interactions."

U.S. Ambassador Donald Blome added, "It is a great honor to partner with Quaid-i-Azam University to promote the discipline of American Studies and discuss the 75 years of bilateral relations between our countries. Over the decades, the U.S. and Pakistan have built a broad, strong partnership around mutual support, economic ties, and people-to-people connections." The Chief Guest at the occasion, Rana Tanveer Hussain, Federal Minister Training further acknowledged the efforts of the U.S. government in promoting academic excellence for Pakistanis and also emphasized the importance of educational exchanges, adding "The Fulbright program is already contributing significantly towards providing opportunities to women and young people." However, he added, the United States and Pakistan "need to explore other ways of mutual corporation." Special guest, Senator Mushahid Hussain stated, "I am very happy we are moving beyond the narrow security driven policies that have shaped our relationship in the past couple of decades, to a more broad-based people-to-people relationship in which education is going to be the centerpiece." Scholars and experts from both the U.S. and Pakistan attended the conference, which included special sessions, plenary sessions, and two working groups to discuss diverse issues such as bilateral trade relations; educational exchanges; and the role of youth, women entrepreneurs and the diaspora in strengthening the bilateral ties between the two countries. In addition to the students and faculty of Quaid-i-Azam University, representatives from various research think tanks, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Trade and Commerce and the Ministry of Climate Change also participated in the conference. Dr. Sadia Sulaiman, the Director of the Area Studies Centre for Africa, North, and South America and the conference organizer, led the concluding session in which speakers presented the potential future trajectory of U.S.-Pakistan relations. Dr. Muhammad Ali, Vice Chancellor of Quaid-i-Azam University and U.S. Embassy Deputy Counselor for Public Affairs Jacqueline Deley delivered closing remarks.

### Friendly Hands Society donates 1.5 m

KHALID MAHMOOD

WAZIRABAD: The third batch of goods worth more than 15 lakh rupees for the rehabilitation of flood affected people from Friendly Hands Welfare Society Wazirabad was handed over to Subedar Ghulam Subhani in charge of flood relief camp set up by Pakistan Army in Wazirabad. The general secretary of the society, Mohammad Tariq Toor, told this while describing the relief goods on this occasion. Includes Dal chana, turpaulins, diapers, dry milk, Medicines, dresses, proven masar, flour, Sugar, Shoes, Rice, towels and lungian. Mohammad Tariq Toor said that these relief goods are being sent by the special efforts of the society's overseas officials Sarfaraz Siddiqui, Asad Dar, and local officials, president of the society Col. (ret'd) Sufyan Dar, Tariq Mehmood Kangi, Rizwan Karim Shehki. On this occasion, local officials Pak Navy Lieutenant (ret'd) Syed Taqi Ali Shah, Mian Mansoor Ali Salimi Advocate, Tariq Zaheer Waraich, Nasir Dar, Muhammad Asghar Soomro, Arif Raza, Arif Yusuf Mughal, Shahzad Farooq, Shaikat Ali Raza, Saad Sabir Minhas and Dr. Khalid Mahmood were present.

### Ambassador of Kazakhstan visits Sargodha University

DNA

SARGODHA: Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan Yezan Kustafan on Thursday visited the Sargodha University and met Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Qaiser Abbas. In the meeting, Commercial Consul Kazakhstan Embassy Dilyara Camperbyara, Sargodha Chamber of Commerce President Malik Shoaib Ahmad Basra, Senior Vice President Makhdoom Muhammad Javed, Vice President Hasan Yusuf, Focal Person Haider Tarar, Dean Faculty of Agriculture Prof Dr Athar Nadeem, Dean Faculty of Arts and Humanities Prof Dr Ghulam Abbas Gondal, Principal College of Pharmacy Dr Usman Minhas, Assistant Professor of English Department Rabia Faiz and other faculty members also participated.

## Roots High achievers' ceremony for year 2022



ISLAMABAD: RISC and MIUC arranged high achievers' ceremony for their fresh graduates on September, 14 for the year 2022. The event marked another successful year for Roots International Schools & Colleges with dozens of students passing out with flying colours. Chairman Higher Education Commission, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed graced the ceremony with his presence as Chief Guest while many Senior officials from Republic of Belarus, attended the occasion as Guests of Honour. CEO RISC & MIUC Mr. Walid Mushtaq addressed the participants, congratulated all graduating students and extended gratitude towards distinguished guests. Chairman H.E.C. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed also shared his thoughts on the occasion, congratulating students for their exceptional performance while underscoring the importance of quality education in today's day and age. He expressed his pleasure with the progress of RISC and lauded the institution's contributions to education sector in Pakistan. Certificates were distributed among high achievers' and students expressed jubilation and hope for a better tomorrow. - DNA

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Bidding documents can be obtained from the office of PROJECT DIRECTOR (BRT) Room No. 03 Block IV, BRT Cell, Bus Operation Directorate, CDA Headquarters G-7/4, Islamabad upon payment of non-refundable bid document fee of Rs.5,000/- (Rupees five thousand only) in shape of Call Deposit/Demand Draft in favor of DDO IMBS during working hours up-to 30-09-2022, along with the Authority letter for collection of tender documents.

A single package containing separate technical proposals and financial proposals duly completed, signed, stamped and in complete conformity with Tender Documents should be delivered at the office of the Project Director (BRT), CDA Room No.03, Block-4, CDA Headquarters, Khayaban-e-Suhrawardy Road, G-7/4, Islamabad by 10:30am on 12th October 2022. The Technical Proposals will be opened at 11:00 Hours on same date in the office of the Project Director.

The Bid security amounting to Rs. 20 million in shape of Call Deposit from any schedule Bank of Pakistan to be accompanied with the Technical Bid.

Bids which are incomplete, not sealed, not signed, and unstamped and late or submitted by other than specified mode will not be considered.

Income / Sales Tax Registration Certificate and other documents as mentioned in Tender Documents must accompany the bids. All Taxes will be deducted as per Government rules.

Pre-bid meeting will be held at 1300 hours on September 30, 2022 at Conference Room CDA Headquarters.

CDA reserves the right to reject all bids at any time prior to the acceptance of a bid.

All questions/queries/clarifications regarding this procurement should be directed to the representative whose contact details are given below:

For details, please download Tender Documents from  
[www.cda.gov.pk](http://www.cda.gov.pk) [www.pprp.gov.pk](http://www.pprp.gov.pk)

Project Director (BRT), CDA  
Room No.03, Block-4,  
CDA Headquarters, Khayaban-e-Suhrawardy Road,  
G-7/4, Islamabad

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Revolution Day

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Independence Day

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Independence Day

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National Day

Sept 09 / Tajikistan

Independence Day

Sept 16 / Malaysia

Armed Forces Day

Sept 16 / Mexico

National Day

Sept 16/Papua New Guinea

Independence Day

Sept 18 / Chile

National Day

Sept 21 / Malta

Independence Day

Sept 23 / Saudi Arabia

National Day

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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

Hospitals

CMH.....5611111

MH.....561116

Cantt Hospital...9270907-11

DHQ.....5556311-4

RGH.....9290301-7

Holy Family.....9290322-7

PIMS.....9261170-79

Polyclinic.....9218300-09

Shifa International.4603666

Departments

CDA.....9221334-43

CDA.....9208301-04

Met Office.....9250360-6

RDA.....5555864

TMA.....5770886

Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation.....9209224

Potohar Town.....9209224

Rawal Town.....5773343

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-544480

# Govt. to facilitate marble sector: Syed Murtaza

**STAFF REPORT**

ISLAMABAD: Syed Murtaza Mahmood, Federal Minister for Industries and Production said that the government would go all out to provide all possible support to the marble sector so that it could grow better and play a more effective role in the economic development of the country. He said that the marble sector's exports of USD 37 million were much below its actual potential and stressed to take them to at least USD 370 million. He emphasized that the marble sector should focus on better marketing of its products to increase their trade and exports. He said this while addressing as Chief Guest an Awareness Seminar on Marble & Granite Sector Development organized by the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry in collaboration with Pakistan Stones Development Company. Iftikhar Ali Shallwani Federal Secretary Ministry of Housing

and Works, H.E. Khazar Farhadov Dean of Diplomatic Corps and Ambassador of Azerbaijan, H.E.Mohamed Karmoune Dean of African Corps and Ambassador of Morocco, Ambassador of Indonesia H.E. Adam M. Tugio, Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan, Deputy Head of Mission of Kazakhashan and representatives of Turkish & UAE embassies were also present at the occasion.

Iftikhar Ali Shallwani, Federal Minister for Housing & Works said that Pakistan has huge potential to promote the exports of marble and granite products, but the government was not providing any support to this sector. He said that over 200,000 marble units were working in the country and the government should facilitate the introduction of the latest technology & machinery

in this sector to produce valued added products and increase their exports. He said that the government should arrange railway cargo service from mines to ports that would reduce transportation cost and help improve their exports. Ms. Shamama Tul Amber Arbab, Chairperson, Pakistan Stone Development Company said that hold-

ing an awareness seminar on marble & granite sector was a new beginning and a series of such seminars would be conducted with the stakeholders to promote this sector. She said that the government should help in introducing the latest cutting & finishing machinery in the marble sector to improve exports of this sector. She said that the government should also set up an apex body for the development of the marble sector in coordination with provinces. H.E.Mohamed Karmoune, Dean of African Corps and Ambassador of Morocco highlighted the potential of marble exports to the African market.

Brig. (Retd) Babar Miraj Shami, Chief Executive Officer, Pakistan Stone Development Company highlighted the initiatives of his company for the development and growth of marble & granite sector in the country.

## Criminals held; liquor, drugs recovered

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capitalpolice apprehended 14 criminals involved in criminal activities and recovered 120 liters alcohol, 408 bottles, brewing items, fake currency and weaponswith ammunition from their possession, a police public relations officer said. He said that DIG Operations Sohail Zafar Chatha had ordered all zonal officers to curb the crime in their respective areas andarrest those involved in looting innocent people. Following these directives, a CIA policeteam conducted a raid at the distillery and recovered 408 bottles wine, 120 liters alcohol,empty bottles, stickers and brewing items. Police team also nabbed two bootleggers namelyRaza and Kalash while efforts are underway to arrest their accomplices. Caseshave been registered against those running the distillery and furtherinvestigation is underway. Likewise, Sangiani police team arrested two drug peddlers namely Ander Gul khan and Qasim Khan andrecovered 2050 gram hashish from their possession. Tarnol police arrestedtwo accused Sadagat and Bilawar Khan and 1050 gram heroin and 1055 gram hashish from their possession, while police team also arrested accused namely Tayyaband recovered fake currency from his possession. Moreover, Golra police team arrested an accused namely Hashim Jan and recovered 345 gram hashish from hispossession. Bani Gala police arrested two accused namely Said Marwat and Mateenand two pistols along with ammunition from their possession. Furthermore, Shalimar policeteam arrested an accused namely Arshad Ali and recovered a 9mm Pistol along with ammunition from hispossession. Khanna police arrested an accused namely Aamir Ali and recovered one 30 bore pistol along with ammunitionfrom his possession. Cases have beenregistered against the nabbed accused and further investigation is underway. During a special crackdown against proclaimed offenders and court absconder-police teams busted two proclaimed offenders. DIG Operations Sohail Zafar Chatha said that the safety of the lives andproperty of the citizens is our prime responsibility and no laxity will betolerated in this regard.—APP

## FGRF plans to construct 10,000 houses for flood victims

ISLAMABAD: Faizan Global Relief Foundation (FGRF), a non-profitable organization, is entering in rehabilitation phase and going to construct 10,000 single-storey houses for the flood victims across the country at the initial stage. As per plan, it would construct 100 houses in clusters at 100 various points to be designated by the provincial governments. Each house would be comprised of 800 square feet having two bedrooms, corridor, kitchen and washroom. In an exclusive talk with APP, FGRF Representative Muhammad Adil Attari informed that the foundation's delegation held a meeting with Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi and Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Director General Faisal Fareed to give a final shape to the plan in the province on Monday. He said the Punjab chief minister appreciated the ongoing welfare activities, carried out by the FGRF, and assured all-out support to make the plan a success story. According to the understanding, the Punjab government would facilitate the FGRF with lands in various areas to construct the residential units for the people severely affected by the torrential rains and flash floods in the province, he added.—APP

# Three-day book fair concludes at AIOU

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: The three-day book fair at Allama Iqbal

interested in books. 20 major booksellers and publishers of the country set up book stalls in this book fair. University faculty

At the end of the fair, certificates were distributed to the participating booksellers and publishers. The speakers at the clos-

society is rapidly decreasing, which is a tragedy for us, we must connect the new generation with books. The speakers con-

Open University concluded on Thursday. Hundreds of books on Islamic, literary, scientific, political, and other topics were sold in the three-day fair organized by the central library of the university, which clearly proved that people are still

members and subject specialists kept coming and selecting books for central Library. On the last day of the fair, the students from local schools, colleges and universities continued visiting throughout the day.

ing ceremony said that the publishers participating in this fair are also playing equal roles in spreading knowledge for which they deserve to be congratulated. They further said that, the trend of reading books in our

gratulated the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum and Chief Librarian, Dr. Shah Farukh for organizing the book fair for establishing a book-friendly society and promoting library culture.

## NUST idea aims to revive shelter for flood victims

ISLAMABAD: The faculty and students of National University of Science and Technology (NUST) are working on a concept of "Own a Village" for revival of livelihood and shelter for the flood-hit people. NUST "Own a Village" concept has to cater for the revival of livelihood, shelter and community services relying on a need-based assessment through engaging the community and local government. Some of the important aspects in this regard are provision of seeds, fertilizers, insecticide sprays, agriculture implements/ tools, tractors, and livestock etc. —APP

## 03 suspects held during search and combing operations

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital police conducted a search and combing operation in the jurisdiction of Ramana police station, a police public relations officer said. He said that, following the special directives of IGP Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, search and combing operations are being conducted in different areas of the city, to ensure the safety and security of the Islamabad citizens.

Following these orders, a search and combing operation was conducted in the PS Ramana areas by local police, CTD and Quick reaction teams under the su-

pervision of SP CTD. During the search operation 03 suspects and 04 vehicles were shifted to the police station for verification, 30 houses and 180 suspects were checked. While one 30 bore pistol, one 12 bore gun along with ammunition and 03 Knives were also recovered. IGP Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan said that the purpose of the search and combing operations was to heighten the security in the Federal capital. All zonal officers were directed to continue these operations in their respective areas. Citizens are also requested to cooperate with police during checking.—app

## Reckless driver hits van at Khanqah Dogran Motorway

ISLAMABAD: A traffic accident occurred at the Khanqah Dogran Motorway on Thursday due to the negligence of a Mazda driver who fell asleep while driving. According to the Motorway Police, the Mazda driver hit a van due to his negligence as he fell asleep while driving. The Inspector General (IG) Khalid Mahmood said the Mazda driver was arrested by the Motorways Police and handed over to the local police for further investigation. A legal action was also being taken against the driver for his reckless driving, he said. The persons injured in the accident were immediately shifted by the Motorways Police to the Pindi Bhattian

hospital. Mahmood said he was grieved and saddened over the loss of precious lives in the accident. Heartfelt condolences to the families of those who died in the accident, he said. The Motorways Police also appealed the commuters to be alert on the highways and to avoid driving when tired or heavy-eyed. COMSTECH Youth Forum on Biotechnology in Agriculture Concludes Islamabad, September 15 (COMSTECH): COMSTECH 3-day "Youth Forum on Biotechnology" organized in collaboration with Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum, Turkiye and Islamic Organization for Food Security, Kazakhstan concluded.

The president of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi inaugurated the forum at COMSTECH auditorium on Sept. 13. The inaugural session was attended by the Ambassadors/ Diplomats of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Palestine, Somalia, Qatar, Iraq, and Uzbekistan. This three-day forum was attended by more than 170 national and international participants in-person, whereas many people attended this forum from 35 OIC member states online on Zoom. The forum comprised on four sessions. Each session was chaired by international renowned scientist currently working in the field of biotechnology. Sixteen lectures were delivered by the

# Pakistan's floods; death toll touches 1,486

**STAFF REPORT**

ISLAMABAD: The death toll due to devastating monsoon floods across the country on Thursday surged amid property losses as five more perished in the past 24 hours, taking the total death count to 1,486. Moreover, 12,749 individuals were reported 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 due to the heavy rains which lashed out various parts of the country. The heavy rains and flash floods caused deaths in various flood affected areas. The Provincial Disaster Management Authority

(PDMA) Balochistan reconciled its data on deaths mentioning mortality number counted in incidents on September 9. It noted that one man, woman and child in Killa Saifullah. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), a man and child were reported dead and a man injured in Kurram District. was no incident or loss to report in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), Gilgit Baltistan (GB), Punjab, Sindh and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) during the last 24 hours. The massive torrential rains in the past 24 hours have damaged 300 kilometers (km) roads in Balochistan whereas 10,336 livestock animal died whereas 5,091 houses got damaged during heavy downpour incidents including 2,166 fully damaged and 2,925 got partially damaged during rains. However the cu-

mulative damages so far stated that almost 12,718 km road, 390 bridges and 1,760,372 houses and 918,473 livestock animals got damaged due to the heavy

rains in various districts of all the provinces including that of Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). The NDMA report highlighted that

81 districts across the country were notified as calamity hit areas with some 33,046,329 people affected, 179,281 individuals rescued in various rescue operations

and 546,288 people inhabited in camps. The joint surveys for damage assessment were started in 30 districts of Balochistan and some 32 teams were deployed for the survey that was likely to be completed by September 25. In GB, four teams were deployed in the region that started the survey from September 12 and was expected to complete by September 20. In Punjab, three survey teams were deployed in the field that initiated the survey from September 12 and was expected to complete by September 30. In KP, some six teams were on the ground to initiate the survey that commenced on September 15 and would be completed by October 15. In Sindh, the survey would commence as soon as practically possible and was expected to commence from September 25.



## Briefs

**2023 will be more upsetting for people**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: FPCCI's Presidential candidate Atif Ikrar Sheikh on Thursday said 2023 will be more upsetting for the masses, inflation will remain high and economic decline will continue to hit the people.

Pakistan will continue to be among the most expensive countries in the world in 2023 while political instability and exchange rate erosion may set new records, he said. Atif Ikrar Sheikh said that the price of petrol, gas, and electricity may continue to rise to make life difficult for the people.

He said that inflation has broken back of the masses and per capita income is falling which is being conveniently ignored.

The government has already slashed its economic growth projections by more than half due to the floods, expecting growth to come in at 2.3%, compared to a target of 5% growth in June. Officials also agreed with the IMF to increase a gasoline tax to 50 rupees per litre from 37.5 rupees by early 2023 which will add to price pressures pushing inflation will climb to 27.5% on average in the year ending in June 2023.

He said that circular debt is rapidly increasing and the government is planning to borrow to repay the old loans which have increased the influence of lending institutions.

The business leader further said that it is impossible to absorb three million youth moving to the labour market every year unless a growth rate of seven percent is ensured.

**Govt not afraid of Imran Khan's calls for protest**

ISLAMABAD: Senior Pakistan Muslim League (N) leader Siddiqui Farooq said on Thursday that the government was not afraid of the threat of protests called by Imran Khan, as the PTI has prioritized its own interests over helping the flood victims. Talking to a PTV news, he said that PTI spent money on public gatherings instead of helping the flood victims, adding, that the PTI leader was a master of U-turns and had no time to resolve the issues of the people. Imran Khan always showed political immaturity and loosing his political credibility due to his frivolous attitude, he said.

Replying to a question, he said that Imran Khan was trying to mislead the public by propagating against state institutions.—APP

**Railways issue schedule for two new rail cars**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways has issued schedule for the two new rail cars to be run between Lahore-Rawalpindi-Lahore to facilitate the passengers on the route of two cities.

"The schedule was issued on the special instructions of Minister for Railways Khawaja Saad Rafique," an official in the Ministry of Railways told APP.

He said the first rail car (109UP) would leave the Lahore Railway Station on September 16 at 07:30 p.m. and would reach Rawalpindi Railway Station at 11:55 p.m. after a stopover at Gujrat and Chaklala stations.

Likewise, the rail car (110DN) would leave the Rawalpindi Railway Station at 07:30 p.m. and would reach at 11:55pm at Lahore Railway Station, the official added. The 2nd rail car (117UP) would depart from Lahore Station at 5 a.m. on September 19 and reach Rawalpindi Railway Station at 9:40 a.m. after making stopovers at Gujranwala, Jhelum and Chaklala. He said that at the same time, the special train (118DN) would also depart from Rawalpindi to Lahore.

The official said that the both the up and down rail cars would comprise, two AC business class, two AC standard class, five economy class and one power van.—APP

# PEIRA request to abolish taxes on low fee private schools

It is imperative to mention that Islamabad Capital Territory-Private Educational Institutions Regulatory Authority (ICT-PEIRA) regulates Private Educational Institutions (PEIs) in Islamabad under the ICT-PEIRA Act 2013, and charges regulatory fees, as per Act/ Rules.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Private Educational Institutions Regulatory Authority (PEIRA), Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training has requested the authorities concerned for exemption of Municipal/Professional tax from those private schools in Islamabad, which are charging upto Rs 5000 fee from students. According to a notification issued by PEIRA, the management of low fee charging private educa-

tional institutions conveyed that Municipal authorities are serving notices to the educational institutions for charging municipal/ professional taxes.

In addition, it is also mentioned in notices that in case of non-submission, legal action shall be taken against the defaulter private schools. Resultantly, the management of Private Educational Institutions (PEIs) requested for exemption of the aforesaid tax due to fact that low fee charging PEIs are serving the community and they

hardly manage to meet the operational expenses of institutions.

It is imperative to mention that Islamabad Capital Territory-Private Educational Institutions Regulatory Authority (ICT-PEIRA) regulates Private Educational Institutions (PEIs) in Islamabad under the ICT-PEIRA Act 2013, and charges regulatory fees, as per Act/ Rules.

In view of the foregoing, the PEIs charging fee upto RS. 5,000/- are considered as low fee charging educational institutions. Therefore,

these PEIs need favorable consideration by the Municipal Authorities too and their request for exemption of Municipal/ Professional Tax is forwarded for consideration, the PEIRA notification mentioned.

Commenting on the issue, President, Private Schools Network (PSN) Dr Afzal Babar while lauding this initiative of PEIRA, stated that it will benefit around 80 percent of private schools in federal capital. "These schools are not only fulfilling the gap created by Federal Directorate of

Education but also competing public sector schools in achieving SDG goals with selfhelp" he told APP. He said, these small private schools are helping the government in achieving 100 percent literacy rate in the federal capital, however, the promotion of these institutions mentioned in PEIRA is still pending since 2006.

In past PEIRA only collected amounts from private schools rather than to facilitate them, he lamented.

Dr Afzal also commended the efforts of Chairperson PEIRA for hard with the help

of only three members as most of the members' seats are lying vacant in the body. President PSN further added that Chairperson PEIRA had been making sincere efforts to maximum facilitate the private schools.

Capital Development Authority (CDA) and other federal institutions had imposed many taxes on these schools, charging low fee which need to be abolished. All efforts will be made to implement this letter of PEIRA, he said adding that Education Minister also wanted to achieve 100 percent literacy in Islamabad.

## Plan afoot to vacate govt quarters

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Housing and Works was planning to vacate government quarters in the federal capital from retired and relatives of late employees. The plan was being devised in line with directives of Minister for Housing and Works Maulana Abdul Wasay, who was making serious efforts to address accommodation issues of the government servants, sources in the Estate Office told APP on Thursday. Assistance from the Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Estate Office was also sought for the purpose, they added. The ministry, they said, was considering legal action against the encroachments and illegally constructed structures in government residences in the federal capital. Strict action would be taken against the construction of extra rooms by the employees and their kith and kin, which lived in government allotted houses, they added. At present, the sources said over 17,000 government houses in Islamabad were under the management of the Estate Office and additional rooms had illegally been constructed by the allottees in over 2,400 residences.

The basic purpose of the operation was to purge the government residences of encroachments. Recently, they said the Estate Office had so far vacated around 2,837 government properties from illegal occupants and handed over to the entitled persons across the country. The CDA and other relevant departments of the provincial governments had helped the Estate Office to vacate government properties.

To a question, they further said that over 25,000 government employees were currently on the general waiting list to get accommodation, but they could not be provided with the same as retired employees, their relatives. —APP



ISLAMABAD: Sri Lankan High Commissioner, Wijewickrama visits the British High Commission, Islamabad to offer his condolences and sympathies on the passing away of Queen Elizabeth-II.

## 3600 cops to guard Chehlum processions in Rawalpindi

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi district police have finalized foolproof security arrangements for the Chehlum of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) and martyrs of Karbala to be observed on Sept 17 as over 3600 cops would be deployed. According to a district police spokesman, City Police Officer, Rawalpindi Syed Shehzad Nadeem Bukhari had directed the police officers to ensure foolproof security arrangements for the Chehlum and utilize all available resources

to provide tight security cover to the mourners. He informed that 3600 police personnel would be deployed for the security of the main and other processions while 236 traffic police personnel would regulate traffic on city roads. A special squad of Rangers would also perform security duty, he added. A control room was being set up in the office of the City Police Officer Rawalpindi to ensure the implementation of security arrangements, he said. —APP

## Inequalities in health

MAHNOOR AKRAM

In developing countries, Pakistan is one of the countries where access to health and health-related indicators is a major concern.

Rapid urbanization and a growing population have threatened people's accessibility to health and the environment. About 400 million people have no access to basic health facilities and nearly 7 million people die each year due to air pollution mostly in low and middle-income countries. Likewise, more than 15 million people living with HIV have no access to treatment, and it is evident that every 2 s, people aged from 30 to 70 die prematurely due to non communicable diseases, chronic respiratory disease, diabetes, and cancer. Challenges like increasing population and growing urbanization not only influenced the basic

health care facilities but have also narrowed the accessibility to other health related factors. Socio-demographic factors of income and education, housing-related indicators, geographical and environmental attributes are considered as a range of significant social determinants of health which are multiple and interactive. Nations throughout the globe are lacking access to health and health-related indicators, but more in low- and middle-income countries. According to UNDP's report, about 103 million of the world population has no literacy skills. Approximately 844 million people have a lack of access to safe drinking water and about 2.3 billion world population has no access to sanitation facilities. Because of continuous population growth, the demand for cheap energy is increasing and the society relying on fossil fuels is creating severe changes to the environment. Pakistan being a low- and middle-income country faces a lack of access to health and health-related socio economic indicators.

## Longping High-tech and Guard Agri join disaster relief activities in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Adhering to the deep friendship between the Chinese and Pakistani, since August 20, Yuan Longping High-tech Agriculture Co., Ltd. (LPHT) and Guard Agricultural Research and Services Private Company (GARS) have actively joined the local disaster relief activities in Pakistan.

According to China Economic Net (CEN), total of Rs 32.19 million reliefs were provided to suffered people in disaster areas including Rs 26.19 million supplies

(440 tents, worth Rs 8.8 million; 171.5 tons of rice, worth Rs 16.22 million; 1920 kg of salt, worth Rs 770,000; 5 tons of flour, worth Rs 400,000); Rs 2 million cash donated through Lahore Industry and Commerce Chamber and the Hybrid High-tech Seeds Association Rs 4 million sent for local staff's home rebuilding. The relief is mainly used for the post-disaster reconstruction at Larkana, Naudero, Khair Pur, Nawab Shah, Sangar, Sawat and Mardan etc.—APP

## NCRC, NHRI held meeting on Child Rights

ISLAMABAD: National Commission on the Rights of Child on Wednesday convened a consultative meeting to discuss the proposed amendments in the NCRC act, 2017 to make the Commission a fully independent NHRI (National Human Rights Institution) as enshrined in the Paris Principles.

The meeting was presided over by Jawad Ullah, the Acting Chairperson from NCRC, a press release issued here on Thursday said. The meeting was attended by Chief of Child Protection UNICEF Daniela Luciani, Child Protection Specialist UNICEF

Farah Ilyas, Legal experts and representatives from civil society including Child Rights Movement (CRM) and NACG Pakistan Jawad ullah (acting Chairperson/ member KP) shared the objectives of the consultation where the amendments are being proposed in NCRC Act, 2017. It would cure the shortcomings of the original statute ensure adequate representation of all provinces in its constitution and empower it for advancing the cause for which the NCRC is established. On this occasion, Atta Ul Mustafa, Legal Advisor explained the theory and practice of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI) in Pakistan. —APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of European Union Riina Kionka visiting a flood relief camp during her visit to Haripur. —DNA

## Six bids to smuggle wheat, flour foiled

RAWALPINDI: The Food Department Rawalpindi and district police on Thursday foiled six bids to smuggle wheat and flour besides seizing 4800 bags weighing 20 kg and 20 fine wheat flour bags weighing 100 kg. According to a district administration spokesman, the authorities of the food department along with Naseerabad and Taxila police confiscated six vehicles loaded with wheat, flour and fine wheat flour.

He informed that police arrested six drivers namely Munir, Shoaib, Umar, Israr, Zubair and Akram for violating the ban on wheat and flour smuggling.

He also informed that the authorities concerned had been directed to strictly monitor district exit points to control wheat smuggling.—APP

## Police arrest three thieves

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi district Police on Thursday arrested three thieves and recovered gold ornaments, four stolen batteries and other items from their possession. According to a Police spokesman, Gujran Khan police rounded up a thief namely Rashid and recovered stolen gold ornaments from his possession. In another raid, Naseerabad police held two accused namely Arif and Pervaiz and recovered four stolen batteries from their possession. Divisional Superintendents of Police (SP) appreciated the police teams and directed to accelerate operations against lawbreakers.—APP

## ANF recovers over 29 kg narcotics

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting raids in Islamabad and Peshawar managed to recover over 29 kg narcotics and arrested two accused.

According to an ANF Headquarters spokesman, ANF Rawalpindi in an operation conducted a raid near Islamabad Toll Plaza and recovered 1250 grams Ice drug from the possession of a passenger, travelling in a Hiace van. Ice was tactfully concealed in a trolley bag.

ANF and Motorway police in a joint operation recovered 20 kg heroin at Peshawar Motorway Toll Plaza while in another raid, ANF Peshawar recovered eight kg heroin from secret cavities of a car and arrested an accused.

Separate cases have been registered against the accused, he said and informed that accomplices of the accused would also be sent behind the bars.

## Motorway police invite applications for vacant posts

ISLAMABAD: The Motorway Police will increase its efficiency by fulfilling hundreds of posts, lying vacant since long.

The police advertised these posts, saying that top priority would be given to the deserving and unemployed candidates.

According to details, Inspector General (IG) Motorway Police said the advisement had been issued on the directives of Federal Minister for Communications Maulana Asad Mehmood.

The applications have been invited to fill around 490 vacant posts from scale 1 to 5.

The first priority of the government and ministry is to provide employment to the people.

"Once filled, the vacancies will increase the efficiency of Motorway Police. Former government had promised to provide employment to youth but they were deprived of it. The posts in will be filled on merit," the minister said in a statement.



## SCO a platform for development cooperation

Chinese President Xi Jinping along with other leaders will attend the 22nd meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in the Uzbek city of Samarkand while paying a state visit to Uzbekistan from Thursday to Friday. The Chinese leader expressed his hopes that the organization can play a greater role in the region and beyond in a signed article carried by leading Uzbek media outlets on Tuesday. "I am confident that with the joint efforts of all sides, the Samarkand Summit will produce fruitful outcomes and make a great contribution to building an even closer SCO community with a shared future and to the peace, stability, development and prosperity of our region," he wrote. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Charter of the SCO, and the Samarkand Summit is being held at a critical time when the region faces many challenges and uncertainties. The protracted COVID-19 pandemic, as well as heavily disrupted global industry and supply chains, the Russia-Ukraine conflict and climate change have created a perfect storm for the global economy, which is heading toward a recession. Which means that the SCO must play a more active role not only in upholding regional security and stability, but also in promoting development and prosperity. During the summit, Iran is scheduled to sign a memorandum of obligations to pave the way for its accession to full SCO membership, while the SCO has also received a membership application from Belarus. Moreover, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Egypt are scheduled to formally become SCO dialogue partners, and negotiations will be held on granting Cambodia, the Maldives and other countries the status of dialogue partner. The fast expanding influence of the SCO attests to the fact that the organization is viewed by the countries of the Silk Road Economic Belt as a vital safeguard for international norms and multilateralism. Bringing together countries from different regions, at different stages of development, and from different civilizations and traditions, the SCO, which now accounts for about 80 percent of Eurasia's territory and 24 percent of the global GDP, is forging a strong collective. It is partnership characterized by non-alignment, dialogue and non-confrontation, and a practical vehicle for exploring the building of a new type of international relations and a community with a shared future for mankind. The SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group, for example, is playing a unique role in helping the country to restore peace and stability through development and political reconciliation. As a regional organization encompassing the largest area and the largest population in the world today, and as a promoter of mutual learning, mutual trust, and mutual benefit, the SCO is also assuming the role of being a practical driver of development.

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## Commonwealth: An unsure future

Queen Elizabeth II was not just Britain's head of state. She was an integral part of how a country found its lost destiny. The empire was already in decline when the late queen became monarch, but the United Kingdom still had 70 overseas territories and was basking in the afterglow of its moral and military triumph in the second world war. The coronation was a globally significant event, its golden flummery an enactment of the kind of nation Britain thought it was. Monarchy was presented as hierarchy's human face.

But history dispelled the illusion of timeless continuity through ceremonial ritual. With revolts brewing in almost every imperial possession, Britain's global footprint shrank. When Hong Kong was transferred to China in 1997, the Prince of Wales thought it the "end of the empire". A myth arose that Britain had voluntarily decided to transform its colonies into a commonwealth. Having been cruelly exploited for decades, British colonies became independent republics with indecent haste. Today there are only 15 realms with the monarch as head of state. That number is set to fall: Barbados became a republic last year, with Jamaica likely to follow – and even perhaps Australia.

The Commonwealth, with the Queen as its head, was a club designed as a destination for countries parachuting out of British rule. The monarch cultivated warm personal relations with many Commonwealth leaders to keep the group together. The monarchy has been involved in skirmishes with the government – but a post-Brexit executive, pumped up on its own power, has brushed off its interventions. King Charles attempted this year to push back against the disgraceful policy of deporting asylum seekers to Rwanda and his son criticised the Windrush scandal, which saw hundreds of Commonwealth citizens wrongly detained and deported.

Both monarch and heir have acknowledged the harm and legacies of slavery. But both stopped short of crossing swords with the government by issuing an apology for it – for fear, probably, of opening a door to reparations. A monarch should not meddle in politics, even for the right reasons.

This also exposes the weakness of the Commonwealth. Its head has been unable to move politics in a progressive direction in the UK, let alone anywhere else. The post-imperial delusion of British political life was exposed when Boris Johnson failed to oust the secretary general of the Commonwealth.

The future of the Commonwealth and its purpose is unclear. Whether it comes together or comes apart will be up to member states. But they will be watching Britain – aware that it is facing its own uncertain future as a wave of dissolution laps against its shores.

## Major Asks of UNGA77

Abdul Rashid Shakir



In the post-COVID world, it has become a new normal that all world systems need a massive realignment to be relevant to social needs. Work in Virtual environments and remote settings have found inroads into almost every sphere of human interaction, be it education, commerce, or service delivery. UN Deputy Secretary-General, Amina Mohammad, rightly said that transitions in renewable energy, food systems, and digital connectivity along with investments in human capital and financing the opportunities are needed

How to speed up the implementation of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), outlined in the UN Agenda 2030; how to come up with transformative solutions to renewable energy, food security, and digital connectivity in the post-COVID world; and how to ensure rights of minorities, enshrined in the UN Declaration on Minority Rights 1992 - are the three major asks of United Nations General Assembly's 77th Session (UNGA77), scheduled from 13 to 27 September.

Catastrophic weather patterns due to climate change; poor water management owing to non-availability of sufficient water storage infrastructure; food insecurity caused by shrinking arable land as a result of sprawling housing societies and low per acre yield for want of genetically modified seeds and innovative on-farm practices; unsustainable energy mix because of excessive use of imported fossil fuels for power generation; growing unemployment resulting from the widening mismatch in population growth and employment opportunities due to the low rate of industrialization in developing countries like Pakistan are major challenges plaguing their economies.

This precarious condition is further exacerbated by political instability; lack of effective planning; discontinuation of economic policies; institutional weaknesses and lack of inter-departmental coordination; pilferage of valuable natural resources and above all misplaced priorities in carrying out development projects that have proved counter-productive instead of yielding socio-economic dividends. Heavy reliance on imports due to lack of import substitution in the local market; and the struggling export sector resulting from low productivity and poor competitiveness due to lack of cutting-edge technologies and insufficient supply of rightly-skilled manpower further compound the woes of developing states. Poor road and communication infrastructure, unskilled or semi-skilled manpower, focus on brick and mortar hardware instead of service delivery and a serious lack of national development narrative further add to the misery of all developing nations. It is a pity that misgovernance is incentivized in almost all developing countries, as the performance of their public officials is gauged based on their interpersonal skills instead of success in implementing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

These challenges resonate with the United Nations Agenda 2030, as its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to fight these very ills in communities of the world. It is, no doubt, an ambitious transformational plan that focuses on eliminating extreme poverty, reducing inequalities, and resisting climate change to make earth a better place to live. Its Implementation can guarantee a peaceful, prosperous and progressive world order. Therefore, UNGA77



plans to have a dedicated debate on how to accelerate their accomplishment in its key events namely, "SDG Moment", on 19 September, and "Global Goals Weak", from 16 to 25 September.

In the wake of historic climate change-induced floods that have wreaked havoc in Pakistan this summer, SDG 13 (Climate Action) has gained even greater prominence, especially for the developing countries that are bearing the brunt of unscrupulous carbon emissions by the highly-industrialized nations. It is high time to "Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact".

In the post-COVID world, it has become a new normal that all world systems need a massive realignment to be relevant to social needs. Work in Virtual environments and remote settings have found inroads into almost every sphere of human interaction, be it education, commerce, or service delivery. UN Deputy Secretary-General, Amina Mohammad, rightly said that transitions in renewable energy, food systems, and digital connectivity along with investments in human capital and financing the opportunities are needed in order to turn multiple crises into opportunities.

The theme of the general debate of the UNGA77, "A Watershed Moment: Transformative Solutions to Interlocking Challenges," also highlights the need for this very shift in our day to day life.

The education system is, no doubt, the most crucial system that has a substantial bearing on the effectiveness of all other systems like health, governance, and service delivery.

Realizing its pivotal role, the proceedings of the 77th session of UNGA feature a dedicated event namely, "Transforming Education Summit." it is a three-day Summit scheduled to take place on 16, 17 and 19 September, immediately before the start of the High-Level Debate Week of the UNGA on 20 September. It will not only highlight the concerns of young people over their education but would also urge the world leaders, civil society activists, and all other stakeholders of the education system like parents, teachers, and students to support the transformation of the education system in order to align it with the ideas of life-long learning, digital learning and learning for life skills.

It is noteworthy that an inclusive growth model is needed to guarantee equal opportunities for all segments of society, regardless of their caste, color, creed, and religious or political ideas.

It has been aptly enshrined in the UN Declaration on Minority Rights, 1992. To highlight the implementation of these rights in different societies of the world in order to have a friction-free robust socio-economic development model, UNGA77 has a special event on "The rights of Minorities". Scheduled on 21 September, it will take stock of unprecedented constraints being faced by Minorities in different parts of the world and set priorities for the future to effectively address this issue.

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## Palestinians right to take fight for statehood back to UN

Ray Hanania

The Palestinians must take their need for justice and statehood out of the hands of the Americans, whose political system Israel has in a tight headlock. Through masterful public relations propaganda, strategic political campaign funding efforts and simply because it is far better at diplomacy than the Palestinians have ever been, Israel is able to influence American politics when it comes to Palestine.

Only by moving the issue to the UN can the Palestinians have hope

A year before Israel declared its existence, the UN created its Special Committee on Palestine, known as UNSCOP, to investigate and find a solution to the growing conflict.

Instead of participating, the Palestinian leadership at the time did what has become the Palestinians' political answer to everything they do not like: They boycotted it. Four months later, the special committee recommended the partition of Palestine into two states.

The UN Partition Plan for Palestine was destined to fail from the start, as it recommended one state that was overwhelmingly non-Jewish and a second that was equally divided between Jews and non-Jews. Worse, the proposed states were an overlapping checkerboard that was destined to collapse and encourage more conflict. We all know what happened then. This week, as the world continues to drift away from justice for the Palestinians and their leaders continue their rejectionist approach to every solution they dislike, a small segment of Palestinian leaders – including 50 from various parts of civil society, one member of the Palestine Liberation Organization Executive Committee and one member of the PLO Central Committee – are urging the UN to do it again.

They want the UN, which this week began the 77th session of its General Assembly, to create another special committee on Palestine, or UNSCOP-2, to complete what the first failed to finish nearly 75 years ago. Tragically, of course, the Palestinians are more divided today than they ever have been. They are dispersed in a diaspora riven by internal squabbling and conflict that makes bringing leaders together extremely difficult. But if the Palestinians who have managed to survive the aftermath of the original UNSCOP living under Israel's brutal apartheid system that was never anticipated by the British or the UN, but was planned by the Zionist leadership at the time, can cast aside the diaspora and do what needs to be done, maybe something can change.

The advocates of UNSCOP-2 hope that the UN will embrace the plan during meetings over the coming weeks



and "produce, within four months, a comprehensive plan to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to report that plan back to the General Assembly."

Turning to the UN is probably Palestine's only hope. The UN is the only place where Palestinians have been able to find honest support for their generations-long displacement and oppression – far different from the lies and distortions of the American political system, which today has a lock on Palestine's future.

Regardless of the differences in rhetoric and attitude of the two American political parties and their leaders, it is clear that President Joe Biden's administration is no different to that of former President Donald Trump. The end results are the same, though the Republican route is through an entirely one-sided approach and the Democratic route is through hypocritical happy talk and intentionally broken promises.

Let me explain it this way. Palestinians are prisoners. Under Trump, the prison starved the prisoners. Under Biden, the prison promised bread, but instead of providing it, it has only offered crumbs. Sadly, when you are starving for freedom, bread crumbs look far more appealing than they actually are.

The Palestinians must take

their need for justice and statehood out of the hands of the Americans, whose political system Israel has in a tight headlock. Through masterful public relations propaganda, strategic political campaign funding efforts and simply because it is far better at diplomacy than the Palestinians have ever been, Israel is able to influence American politics when it comes to Palestine. Only by moving the issue to the UN can the Palestinians have hope.

The Palestinians in the Occupied Territories also need to extricate their efforts from those of the dysfunctional and divided diaspora, which stews in resentment, anger and uncontrollable emotions.

UNSCOP-2 would be the perfect place to begin a new campaign to erase the failures of Oslo and the old peace process, which was killed off by the Israeli right on the day Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated in November 1995.

Advocates of UNSCOP-2, including leaders of the Jewish Peace Lobby, state that "the idea of going to the United Nations to establish UNSCOP-2 first emerged in a New York Times essay in 2012 by former Israeli Foreign Minister Shlomo Ben-Ami, former High Commissioner of the European Union Javier Solana and Jerome Segal, founder of the Peace Consultancy, who is serving as a consultant to the new Palestinian initiative." They argued at a recent press conference in Ramallah that UNSCOP-2 "would create a new process of conflict resolution in which the United Nations becomes a medium for people-to-people peace-making between the Palestinian people and the citizens of Israel. It is believed that this new process can transform Israeli politics and politics in the international community, especially the United States, in ways that ultimately will give rise to an Israeli government which is a serious partner for peace, as were the governments of Prime Ministers Rabin and (Ehud) Olmert."

I agree with them and so should every Palestinian in the diaspora who wants to see a Palestinian state become a reality.

Courtesy: Arab News



## Briefs

## Typhoon Muifa lashes eastern China

SHANGHAI: High winds and heavy rain lashed China's densely populated east coast on Friday, after Typhoon Muifa forced around 1.6 million people to leave their homes and grounded most flights at Shanghai's main airports. Muifa is the strongest tropical cyclone to hit Shanghai – home to more than 25 million people – since record-keeping began in 1949, state broadcaster CCTV said. However, there were no immediate reports of any deaths or casualties. At least 426,000 people were evacuated in Shanghai and another 1.2 million people were taken to temporary shelters in neighbouring Zhejiang province, CCTV added.

Heavy rainfall led to traffic tailbacks and floods in several areas of the Yangtze river delta region, a major global manufacturing hub. Giant waves were seen crashing onto the coastline in Hangzhou bay, to the south of Shanghai, and national radio reported a landslide in Ninghai County in Zhejiang province.

Packing winds of up to 82 kilometres (50 miles) per hour, the storm made landfall at around 12:00 am Friday (1600 GMT Thursday) in coastal areas of Qingdao, state news agency Xinhua reported.

Muifa previously hit the city of Zhoushan in Zhejiang on Wednesday and Shanghai's Fengxian district on Thursday.

It also led to the cancellation of all flights to China's biggest financial hub.

Air travel slowly resumed in Shanghai as the storm moved north, but most flights from the city's two main airports were cancelled Thursday morning, according to aviation data provider Flightradar24.

Operations at some of Asia's largest container shipping ports in Shanghai and neighbouring Ningbo that were halted because of the typhoon were scheduled to resume Thursday, according to statements from port officials.

Officials ordered all fishing vessels in the Yellow Sea and Bohai Sea to anchor in ports as northeast China braced for the typhoon.

The storm came soon after Typhoon Hinnamnoor hit Shanghai and its neighbouring region last week, causing the suspension of Shanghai ferry services and school closures in parts of Zhejiang.

Muifa is the 12th typhoon to hit China this year, according to state media.

Tropical storms, which are expected to increase as the planet warms, were sharply up in 2021, a report by the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said earlier this month.

## UN nuclear agency seeks Russian retreat

VIENNA: The UN nuclear agency's board of governors on Thursday asked Russia to withdraw its troops from Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, two diplomats said. The text, submitted by Canada and Poland, was approved by 26 of the 35 member states sitting on the Council. China and Russia voted against, while seven countries – Burundi, Egypt, India, Pakistan, Senegal, South Africa and Vietnam – abstained.

"The (IAEA) Board of Governors has sent another strong message to Russia: cease immediately all actions threatening nuclear safety and security, and return the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant and all other Ukrainian territory to control," Australian ambassador Richard Sadleir tweeted. Another diplomat confirmed the move.

The resolution supports the efforts of the IAEA which has been in talks with Russia and Ukraine over setting up a security zone around the nuclear plant. Already in March, the IAEA passed a resolution warning about the "unprecedented danger of a nuclear accident" that would endanger not just the population of Ukraine but Europe as a whole.—APP

## Pak announce squad for T20 World Cup

DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan have unveiled their squad for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Australia 2022, which will be held from 16 October to 13 November. In the 15-player World Cup squad, top-order batter Shan Masood has been included in the side for the shortest format for the first-time along with fast bowlers Mohammad Wasim Junior and Shaheen Shah Afridi, while Fakhar Zaman, Mohammad Haris and Shahnawaz Dahani have been named as the three traveling reserves. Wasim Junior has been included after recovering

completely from the side strain he suffered during the ACC T20 Asia Cup, whereas Shaheen, who is undergoing rehabilitation for a knee injury in London and expected to resume bowling early next month, will join the squad in Brisbane on 15 October.

Pakistan squad for ICC Men's T20 World Cup: Babar Azam (c), Shadab Khan (vc), Asif Ali, Haider Ali, Haris Rauf, Iftikhar Ahmed, Khushdil Shah, Mohammad Hasnain, Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Mohammad Wasim Jr, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Shan Masood, Usman Qadir, Naseem Shah

Traveling reserves: Fakhar Zaman, Shahnawaz



Dahani, Mohammad Haris (wk)

Prior to their arrival in Brisbane on 15 October, the World Cup-bound squad will feature in the T20I tri-series in Christchurch from 7-14

Cup 2022. That's why we have shown faith and confidence in almost the same set of players who have been part of the T20I squad post the 2021 World Cup in the UAE.

"These players have performed well since November 2021 and that's why we have won nine out of our last 13 T20Is. We have invested in these cricketers and it is fair to them that they get the opportunity to show their mettle in the World Cup, an event for which they have been preparing and training hard."

"We needed to ensure continuity and support to these players, and that's precisely what we have done. "We are receiving encour-

aging reports about Shaheen Shah Afridi, who is likely to resume bowling early next month." Pakistan v Bangladesh and New Zealand (T20I tri-series) 7 October – vs Bangladesh, Christchurch 8 October – vs New Zealand, Christchurch 11 October – vs New Zealand, Christchurch 13 October – vs Bangladesh, Christchurch 14 October – Final, Christchurch Pakistan at ICC Men's T20 World Cup Australia 2022:23 October – vs India, Melbourne 27 October – vs winner Group B, Perth 30 October – vs runner-up Group A, Perth 3 November – vs South Africa, Sydney 6 November – vs Bangladesh, Adelaide

## WB warns recession risk rising

Washington: The threat of a global recession is growing as central banks focus on bringing down soaring inflation rates, the World Bank warned Thursday, calling on governments to help boost supply to ease the constraints behind rising prices. Inflation worldwide has been rising at the fastest pace seen in decades, due to supply constraints amid high demand as countries emerged from the pandemic. It has been exacerbated this year by the Russian invasion of Ukraine and Covid lockdowns in China.

Major central banks have responded forcefully, raising borrowing costs to cool demand and douse red-hot inflation. But in a new paper, World Bank economists warned that the actions may not be enough to bring high prices under control, leading to a need for more interest rate hikes, which in turn will put the brakes on growth. Many countries will not be able to avoid a recession, but the worldwide slowdown and tightening monetary policy "could give rise to significant financial stress and trigger a global recession in 2023," the paper said. In that scenario, global GDP growth would slow to 0.5 percent in 2023 – a 0.4 percent contraction in per capita growth, meeting the technical definition of a global recession.

"Global growth is slowing sharply, with further slowing likely as more countries fall into recession," World Bank President David Malpass said in a statement. "My deep concern is that these trends will persist, with long-lasting consequences that are devastating for people in emerging market and developing economies."

He urged policymakers to "shift their focus from reducing consumption to boosting production."

The World Bank in early June slashed its forecast for global growth to 2.9 percent, more than a full point lower than the estimate in January.

Indermit Gill, the newly installed chief economist at the Washington-based development lender, said his biggest concern is that because of the slowdown and pandemic crisis, "poverty reduction has stopped."

But he expressed some optimism as well.

"It's not an all doom and gloom story," he told reporters, noting that because of work done to improve economic policies and management before the pandemic, countries are better able to protect the poor.

"I have the feeling that we will come out on the right side of this because the world has changed now and you know, there's a lot more capability around," he said.

The worst case scenario described in the paper Thursday would entail a recession in advanced economies and sharp declines in growth in emerging and developing economies.

"The global economy is now in its steepest slowdown following a post-recession recovery since 1970," the World Bank said.

## China sees improvement in air quality globally

FOREIGN DESK

ISLAMABAD: China has witnessed the fastest improvement in air quality across the world, said a Chinese minister on Thursday.

Over the past 10 years, China's air quality has undergone historic changes, said Huang Runqiu, minister of the Ecology and Environment. The annual average value of fine particulate matter (PM2.5) in China decreased from 46 micrograms/cubic meter in 2015 to 33 micrograms/cubic meter in 2020 and 30 micrograms/cubic meter in 2021, ecns.cn reported. The days with good air quality reached 87.5 percent, an increase of 6.3 percentage points over 2015, according to the data. China has reduced air pollution nearly as much in seven years, helping to bring down average global smog levels in the process, according to a Bloomberg report.

## Late finishes don't look professional

LONDON: Playing tennis matches late at night does not look very "professional" and the sport needs to look at the issue, says Andy Murray. The former world number one was still on court at nearly 01:00 BST on Thursday in Glasgow, playing doubles with Joe Salisbury in Great Britain's Davis Cup defeat by the United States. Earlier this month Carlos Alcaraz and Jannik Sinner played until 2.50am in the US Open's latest ever finish, one of two occasions champion Alcaraz competed beyond 2am in New York.

"It's something that tennis needs to sort of have a bit of a think about," Murray, 35, told a news conference. "I don't think it looks that professional."

While a good-sized and passionate crowd remained at Emirates Arena to watch Murray and Salisbury in their 5-7 6-4 7-5 doubles defeat by Rajeev

Ram and Jack Sock that decided the Davis Cup group-stage tie, it was far from the packed arena it had been earlier in the day.

"It would be better if they were earlier I think for everyone involved," said Murray, whose match started at 22:00 BST.

The tie had got under way at 16:00 BST with back-to-back singles rubbers both going to three sets.

"I don't think it's ideal for you guys [media]. I don't think it's ideal for the fans," he added. "That match that we played there, there's probably half of the people in there at the end of the match that were there at the beginning."

"It's a bit of a shame because they missed a great match. It's not probably because they didn't want to stay. If you [have] got children here, you can't stay with them.—APP

## Federer to retire after Laver Cup in September



LONDON: Roger Federer, a 20-time Grand Slam singles champion, will retire from top-level tennis after the Laver Cup in London later this month. Swiss Federer, 41, has not played since Wimbledon 2021, after which he had a third knee operation. "My body's message to me lately has been clear," Federer said. "I have played more than 1,500 matches over 24 years. Now I must recognise when it is time to end my competitive career." He added: "To the game of tennis, I love you and will never leave you."

Federer has struggled with a knee problem for the past three years that has re-

stricted him to only three of the 11 Grand Slams staged since the start of 2020. He has not played a competitive match since losing to Hubert Hurkacz in the quarter-finals at Wimbledon last summer. He subsequently announced he needed more surgery on his knee having previously had two operations in 2020. Only Spain's Rafael Nadal, with 22 majors, and Serbia's Novak Djokovic, with 21, have more men's Grand Slam singles titles than Federer. "This is a bittersweet decision because I will miss everything the tour has given me," added Federer.—APP

## End of pandemic 'in sight': WHO chief

NEW YORK: The world has never been in a better position to end the COVID-19 pandemic, the head of the World Health Organization says, his most optimistic outlook yet on the years-long health crisis which has killed over six million people.

"We are not there yet. But the end is in sight," WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told reporters at a virtual press conference.

That was the most upbeat assessment from the UN agency since it declared an international emergency in January 2020 and started describing COVID-19 as a pandemic three months later. The virus, which emerged in China in late 2019, has killed nearly 6.5 million people and infected 606 million, roiling global economies and overwhelming healthcare systems.

The rollout of vaccines and therapies have helped stem deaths and hospitalizations, and the Omicron

variant which emerged late last year causes less severe disease. Deaths from COVID-19 last week were the lowest since March 2020, the UN agency reported. Still on Wednesday, he again urged nations to maintain their vigilance and likened the pandemic to a marathon race. "Now is the time to run harder and make sure we cross the line and reap the rewards of all our hard work."

Countries need to take a hard look at their policies and strengthen them for COVID-19 and future viruses, Tedros said. He also urged nations to vaccinate 100% of their high-risk groups and keep testing for the virus.

The WHO said countries need to maintain adequate supplies of medical equipment and healthcare workers.

"We expect there to be future waves of infections, potentially at different time points throughout the world caused by different subva-

riants of Omicron or even different variants of concern," said WHO's senior epidemiologist Maria Van Kerkhove.

With over 1 million deaths this year alone, the pandemic remains an emergency globally and within most countries.

"The COVID-19 summer wave, driven by Omicron BA.4 and BA.5, showed that the pandemic is not yet over as the virus continues to circulate in Europe and beyond," a European Commission spokesperson said. WHO's next meeting of experts to decide whether the pandemic still represents a public health emergency of international concern is due in October, a WHO spokesperson said.

"It's probably fair to say most of the world is moving beyond the emergency phase of the pandemic response," said Dr Michael Head, senior research fellow in global health at Southampton University. Governments are now look-

ing at how best to manage COVID as part of their routine healthcare and surveillance, he said. Europe, the United Kingdom and the United States have approved vaccines that target the Omicron variant as well as the original virus as countries prepare to launch winter booster campaigns. In the United States, COVID-19 was initially declared a public health emergency in January 2020, and that status has been renewed quarterly ever since.

The US health department is set to renew it again in mid-October for what policy experts expect is the last time before it expires in January 2023.

US health officials have said that the pandemic is not over, but that new bivalent vaccines mark an important shift in the fight against the virus. They predict that a single annual vaccine akin to the flu shot should provide a high degree of protection and return the country closer to normalcy.

## Excited to witness Pakistan fans: Buttler

SPORTS DESK

KARACHI: England skipper Jos Buttler said Thursday he hopes his injury-hit Twenty20 side embrace the challenge of facing a strong Pakistan team on their first tour of the country in 17 years. Security issues have meant Pakistan has struggled to attract visiting sides since an attack on the Sri Lankan team bus in 2009, but tours have slowly resumed in the past few years – with England the latest.

This seven-match series is seen as a preparation for next month's Twenty20 World Cup to be held in Australia, and Buttler hoped his young side build up well for the mega event.

"We look forward to the tough challenge and to be battle-hardened for the

World Cup after this series," said Buttler, who will miss the first few games to recover fully from a calf injury.

Two of England's World Cup squad members – Liam Livingstone and Chris Jordan – are also missing this series as they recover from ankle and finger injuries respectively, while Test skipper Ben Stokes was given a rest. Buttler said he hoped the injuries would give an opportunity to other players hungry to show their talent. "Obviously the main aim for everyone is to turn up for Australia fully ready," said Buttler of the event to be held from October 16 to November 13.

He said seven of his squad – David Willey, Phil Salt, Will Jacks, Liam Dawson, Harry Brook, Luke Wood and Ben Duckett – had featured in the Pakistan Super League



(PSL) this year and would know local conditions.

"Plenty of our players featured in the PSL and shared the positive experiences of being here and about how much the public love the game," said Buttler.

"We know Pakistan are a very great side. We look forward to challenge ourselves against them and I expect to see some great cricket."

The England skipper also hoped his side would perform well to honour Queen

Elizabeth II, who died last week.

"Obviously, with her majesty the queen passing, we were deeply saddened by that. We have seen the reactions over in England."

"We hope to honour her in

our own way as a T20 team and play in a fashion to do that."

The first four matches will be in Karachi on September 20, 22, 23 and 25, and the next three in Lahore on September 28, 30 and October 2. Series Schedule Sept 20 - first T20I - National Stadium, Karachi (7:30pm) Sept 22 - second T20I - National Stadium, Karachi (7:30pm) Sept 23 - third T20I - National Stadium, Karachi (7:30pm) Sept 25 - fourth T20I - National Stadium, Karachi (7:30pm) Sept 28 - fifth T20I - Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore (7:30pm) Sept 30 - sixth T20I - Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore (7:30pm) Oct 2 - seventh T20I - Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore (7:30pm)



## Briefs

## 71 Azerbaijan soldiers killed by Armenia

ANKARA: Seventy-one Azerbaijani soldiers have been killed in recent days in "provocations" by Armenia, Azerbaijan's Defense Ministry said Thursday. The ministry said that so far, 71 Azerbaijani soldiers have died during the recent flare-up, while Armenia's Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan announced on Wednesday that 105 Armenian soldiers were killed in the clashes. Following the recent flare-up in the region, Türkiye reiterated its support to Azerbaijan. On Wednesday, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Ankara sees the latest border tension as the result of Armenia's violation of the November 2020 deal ending the Karabakh war that resulted in the victory of Azerbaijan, adding that he finds it "unacceptable." Azerbaijan has accused Armenia of "large-scale provocations" in recent days, saying saboteurs planted mines and Armenian forces carried out "intensive" firing on Azerbaijani positions. Relations between the former Soviet republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan have been tense since 1991, when the Armenian military occupied Nagorno-Karabakh, also known as Upper Karabakh, a territory internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan. In fall 2020, Azerbaijan liberated several cities and over 300 settlements and villages that were under Armenian occupation. The fighting ended with a deal brokered by Russia.

## R. Kelly convicted of child pornography

WASHINGTON: Disgraced R&B singer R. Kelly, who is serving a 30-year sentence for sex offenses, was found guilty of child pornography and other charges on Wednesday after a month-long trial in his hometown of Chicago. Kelly, whose full name is Robert Sylvester Kelly, was convicted of three counts of producing child pornography and three counts of enticement of a minor, the Chicago Tribune reported. Kelly, a three-time Grammy Award-winner, was acquitted by a federal jury of seven other counts including charges that he obstructed justice in a previous trial, the newspaper said. Kelly and two ex-associates had been accused of rigging the singer's 2008 child pornography trial in which a jury delivered a verdict of not guilty. Kelly's former manager, Derrel McDavid, and an ex-employee, Milton "June" Brown, were tried alongside the singer in the latest trial and were also acquitted of obstruction charges. The 12-person jury took around 11 hours over two days to deliver the verdicts, which could add additional decades in prison to the 30 years Kelly is already serving. A minor victim declined to testify in the 2008 trial because of alleged threats and bribes, but the now 37-year-old woman took the witness stand this time.

## Swedish right prepares for power

STOCKHOLM: Sweden's incoming leader got to work Thursday on the thorny task of building a government supported for the first time by the far-right, a day after securing a slim election victory. Conservative Moderates chief Ulf Kristersson was expected to be formally tasked sometime next week with forming a government after Social Democratic Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson on Thursday tendered her resignation. While the far-right Sweden Democrats became the biggest party on the right with 20 percent of votes, observers said it was unlikely the anti-immigration and nationalist party would be given cabinet seats due to divisions in the right-wing bloc. The small Liberal party has said it would withdraw its support for Kristersson - which would leave him without a majority - if he includes the far-right in the government. With 176 seats - 73 of them going to the far-right Sweden Democrats - the four-party coalition will have a slim majority. - APP



ISLAMABAD: Senator Farooq Hamid Naek, Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs in a meeting with Don Tuan Phong, Vice Chairman of Foreign Affairs Committee, National Assembly of Vietnam. - DNA

## Uzbek, Chinese Presidents vow to strengthen trade ties

A special attention is paid to continuing the extensive study and implementing the progressive Chinese experience in the field of poverty reduction, regional development, and professional training

## NEWS DESK

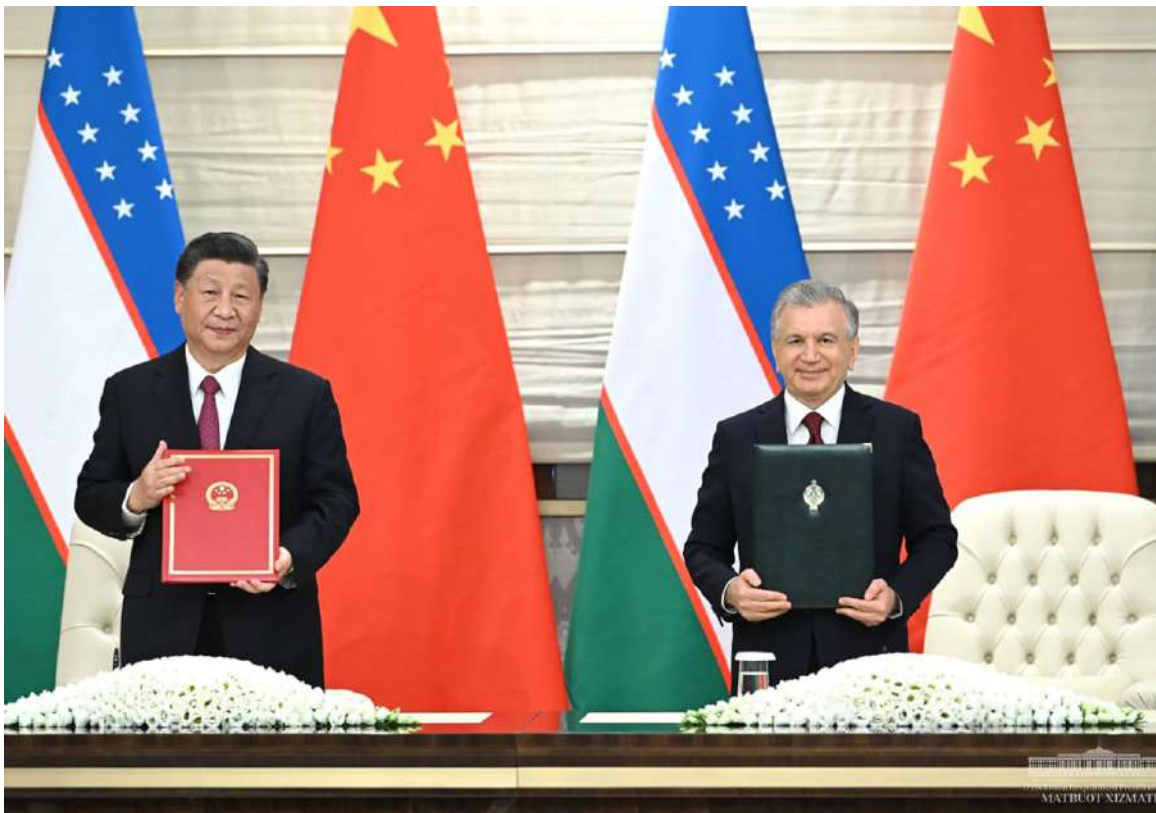
SAMARKAND: President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev and the President of the People's Republic of China Xi Jinping held the negotiations at the Congress Center of the Great Silk Road International Tourist Center in Samarkand. According to the press service of the President of Uzbekistan, the at the beginning of the meeting, the leaders exchanged the congratulations on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations and the 10th anniversary of the strategic partnership between the two countries. The President of our country expressed his sincere gratitude for the signed article by Chinese President Xi Jinping published on the eve of the visit «Working Together for a Brighter Future of China-Uzbekistan Relations», which is of a guided nature and witnesses the long-lasting historical ties between our peoples. The President of Uzbekistan noted the tremendous achievements of the Chinese people under the leadership of the President and wished successful holding of the upcoming 20th Congress of the Communist Party of China. In turn, Xi Jinping highly appreciated the ongoing program of large-scale reforms in the New Uzbekistan, which demonstrates the impressive results in all spheres of life of the state and society. The leaders held in-depth discussions on the further ways of strengthening the Uzbek-Chinese relations of comprehensive strategic partnership. It was noted that due to the regular contacts at the highest level, an unprecedented level of interstate cooperation has been achieved.

In particular, last year the trade turnover reached a record \$8 billion, as well as since the beginning of this year it has grown by more than 30%. The volume of investments in the economy of Uzbekistan has exceeded \$10 billion over the past five years. A five-year program of full-scale economic cooperation is being successfully implemented. The joint projects in the key sectors of the economy and the social sphere are being successfully implemented. The importance of further expanding trade and economic cooperation, through the development of e-commerce, as well as implementing the breakthrough industrial cooperation projects, primarily in such areas as automotive industry, green energy, agricultural and infrastructure development, was

emphasized. A special attention is paid to continuing the extensive study and implementing the progressive Chinese experience in the field of poverty reduction, regional development, and professional training.

The sides called for the activation of interregional exchanges. In this context, it is proposed to hold the first Forum of the Regions of the two countries in Uzbekistan by the end of the year. The historic agreement on the start of construction of the «China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan» railway, which has high strategic importance for consolidation and development of transport connectivity of the region was noted with deep satisfaction. A particular attention was paid to the humanitarian cooperation, including the expansion of programs in healthcare, vaccine production, science, educa-

tion and culture. The parties have agreed to hold the Year of Culture and Art of the Peoples of Uzbekistan and China next year, which shall further consolidate the friendship and mutual understanding between our peoples. There was also an exchange of views on the topical issues on the regional and international agenda. The importance of continuing joint efforts to facilitate an Afghan peace process and economic restoration, as well as a systemic interaction as a part of the international and regional structures, including the «Central Asia-China» mechanism was emphasized. The President of China highly appreciated the activities of Uzbekistan as a host country of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which resulted in the adoption of important decisions to expand the Organization and strengthen its international authority.



## EU lawmakers say Hungary no longer a 'full democracy'

STRASBOURG: Strasbourg, France, Sept 15 (AFP/APP):Hungary is no longer a "full democracy" and the EU needs to do everything to bring it back into line with European values, the European Parliament said Thursday. MEPs voted 433 in favour, 123 against, to now describe Hungary - ruled by populist Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who maintains close ties to Russian President Vladimir Putin - "a hybrid regime of electoral autocracy" in "serious breach" of EU democratic norms. The vote was largely symbolic and does not change the course of EU decision making, which requires unanimity of all 27 member states - including Hungary - to adopt major issues, such as sanctions on Russia. With their vote, the EU lawmakers roundly adopted a parliamentary report that said Hungary has been backsliding on democratic and fundamental rights since 2018 through the "deliberate and systematic efforts of the Hungarian government". The report said lack of action by EU institutions, including the commission which is tasked as "guardian" of the EU treaties enshrining democratic standards, had exacerbated the degradation. While EU countries are treading a careful line around Hungary because of the need to win its assent on major decisions, diplomats privately are frustrated with Orban's cosy relationship with the Kremlin and his blocking of further sanctions on Moscow. The commission has likewise been careful to avoid overt criticism, but unease over Hungary's swerve away from rule of law, particularly in failing to curb corruption, is becoming more evident. Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen said Wednesday, in her State of the European Union address to the European Parliament, that the EU "must fight for our democracies". She said her EU executive would work to protect the member states "from the external threats they face, and from the vices that corrode them from within," notably calling out corruption although not naming Hungary directly. She pledged legislative action to step up the fight against corruption, including against "illicit enrichment, trafficking in influence and abuse of power". - APP

## Tehran blasts US sanctions

TEHRAN: The spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry has strongly condemned the United States for slapping a fresh raft of sanctions on Iranian individuals and firms after falsely accusing them of being involved in cyber attacks against Washington and its allies, emphasizing that persistence on a campaign of deceitful propaganda and disinformation against Tehran will not succeed. Nasser Kan'ani said on Thursday that the US administration is empty-handed in dealing with the Islamic Republic of Iran, noting "Washington's insistence on resorting to foolish, unlawful and norm-defying behaviors against independent governments and nations is indicative of the American statesmen's inability." - APP

## Hamas calls for 'popular mobilization'

GAZA: Palestine's Hamas resistance movement has called on all Palestinians to mobilize to confront Israel's malicious conspiracies against the al-Aqsa Mosque in the occupied al-Quds and protect it against the regime's acts of sacrilege. "Al-Quds [Palestinian] residents are the spearhead of the battle against the occupying Zionists and the nation's hope for defending the first Qibla of the Muslims," Mohammad Hamadeh, spokesman for the Hamas branch in occupied al-Quds, said on Wednesday. The remarks followed yet another military-backed desecration of the al-Aqsa Mosque by Israeli settlers. Palestinian media said over 230 settlers entered

the mosque in groups via the al-Maghariba Gate and toured the courtyards. Israeli rabbis also delivered lectures and a number of visitors performed prayers at the site. Radical Israeli groups are encouraging the settlers to visit the flash-point holy site throughout the upcoming Jewish holidays later this month. As per a long-standing agreement signed between Israel and the Jordanian government in the wake of Israel's occupation of East al-Quds in 1967, Jews may visit the al-Aqsa Mosque compound but are not allowed to pray there. However, an uptick in visits by Israeli settlers to the mosque has angered Palestinian Muslims and led to protests. - Agencies

## California sues Amazon

CALIFORNIA: California filed a lawsuit Wednesday accusing Amazon of using its market influence to prevent merchants from offering buyers better deals elsewhere online, in violation of state antitrust law. Amazon pressures merchants not to list items at lower prices on other websites, which hurts sellers and consumers, California Attorney General Rob Bonta said in the lawsuit. "Amazon coerces merchants into agreements that keep prices artificially high, knowing full well that they can't afford to say no," Bonta said in a release. "Many of the products we buy online would be cheaper if market forces were left unconstrained." The attorney general in Washington had filed a similar suit against Amazon, but a judge dismissed the case in March. "Similar to the DC Attorney General - whose complaint was dismissed by the courts - the California Attorney General has it exactly backwards," an Amazon spokesperson said in response to an AFP inquiry. "The relief the AG seeks would force Amazon to feature higher prices to customers, oddly going against core objectives of antitrust law." Amazon is such a dominant e-commerce site that merchants feel they have little choice when it comes to agreeing to the titan's selling conditions, Bonta's lawsuit argued. - Agencies

## Turkish, Azerbaijani presidents meet in Uzbekistan

## FOREIGN DESK

SAMARKAND: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Azerbaijani counterpart Ilham Aliyev met on Thursday in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. The two leaders' closed-door meeting took place on the sidelines of a Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit. No further information on the meeting was released. However, the recent deadly border clashes between Azerbaijan and Armenia, which Erdogan has criticized Armenia for provoking, was likely a subject of discussion. After his arrival in Samarkand this afternoon, Erdogan visited its historic Hazrat Khizr Mosque and Tomb. He is also due to attend a sapling-planting event along with the leaders of countries attending the summit and tour newly built areas of the city. Later in the day, Erdogan will attend dinner with the leaders. On Friday, Erdogan will attend as a special guest the 22nd Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the SCO, with Türkiye taking part at the presidential level for the first time since Ankara obtained SCO dialogue partner status in 2012. Established in 2001, the eight-member organization aims to strengthen friendly, good neighborly relations and mutual trust among member states.

## King Charles III faces a home-front reshuffle

LONDON: King Charles III has built up a string of cherished residences across Britain but now faces having to give them up to meet the demands of state. The death of his mother Queen Elizabeth II means the new king will have to rejig his home life as her official and private residences become his - and Charles's also change hands. Since 2003, his official London residence has been Clarence House. He will shortly be expected, however, to move to Buckingham Palace, the sovereign's London residence and the administrative headquarters of the monarchy. He also seems set to say farewell to his beloved Highgrove family home in the countryside, the embodiment of his environmental principles. Highgrove in Gloucestershire, southwest England, belongs to the Duchy of Cornwall - the historic land and property estate established to provide a private income for the eldest son and heir apparent of the monarch. When Charles became king, the dukedom automatically passed to his eldest son Prince William. As king, he now takes command of not only Buckingham Palace but also Windsor Castle; the Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh. - APP

## Iran signs memorandum to join SCO

Iran's economy has been hit hard since 2018, when then-US President Donald Trump unilaterally abandoned a landmark nuclear deal signed between Iran and world powers, including Russia and China

## AGENCIES

SAMARKAND: Iran has signed a Memorandum of Obligations to become a permanent member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), a central Asian security body, the Iranian foreign minister said. "By signing the document for full membership of the SCO, now Iran has entered a new stage of various economic, commercial, transit and energy cooperation," Hossein Amirabdollahi wrote on social media. The statement came as leaders from China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan headed to the latter's city of Samarkand for a summit of the eight-member SCO, a security group

formed by Beijing and Moscow as a counterweight to United States influence. Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran, and Mongolia are observer countries, while the organisation has six "dialogue partners": Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Turkey. Last year, the rapidly expanding SCO approved Iran's application for accession, while the government in Tehran called on members to help it form a mechanism to avert sanctions imposed by the West over its disputed nuclear programme. "The relationship between countries that are sanctioned by the US, such as Iran, Russia or other countries, can overcome many problems and issues and make them stronger," Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi told his Russian

counterpart, Vladimir Putin, during a meeting in Samarkand. "The Americans think whichever country they impose sanctions on, it will be stopped, their perception is a wrong one." For his part, Putin said relations were "developing positively" between Russia and Iran and gave his full support to the latter's application to become an SCO member. Reporting from the Silk Road oasis of Samarkand, Al Jazeera's Resul Serdar said Iran's full membership is expected to become effective in April 2023. He added that the SCO, the world's largest regional organisation consisting of 40 percent of the world's population and 30 percent of global gross domestic product (GDP),

wants to further expand. "Belarus is also officially going to sign the documents that its membership will be initiated," Serdar said. "Qatar and Saudi Arabia are also expected to become new dialogue partners." Iran's economy has been hit hard since 2018, when then-US President Donald Trump unilaterally abandoned a landmark nuclear deal signed between Iran and world powers, including Russia and China. Months of indirect talks between Iran and US President Joe Biden's administration have hit a dead end over several obstacles to reviving the nuclear pact, under which the Iranian government agreed to curbs on its nuclear programme in return for the lifting of sanctions.



## Briefs

Shehbaz Gill  
given bail  
in sedition  
case

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) Thursday granted Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf (PTI)'s Leader Shahbaz Gill post-arrest bail in a sedition case registered by the capital's police.

The court accepted the bail against surety bonds worth Rs 500,000 and ordered to release the accused. During the hearing, Chief Justice, Athar Minallah asked Gill's lawyer that how he could justify the statement of the accused to involve armed forces in politics. The chief justice said that political parties had increased so much hatred and it could be seen in the speech.

He remarked that the institutions were not so weak that it could be affected by someone's speech but Shahbaz Gill's irresponsible statement could not be justified in any way.

The court asked whether the government's permission was taken before registering sedition case.

The chief justice said that whether the spokesperson of the political party did not know that the armed forces had taken an oath for not to interfere in politics. He remarked that Shahbaz Gill's statement was irresponsible, inappropriate and defamatory. "Do you think that such an irresponsible statement can influence the armed forces," he asked.

The court asked whether a complaint ever filed on behalf of the institutions.

The chief justice questioned that if Shahbaz Gill told anyone to rebel, then tell the court. The court inquired how this charge was made in accordance of the law.

The court said that he was arrested and was inside, then how did he not cooperate. The court said "PTI imposed draconian law in their government, now you want to apply the same." The chief justice said no one should be deprived of bail unless there was concrete material against him. If the same person turns out to be innocent tomorrow then there could be no compensation for him, he said.

Shahbaz Gill's lawyer Salman Safdar said this case was made on political grounds and the investigation had also been completed, adding that the whole case revolved around a speech. The chief justice stopped the lawyer from talking about politics and instructed him to give arguments on legal points. Shahbaz Gill's lawyer read the text of the FIR.—APP

Petrol price  
likely to  
slide down  
by Rs9.62

ISLAMABAD: The price of mogas is likely to drop from Rs235.98 per litre to Rs226.36 after a cut of Rs9.62 per litre on September 16 (Friday) for the next fortnight. However, a slight increase of Rs3.04 per litre is expected in the price of diesel, taking the rate up from Rs247.26 per litre to Rs250.30 for the said duration. Industrial sources said that the average Platts price for motor spirit also plunged by Rs9.55 to Rs92.28 from Rs101.83 for the duration from September 1-15. However, the exchange rate remained on the higher side if compared with the exchange rate registered during August 16-31. And with unchanged customs duty at Rs15.39 per litre, the cost of one-litre petrol in the refinery slid by Rs7.84 per litre to Rs166.76 from Rs174.61 per litre.

Pak-Uzbekistan vow to  
deepen bilateral ties

Prime Minister thanked President Shavkat Mirziyoyev for his sympathies and condolences on sending humanitarian aid to the flood affected people

NEW DESK

ISAMARKAND: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev met on the sidelines of Heads of Summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

The two leaders exchanged views on Pakistan-Uzbekistan relations, and regional and international issues. The Prime Minister thanked President Shavkat Mirziyoyev for his sympathies and condolences on sending humanitarian aid to the flood affected people. He highlighted the devastation caused by the climate induced floods in terms of loss of human lives and damage to crops, livestock, housing and critical infrastructure.

The wide-ranging talks covered bilateral cooperation, with a special focus on trade and economic relations, and regional connectivity through rail, road and



seaports.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif underscored the significance of enhancing political ties, fast-tracking

trade and economic cooperation by fully operationalizing Uzbekistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (UPTTA) and Preferential

Trade Agreement (PTA). The Prime Minister underlined the need for closer defence and security cooperation, and further

increasing collaboration in the fields of education, culture and tourism. He emphasized that liberalized Visa Regime would encour-

age business community of both countries to boost bilateral trade and investment. The Prime Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to the timely completion of Trans-Afghan Railway project and expressed satisfaction at the successful completion of field expedition inside Afghanistan by the technical teams from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Uzbekistan. Once completed, this project would effectively link the Central Asian countries with the world through the seaports of Karachi and Gwadar.

The two leaders agreed to early convening of the Inter-Governmental Commission to formulate specific proposals and projects to further deepen and broaden Pakistan-Uzbekistan cooperation across the entire spectrum.

The Prime Minister extended an invitation to President Shavkat Mirziyoyev to visit Pakistan. The Uzbek President invited the Prime Minister to visit Uzbekistan at an early date.

Germany to  
send rocket  
launchers,  
armored  
vehicles to  
Ukraine

BERLIN: German Defense Minister Christine Lambrecht announced on Thursday that Germany will send two more multiple rocket launchers as well as 50 armored personnel carriers to Ukraine.

On top of that, Germany will send some 200 rockets for the launchers. Ukraine has recently called on Germany to increase its weapons deliveries following a successful counteroffensive against the Russian occupation. "We have decided to deliver two more MARS II multiple rocket launchers including 200 rockets to Ukraine," Lambrecht told a Bundeswehr conference. "On top of this, we will send 50 Dingo armored personnel carriers to Ukraine," she added.—APP

Japanese  
minister  
condoles  
with Pak  
envoy

TOKYO: Japan's State Minister for Foreign Affairs Takei Shunsuke visited the embassy of Pakistan here on Thursday and expressed condolences on behalf of the government of Japan, on losses in devastating floods in Pakistan.

During a meeting with Pakistan's Charge d' Affaires Ismat Hassan Sial, he expressed grief and sympathy on the loss of precious lives and displacement of millions in Pakistan during the torrential rains. Besides flood related matters, various issues on bilateral matters were also discussed during the meeting.

To express solidarity on behalf of the Government of Hyogo Prefecture of Japan, Imago Motohiko, Director General, Hyogo Prefectural Government, also visited the embassy of Pakistan. He pledged a donation of Japanese Yen One million for flood affectedees. Ismat Hassan expressed gratitude for the sympathy and donation by the government of Hyogo Prefecture. Further ways of enhancing future relations were also discussed.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov presenting a souvenir to Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal, during a meeting, on Thursday.—DNA

Imran launched to create  
'anarchy, destruction': Maryam

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Vice President Maryam Nawaz has said that PTI Chairman Imran Khan had been launched in politics to "create anarchy and destruction." Talking to media after her court

appearance in Islamabad along with hubby Captain Safdar on Thursday, Maryam Nawaz said "Imran Khan is not a stakeholder rather he is destruction of Pakistan."

She said the forces which funded him do not want Pakistan to progress. "Imran brought the economy on the verge of collapse and he had also violated the agreement he struck with the IMF," she added.

Calling Imran Khan a 'fina' (mischief-monger), Maryam Nawaz said that during his over three-and-a-half-year rule the country's economy reached the brink of destruction. She said Imran had even broken the

country's deal with the IMF before leaving the office, which further exacerbated the situation. Maryam alleged that some foreign powers had launched Imran to destroy the new generation's moral values as well as corrupt the country's politics. "These powers do not want Pakistan to progress," she opined. Referring to Imran's statement that he had become more dangerous, she said these words were not meant for his political opponents, but for the country. She made it clear to the PTI chairman that if he wanted general elections in the country, he should dissolve the provincial assemblies of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP)

and Punjab first. PML-N vice president also urged the former prime minister not to use religion for politics. She told Imran that he could not get a clean chit by putting all blame for the country's pathetic situation on the current government's shoulders. "Imran, this is your party which is in power in the flood-affected provinces of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa," Maryam said, adding, "Therefore, a greater responsibility rests on your shoulders." "Look Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is visiting all flood-hit areas of the country despite the fact that in none of the provinces the PML-N is in power," she boasted.

Any efforts to destabilise  
Pakistan won't be tolerated

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Office Spokesperson Asim Iftikhar has rejected media reports regarding any stoppage of work or abandonment of the Neelum-Jhelum Hydropower project.

Responding to a question during his weekly news briefing in Islamabad this afternoon, he said India is once again churning out false and baseless reports regarding the Neelum-Jhelum hydropower project. He said a fault was detected in the project and is currently undergoing remedial works for which the concerned entity, Gezhouba Group of China, has been contacted. He said

the group has already attained full mobilization at the site and at present, the work is proceeding smoothly without any interruption with completion expected in 2023.

The Spokesperson said that there is no truth in any report of work stoppage or so-called abandonment. He said these reports are aimed at misleading the public as well as part of malicious propaganda efforts to fuel controversy around Pakistan-China relations. He said such efforts will not succeed as all-weather strategic cooperative partners are fully committed to strengthening bilateral co-

operation for the benefit of both countries and people. Regarding another question about presence of a UN designated individual in Afghanistan, Asim Iftikhar said that the person is a proclaimed offender and wanted in numerous terrorism-related cases in Pakistan.

He said Pakistani authorities have formally raised this issue with the relevant Afghan interlocutors on multiple occasions. He said Pakistan as well as the international community have sufficient reasons to believe that there are still pockets of ungoverned spaces in Afghanistan that

have been used by terrorist groups as safe havens.

The Spokesperson said that multiple deadly cross border terrorist attacks from Afghanistan only increase these legitimate concerns.

He urged the Afghan interim authorities to take concert and verifiable actions to deliver on the assurances they have given to the international community that they will not allow anyone to use Afghan soil against any country.

Responding to another question, Asim Iftikhar said that any efforts to destabilize Pakistan will not be tolerated.—DNA

Rains, floods caused  
massive losses to  
Sindh: President

DADU: President Dr Arif Alvi Thursday said Sindh province had suffered massive losses due to devastating rains and floods and called for extensive measures to help people in time of distress and displacement in the country.

Talking to media at a relief camp in Government Pilot High School, he said: "This is probably the biggest flood in the history of Sindh with huge losses of entire crops."

He pointed out rains and floods had also caused devastation in Balochistan, KPK and Punjab but the level of catastrophe was far bigger in Sindh province.

The President said the government was tirelessly working for rescue and relief of the affected people who were also being helped through Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP). He said the country had never witnessed devastation on such massive

scale and added the government could not cope with the situation single-handedly and urged international community to come forward for help of affected people. He called upon the well-off people of Karachi and other parts of the country to come forward for the help and rehabilitation of affected people. The President asked the government to take extensive measures for providing relief, shelter, education and health services to the affected people.

He said the floods had played havoc with millions of acres of farmlands besides destroying hundreds of thousands of houses. The President observed that the climate change and the rising global temperatures paved the way for the massive floods in Pakistan. "Pakistan contributes minimally to the enhancing temperatures, but it is among the top affected in countries in the world" he added.

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