



# Islamabad POST

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**NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg's term extended to 2024**

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**Putin calls for SCO membership for Belarus**

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**Standing ovation for Federer at Centre Court**

Detailed News On Page-06



## SCO Summit

# Terrorism must be condemned, not politicized

PM Shehbaz Sharif says religious minorities should never be demonized, stresses on close economic linkages between member states

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Tuesday advised India against using terrorism for diplomatic point-scoring, saying terror activities remain a serious obstacle to peace in the region. The prime minister's statement came during his address to the 23rd meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of State (CHS), being virtually hosted by India under the chair of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The premier, during the address, noted that SCO members have a shared interest in ensuring peace and stability in the region, a precondition for economic development anywhere in the world. "The hydra-headed monster of terrorism and extremism, whether committed by individuals, societies, or states, must be fought with full vigour and conviction," the premier said. "Any temptation to use [terrorism] for diplomatic point-scoring must be avoided under all circumstances. Terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, including state terrorism, must be condemned in clear and unambiguous terms." PM Shehbaz noted that there could be no jus-

## Iran becomes member of SCO

BEIJING: Iran on Tuesday officially became a member state of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). The flag of Iran was raised at the SCO Secretariat during an impressive ceremony attended by Secretary General SCO, Zhang Ming, Iranian Ambassador Mohsen Bakhtiar and the envoys and senior officials of the SCO member states. Addressing participants of the ceremony, Secretary General of SCO, Zhang Ming expressed confidence that Iran's full membership will help enhance mutual trust and solidarity among the member states, safeguard regional security and stability and create a new possibility of expanding and deepening cooperation in the economy and trade, transportation, investment, tourism, energy and other areas of common interest of the SCO. Over the years, the Shanghai Spirit has united us all and become our common guidance on the path ahead, he added. He believed that with the joint efforts of member states, the SCO member states will continue to carry forward the Shanghai spirit, turn challenges into opportunities, and make greater contributions to international and regional peace, security, development and prosperity. The Secretary-General, on behalf of the SCO Secretariat, extended warm congratulations to the Iranian leadership and people. - APP

tification for killing innocent people, regardless of the cause or pretext. "Similarly, religious minorities should never be demonised in the pursuit of domestic, political agendas," he said. PM Shehbaz noted that Pakistan had made numerous sacrifices to combat terrorism, adding that the menace of militancy plagues

the region and is a major obstacle to achieving peace. "SCO countries must take concerted and immediate actions [...] against terrorism, extremism, and separatism," the prime minister said, noting that it was the responsibility of all member states.

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses the 23rd SCO Summit. - DNA

## Afghan borders areas safe haven for TTP men

There is a looming threat of these individuals openly joining the ranks of ISIS

DNA

KABUL: The border areas of Afghanistan are currently facing a concerning situation where individuals associated with the TTP (Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan) are reportedly freely moving about. It is imperative for the Afghan government to promptly address this issue and take necessary actions against these TTP terrorists. Reliable sources indicate that there is a looming threat of these individuals openly joining the ranks of ISIS in the near future. Moreover, it is worth noting that a significant number of TTP members have already covertly aligned themselves with ISIS.

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## Upon Pakistan's request UN to hold urgent meeting on Holy Quran desecration

PM calls for joint session of Parliament, nationwide protests

CENTRELINE REPORT

GENEVA: The UN Human Rights Council will hold an urgent session to address the desecration of the Holy Quran following an incident in Stockholm that sparked global outrage, a spokesman said on Tuesday. The development comes after a man, who fled from Iraq to Sweden several years ago, tore up and burned the Holy Quran outside Stockholm's central mosque last week as Muslims around the world began marking the Eidul Azha holiday. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chaired a meeting on the issue of desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden and decided to call joint sitting of the parliament to condemn the matter that hurt billions of Muslims globally. The top huddle decided that there will be a nationwide protest against the Sweden incident on Friday-July 7. The Geneva-based UN Human Rights Council, which is meeting in session until July 14, will change its agenda to stage an urgent debate, following a request from Pakistan. "The UN Human Rights Council will hold an urgent debate to discuss the alarming rise in premeditated and public acts of religious hatred, as manifested by the current desecration of the Holy Quran in some

## Sanjrani writes to Swedish speaker

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: In response to the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden, Acting President Sadiq Sanjrani wrote a letter to the speaker of the Swedish parliament on Tuesday. In a letter to the speaker of the Swedish parliament, Sanjrani said: "There is no margin of the desecration of the holy figures, scriptures, and religious sentiments in modern era. Islam is a whole system of morality that upholds the profound ideals of tolerance, peace, prosperity, humanity, and love." "The Holy Quran discourages violence and is an eternal guide. The significance of upholding peace is emphasised in the Holy Quran", he continued. Sanjrani said, "Islam strictly forbids us from insulting other religions, prophets, or holy books. The true message of Islam must be understood by the entire globe".

Continued on Page 06

## Gold prices decline for 2nd day

DNA

KARACHI: Gold prices in Pakistan continued to decline for the second consecutive day after the rupee made massive gains against the dollar on Tuesday. According to data released by All-Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association (APSGJA), the price of gold (24 carats) decreased by Rs2,200 per tola and Rs1,887 per 10 grams to settle at Rs205,000 and Rs175,754, respectively. Meanwhile, the price of the yellow metal increased for the second time by \$17 to settle at \$1,929 per ounce in the international market.

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## Briefs

### July 5 a Black Day in history

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Chairman of PPP and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has termed July 5, 1977, as a black day in national history. According to the statement issued by Media Cell Bilawal House, the Chairman of PPP further said in his message that Zia is a culprit of the Constitution of Pakistan and the Pakistani nation. He said that the way civil and human rights were violated during the dictatorship of General Zia and way atrocities were committed on those who demanded the restoration of democracy, humanity will always be ashamed of such crimes. Bilawal said that nation is well aware of the fact that a handful of people who follow dictator Zia's thinking are still busy making conspiracies against people's right to rule in their hunger for power, but failure is their destiny.

### GB CM Khalid disqualified

DNA

GILGIT: Gilgit-Baltistan's Chief Court Tuesday disqualified Chief Minister Khalid Khursheed - a leader of the embattled Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) - for holding a fake degree under Articles 62 and 63 of the Constitution of Pakistan. A three-member larger bench - Justice Malik Inayat Ur Rehman, Justice Jaubar Ali, and Justice Mushtaq Muhammad - announced the verdict on the plea filed by Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) GB Assembly member Ghulam Shahzad Agha.

## Toshakhana case

# Sessions court's verdict declared null and void

Courts also extend interim bails of Khan in 10 cases

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday announced its reserved verdict providing relief to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief as it declared the criminal proceedings against him in the Toshakhana (gift repository) case inadmissible. On March 30, the trial was adjourned till April 29 in view of Ramadan and Eid holidays. However, on April 4, the election supervisor requested the court to set an earlier date for hearing the case and the court on April 8 decided to hear the ECP's request on April 11. According to the reserved verdict, the IHC has accepted the petition filed by chairman PTI against the May 5 decision of the trial court and directed the lower court to review its verdict. The IHC has granted the trial court seven days' time to decide the case. Meanwhile, the local courts on Tuesday extended the interim bails of Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI)'s Chief Imran

# PTI hails IHC verdict

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Central Information Secretary (CIS) Raof Hassan said that Islamabad High Court's (IHC) decision in Toshakhana case against PTI Chairman Imran Khan was testimony that fake, frivolous and fraudulent cases were registered against him simply to get him out of the way of the criminal ruling mafia but it would not work. PTI CIS said that PTI Chairman shall emerge ascendant in this political struggle to guide Pakistan to salvation. "Throwing out of Toshakhana case by IHC proves the fake,

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# Jenin: 10 Palestinians martyred in Israeli raids

8 injured in Tel Aviv car ramming incident

NEWS DESK

JENIN: At least 10 Palestinians lost their lives as Israel's operation in Jenin entered its second day, with a senior aide to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu saying Tuesday that the action would come to a halt soon. Media reported that over 1,000 Israeli soldiers and commandos backed by air attacks launched a raid on the Jenin refugee camp early on Monday during which about 100 people sustained injuries. Meanwhile, Eight people were injured after a car driver rammed into pedestrians near a Tel Aviv shopping center and then got out of the vehicle to stab civilians. Israeli officials said Tuesday. The attack came as Israeli forces continued vicious operations in the occupied West Bank city of Jenin for a second night, a day after incursions killed at least 10 people between the ages of 16 and 23, and injured about 100 others. Hamas claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement, and said it was a response to Israel's ongoing military operation in Jenin. The raid, deadliest in two decades, prompted concerns over humanitarian conditions from the United States and the United Nations and also forced the Palestinian administration to suspend contacts with Israel. The operation at the Jenin refugee camp, codenamed "Home and Garden", has been initiated to "uproot Iranian-backed Palestinian armed factions, according to Israel, media reported.

## Pakistan condemns raids, airstrikes

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan condemned, in the strongest possible terms, the raids and airstrikes carried out by the Israeli occupation forces since Monday in Jenin in the occupied Palestinian territory of the West Bank, which killed 10 Palestinians and injured some 50 others. This latest episode of violence against the occupied people of Palestine by the occupying power must end immediately. Pakistan calls upon the international community to assume its responsibility in bringing these brutal and illegal actions by the Israeli occupation forces to a halt and to ensure protection of the human rights of the Palestinian people. Pakistan reaffirms its strong and unwavering support to the legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people for the full realization of their rights and freedoms - including the right to self-determination. We also renew our call for a viable, independent and contiguous Palestinian State, with pre-1967 borders and Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital, in accordance with the relevant United Nations and OIC resolutions. - DNA

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# Kazakh-Pakistan direct air flights to start from July 8

The Ambassador said that the top leadership of both the countries was determined to strengthening and promoting of bilateral economic, trade and diplomatic relations

## STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan Yezhan Kistafin on Tuesday said that direct air flight operation between Kazakhstan and Pakistan would start from July 8 this month, which would increase economic, social and cultural integration of both countries. Addressing a round table on 'Kazakhstan and Pakistan bilateral ties and way forward', he said a direct air flight between Almaty and Lahore would start on July 8. The Ambassador of Kazakhstan said that direct air flights between the two countries were crucial for regional economic and trade integration in Kazakhstan and Pakistan. He said that duration of the direct flight between the two countries would be 2 hours, which would promote mutual economic and trade relations and the possibilities of cooperation in the field of tourism would be brighter. The

envoy said that after success of direct flight operations in these two cities, such air service would be started between other big cities including Islamabad and Karachi. He said that just last week, there was a phone conversation between the President of Kazakhstan, Kassim Tokayev, and Prime Minister of Pakistan, Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif during which issues of mutual interest between the two countries were discussed. The Ambassador said that the top leadership of both the countries was determined to strengthening and promoting of bilateral economic, trade and diplomatic relations. He said that Kazakhstan was currently a great destination for foreign investment which attracted \$28 billion FDI this year. He said that there was a lot of potential in the ports of Gwadar and Karachi of Pakistan, through which Kazakhstan, including Central Asia, can be accessed to the markets of

Europe and Africa. Ambassador Yezhan Kistafin said that Kazakhstan had vast reserves of energy, gas and oil which Pakistan could take advantage of. He said that Kazakhstan was currently the third largest exporter of wheat in the world, which had wide possibilities for cooperation with Pakistan. Kazakhstan is an important member of the Eurasian Organization, which Pakistan can also benefit from, he said. He said the role of media was very important in the relations between the two countries, which could open new avenues of cooperation between the two countries. On this occasion, Director Pakistan China Institute of Strategic Studies and Central Asia, Dr. Talat Shabbir said that Kazakhstan and Pakistan had wide possibilities of economic, trade and diplomatic cooperation. Dr. Talat Shabbir said that so far 35 bilateral MOUs have been signed between the two countries in various fields, most of which have been implemented.



RAWALPINDI: Delegation of 3rd SMC posing for a group photo with RCCI President, Saqib Rafiq on the occasion of their visit. — DNA

## 33rd SMC delegation visits RCCI

RAWALPINDI: A delegation headed by Ms Sameena Fayyaz, Director Staff of the 33rd Senior Management Course (SMC) along with faculty members from the National Institute of Management, (NIM), Lahore visited the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) on their Inland study tour here Tuesday. The visit was part of the National Institute of Management Course aiming at capacity building and a better understanding of national issues and interacting with the key decision makers and Institutions. RCCI President Saqib Rafiq along with Senior Vice President Muhammad Hamza Sarosh welcomed the participants and briefed them about the activities of RCCI and further expressed the Chamber's policies and initiatives for enhancing business ties and economy. —DNA

## PTI applies for election symbol

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Tuesday applied for an election symbol for the general elections. In this regard, the PTI had submitted an application to retain "bat" as its electoral symbol. The PTI spokesperson said, "It is legally required to request and receive one's preferred electoral symbol prior to the election. Only the bat symbol will be used by PTI candidates to contest the national and provincial elections." The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Saturday directed political parties to submit their applications for the allotment of election symbols ahead of general elections. —APP

# Governor KP directs transparency, merit in appointments of VCs

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali on Tuesday stressed following a policy of merit and transparency in appointments of Vice Chancellors (VCs) in public sector universities and said that educational qualifications and administrative capabilities should be considered minutely before giving them responsibilities. He expressed these views while chairing a meeting held to discuss matters of appointing vice-chancellors in universities. The meeting was also attended by caretaker ministers including Barrister Feroz Jamal Kakakhel, Justice (ret) Irshad Qaisar, Hamid Shah, Chief Secretary, Naadeem Aslam, Secretary Law and Secretary Higher Education. The meeting discussed the educational,

administrative and financial problems of universities due to the delay in appointing permanent vice-chancellors. Participants of the meeting also discussed appointments of vice-chancellors in newly established universities including Shringal and Taimargara and various problems faced by these universities. The meeting was briefed by Chief Secretary, Higher Education Secretary about appointments of vice-chancellors in public sector universities. The meeting concurred to appoint vice-chancellors at the earliest following policy of merit and transparency. Chairing the meeting, Governor directed that appointments should be made abiding by policy of merit and transparency and search committee must be

informed about any complaints. He said that universities should be provided all the needed facilities and pay increases of staff should also be considered. He urged vice-chancellors and faculty members to jointly work to further increase the educational standard of these institutions besides introducing research innovations to enhance the capacity of students and enable them to meet the challenges of the contemporary world. KP Governor said that young generation is our asset and their venturing into new fields of technologies would directly impact progress and development of our country. He that advancement into new education field would not only benefit our youth but would also help strengthen the country's economy. —APP

## River Kabul still flows in low flood

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Flood Commission (FFC) has said that all major rivers of Indus River System are running normal except River Kabul, which continues to flow in low flood at Nowshera. According to a daily FFC report on Tuesday, at present, Combined Live Storage of country's major reservoirs (Tarbela, Chashma & Mangla) is 7.252 MAF of total country's storage 13.443 MAF.

As per Flood Forecasting Division (FFD) Lahore, yesterday's deep trough of Westerly Wave over Northern parts of Afghanistan today lies over Northeastern Afghanistan and adjoining areas. An upper air cyclonic circulation has developed, due to air cooling, over Southwestern Bay of Bengal. Seasonal Low lies over Northeastern Balochistan with its trough extending northwards. Moderate to Strong Monsoon Currents both from the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal are penetrating into upper parts of Pakistan up to 5000 feet and are likely to continue during the next three days. For the next 24 hours FFD, Lahore has predicted scattered to widespread thunderstorm/ Rain of Moderate Intensity with isolated heavy falls over Islamabad, Punjab (Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Sargodha & Lahore Divisions) and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa including over upper catchments of all the Major Rivers of Indus River System (IRS). Isolated thunderstorm/ rain may also occur over the rest of the Punjab and Balochistan (Kalat, Naseerabad, Loralai, Quetta, Sibi & Zhab Divisions) during the said period. The present wet spell of moderate to heavy intensity is likely to affect upto July 09, 2023 over the upper catchments of all the major Rivers of IRS and Sulaiman range. Another strong monsoon System is likely to hit the upper catchments of all the major Rivers except River Indus from 8th July 2023. As a result, it is expected that flash flooding in the Hill Torrents of D.G Khan Division and local Nullahs of Northern Balochistan including small Rivers in Bannu, —APP

# CDA board, approved budget for year 2023-24

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: An important meeting of the CDA Board was held on Tuesday under the Chairmanship of Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) Noor Alamin Mengal at CDA Headquarters. In the meeting, CDA board approved the world's largest bird aviary, which will be built in F-9 Park in Islamabad. Birds from all over the world will be bred in the aviary covering ten acres of land. The main objective of this bird aviary is to establish an aviary that will serve as a

sanctuary for various species of birds that will contribute to the conservation of biodiversity and provide entertainment and information to park visitors. The Aviary will be built through open auction on the basis of DBOT model (Design, Build, Operate and Transfer). Moreover, CDA board approved the layout plan of Sector D-13, E-13 and F-13 these revised LOPs of the above sectors were presented and in the light of opinions and instructions of the board the revised LOPs will be planned in accordance with the modern manner keeping in mind the require-

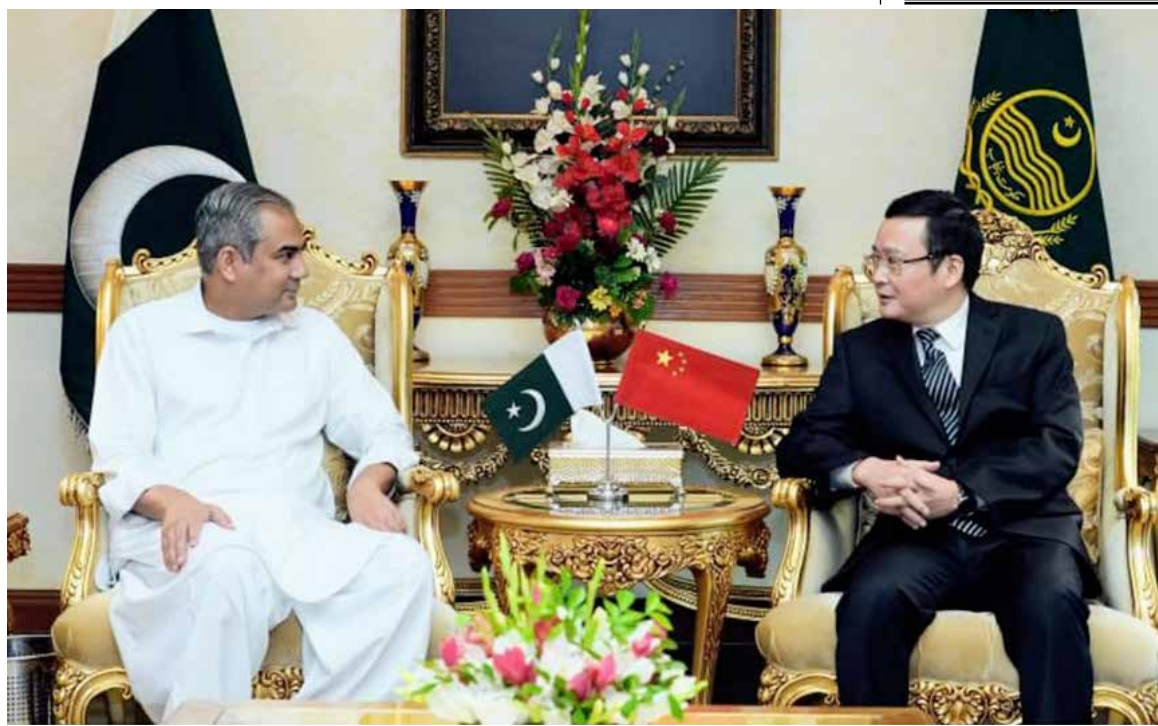
ments of present era. CDA board approved the open auction of 20 plots of Capital Street Islamabad. The board also approved the rules and regulations of Capital Street. The board further directed to make investor-friendly rules and regulation of capital streets. In addition, CDA board approved the budget for the financial year 2023-24, which is estimated at Rs 150, 948.20 (million). The estimated expenditure of Capital Development Authority will be at Rs 150, 095.74 (million). Amount of Rs 852.46 (million) will be a surplus of the current budget

# Naqvi, Shiren discuss ways to enhance coop

LAHORE: Chinese Consul General Zhao Shiren called on Caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi to discuss ways to enhance cooperation, at the CM office here on Tuesday. The focus of their discussion was the fields of agriculture, livestock, and information

technology, with both expressing their commitment to further promote bilateral ties. They agreed to strengthen collaboration in various areas, with China offering its support by providing high-quality cotton and rice seeds to Punjab. Chinese experts will also be

involved in cotton research and mechanization efforts. Additionally, the CM offered to facilitate meat exports from Punjab to China, and the Consul General assured cooperation in issuing Halal Meat Certification for Punjab. Recognizing China's expertise in modern cattle farming, it was agreed to leverage their experience in this domain. The Chinese Consulate in Lahore will arrange the teaching of the Chinese language to the jawans of the Special Protection Unit (SPU). —DNA



LAHORE: Chinese Counsel General Zhao Shiren calls on Caretaker CM Punjab, Mohsin Naqvi. —DNA

# Rain-wind expected at various parts of country

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast rain-wind/thundershower for Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Islamabad, Potohar region, upper/central Punjab and Northeast Balochistan during the next 24 hours. Isolated heavy falls are also expected in upper Punjab, Islamabad, Kashmir and upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the period. However, very hot and humid weather is expected in other parts of the country. The PMD has also warned that heavy falls may generate urban flooding in low-lying areas in Sialkot, Narowal, Gujranwala, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, Islamabad and Peshawar. While landslide is also likely

in hilly areas. In Islamabad, rain-wind/thundershower with heavy falls at isolated places is expected in Islamabad. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, rain-wind/thundershower is expected in Chitral, Dir, Swat, Kohistan, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Malakand, Balakot, Charsadda, Mardan, Peshawar, Kohat, Kurram, Bannu, Waziristan and Dera Ismail Khan. Heavy falls are also expected in Charsadda, Mardan, Nowshera, Peshawar, Abbottabad, Mansehra, Malakand, Dir, Swat, Kohat and Kohistan during the period. In Punjab, rain-wind/thundershower is expected in Murree, Galliat, Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Attock, Chakwal, Sargodha, Mianwali, Faisalabad, Jhang, Toba Tek Singh,

Bahawalnagar, Narowal, Sialkot, Sahiwal, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Mandi Bahauddin, Hafizabad, Lahore, Bhakkar, Layyah, Taunsa, Multan and Dera Ghazi Khan. Heavy falls are also expected in Sialkot, Narowal, Gujrat, Gujranwala, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Attock, Chakwal, Toba Tek Singh, Mandi Bahauddin, Sargodha and Faisalabad during the period. Very hot and humid weather is likely to continue in other districts of the province. In Balochistan, hot and humid weather is expected in most parts of the province however isolated rain-wind-thundershower may occur in Ziarat, Kalat, Khuzdar, Zhab and Barkhan. The weather will remain very hot and humid weather in most districts of Sindh

In Kashmir/Gilgit-Baltistan, rain-wind/thundershower is expected in Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. Heavy Falls are also expected in Kashmir (Neelum valley, Muzaffarabad, Poonch, Hattian, Bagh, Haveli, Sudhanoti, Kotli, Bhimber, Mirpur) during the forecast period. During the last 24 hours, rain-wind/thundershowers occurred in Northeastern Punjab, Potohar region, Upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Kashmir. While, hot and humid weather prevailed in other parts of the country. The rainfall recorded was Punjab: Jhelum 49 mm, Mangla 46, Sialkot (Airport 42, City 29), Lahore (Head Office Wasa 33, Mughal Pura 26, Airport 25, City 24, Quertaba Chowk 23, Pani Wala

Talab 22, Taj Pura, Farukhabad 20, Lakshmi Chowk 18, Johar Twon, Nishtar Town 16, Chowk Nakhuda, Gulshan-e-Ravi 14, Iqbal Town, Upper Mal 12, Samanabad 09), Narowal 25, Rawalpindi (Shamsabad 23, Chaklala 17, Kacheri 10), Murree 18, Gujranwala 17, Islamabad (Bokra 16, Zeropoint, Airport 09, Saidpur 03), Kasur 07, M. B. Din 06, Gujrat 05, Noorpur Thal 01, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Kakul 30, Balakot, Bannu 18, Malamjatta 12, Lower Dir 08, Saidu Sharif 03, Kashmir: Kotli 10, Rawalakot 05, Garhi Dupatta 03 and Muzaffarabad Airport 01mm. The highest maximum temperatures recorded were Dadu, Dalbandin 47 C, Sibbi 46, Nokkundi and Jacobabad 45 C. —APP

# Desecration of Quran: JI to hold protest on Friday

## DNA

LAHORE: The Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) decided to observe Friday, July 7, a "day of condemnation" in response to the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden. Speaking to media on Tuesday, JI Emir Sirajul Haq said, "The Holy Quran was desecrated in Sweden with the permission of the Swedish authorities. The despicable act has damaged the feelings of two billion Muslims across the world." "The fact that this heinous act took place in Sweden on the auspicious festival of Eidul Azha raises a lot of questions," he con-



tinued. Speaking about the Organisation of the Islamic Committee (OIC), Haq stated, "We were thinking the OIC will hold the meeting in this regard, But regrettably, nothing has been done effectively." He made it clear that on July 7, the JI will hold protests against the desecration of Holy Quran.

Haq continued, "The day of condemnation will be observed on the five continents." Haq on Sunday made it clear that his party will stage protest against sacrilege of the Holy Quran in Sweden. He expressed his thoughts, urging the Muslim countries to protest against the abhorrent act. It is the responsibility of Pakistan and other Muslim countries to respond to the heinous sacrilege of the Holy Quran with an even stronger response, he added. Siraj said it was urgently necessary to expel the Swedish diplomats from all Muslim countries.

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## National Days and Armed Forces Days

### JULY

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

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



### Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115  
PIA Flight Info.....114  
PIA Cargo.....9280979  
Railway Inquiry.....117  
Railway Exchange9270831-5  
WASA Rawalpindi.5555489  
CAA.....9281092



### Hospitals

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



### Departments

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

### Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480



ISLAMABAD: A view of the Faisal Avenue as people are on their way to home after office timing in Federal Capital. —Onine

## BISP to utilize mobile registration vans: Kundi

Faisal Karim Kundi said that open court was meant to resolve citizens' problems at their doorstep. He said that the total population of the Daraban Tehsil was about 1,25,000 which included 17500 BISP beneficiaries

### DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety and Central Information Secretary of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Faisal Karim Kundi has said that mobile registration vans would be utilized from next month to facilitate and register women hailing from far-flung areas for the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP). He said BISP was a non-political program which was underway for the welfare of the poor voters of every party in a transparent manner. He expressed these views while addressing an open court at BISP Center to address issues of the people of Daraban, Darazinda

and adjacent areas. Faisal Karim Kundi said that open court was meant to resolve citizens' problems at their doorstep. He said that the total population of the Daraban Tehsil was about 1,25,000 which included 17500 BISP beneficiaries. He informed that about 160 million amount after every three months among them. He added that the stipend for children of cardholders had been increased and added that amount was also being provided for college and university students to enable children of the poor to pursue higher education as well. He added 11,000 cardholders were given Rs25000 each during the flood in Daraban last year. He said that 85 percent of the genuinely deserving people



were benefiting and if this program was not there then who would ask the poor people of Daraban and Kulachi Tehsils. He said more incentives would be given to the deserving people of this

program. He said that Daraban, Kalachi and Darazinda were the backward Tehsils of Dera Ismail Khan and the BISP office would be set up there as government land was provided. If an application was given for a device for his convenience then Bank Al Falah could provide a device to each union council so that people had not to travel to cities. He said prompt action would be taken if the device holder register any complaint. From next month, he said the beneficiaries were being provided with the facility to open a bank account and the amount would be directly deposited into the beneficiary's account. He said in the previous government several cards were blocked across the country. Out

of which two and a half lakh cards had been restored across the country including 120 cards in Daraban city. He also said that the passport counter would be established in Darazinda and Kulachi soon. He also appreciated the BISP staff for providing swift services to people. He also met the staff of the BISP and assured them of his effort for resolving problems of people. Earlier Minister of State Faisal Karim Kundi also participated in the reception of dignitaries at Gandhi Ashaq and Gara Khan. Former Tehsil Nazim Daraban Humayun Khan Miankhal. Malik Asif Luthani, Ramzan Shirani and other dignitaries of the area highlighted the issues. —APP

## Benazir Nashonuma Program touches over 770000 mark

ISLAMABAD: The Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) has served over 770000 women and children under the Benazir Nashonuma initiative until now through provision of health and nutrition services. Among the total beneficiaries, a total of 38,2900 pregnant and lactating women (PLW) and 387400 children have been facilitated so far. According to an official source, these beneficiaries had been served through the network of over 488 Nashonuma Centers across the country. The Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) intervention of Benazir Nashonuma was designed in August 2020 to increase the uptake of Health and Nutrition services of its beneficiaries. The primary objectives of the program were to prevent stunting in children under two years of age, improve weight gain of pregnant women during pregnancy, reduce anemia and micronutrient deficiencies and prevent low birth weight. —APP

## Delegation of 33rd Senior Management Course visits Police Lines

RAWALPINDI: A delegation of the 33rd Senior Management Course here on Tuesday visited Police Lines Headquarters. City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Syed Khalid Hamdani briefed the officers about steps taken by Rawalpindi Police to improve service delivery and performance standards. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations, SSP Investigation, Divisional SPs, SP Headquarters and SDPOs were also present on the occasion. The delegation included senior officers of Pakistan Administrative, Provincial Management and Pakistan Police services, Inland Revenue, Finance Division, National Accountability Bureau and other institutions. —APP

## Tourism fastest growing industry in Pakistan: ICCI

### MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that tourism is among the fastest growing industries in the world. Many countries are earning billions of dollars annually only through this industry. Last year, more than 200 million tourists traveled to different countries around the world. Pakistan has not yet become an international tourism spot due to several reasons, despite having immense potential in terms of tourism. The ICCI Tourism Summit to be held in Skardu next week under Islamabad Chamber of Commerce is an attempt to attract global tourism. The ambassadors of different countries participating in the conference will be the cause of

conveying the positive image of the country to the world. In a statement issued on Tuesday, he said that millions of tourists visited KPK and northern regions during the Eid holiday only, which is still going on. Despite many obstacles including lack of infrastructure, lack of regulations in the hotel industry, the beauty of these areas attracts tourists. Pakistan has the best tourism resources in the form of KPK, Kashmir and especially the northern regions to attract tourists from all over the world. Due to the sacrifices of the brave forces, people and security agencies, a major obstacle in terms of security has been removed. To increase the share of the tourism industry in the country's GDP, bringing in foreign tourists is essential. The government needs to focus on it. He said that this year there is a possibility of

earning 2000 billion dollars in the world through the tourism industry which was 1451 in 2018. Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world. In the last few years, there has been a decline in tourism in the Muslim world, which is mainly due to the incidents of terrorism. Egypt is earning 50% of its GDP from tourism. Similarly, Turkey, Malaysia, Maldives, some African countries, Dubai, Saudi Arabia are examples for Pakistan, which have focused heavily on tourism. Arab countries are focusing on tourism and other industries by ending their dependence on oil, in this regard, Dubai and Saudi Arabia have invested billions of dollars. Pakistan also needs to think on the same lines. To attract the attention of international tourists to Pakistan, we have to adopt the Turkish model. Pakistan needs to start direct

flights, ease of visa processing, international branding of the country's tourist destinations. Many international organizations have declared Pakistan as the best tourism spot in the world, while with the presence of many highest peaks in the world including K2, Naga Parbat, Pakistan can also become the center of adventure tourism. Nepal earned about 1300 million dollars last year through one of its peaks, Mount Everest, while 6 of the world's 15 highest peaks are in Pakistan. Adventure tourism is important in the western world. The government needs to take steps in this regard. He said that the main objective of the tourism conference held under the Islamabad Chamber is to attract the world to this most beautiful region. I hope this conference will be a milestone for the promotion of tourism in the northern regions.

## Short courses pave way for youth in freelance industry

ISLAMABAD: Learning skills through short course allows youth to work in the international market with flexibility and freedom of choice in freelance industry. Talking to APP here on Tuesday, Chief Executive Officer of Cognitive Innovations Farhan Ahmed pointed out that Information Technology (IT) experts in countries like the United States charged over \$100 USD per hour whereas Pakistani experts got around \$30 USD which made them a favoured choice for international clients. Farhan explained that the freelance industry provided a work environment where experts could sell their skills. He said that freelancers could choose from a wide range of options, including web development, coding, voice overs. —APP



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazir Tarar had a meeting with the Turkish Ambassador Dr Mehmet Paçacı. —DNA

## Pakistan, China bilateral cooperation soars

Collectively, we will tackle common challenges', says Mushahid

### FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Under the leadership of Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Chairman of the Senate Defence Committee and Pakistan-China Institute will spearhead a prominent delegation of seven parliamentarians on a momentous journey to China, the first parliamentary delegation to visit China after the COVID crisis. The significance of this visit cannot be overstated, as it underscores the commitment of both Pakistan and China to further strengthen the bonds of friendship and cooperation. This highly anticipated visit aims to foster robust parliamentary exchanges between Pakistan and China, while further deepening the mutual understanding and cooperation between the two nations. According to Senator Mushahid Hussain, the Delegation

representing 6 political parties from all four provinces, is visiting China with a three-pronged purpose: a) to reaffirm Pakistan Parliament's commitment to promoting Pakistan-China friendship as the pillar of Pakistan's foreign policy; b) to learn from the Chinese experience of development and modernisation with a view to imbibing lessons that can take CPEC forward in the new phase; c) to exchange views with Chinese friends and counterparts on the rapidly changing situation in our neighbourhood so that Pakistan and China can tackle common challenges collectively. The parliamentarians include Mahesh Kumar Mallani, MNA and Minister of State for National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination; Mohsin Dawar, MNA, Chairman of the National Assembly Standing

Committee on Foreign Affairs; Muhammad Abubakar, MNA, Chairman of the National Assembly Standing Committee on

Parliamentary Affairs; Ghous Bux Khan Maher, Member of the National Assembly of Pakistan; Dr Nisar Ahmad Cheema, Member of the National Assembly Standing Committee on Science and Technology, National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination; and Senator Sana Jamali, Member of the Senate Standing Committee on Power, National Health Services Regulations and Coordination, Science and Technology, and Water Resources. During their stay in China, the delegation will partake in a series of high-level meetings with Senior Officials of China's Foreign Ministry, the International Department of the Communist Party of China's Central Committee, deputies to the National People's Congress, and Members of Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference plus media and think

tanks for first-hand understanding of whole-process people's democracy. These discussions will delve into vital matters of mutual interest, charting a course for deeper collaboration in several areas. Moreover, the delegation will also visit China Foreign Affairs University and Beijing Foreign Studies University, National Museum of China, and will meet business leaders and Media personnel. With a schedule packed with high-level meetings, visits to prestigious institutions, and interactions with business leaders and media personnel, this momentous journey promises to deepen collaboration and pave the way for a prosperous future of bilateral cooperation. The bonds between Pakistan and China are set to grow even stronger as this delegation embarks on this important endeavor of Parliamentary Diplomacy.





## Briefs

## Pakistan's copper products exports to China cross \$485 million

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In the first five months of 2023, Pakistan's copper products exports to China have crossed \$485 million.

This noteworthy trade between the two nations highlights the growing demand for copper products in China and Pakistan's ability to meet this demand. Speaking to Gwadar Pro, the trade and investment counsellor of the Pakistani Embassy in Beijing, Ghulam Qadir, said that the Pakistani government is eager to increase exports of copper and related products to China. He added that copper exports to China have increased in recent years and he hopes that refined products of copper will increase the value of exports from Pakistan to China.

He added that one of the biggest players in China's copper industry, Metallurgical Corporation of China (MCC), operates in Pakistan and plays a very important role in the development of Saindak copper mines since 1995. "From January to May 2023, refined copper products in raw form, community code (74031900) generated \$201.098 million in sales, compared to \$244.62 million last year during the same period," he said. Similarly, unrefined copper, copper anodes for electrolytic refining, community code (74020000) reached \$167.21 million from January to May 2023, while it was \$134.32 million in the same period in 2022," Pakistani sources said.

## APHC call for strike on in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD: The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has called for complete shutdown in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir on July 08 (Saturday) on the 7th martyrdom anniversary of the prominent youth resistance leader, Burhan Muzaffar Wani who along with his colleagues sacrificed his life for the just cause of right to self-determination. According to Kashmir Media Service, Burhan Wani along with two associates was martyred by Indian troops in a fake encounter in Kokernag area of Islamabad district on July 8, 2016. During the period of mass uprising, 156 civilian protesters were martyred and thousands injured by the troops, paramilitary and police personnel. The APHC call has been supported by all pro-freedom leaders and organizations. The posters displayed by All Parties Hurriyat Conference, Nawjawan-e-Hurriyat Jammu Kashmir, Political Resistance Movement, Jammu and Kashmir Justice League Forum, Jammu and Kashmir Sadaq Mazloom, Wareseen-e-Shuhada, Democratic Youth Forum, Jammu Kashmir Democratic Movement, Jammu Kashmir Peoples Resistance Party, Kashmir Resistance Movement, Kashmir Hurriyat Forum, Youth Democratic Political Movement, Jammu.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Wives of defence attaches of various countries posing for a picture during an Eid get-together organized by Ms. Afshee Misbah.—DNA

## China, Pak jointly explore new path of silage harvesting

"Mechanization in agriculture farm reduces cost by enabling efficient use of inputs including water, seeds, pesticides and fertilizers"

DNA

ISLAMABAD: China and Pakistan will step up efforts to jointly explore a new path of silage harvesting and processing in Pakistan, as the two sides agreed on a meeting held to promote the joint research and outcome commercialization of small and medium-sized silage harvesting equipment in mountainous and hilly areas of the countries.

Meeting on joint research and development and outcome commercialization of small and medium-sized silage harvesting equip-

ment in mountainous and hilly areas of China and Pakistan held in Lanzhou, China on June 28, 2023, China Economic Net (INP) reported on Tuesday.

At the meeting that took place in Lanzhou, China, it was announced that China will help Pakistan in the livestock sector by establishing a test and demonstration base, donating agricultural machinery and equipment worth 1.5 million yuan, and training a professional team for the R&D and design of silage harvesting and processing machinery and a group of technicians for the operation, use and maintenance of the machinery

for Pakistan. CEN reporter learns that the project, undertaken by Gansu Academy of Mechanical Sciences Co., Ltd., aims to enhance the mechanized operation, efficiency and economic benefits of Pakistan's agricultural production, and the export competitiveness of its silage.

Since the project was launched in 2018, the team has been studying the key technologies suitable for Pakistan in terms of silage harvesting and processing, sealing reliability of wrap film, mechanical properties of wrap film and shearing characteristics of corn. So far, four kinds of harvesting

and processing equipment suitable for silage production under different conditions in mountainous and plain areas of Pakistan were developed, namely, silage harvesting equipment, mounted silage harvester, efficient silage processing machinery, and silage strapping press baler. According to the requirements of silage production, two production lines were designed respectively for small-scale silage production in mountainous and hilly areas and large-scale silage production in plain areas. "Mechanization in agriculture farm reduces cost by enabling efficient use of inputs

including water, seeds, pesticides and fertilizers.

It also reduces spoilage and harvest losses", said Mr. Muhammad Ismail, ecosystem specialist at the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), an intergovernmental knowledge and learning center. Following the meeting, Pakistani experts visited the agricultural machinery and equipment production base of Gansu Academy of Mechanical Sciences Co., Ltd., where the agricultural machinery and equipment to be demonstrated and promoted in Pakistan were displayed and introduced.

## Huawei unveils innovations in ICT services

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Huawei, the global technology leader, showcased its latest innovations in ICT services and software at the Mobile World Congress (MWC) Shanghai 2023 aimed to empower industrial intelligent digital transformation in collaboration with global carriers and industrial partners. Vice President of Huawei's Global Technical Service Department Bruce Xun while addressing the MWC Shanghai 2023 emphasized that by innovating ICT service and software solutions, Huawei will continue to work alongside global carriers to build green, efficient, and robust networks that provide the ultimate experience, chart new growth curves, develop the intelligent digital talent

of the future, and drive industrial intelligent digital transformation to create an intelligent world that prioritizes ultimate user experience. Embracing the dual-E (Energy and Experience) concept, Huawei is committed to promoting a low-carbon circular economy with green and low-carbon target networks. In the second half of 2022, Huawei initiated a project to reconstruct the sites and equipment rooms of China Mobile Shandong. As of June 2023, the impact of this project has been substantial, with a total energy savings of 10.6+ million kWh and a reduction in carbon emissions of 3720+ tons, which is equivalent to planting about 200,000 trees. The explosive growth of computing power requirements has led to a sharp increase in AI computational capacity, accompanied by a dynamic surge in energy consump-

tion. Shenyang AI Computing Center was successfully launched in just six months, achieving a high level of computing density while maintaining exceptional energy efficiency. In Q2 of 2023, Huawei efficiently upgraded the center's computing power from 100P to 300P, resulting in sustained and efficient business growth for the customer. Huawei's AUTIN solution facilitated the O&M transformation of China Mobile Tianjin's B2B services. AUTIN ensured a guaranteed user experience, which substantially improved China Mobile Tianjin's private line user satisfaction, ranking it among the top 10 in the China Mobile group nationwide. AUTIN implements proactive service quality monitoring through multi-vendor cross-domain service topology restoration, facilitating the identification of potential network risks up to 12 hours in advance.

## Nawaz to return Pak before election campaign

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Petroleum, Dr. Musadik Malik Tuesday said that Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) supreme leader and former prime minister Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif will return back to the country before the election campaign.

Talking to a Private news channel, he said that the party was fully prepared to go to the election and former prime minister Nawaz Sharif is the only capable leader who would steer the country out of present challenges. He said Pakistan always progressed in every field under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif, adding, Nawaz Sharif is still the most popular leader in Pakistan and he will stand the country on its feet again.

Replying a question, he said that PML-N led government was making strenuous efforts to preserve economic stability and move the economy towards growth, adding, the revival of IMF program will now give breathing space to Pakistan and the country will be able to get loans from multilateral financial institutions and trust of the international community will also be increased. To another question, he said that economic reforms are very important for a country's economic survival and that signing a staff-level agreement with IMF is a great success of government policy and measures.—APP

## Trade deficit narrows by 43%

ISLAMABAD: The trade deficit witnessed a decline of 43.03 percent during the fiscal year 2022-23 as compared to the previous year (2021-22), the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. The trade deficit during July-June (2022-23) was recorded at \$27.547 billion against the deficit of \$48.354 billion in July-June (2021-22), a decline of 43.03 percent. The exports during the period were recorded at \$27.744 billion against \$31.782 billion last year, showing a decline of 12.71 percent. On the other hand, the imports witnessed a sharp decline of 31 percent falling from \$80.136 billion last year to \$55.291 billion during the fiscal year 2022-23. On a year-on-year basis, the exports from the country witnessed a decline of 18.72 percent and were recorded at \$2.366 billion in June 2023 against the exports of \$2.911 billion in June 2022. The imports also decreased to \$4.180 billion in June 2023 from \$7.857 billion in June 2022, showing negative growth of 46.80 percent. On a month-on-month basis, the exports during June 2023 however increased by 7.55 percent when compared to the exports of \$2.200 billion in May 2023. The imports into the country declined by 3.42 percent in June 2023 when compared to the imports of \$4.328 billion in May 2023, according to the data.—APP

## Green hydrogen to boost CPEC development

DNA

ISLAMABAD: "China's investment in green energy in countries along the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has exceeded its investment in traditional fossil energy, said An Fengquan, Deputy Director General of International Cooperation Department of National Energy Administration of China (NEA) BRI countries have rich wind, photovoltaic and hydropower resources, which makes green energy development an important direction in the future, he added. Apart from building plants and facilities for clean-green energy production, expanding the application of green energy in the BRI programs should also be stressed, says a report published by Gwadar Pro on Tuesday. Hydrogen produced with renewable energy sources, or green hydrogen, has emerged as a key energy to achieve net-zero emissions from heavy industry and transport.

## POEPA delegation visits NUTECH

DNA


RAWALPINDI: A five-member delegation headed by Secretary General from Pakistan Overseas Employment Promoter Association (POEPA) visited NUTECH

to forge a long-term partnership and explore avenues of collaboration in the Skills sector. The delegation was briefed on the University mission, academic system, skills education, affiliated institutes, international collaborations and future skills


programs. The delegation appreciated the efforts of NUTECH in the export of manpower, especially to Japan. They showed keen interest in future partnerships with NUTECH through promoting the export of skilled manpower

abroad as many countries in the West, Middle East and the Asia Pacific Region require skilled manpower. Matters related to language training and skills certifications with NUTECH for the export of manpower were also discussed.





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## IAEA's report bad for world

**T**OKYO should by no means consider the so-called final safety review that the International Atomic Energy Agency submitted to the Japanese government on Tuesday as a green light given by the world to its plan to dispose of the contaminated water at the crippled Fukushima nuclear power plant into the Pacific Ocean. The IAEA has made several trips to Japan since early 2022 – regrettably only to dance with Tokyo at the ball the latter has staged for it – and it acknowledges that it can't make decisions for the Japanese government. That means even though the IAEA concludes, on the basis of the water it sampled, that discharging the contaminated water into the ocean is in accordance with its safety standards and its environmental influence will be "negligible", it is still not willing to endorse the Japanese plan, and thus passes the buck to Tokyo. The agency is well aware of its inability to identify the possible long-term environmental influences of this practice that will last decades. The IAEA's "it is not in the position to decide" report, which has not fully reflected the points of views of all participating parties, has only intensified the international community's concerns. Disregarding these, Tokyo has tried to portray the IAEA report as go-ahead approval of its plan, which directly violates the London Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter, to which Japan is a signatory. The verbal back-patting engaged in by visiting IAEA chief Rafael Mariano Grossi and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in Tokyo on Tuesday on the release of the report was in stark contrast with their studied silence over earlier reports of Japan's underhand dealings with the agency in exchange for the latter to remove certain content in the report that Tokyo was unhappy with. Interestingly, although the IAEA has been trying to avoid being seen as an endorser of Tokyo, Grossi is expected to visit the Republic of Korea, New Zealand and the Cook Islands after his visit to Japan to "ease their concerns". That is something that should be done by Japanese officials with the IAEA report under their arms. It is not yet known whether Tokyo is reimbursing the costs of the trips. Notable by its absence from that list of destinations is China, the Pacific country with the largest population and one of the most vocal doubters of the Japanese plan. Japan has set up special funds and subsidies to ease the opposition of its own fishers, if not compensate them for their losses. If the environmental influence of the contaminated water will really be "negligible" as the IAEA claimed in its report, these indemnity funds would not have been necessary, and Japan, a country thirsty for freshwater resources, should have every reason to make use of the water, instead of forcing it into the stomachs of the rest of the world. The discernable exhilaration of the Kishida government on obtaining the IAEA's "approval" is an alarming sign of it treating the endeavor as a diplomatic success rather than a scientific matter. But then Tokyo has forgone prudence and transparency and seriousness since the very beginning in its haste to be rid of the toxic water.

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## Europe's green deal

**E**UROPEAN parliament plenary vote, held in mid-July, might normally pass under the radar of all but the most passionate aficionados of Brussels politics. That will not be the case next week, when environmental campaigners will watch through their fingers as one of the most consequential decisions so far is made in relation to the EU's net zero targets. Before heading for their summer holidays, MEPs are expected to vote on a proposed nature restoration law, committing European governments to rehabilitate and rewild swathes of territory suffering from desertification, deforestation and the draining of peatlands. Along with action on pesticides, this is essentially the biodiversity strand to the EU's green deal. In the context of post-Ukraine economic pressures and priorities, the European People's party (EPP) – which groups together centre-right parties – is arguing for a pause in environmental legislation. To that end, the EPP has allied with the climate-sceptic far right in Brussels, and is set to oppose the restoration law. As a result, next week's vote is on a knife edge. But the broader picture is still more disturbing. Amid concerns over the cost of living crisis, and a growing challenge from populist anti-green parties across Europe, mainstream conservatives are increasingly viewing opposition to the timetable and cost of the net zero transition as smart politics. In Germany, the extreme nationalists of Alternative für Deutschland are vying for second place in the polls, after leading attacks on government plans for the conversion of home heating systems to renewable energy. In Spain – where a snap election this month may see the far right enter government for the first time since the return of democracy – the high-profile conservative mayor of the Madrid region has accused the left of overstating the gravity of the climate crisis. Elsewhere, the rise of the Farmer-Citizen Movement in the Netherlands, which opposes attempts to reduce nitrogen emissions from intensive farming, has come to symbolise a potential rural backlash against net zero targets. The world cannot afford for Europe to cool on its climate commitments. But as conservatives seek to turn the green deal into a dividing line, progressive leaders must respond to the threat where they have the power to do so. Much more needs to be done to persuade the less well-off and rural communities that they will be looked after in a time of upheaval. A new age of economic and geopolitical insecurity has made a challenging transition even tougher. In the face of political headwinds, it will not be accomplished on the cheap.

## Beyond the Islamophobia

Waheed Hussain



The term Islamophobia was frequently used after the terrorist attacks in the US on September 11, 2001. The United States along with the western nations tried to give this impression to their local population that by and large Muslims are violent, non-tolerant, against human rights and western way of live. So much so that the then US President George Bush used the word Crusade for countering the international so-called terrorism. His statement was bitterly criticized by the world leaders. Although, many western countries' governments, political and diplomatic experts including the local population did not agree with the idea of crusade...

**D**ECERTATION of the Holy Quran on the day of Eid ul Adha in Stockholm, Sweden by an Iraqi refugee was not a sudden act of hatred-prejudice against Islam and Muslims. In the presence of dozens of people outside the main Mosque in the capital city along with the inactive police force was an open indication that the episode was staged on the Eidday celebration to hurt feelings of the Muslims not only in Sweden but rest of the world. It was a provocative action for some nefarious designs. It was a prejudice act to demonstrate intolerance-hatred for those who recite and take guidance from Holy Quran, send by Allah Talah through His beloved last Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). It was a well-planned-preconceived act of Islamophobia. Although, the Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson in a press conference called the act legal but not appropriate, further explaining, "it was up to the police force to make decision on the burning." How a prime minister of a country can issue such an irresponsible statement knowing that the satanic-criminal act has hurt the feeling of 1.8 billion Muslims in the whole world. After receiving worldwide condemnation and a very strong statement from the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) the Swedish foreign ministry after four days of the act issued condemnation calling it a Islamophobic act. This was not the first time that the Swedish land and its citizens (enjoying permanent or temporary status as citizens) had committed this crime of blasphemy to Islam and its Holy book Quran. In recent years we had witnessed number of such acts in various European countries including Denmark, France, Sweden, etc. There is no doubt that in every society or a country there are certain individuals or elements who show disrespect to religion, humanity, morality, or cultures. However, in most cases its population and government stood with the victims. The state and the people openly condemn such acts of physical or verbal violence-blasphemy and disrespect. In the case of Sweden, Denmark, and France, governments failed to punish the criminals rather defended their satanic acts under the pretext of freedom of expression. Before debating on the controversial phrase "freedom of expression," we need to discuss the concept of Islamophobia. As we all know, phobia is a fear that an individual might be suffering from due to certain mental or psychological reasons. The term Islamophobia was frequently used after the terrorist attacks in the US on September 11, 2001. The United States along with the western nations tried to give this impression to their local

population that by and large Muslims are violent, non-tolerant, against human rights and western way of live. So much so that the then US President George Bush used the word Crusade for countering the international so-called terrorism. His statement was bitterly criticized by the world leaders. Although, many western countries' governments, political and diplomatic experts including the local population did not agree with the idea of crusade (which had a negative connotation with reference to the history). They declared it the political strategy of some western leaders for launching war in Afghanistan and Iraq. Later the world witnessed that both former US president Bush and UK prime minister Toney Blair apologized to the Iraqi people saying that Saddam Hussain regime did not possess the Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) as they had flawed information about Iraq weapons. Iraq war was not the war to protect the peace and security of the world but it was a war of oil and natural resources. It was a war of money. The US administration at that time launched a fake narrative (propaganda) through the western media that Saddam Hussain was the most dangerous person who could destabilize the world through dirty biological and chemical weapons within 45 minutes, however, those weapons could not be found anywhere in Iraq in last two decades. Similarly, after 9/11, the Afghan Taliban were presented the most dangerous people on the face of this earth. The US along with allied forces fought longest war in Afghanistan. That anti-Taliban narrative again supported the concept of Islamophobia. The western population was being terrified by their governments that most of the Muslims are violent and intolerant. They do not have respect for humanity. They disrespect their women and keep them in isolation without education and basic human rights. It was all fake notions to fulfill the political and strategic agenda. The idea of Islamophobia was dying, and the US and its allied nations lost their interest in Afghanistan. As a result, the US finally decided to engage the Afghan Taliban through Pakistan and Arabs countries for talks to get a safe passage and leave Afghanistan. After many rounds of talks the US and Afghan Taliban signed a peace agreement. Interestingly the US struck a deal with the same people whom it called terrorists. The term Islamophobia had to do a lot with strategic and international political developments instead of religious beliefs only. Therefore, such terms will remain alive for the states to serve their internal and external economic, financial, strategic, and political interests. The hatred, fear, or prejudice against the Muslim

communities in the western societies have linkages with economy and finance. The Muslim population in the western countries is growing in the last few decades. They are running successful businesses, holding good positions (jobs) at the public and private organizations, which also create jealousy among the permanent citizens in those countries. Apart from the economic reasons, the spread of Islam in the western population ran an alarm bell to the policy makers believing that the increasing Muslims population could disturb the socio-political balance. And finally, there is a small minority group of (so-called) intellectual in the western world, which still consider the Muslims as their adversaries, depicting Muslims as enemy. Such a group could also use the concept of Islamophobia. As far as the freedom of expression is concerned it's an illogical argument presented by the Swedish Government regarding the blasphemy of Islam or disrespect of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Holy Quran. There is no absolute freedom in the world. The laws are being introduced in the countries to protect the freedom of all, not of a single person or of a few. Freedom does not mean to hurt the feelings of other individuals and communities based on sex, cost, color, language, or religion. All the western countries have laws to arrest and punish those who deny the Holocaust incident, in which the Jews were attacked by the Nazi forces during the Second World War. The Jews had established the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) to which European Union is the signatory. All the western states have legislated special criminal laws to protect the Jews Holocaust Denial. The problem with the western nations is that they do have laws for 16 million Jews which is just 0.2 percent of the world population, but they don't want to make laws to respect the feelings of 1.8 billion people which is 24 percent of the total world population. The United Nations, OIC and Vatican Pop must urge the western countries to introduce laws to prevent such criminal acts in the future. We hope the western governments will understand the issue and will address it once and for all. Otherwise, such conspiracies will create distrust and distance between the west and Muslim world leading towards clash of civilizations. Holy Quran is the (Noor) light for Muslims to seek right path in this and world after death. Holy Quran is part of our Emaan (faith). No Muslim can tolerate the disrespect of Islam, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the Holy Quran. Muslims are not against human freedoms, but they want that their freedom should also be respected.

## Women's Empowerment: A Journey to Equality and Freedom

Noor-ul-Ain



Self-awareness emerged as a critical factor in empowering young women, followed by experience and education. This finding challenges conventional assumptions and highlights the importance of nurturing a woman's inner power to effect lasting change. Recognizing the need for women's empowerment, especially in countries like India where women still...

**I**N every corner of the world, women have been at the forefront of shaping societies, economies, and cultures. It is time to shed light on the transformative power of women's empowerment and recognize it as a critical catalyst for achieving equality and freedom. The journey towards women's empowerment is a multifaceted one, encompassing various aspects of social, economic, and political transformation. It begins with challenging deeply rooted gender norms and stereotypes that have perpetuated the subjugation of women for generations. By dismantling these barriers, we can create a society where women are not only equal but also valued for their unique perspectives, talents, and capabilities. Education plays a pivotal role in this journey, as it equips women with knowledge, skills, and confidence to challenge the status quo. When women have access to quality education, they are empowered to pursue their aspirations, break free from traditional roles, and contribute meaningfully to their communities. Education becomes a powerful tool for social mobility, enabling women to rise above societal constraints and take charge of their lives. Beyond education, economic empowerment is essential for women to attain equality and freedom. Access to equal opportunities in the workforce, fair wages, and financial resources empowers women to become economically independent and make decisions that affect their own lives. By closing the gender pay gap and eliminating workplace discrimination, we create an environment where women can thrive, excel, and lead without limitations. Furthermore, women's empowerment encompasses their ability to participate in decision-making processes at all levels. When women are represented in politics, governance, and leadership roles, their voices are heard, and their perspectives influence policies that shape society. By ensuring equal political representation, we can foster inclusive and democratic

societies where women's rights and concerns are addressed effectively. However, the journey to women's empowerment is not without its challenges. Deep-seated gender inequalities, cultural norms, and institutional barriers often hinder progress. Therefore, it requires collective efforts from governments, civil society, and individuals to break down these barriers and create an enabling environment for women to thrive. Women's empowerment is not just a matter of justice; it is a fundamental human right. When women are empowered, societies prosper, families thrive, and economies flourish. By investing in women's education, health, and economic opportunities, we unleash their full potential and accelerate progress towards a more equitable and just world. Empowering girls and women is a powerful force that drives economic growth, political stability, and social transformation. Leaders, experts, and scholars worldwide recognize the importance of this critical endeavor. However, despite these noble intentions, a brutal reality persists – violence against girls and women occurs on a mass scale, undermining efforts towards empowerment. Every minute, girls and women suffer from rape, with shocking statistics from countries like South Africa and Congo. Moreover, gender-based violence extends beyond physical harm; millions of girls face discrimination and neglect merely for being female. To understand women's empowerment, the first-ever global survey on the subject was conducted by 4GGL - For Girls G Local Leadership, a non-profit social change movement. The survey targeted millennial women from various countries, revealing that while progress is being made, challenges remain. Young women have more choices and control in their lives, particularly in education, but career choices still face limitations.

Self-awareness emerged as a critical factor in empowering young women, followed by experience and education. This finding challenges conventional assumptions and highlights the importance of nurturing a woman's inner power to effect lasting change. Recognizing the need for women's empowerment, especially in countries like India where women still face various injustices, is paramount. Violence, honor killings, limited education opportunities, and unequal pay are among the issues that persist. To empower women effectively, both individuals and governments must collaborate. Compulsory education for girls, equal opportunities in all fields, and fair pay are crucial steps. Efforts should also be directed towards eliminating child marriage and providing skill-building programs for financial independence. Media portrayal of women and gender roles also play a significant role in shaping societal perspectives. Breaking away from stereotypical roles and encouraging women to pursue diverse careers can lead to a more empowered society. One of the gravest challenges is violence against women and girls, which affects one in three women globally. Eradicating this crisis requires collective action and an end to the normalization of violence. Women's rights organizations are already making a difference, but everyone must stand together and say 'Enough' to violence against women and girls. Women's empowerment is a journey towards equality and freedom. It involves breaking societal barriers, empowering women to become agents of change, and eradicating violence and discrimination. By supporting women in realizing their inner power, the world can witness the transformation of empowered women leaders and change-makers, leading us to a brighter and more equitable future.

– The Writer is BS Medial Laboratory  
Technology University of Okara



## Briefs

Terrorism  
must be  
condemned...

FROM PAGE 01  
The premier began by thanking India for its stewardship of the regional body this year. PM Shehbaz said that Pakistan holds a unique geographical status in central Asia. Shedding light on the importance of the multi-billion dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the prime minister said that the partnership between the two nations can be a "game changer" for the entire region. He told the members of the meeting that special economic zones are being developed in Pakistan under the CPEC. In his address, the premier also highlighted the lingering issue of Afghanistan. "International community finds itself in a standstill on Afghanistan," the PM said, urging the stakeholders to continue their support to prevent a humanitarian crisis in the war-torn country. He said that the "critical support" needed by Afghanistan had been withheld and the matter needed review. He also urged the interim government in Afghanistan led by the Taliban, to take concrete measures to show its soil is not used for "militant activity". He congratulated the President of Iran on his country's inclusion in the organization as a full member.

UN to hold  
urgent  
meeting...

FROM PAGE 01  
European and other countries', council spokesman Pascal Sim told reporters, citing the wording of the request. "This urgent debate will be convened following a request of Pakistan, sent on behalf of several members of the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation, including those that are members of Human Rights Council. "It will most likely be convened this week at a date and time to be determined by the bureau of the Human Rights Council that is meeting today," Sim added. There are 47 members of the Human Rights Council. The UN's top rights body is currently in the second of its three regular sessions per year.

Sanjrani  
writes to  
Swedish  
speaker

FROM PAGE 01  
"We have deep devotion and love for the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and the Holy Quran. The recent desecration of the Holy Quran has caused confusion and a lack of awareness. It is important to clear up any misconceptions regarding Islam, Sanjrani continued". "Each of us has a responsibility to teach others how to foster interfaith harmony, tolerance, and understanding," he added. He added that it is commendable the Swedish government had condemned the sacrilege of the Holy Quran.

Jenin: 10  
Palestinians  
martyred in  
Israeli raids

FORM PAGE 01  
While violence continued, at least six drones were seen circling over the city and the adjoining camp, which is densely packed and houses around 14,000 people in less than half a square kilometre, according to Daily Sabah. "What is going on in the refugee camp is real war," said Palestinian ambulance driver, Khaled Alahmad. "There were strikes from the sky targeting the camp, every time we drive in around five to seven ambulances and we come back full with injured people." The Palestinian health ministry said that the death toll had risen to 10 after an overnight death of a person who succumbed to injuries at a hospital, while 100 were wounded, 20 of them critically.

Wimbledon 2023: Rybakina,  
Alcaraz advance to 2nd round

Watched by record eight-times Wimbledon men's champion Roger Federer in the royal box, the Kazakh looked to still be suffering from the illness that forced her out of the French Open last month when she was broken in the first game

SPORTS DESK

LONDON: Defending women's champion Rybakina dispatched American Shelby Rogers 4-6, 6-1, 6-2. The No. 3 seed will next face Nao Hibino or Alize Cornet. Elsewhere, Top seed Carlos Alcaraz and defending women's champion Elena Rybakina both advanced to the second round of Wimbledon on Tuesday. For Alcaraz, he swept past Frenchman Jeremy Chardy 6-0, 6-2, 7-5 in one hour and 53 minutes. The Spaniard will next face either Alexandre Muller or Arthur Rinderknech. Chardy, who was playing in his 14th Wimbledon Championship, participated in his final match as a professional. The 36-year-old reached a career high of No. 25 in the world in January of 2013. Defending Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina came from a set down on Centre Court to beat American Shelby Rogers 4-6 6-1 6-2 in the first round on Tuesday. Watched by record eight-times Wimbledon men's champion Roger Federer in the royal box, the Kazakh looked to still be suffering from the illness that forced her out of the French Open last month when she was broken in the first game. Rogers powered through the first set with Rybakina looking out of practice having



in Eastbourne due to a virus. However, the third seed roared back in the second, showing the kind of strength and composure she utilised to claim her first Grand Slam title in London last year. Asked on court if the experience of playing last year's final at the same venue had helped her this time, Rybakina said: "Ac-



tually, it didn't help me much because I was just as nervous today. She will face either Japanese lucky loser Nao Hibino or France's Alize Cornet in the second round. Top seed Carlos Alcaraz opened his Wimbledon campaign in ruthless fashion by sending French veteran Jeremy Chardy into

retirement with a 6-0 6-2 7-5 drubbing. At about the same time as eight-times champion Roger Federer was receiving a rapturous reception as a Royal Box guest across on Centre Court, Alcaraz showed why he is billed as the future of men's tennis on Court One. Under the roof, the 20-year-old Alcaraz subjected the unfortunate Chardy to a high-profile pummeling, firing down ferocious serves and rasping forehands with frightening power. U.S. Open champion Alcaraz, who returned to the top of the ATP rankings after winning the Queen's Club title on grass last week, blasted through the opening set in 20 minutes. When he won the first two games of the second set it began to look really ugly for the 36-year-old Chardy whose 56th and final Grand Slam tournament was turning into a horror show. Chardy, the former world number 25 who once beat Federer, finally got on the scoreboard with a service hold greeted by warm applause. He turned the match into a contest in the third set as the rifle-shot sound of Alcaraz's ball-striking was temporarily muffled by rain hammering on the translucent roof. Alcaraz trailed 4-2 after a sloppy service game but he was not in the mood for retirement gifts and buckled down again to finish off his opponent in a shade under two hours, sealing victory with an ace.

Federer receives a standing  
ovation at Centre Court

LONDON: It was an unmissable moment to celebrate the greatest player to ever grace the hallowed turf of Centre Court and Roger Federer's arrival drew the kind of visceral roar of appreciation rarely seen before finals weekend - but lazy BBC coverage missed every second. It continued a week of gaffes for the Beeb after they also failed to show the first two games of British No 1 Katie Boulter's

match and got top seed Carlos Alcaraz's age wrong. As Boulter, cover star of Tatler and many newspapers, took to court, BBC were showing a pre-recorded interview with her instead. Fans have also decried the lack of genuine tennis experts in their mainstream coverage, with cricket presenter Isa Guha also making a mistake on the age of 23-time Grand Slam winner and favourite Novak Djokovic on Monday. No one lucky enough to have tickets for Centre Court missed the ceremony, though, as eight-time Wimbledon winner Federer and wife Mirka joined the Princess of Wales in a royal box also populated by former Prime Minister David Cameron and Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe. The 41-year-old, who retired last year, jetted in from Zurich after he performed on stage at a Coldplay gig

on Sunday and then joined a sky full of stars at SW19 and received a three-minute applause from starstruck spectators. The All England Club celebrated his unmatched eight gentlemen's singles titles here with a special video montage of his best moments from 2013 to 2021, featuring input from former opponents. Sporting a plush cream suit and sunglasses, Federer looked on intently as defending champion Elena Rybakina opened the day's play - though Kate Middleton and his wife chatted across him for most of a tough three-set start to a title defence for the Kazakh player. It comes a year after Federer drew the loudest cheer from a field of more than 20 previous winners who lined up on the hallowed green grass to mark 100 years of Centre Court. The All England Club plan to hold a similar ceremony for Serena Williams when she is able to travel to London. The seven-time singles champion, who like Federer retired last year, is currently pregnant. - Agencies

Pope out of  
Ashes series  
with injury

LONDON: England batter Ollie Pope has been ruled out of the rest of the Ashes series with a dislocated shoulder. England's vice-captain was injured diving in the field during the second Test at Lord's, which Australia won to take a 2-0 series lead. Scans on Monday showed Pope, 25, would require surgery. Essex batter Dan Lawrence, 25, is the most likely replacement for the third Test, which starts at Headingley on Thursday. Lawrence is the only spare batter in England's squad. England have said they will not call up a replacement for the Leeds Test, ruling out a possible recall for Surrey wicketkeeper Ben Foakes. Lawrence averages 29 from 11 Tests but has not played since the tour to the West Indies in March 2022, before captain Ben Stokes and coach Brendon McCullum took charge. "Ollie has stepped up as vice-captain and the more responsibility we've given to him, the more we've got out of him as a player," England batter Joe Root said. "He'll be a big miss for us. He's an integral part of the team." Pope has injured his right shoulder, after dislocating his left shoulder twice before having surgery on it in 2020. On this occasion he sustained the injury in the first innings at Lord's before coming out and making 42 with the bat. The right-hander then took to the field in Australia's second innings - amid confusion over the umpires saying he had to do so - and aggravated the injury. He scored 205 against Ireland at the start of the summer before scores of 31, 14, 42 and 13 in the Ashes. A left-field option to replace him in Leeds would be to move the batters up a place in the order and recall Moeen Ali at number seven, with the possibility of bringing in Chris Woakes for a bowler to further strengthen the batting. In Tuesday's pre-match media conference, former captain Root did not rule out moving up to number three, where he has batted 33 times. - Agencies

Sessions  
court's  
verdict  
declared...

FROM PAGE 01

Khan in ten cases pertaining riot, vandalizing public property and violation of section-144 of Pakistan Penal Code (PPC). Additional District and Session Judge Tahir Abbas Sapra heard the interim bail petitions of ousted prime minister in six cases. Imran Khan's lawyer Sher Afzal Murawat objected over the court, hearing this case, and said that it had already disclosed its mindset in the matter to the extent of two co-accused. He said that the decision should have come together and prayed the judge to transfer the case to another court. Salman Safdar Advocate also requested the court to shift the case, adding that the same court had decided the bails of co-accused few days back. The judge said that he would not disassociate himself from the case as the court used to take decisions as per the law. The court inquired that whether the accused had joined the investigation to this the prosecutor answered in negative. The court extended interim bail of Imran Khan in six cases till July 10, and instructed the petitioner to join the investigation. Similarly, Additional District and Session Judge Fareed Baloch heard the bail petitions of ex-prime minister in two cases registered by Shahzad Town Police Station. Prosecutor Zahid Asif informed the court that Imran Khan not joined the investigation so far. The court, however, extended the bails till July 10.

PTI hails  
IHC verdict

FROM PAGE 01

frivolous and fraudulent nature of cases registered against Imran Khan simply to get him out of the way of the criminal ruling mafia. Has never worked and will not work. Khan shall emerge ascendant in this political struggle to guide Pakistan to salvation," he added. "Persistent shall be our struggle. Resolute shall be our struggle. Peaceful shall be our struggle. Till victory make us proud and till victory make Pakistan proud," Raof Hassan vowed.

Afghan  
borders  
areas safe...

FROM PAGE 01

Given these circumstances, it is crucial for the Afghan government to prevent its territory from being exploited as a launch pad for activities against its neighboring countries. By actively countering the presence and activities of TTP terrorists, the Afghan government can effectively safeguard its borders and maintain regional stability. It is essential to prioritize the security of both Afghanistan and its neighboring nations by proactively addressing this situation and preventing any further escalation of the TTP threat.

Neymar fined  
\$3.5 mln for  
environmental  
offense

RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazilian authorities said on Monday that soccer star Neymar was fined 16 million reais (\$3.33 million) for breaching environmental rules during the construction of his coastal mansion in southeastern Brazil. The luxury project violated rules regarding the use and movement of freshwater sources, rock and sand, local authorities first alleged late last month and confirmed on Monday. A spokesperson for Neymar declined to comment on the matter. His residence is located in the town of Mangaratiba on the southern coast of Brazil's Rio de Janeiro state. Mangaratiba's environmental body said in a statement on Monday that environmental infractions were made "in the construction of an artificial lake at the mansion." Besides the fine, the case will be probed by the local attorney general's office, the state civil police and environmental protection office, among other environmental control bodies. - Agencies

Schedule of Pak T20I  
tour to England

ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2022 finalists will go head to head in May 2024 in the United Kingdom in the build-up to the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 in the West Indies and the United States of America (USA). World champions England will host Pakistan in a four-T20I series from 22-30 May before both the sides will depart for the tournament. The matches will be played in Leeds (22 May), Birmingham (25 May), Cardiff (28 May) and The Oval, London (30 May). England had defeated Pakistan by five wickets with one over to spare in the T20 World Cup 2022 final in Melbourne. Prior to the Australia event, Pakistan had hosted England for a seven-match T20I series in Karachi and Lahore with the visitors winning by 4-3. England is ranked second on the ICC T20I Team Rankings, while Pakistan is ranked fourth - five points behind. Before arriving in the UK, Pakistan will play a three-T20I series against the Netherlands and two-T20I series against Ireland, details of which will be announced in due course.

## SCHEDULE

22 May: 1st T20I - Headingley, Leeds  
25 May: 2nd T20I - Edgbaston, Birmingham  
28 May: 3rd T20I - Sophia Gardens, Cardiff  
30 May: 4th T20I - The Oval, London

Pakistan's training  
camp for Sri Lanka Test  
tour begins in Karachi

KARACHI: The Pakistan cricket team kicked off their training camp on Tuesday in Karachi for the upcoming two-match Test series against Sri Lanka later this month. The camp currently includes 16 players, including captain Babar Azam, pacer Naseem Shah, and wicketkeeper-batsman Sarfaraz Ahmed. Hasan Ali and Shan Masood will join the camp tomorrow. Despite not being part of the Test squad, spinner Zahid Mahmood and Sajid Ali have also been invited to participate in the camp. Mohammad Rizwan, the wicketkeeper-batsman, was unable to attend the first session of the camp due to personal reasons but is

expected to join later in the day. Head coach Grant Bradburn is supervising the camp. Batting coach Andrew Puttick gave full attention to the batters during practice. Furthermore, fielding coach Aftab Khan supervised the players' catching practice. The players will be allowed to leave the camp on Friday evening to attend Haris Rauf's wedding in Islamabad. They will reassemble in Karachi on Saturday and will leave for Sri Lanka, via Dubai, on the same day. Itinerary of Pakistan's tour of Sri Lanka: Pakistan squad Babar Azam (c), Mohammad Rizwan (vc & wk), Aamir Jamal, Abdullah

09 July - Pakistan land in Colombo  
11-12 July - Warm-up game  
16-20 July - First Test at Galle International Cricket Stadium  
24-28 July - Second Test at Sinhalese Sports Club, Colombo

Shafique, Abrar Ahmed, Hasan Ali, Imam-ul-Haq, Mohammad Huraire, Mohammad Nawaz, Naseem Shah, Noman Ali, Salman Ali Agha, Sarfaraz Ahmed (wk), Saud Shakeel, Shaheen Afridi, and Shan Masood  
Player support personnel  
Rehan-ul-Haq (team manager), Grant Bradburn (head coach), Andrew Puttick (batting coach), Morne Morkel (bowling coach), Aftab Khan (fielding coach), Abdul Rehman (assistant coach), Drikus Saaiman (strength and conditioning coach), Cliffe Deacon (physiotherapist), Ahsan Iftikhar Nagi (media and digital content manager), Lt Col Usman Anwari (Retd) (security manager), Talha Ejaz (analyst) and Malang Ali (masseur). - DNA

## Macron weakened by crisis over teen killing

"I hope very much, and I am convinced, that the French president will find ways for this situation to improve quickly," he told ARD television. "I don't expect France to become unstable, even if the pictures are of course very depressing"

PARIS: Even in normal times Emmanuel Macron needed the help of allies in governing France. To get some things done the French president worked with the traditional right. The center-left helped him accomplish others. The challenge was bigger than any faced by a French leader in more than two decades: He had to convince politicians across the country's national assembly to support even minor domestic projects. Now, governing his already-polarized country has gotten close to impossible for Macron because a suburban police officer stopped a yellow Mercedes and fired a fatal shot into the 17-year-old driver's

chest, setting off six days of tumult across the country. Macron's far-right rivals, meanwhile, are emboldened. A controversial extreme-right figure started an online fundraising campaign for the family of the police officer who shot the teen, praising him as someone who "did his job and is paying a high price for it." The campaign quickly raised more than 1 million euros from tens of thousands of people, shocking many and prompting calls from anti-racism groups and left-wing politicians for it to be shut down. The government fears it is fueling tensions. Macron won his second five-year term last year with 58% of the votes in a runoff with far-right leader Marine Le Pen, but his centrist Renaissance party lost its majority in parliament two months later. Le Pen's National Rally won a record number of seats. Macron dreamed big despite the close victory. His first big goal was raising the retirement age from 62 to 64, which he had to force through parliament. He then hoped to re-industrialize France, improve working conditions and finalize a new immigration bill. Abroad, Macron championed European sovereignty and independence in fields ranging from the economy and energy to defense. But all that has had to fall by the wayside. Macron shortened a visit to a European summit in

Brussels last week for a crisis meeting with his government. This week, he called a last-minute delay in a visit to Germany that had been meant to show the strength of the bilateral friendship despite disputes on energy, defense and the economy, among other issues. The changes in his agenda echo another uncomfortable situation for the French leader three months ago, when the planned state visit of King Charles III to France was postponed due to violent protests against the pension changes. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said he was watching France's situation with concern. "I hope very much, and I am convinced, that the French president

will find ways for this situation to improve quickly," he told ARD television. "I don't expect France to become unstable, even if the pictures are of course very depressing." The U.S., the U.K. and China were among those that called on citizens to exercise caution when traveling to France. Last month, after a climate summit, Kenyan President William Ruto praised Macron's deep involvement. "You have run this like Kenyans do ... like a marathon," he told Macron. The question now for Macron is whether he can marshal enough endurance to face the political situation at home. "The problem is that he still has four more years

ahead," said Luc Rouban, a senior researcher at the National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS). He noted that Macron has faced a succession of protests and street unrest, starting with the yellow vest movement against social injustice that broke out in 2018. An increasing proportion of the population "rejects institutions" as part of a broader criticism of "a social order that involves inequalities, that is ... basically quite hypocritical, with school in particular not allowing people to succeed as it once did," Rouban said. Schools, city halls, police stations and other public institutions have been attacked. - Agencies



## Briefs

## 'Athens is ready for talks with Turkey'

NICOSIA: Greece is ready to start talks with Turkey to resolve a long-standing dispute over maritime borders that has repeatedly brought the two neighbors to the brink of armed conflict, Greece's newly appointed foreign minister said Tuesday. Giorgos Gerapetritis said the Greek government wants to "take advantage of the ongoing positive climate" in order to come to an agreement on delineating the areas in which each country has exclusive economic rights, including the right to search for offshore oil and gas. Turkey disputes areas which Greece says fall within its own economic zone and where it's seeking to start a search for offshore oil and gas reserves. Turkey claims much of the economic zone of Cyprus where several sizeable offshore natural gas deposits have been discovered. The feud over exploratory drilling rights had culminated in a naval standoff three years ago. Another key issue at the heart of Greek-Turkish tensions that Gerapetritis wants resolved is the extent of the continental shelf — and by extension, Greek sovereign territory — of Greek islands near Turkey's coastline in the Aegean and the eastern Mediterranean. —Agencies

## Public confidence in US, UK govts lowest among G7

LONDON: A new survey has found that people in the United States and the United Kingdom have the lowest levels of confidence in their governments among the G7 group of industrialized nations. According to the poll, conducted and released Monday by the Washington, DC-based Gallup analytics and advisory company, only 31 percent of adult participants in the US responded yes when asked if they had confidence in their government in 2022, compared to 69 percent who answered no. The US was followed closely by the UK in the survey, with just 33 percent of British adults expressing confidence in their government and 64 percent believing otherwise. The citizen confidence levels in the US and the UK administrations have declined sharply over the past years. In the same Gallup research conducted in 2006, the United States and Britain topped the list with 56 and 49 percent of adults expressing faith in their governments, respectively. However, the remaining G7 members — Germany, Japan, Italy, France and Canada — saw their government confidence levels improve between 2006 and 2022. Germany and Canada were top on the 2022 list, with 61 and 51 percent saying they have confidence in their governments, respectively. —APP

## UN warns world to prepare for El Nino impact

GENEVA: The United Nations on Tuesday warned the world to prepare for the effects of El Nino, saying the weather phenomenon which triggers higher global temperatures is set to persist throughout 2023. El Nino is a naturally occurring climate pattern typically associated with increased heat worldwide, as well as drought in some parts of the world and heavy rains elsewhere. The phenomenon occurs on average every two to seven years, and episodes typically last nine to 12 months. The UN's World Meteorological Organization declared El Nino was already under way and said there was a 90-percent chance that it would continue during the second half of 2023. "The onset of El Nino will greatly increase the likelihood of breaking temperature records and triggering more extreme heat in many parts of the world and in the ocean," warned WMO secretary-general Petteri Taalas. "The declaration of an El Nino by WMO is the signal to governments around the world to mobilise preparations to limit the impacts on our health. —Agencies

## Oppose building barriers, de-coupling: Xi tells SCO

Calling for "pragmatic SCO cooperation to speed up economic recovery," Xi suggested "synergizing" the Belt and Road Initiative with "development strategies of various countries" He added

## DNA

BEIJING: China's President Xi Jinping on Tuesday called on SCO to oppose "building barriers and walls" as well as "de-coupling." "China is willing to work with other members to stick to the right direction of economic globalization, object protectionism, unilateral sanctions and overstretching the national security concept," Xi told the 23rd summit of SCO Council of Heads of States. The summit began in virtual mode on Tuesday, with Iran expected to become a full member of the bloc at the session. Xi said China "will strive to make the cake of mutually beneficial cooperation bigger so as to deliver more benefits to people around the world," the Chinese daily Global

Times reported.

This year India is hosting the summit via videoconference. Also at this year's meeting, Kazakhstan will be taking over as chair of the eight-nation group from India. Xi also called on the SCO members "to enhance their solidarity and mutual trust." He emphasized "safeguarding regional peace and ensuring common security," according to a transcript released by the China Daily newspaper. The Chinese president said the SCO members should "strengthen exchanges and mutual learning" besides "fostering closer people-to-people ties." Calling for "pragmatic SCO cooperation to speed up economic recovery," Xi suggested "synergizing" the Belt and Road Initiative with "development strategies of various countries." He added: "The historical trend of peace, develop-

ment, and win-win cooperation is unstoppable." Addressing the summit, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he was "happy Iran is becoming a member of SCO grouping," adding that the summit would also pave the way for Belarus to become a permanent member of the bloc. During its term as the SCO chair, India has made sustained efforts to take "our multi-faceted cooperation to new heights," the premier further said. The food, fuel and fertilizer crisis is a "big challenge" for all the countries in the world "surrounded by controversies, tensions and epidemics," Modi said, adding: "Terrorism may be in any form, in any manifestation, we have to fight together against it." Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, in his ad-

dress, called for joint efforts to curb the "monster" of terrorism, including state terrorism, stressing that Islamabad condemns all "forms and manifestations" of it. "The Hydra-headed monster of terrorism and extremism — whether committed by individuals, societies or states — must be fought by full vigor and conviction. Any temptation to use it as a cudgel for diplomatic point-scoring must be avoided under all circumstances," he said. Sharif stressed that religious minorities should not be demonized in the "pursuit of domestic political agendas," a thinly-veiled reference to neighboring India where the nationalist government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is often accused of targeting the religious minorities, mainly Muslims, Pakistan's state television reported.

## Putin urges SCO to grant Belarus full membership

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday urged the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to grant Belarus full membership. Putin said via video link at the SCO Council of Heads of State hosted by India in a virtual format that Belarus' accession will have a positive impact on the organization's activities. He noted that Iran completed the SCO membership process in two years and emphasized the necessity of considering other applications for membership in the organization. "The authority and influence of our association continue to strengthen, and interest in its activities from other states and international structures is growing. Many of them seek to establish an equal dialogue with the SCO and are considering the possibility of joining its work. They trust us, they want to be friends and cooperate with us," he said. Moscow, for its part, plans to deepen ties with the SCO members, which are growing successfully, as trade turnover among SCO countries increased by 37% last year. —Agencies

## Ankara, Cairo mark new milestone in normalizing ties

ANKARA: By mutually appointing ambassadors, Ankara and Cairo have marked a new milestone in the normalization of ties, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said on Tuesday. "With the joint decision we took today, as Egypt and Türkiye, we mutually appointed ambassadors," Fidan told a news conference in the capital Ankara with his Jordanian counterpart Ayman Safadi. "At the point we have reached, we have now moved past an important stage in normalization. From now on, our relations will continue to progress rapidly in the political, economic, and all other fields." Fidan's remarks came after Türkiye and Egypt raised their diplomatic ties to the level of embassies on Tuesday. Türkiye nominated Salih Mutlu Sen as its new ambassador to Cairo, while Egypt named Amr El Hamamy its ambassador to Ankara. The countries' historical, geographical, cultural, strategic, and re-

ligious ties make them effectively inseparable, Fidan added. Diplomatic relations between Türkiye and Egypt had been at the level of charges d'affaires since 2013. Turning to last week's burning of a copy of the Muslim holy book, the Quran, in Stockholm, Fidan said: "We once again strongly condemn the vile attack on the holy Quran in Stockholm and the condoning of this attack despite our warnings." He said the burning taking place freely under police protection, as Sweden continues to seek NATO membership, made it especially concerning. "The inability of Sweden's law enforcement and security system to react to such incidents is worrying in terms of security," he added. Fidan said that Stockholm's failure to prevent provocations brings problems to NATO, not more strength. In terms of strategic and security assessment, the question

of whether Sweden's membership in NATO would be a burden or a benefit is now open to more debate, he added. Finland and Sweden applied for NATO membership soon after Russia launched its war in Ukraine in February 2022. Although Türkiye approved Finland's membership to NATO, it is waiting for Sweden to abide by a trilateral memorandum signed in June 2022 in Madrid to address Ankara's security concerns on terrorism. "It is not possible for us to make a positive assessment in an environment where terrorist groups can easily organize all kinds of actions on the streets of Stockholm, organize demonstrations and protests, and raise money," Fidan stressed. Previously, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said that Sweden cannot hope to join NATO as long as it gives shelter and a green light to terrorists and supporters of terrorists. "If Sweden continues its efforts and

does its homework, there are always alternatives, just as in the case of Finland," Fidan said. Fidan strongly condemned the recent incursion carried out by Israeli forces in the city of Jenin in the occupied West Bank, calling on Tel Aviv to instead act "prudently." "The settlers' raids and attacks on our innocent Palestinian brothers must stop as soon as possible," he urged. "We convey our views on the good of the whole region to the Israeli authorities in an open and transparent manner," Fidan added. Tensions have been running high across the occupied West Bank in recent months amid repeated Israeli raids into Palestinian towns. Nearly 190 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces since the start of this year, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry. At least 25 Israelis have also been killed in separate attacks during the same period. —APP

## Global warming could increase food inflation up to 3%

BERLIN: Global warming could cause food inflation to increase by an average 1% to 3% points every year by 2035 as the impacts of climate change intensify worldwide, a scientist at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research told Anadolu. Referring to a recent study by the institute and the European Central Bank (ECB), Maximilian Kotz, said increases in global warming had resulted in rises in both headline and food inflation. Researchers at ECB and Potsdam Institute looked into inflation data from 121 developed and developing countries in the last 30 years, together with changes in climate change. "What we found is that increases in temperature do in fact cause increases in inflation, particularly in food inflation, because of effects on agricultural productivity. The effects on food inflation go through into the rest of the economy and they cause general increases in prices," Kotz said. Last year's heatwaves in Europe contributed 0.7% points to food inflation, the study found. According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and EU's Copernicus Climate Change Service, Europe was the fastest-warming continent in 2022, a year marked by extreme heat, drought, and wildfires. Climate-related hazards in Europe last year led to 16,365 reported fatalities and directly affected 156,000 people as extreme events resulted in total economic damages of \$2 billion. Noting that inflation had also risen due to factors like COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, climate change is also set to result in a higher but also persistent inflation as warming continues to intensify. According to the WMO, average worldwide temperatures had climbed 1.15 C last year since the 19th century, with 2023-2027 predicted to be the hottest years on record. "We find that by 2035, global warming is going to be causing increases in food inflation across. —Agencies

## US plotting false-flag attacks in Syria

DAMASCUS: The director of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) has warned that the United States is planning to stage new false-flag operations, including chemical attacks, against civilians in Syria in order to incriminate the Syrian government. In a statement on Monday, Sergey Naryshkin said that the US, distraught with a series of reconciliation moves between Syria and Arab states including its return to the Arab League, wishes to "discredit" the Syrian leadership. "Biden's team is doing everything to derail the Arab-Syrian normalization, to discredit the Syrian leadership. To this end, false flag attacks are being prepared, including with the use of chemical warfare agents," Naryshkin said. He added that the SVR has received information that members of the al-Qaeda-linked Hurras al-Din militant group and the Salafist terrorist group Turkistan Islamic Party underwent training in Syria's northwestern province of Idlib last May on how to apply toxic materials. Americans have also provided Daesh Takfiri terrorists with missiles, whose warheads are laced with chemical agents, and the munitions have been stockpiled near the villages of al-Khawiyah and al-Zawriyah not far from the US-run al-Tanf military base in southern Syria, Naryshkin added. The base has turned into a real "den of bandits," he said. —DNA

## Jordan's FM calls for investment into Syria

DAMASCUS: Jordan's foreign minister Monday called for international investment into conflict-ravaged Syria's crippled infrastructure to speed up refugee returns. Ayman Safadi made the remarks during a visit to the capital Damascus, where he met with Syrian President Bashar Assad and his counterpart, Faisal Mekdad. Jordan, which shares a border with the war-torn country and hosts some 1.3 million Syrian refugees, played a crucial role in the once-pariah state's return to the Arab League. It hosted regional talks in May between Syrian, Saudi, Iraqi and Egyptian officials in an initiative to reach a political solution to the years-long crisis. Syria's uprising-turned civil war, now in its 13th year, has killed nearly half a million people and displaced half of its prewar population of 23 million. Syrians in both government-held territory and an opposition-held enclave in the country's northwest suffer from rampant poverty and crippled infrastructure. —APP

## Drug cartel violence flares in western Mexico

APATZINGAN: The drug cartel violence that citizen self-defense leader Hipolito Mora gave his life fighting flared anew on Sunday, just one day after he was buried, as shootings and road blockades hit the city of Apatzingan, a regional hub in Mexico's hot lands. Roads in and out of Apatzingan were blocked Sunday morning by trucks and buses pulled across the road by cartel gunmen, as the vehicles' owners stood helplessly. "They told me to park my truck across the road. They said if I moved it, they would burn it," said one truck driver, who asked his name not be used for fear of reprisals. And in the city of Apatzingan, the regional hub where the area's agricultural products are traded, gunmen carjacked a family, took their auto at gun point and used it to shoot another driver to death just a few blocks away. The victim's car was left dangling from a bridge as he lay dead inside, slumped onto the passenger's side seat. The execution was so quick that his car continued on for a few yards, the front end climbed onto the guard rail of the bridge, and came to rest almost turned on its side. A friend of the man said he worked at a car dealership and had gone on a pizza run for a family get-together a few moments before he died. —Agencies

## Allies agree to extend term of NATO chief Stoltenberg

LONDON: The NATO allies have agreed to extend the term of Jens Stoltenberg as the secretary general until October 2024, the alliance's chief said on Tuesday. Stoltenberg, who said he was honored by the decision, wrote on Twitter: "The transatlantic bond between Europe & North America has ensured our freedom & security for nearly 75 years, and in a more dangerous world, our Alliance is more important than ever." Since 2014, Norwegian politician Stoltenberg, 63, has been serving as the alliance's 13th general secretary. The decision came amid a reported lack of agreement over a possible successor to Stoltenberg, as well as many allies wanting to keep a steady hand at NATO's helm as Russia's war on Ukraine nears the 18-month mark, posing a continued challenge to the alliance. "The mandate of Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has been extended three times, and he has served for a total of almost nine years," NATO spokesperson Oana Lungescu said in February, when Stoltenberg was due to step down this October but has resisted yet another extension of his term. British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak praised Stoltenberg's contributions to the alliance. "Under Jens Stoltenberg's leadership, NATO has evolved to meet new threats, continued to protect our people, and has been steadfast in support of Ukraine," he said on Twitter. Likewise, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock congratulated Stoltenberg on his extension in office. "You can count on Germany, as we continue to rally support for Ukraine," she said. Also congratulating Stoltenberg was Romanian President Klaus Iohannis, who said he is "looking forward to continuing to work together for further consolidating the Alliance." — Agencies



RAWALPIND: HE. Sher Ali Mirzo, Defence Minister of Tajikistan presenting a souvenir to Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, at Ministry of Defence in Rawalpindi did not match any documents. —DNA

## Russia's oil exports at higher volumes than war

LONDON: Russia's crude oil and diesel exports are at higher volumes than in the pre-war period with the emergence of new export destinations, particularly China and India, for crude exports and a good range of buyers for diesel exports, according to Vortexa data compiled by Anadolu. Russia's crude oil exports plummeted to the lowest of 2.28 million barrels a day in May 2019 but hit a record high of 4.02 million barrels a day in July 2020, data comprising Russia's crude oil exports between January 2016 and June 2023 shows. Russia's crude oil exports last year before the war, between January 2021 and January 2022, reached between 2.75 million and 3.30 million barrels a day. In February 2022 when Russia started its war in Ukraine, crude oil exports totaled 3.17 million barrels per day. In a bid to target Russia's export revenues, Western countries tried to shift away from exporting crude oil and oil products from Russia. The

European Union (EU) and G7 countries banned seaborne crude exports from Russia by Dec. 5 last year, imposing a price cap of \$60 per barrel. As a result, Russia sought new export destinations for its oil exports, with China and India emerging as the largest importers of cheaper Russian petroleum, resulting in virtually no change in Russia's crude export volumes but at much higher levels. Russia's crude export volumes in the post-war period only dropped below 3 million barrels a day in July and December last year. The country exported 3.29 million barrels a day this February and 3.51 million barrels a day in March, while exports hit 3.71 million barrels a day in April this year and 3.64 million barrels a day in May. June this year saw Russia's crude exports surpass pre-war levels at 3.49 million barrels a day. "Crude exports from Russia have increased as pipeline exports from the northern leg of the Druzhba pipeline have been rerouted to seaborne exports as of late last year,"

David Wech, Vortexa's chief economist, told Anadolu. The pipeline is one of the biggest crude oil pipeline networks in the world, with a total length of 5,500 kilometers, including all its branches. The pipeline starts in Almetyevsk, Russia, where pipelines carrying crude oil from Siberia, the Urals and the Caspian Sea converge. The pipeline splits into a northern and a southern leg, with the northern leg continuing via Belarus and Poland to Germany and the southern branch running through Ukraine to Slovakia and Hungary. The pipeline's capacity is between 1.2 million and 1.4 million barrels per day, with the potential to increase to 2 million barrels per day. "Meanwhile, much more crude is being declared as transit crude, with Kazakhstan Export Blend Crude Oil (KEBCO) barrels being attributed to its Kazakh origin, allowing the avoidance of all sanctions. Technically, these barrels are the same as Urals and have always been. They just reflect the share of Kazakh transit crude in

the Urals blend," he noted. The transit crude oil exports stood at 1.36 million and 1.49 million barrels a day in January and February 2022, respectively. These volumes hit their highest level of 1.84 million barrels a day in March 2023 and remained at 1.61 million barrels a day in June 2023. Wech explained that diesel exports are "much higher as Russia makes every effort to maximize those flows due to their high value and the much higher premium product price cap of \$100 per barrel". Europe has imposed a ban on Russian diesel and other refined oil products, taking effect on Feb. 5, 2023. "Diesel is the only Russian export flow, except for liquefied natural gas, which is exempt from European sanctions, where Russia enjoys a broad pool of buyers. Crude and other product exports are dependent on very few buyers, led by China and India," Wech said. Russia's diesel exports remained mostly below 1 million barrels a day during the period the data covers, but the

volumes reached 1.1 million barrels a day in February 2022, when the war started. The following months saw Russian diesel exports at a level of 800,000 barrels a day until recovering to 1 million barrels a day in November 2022. The highest diesel export volumes were recorded in March 2023 at 1.3 million barrels a day. They dropped to 1.19 million and 875,000 barrels a day in April 2023 and May 2023, respectively. However, export volumes rebounded to 1.27 million barrels a day in June 2023, exceeding levels recorded in the pre-war period. Wech also said other product exports were down compared to pre-war levels, but exports recovered slightly from a strong downturn right after the war started. According to Wech, Russian crude oil exports in general record seasonal declines over the summer months due to higher domestic demand from higher refinery runs after the spring maintenance season as well as oil field maintenance. —Agencies



**Briefs**

**Taliban orders beauty salons to close**

WEB DESK

KABUL: The Taliban administration in Afghanistan has ordered beauty salons to close within a month, the morality ministry said, in the latest shrinking of access to public places for Afghan women. "The deadline for the closing of beauty parlours for women is one month," Mohammad Sadiq Akif, a spokesperson for the Ministry for the Prevention of Vice and Propagation of Virtue, said on Tuesday, referring to a ministry notice. Foreign governments and U.N. officials have condemned growing restrictions on women since the Taliban returned to power in 2021 after defeating a U.S.-backed government as foreign forces withdrew. Last year, authorities closed most girls' high schools, barred women from university and stopped many female Afghan aid staff from working. Many public places including bathhouses, gyms and parks have been closed to women. Beauty salons sprung up in Kabul and other Afghan cities in the months after the Taliban were driven from power in late 2001, weeks after the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States. Many remained open after the Taliban returned to power two years ago, providing some women with jobs and their customers with their services. The salons are usually female-only and have their windows covered so that customers cannot be seen from outside. Sahar, a Kabul resident who visited a salon every few weeks to get her hair and nails done, said she felt that a final avenue for socializing safely outside of with family had now been cut off.

**Monthly salary of CJP increased to Rs1.2m**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Acting president and Senate Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani on Tuesday issued an order increasing the monthly salaries of the chief justice of Pakistan (CJP) and other Supreme Court judges to Rs1.2 million and Rs1.1m, respectively. The order issued by Sanjrani dated July 3, a copy of which is available with Dawn.com, said that the changes would come into effect at once and would be deemed to have taken effect on and from the first day of the current month. Under the order, titled the "Salary of Judges of the Supreme Court Order 2023, the CJP would be paid Rs1,229,189 per mensem (every month) while other top court judges would be paid Rs1,161,163 per mensem. Under the previous order issued by President Dr Arif Alvi in June 2022, the CJP's monthly salary was Rs1,024,324 while that of other top court judges was Rs 967,636.

**Independence Day of Belarus celebrated**

**Pakistan greatly values its relations with Belarus: minister**

Independence Day carries huge significance for Belarusian people: Ambassador

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Human Rights Riaz Hussain Pirzada has said both Pakistan and Belarus enjoy excellent relations adding both countries had huge scope to further strengthen these relations. He expressed these views while speaking on the occasion of the Independence Day of Belarus. Among others SAPM Tariq Fatemi also attended the reception. The Minister further said Belarus has made huge strides especially in the technological field. He hoped bilateral relations between the two countries shall be solidified. He said, the recent visit of Russian foreign minister to Pakistan provided a firm basis towards building relationship on strong footing. He said there was huge scope as well in the fields of information technology, education, cultural etc between the two countries 'It is a matter of satisfaction that the continued high level exchange and interaction between our leadership in different regional and international summits had yielded productive results'. Pakistan duly recognizes the importance of international cooperation especially in the field of human rights. He said let us seize this opportunity to strengthen the bonds of friendship between our two nations and explore new avenues of cooperation that will benefit our people. Ambassador of Belarus Andrei Metlitsa in his remarks thanked the chief guest and Ambassador Tariq Fatemi for gracing the occasion. He also thanked his fellow diplomats for their presence. The ambassador termed the recent visit of the foreign minister as an important milestone in terms of further cementing of bilateral relations. He said Belarus and Pakistan established



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Human Rights Riaz Hussain Pirzada, Ambassador of Belarus Andrei Metlitsa, SAPM Tariq Fatemi and others cutting cake to mark the Independence Day of Belarus. – DNA

diplomatic relations back in 1994 and since then these relations are constantly on the move. The Ambassador announced that after the successful visit of the foreign minister now they were working on the visit of the Belarusian president to Pakistan.

**Ukraine reports 'fruitful' days in counteroffensive**

NEWS DESK

KYIV: A Ukrainian counteroffensive against Russian forces has been "particularly fruitful" in the past few days and Ukraine's troops are fulfilling their main tasks, a senior security official said on Tuesday. The comments by Oleksiy Danilov, Secretary of Ukraine's National Security and Defence Council, were Kyiv's latest positive assessment of the month-old counterattack although Moscow has not acknowledged Ukraine's gains. Russia, which began its full-scale invasion in February 2022, still holds swathes of territory in eastern and southern Ukraine but Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Monday his troops had

**Putin says sanctions making Russia stronger**

MOSCOW: Russia will continue to oppose Western sanctions, President Vladimir Putin has said, following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. His address to a virtual Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit was his first to an international meeting since last month's mutiny in Russia. Mr Putin backed trade accords between SCO nations in local currencies - seen as an attempt to blunt sanctions. The 2023 SCO summit is taking place virtually, under India's leadership. – Agencies

made progress after a "difficult" week. "At this stage of active hostilities, Ukraine's Defense Forces are fulfilling the number one task - the maximum destruction of manpower, equipment, fuel depots, military vehicles, command posts, artillery and air defense forces of the Russian army," Oleksiy Danilov, the head of Ukraine's National Security and Defence Council, wrote on Twitter. "The last few days have been particularly fruitful," he said, without providing any details from the battlefield. Valeriy Shershen, spokesperson for the Tavria, or southern, military command, said Ukrainian troops had advanced by up to two km (1.2 miles) in the Bardiarsk direction of southern Ukraine, despite fierce Russian resistance.

**Five killed after man opens fire in Philadelphia**

PHILADELPHIA: Five people have been killed and two children wounded after a man wearing a bullet-proof vest opened fire in the US city of Philadelphia. The suspected attacker, a 40-year-old man who is now in custody, was carrying an AR-15-style rifle, a handgun, a police scanner and ammunition. He has no known connection to the victims and, with no clear motive, the shooting appeared to be random. Police were called to the city's south-western Kingsessing area on Monday. "When officers responded, they did identify and find some gunshot victims," Police Commissioner Danielle Outlaw said. "As they were scooping up the victims and preparing them for transport to hospital, they also heard multiple gunshots." Officers then chased the suspect on foot while gunfire continued to ring out, damaging parked cars and littering the streets with shell casings. At about 20:40 local time (00:40 Tuesday GMT), police cornered the man in an alleyway. He surrendered and was taken into custody without further incident. Police initially said four people had been killed and were all men aged between 20 and 59. The two injured children, aged two and 13, were taken to hospital and are in a stable condition. But a fifth victim was identified early on Tuesday. A body was discovered inside a building in the same neighbourhood and the individual is believed to have died in the shooting spree. – Agencies

**IMF deal pushes rupee up by 10.5 against dollar**

KARACHI: The Pakistani rupee on Tuesday gained massively in the interbank market during the intraday trade after the government struck a deal with International Monetary Fund (IMF). The country on Friday secured a \$3 billion short-term financial package from the IMF, giving the economy some much-awaited respite as it teeters on the brink of default. The local currency closed at Rs275.44 against the greenback, gaining Rs10.5 or 3.83% in the interbank market. It closed at 285.99 on June 27 - the last trading session before the Eid holidays. The dollar had on May 11 soared to a record-high Rs290.93 in the interbank. Since then, it has posted a drop of Rs23.43. Speaking to media, Topline Securities CEO Mohammad Sohail said that the rupee has gained up to 3% as expected. "The sustainability of the gains will be confirmed in the coming days as the government claims that the partial funds under the deal will be disbursed by the mid of July," Sohail added that the government has also claimed that it would secure around \$4-\$5 billion from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and the Islamic Development Bank - which would improve the dollar liquidity issues. – DNA



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov meets with Syed Ahsan Raza Shah, Additional Secretary Afghanistan & West Asia of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. – DNA

**FM concludes fruitful official visit to Japan**

SAIFULLAH

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, visited Japan on 1-4 July 2023 at the invitation of Foreign Minister of Japan Yoshiyuki Hayashi. In Tokyo, Foreign Minister held bilateral talks with Foreign Minister Hayashi and called on Prime Minister Fumio Kishida. The two Foreign Ministers discussed all aspects of bilateral relation; including, trade and investment, defence cooperation, education, science & technology, vocational training, people to people exchanges and export of manpower from Pakistan to Japan. They also exchanged views on the regional and global matters. The two sides expressed their desire to remain engaged at all levels to further intensify dialogue and mutually beneficial cooperation. They agreed to work together on targeted programmes with high impact, especially in the domain of solarization, desalination and water purification, housing and infrastructure rebuilding in the flood affected areas in Pakistan. It was also agreed to conduct the language skill tests for Japanese language in Pakistan, to facilitate movement of the skilled workforce. Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addressed the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI) where he spoke about Pa-

kistan's vision of regional connectivity and economic cooperation. He emphasized the importance of Pakistan-Japan relations and the vast and multi-faceted economic complementarities between Pakistan and Japan which could create win-win outcomes and shared prosperity and growth. He said that together Pakistan and Japan could create a robust and efficient infrastructure network, boost regional connectivity and enhance trade volumes not only between the two countries but also across the entire region. The Foreign Minister also met with executives of Japanese business enterprises, representatives of JICA and Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) and with prominent members of Japanese civil society. In these meetings, he highlighted the vast trade and investment potential between Pakistan and Japan and invited Japanese enterprises to invest in Pakistan. In his interactions with members of the Pakistani community in Japan, the Foreign Minister shared Government's strong commitment to facilitate Pakistani diaspora abroad. The visit of Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari to Tokyo afforded an important opportunity for high level political engagement between Pakistan and Japan. These engagements and dialogue will further build mutual trust and confidence and mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries.

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