



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
جریر رضی اللہ عنہ سے نقل کرتے ہیں کہ
نبی اکرم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے ان سے پتہ
اودا میں فرمایا کہ لوگوں کو یا کھانا خوش
کردو (تا کہ وہ خوب سن لیں) پھر فرمایا،
لوگو! میرے بعد پھر کافر مت بن جانا کہ
ایک دو سرے کی گردن مارے گا۔
(صحیح بخاری، حدیث نمبر 121)

Barkat Rice Mills
(Pvt) Limited

Senators to protest in front of Indian HC today: Sanjrani

Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani says Senators will register protest in front of the Indian High Commission against the blasphemous remarks made by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders today after Friday prayers. The parliamentarians would go to Indian High Commission in a procession immediately after Friday prayers and hand over a protest resolution to the Indian High Commissioner.



Single province can't resolve water issue: Khurshid Shah

Minister for Water Resources Syed Khurshid Ahmed Shah says water scarcity is a serious issue and it cannot be resolved by any single province. Water sharing formula agreed in 1991 accord should be acted upon instead of following three-tier system. The three-tier system is the most disadvantageous. The one who was getting water through this system was the biggest responsible of water crisis in the country.

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Measuring economy

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Miftah Ismail addressing a press conference along with Federal Minister for Commerce Engr. Khurram Dastgir Khan, Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary, during launching of Pakistan Economic Survey 2021-22 at P-Block in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

Power shortfall hits record 7,700mw

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Load shedding continues to irk people as the electricity shortfall in Pakistan has reached record level of 7,700 megawatts. Despite an announcement from the government to bring down load shedding to three and a half hours, people in several parts of the country are complaining about prolonged power outages. According to sources in the power division, the demand for electricity peaked at 29,400 MW against the available supply of 21,700 MW, bringing the shortfall to 7,700 MW. The sources further said that the demand for electricity will reach to 30,000 MW in the month of July.

It may be noted that on Wednesday, the NEPRA fixed the electricity tariff at Rs24.82 per unit for the fiscal year of 2022-23 after a massive hike of Rs7.91 per unit.

Economic Survey 2021-22

Pakistan beats target, posts 6% GDP growth

Miftah says 5.97pc GDP growth rate in FY22 unsustainable

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: A day before announcing the budget for the fiscal year 2022-23, the coalition government reflected upon the performance of the economy for the outgoing fiscal year with a growth of 6% against the envisaged target of 4.8%. Finance Minister Miftah Ismail, who succeeded Shaukat Tarin as the country's finance czar in mid-April (which interestingly is when the survey review period ends), chaired the launch ceremony of the Economic Survey 2021-22. "The situation in Pakistan has remained the same: whenever the country records growth, unfortunately, it falls into a crisis of current deficit," Miftah said in a televised press conference.

The survey document released

by the Ministry of Finance noted that though the economy recovered from the pandemic (a 0.94% drop in FY20) and maintained a V-shaped recovery by posting

Fiscal deficit increases 3.8%, Public debt surges by Rs 4,500b in 9 months

real GDP growth of 5.97% in the fiscal year 2022, this high growth is "unsustainable" and has resulted in "financial and macroeconomic imbalances". It is worth mentioning that the National Economic Council (NEC) has approved the

annual targets for the upcoming fiscal year 2022-23, including the economic growth target set at 5%, along with the commitment to make efforts to raise it to 6%.

Minister for Finance and Revenue Miftah Ismail termed the GDP growth rate of 5.97 percent during the outgoing fiscal year unsustainable as the country needed to stabilize the economy before moving towards sustainable growth. Addressing a press conference in Islamabad on Thursday, he said the country witnessed a higher economic growth during the year, which resulted in the Current Account Deficit (CAD) to soar to a level where the government had no option but to slow down the economy to control the CAD. The minister said the growth rate was according to the new base year. "Had it been based on the old

base year, the GDP (gross domestic product) growth rate would have been lower." Miftah said during the current fiscal year, the imports increased by 48% to \$75 billion whereas the exports rose by 28 percent. The government could manage to pay only 40% of the import bill out of the exports earning, while the rest was footed from other sources, including loans, he added. Miftah Ismail stressed the need for putting the country in the right direction. He said we have to increase the prices of petroleum products the Brent price is hovering around 120 to 123 dollars per barrel.

The Minister pointed out that the country would not have been faced with the current price hike had the previous government signed long term agreements for gas import during the period of Covid-19.

PML-N won't quit govt voluntarily

Nawaz tasks party leaders to prepare for elections

ISLAMABAD: A majority of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leaders have opposed leaving the government before the completion of tenure after a recent consultation between the top leaders in London. According to sources privy to the discussion within the party, it has been decided that the party will not leave the government until it is being forced to do so. "The party will not quit the government unless a coalition partner leaves or for any other reason," they said adding that it was agreed that if PML-N was not allowed to run the affairs then it would

be easy for them to build a narrative that they were not allowed to work and go into masses with it.

Moreover, Nawaz Sharif has also tasked some party leaders to prepare for elections. The sources within the party said that Shahid Khaqan Abbasi visited London thrice in a month recently and had returned after discussing the matter with Nawaz Sharif. "Khawaja Saad Rafique and Javed Latif also attended these meetings," they said and added that leaders of coalition parties have also met PML-N supremo recently.

Negative from stable

Moody's cuts five Pakistani banks' outlook

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: Moody's Investors Service has affirmed the B3 long-term deposit ratings of five Pakistani banks but changed the outlook on the banks' long-term deposit ratings to negative from stable. The banks included Allied Bank Limited (ABL), Habib Bank Ltd. (HBL), MCB Bank Limited (MCB), National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) and United Bank Ltd. (UBL). According to Moody's, the affirmation of the five Pakistani banks' ratings reflects their stable, deposit-based, funding profiles and adequate liquidity.

"Around 12% of assets are held as cash and interbank placements and an additional 45% are invested in government securities, a large proportion of which can be repaid with the central bank in case of need. Pakistani banks also display a resilient profitability, with the 2021 system-wide return on assets at 1.0%, while growing financial inclu-

sion and other government initiatives are boosting lending opportunities. "These strengths are balanced against the still high asset risks given the vulnerable operating and macro conditions, with the 2021 system wide non-performing loans (NPLs) at 7.9% of gross loans; and modest capital buffers, with the 2021 system wide equity-to-assets ratio at 6.3%."

According to the rating agency, the negative outlook on the bank ratings reflects 1) the rated banks' sizable holding of securities holdings, predominantly sovereign debt securities, at between 5-8 times their shareholders' equity, which links their creditworthiness to that of the government; and 2) the risk of a further weakening in the government's capacity to support the banks in case of need.

The latter is particularly relevant for NBP and HBL, whose ratings incorporate one notch of government support uplift.

People will now find out what inflation is: Imran Khan

Says Economic Survey proves country was on path of progress during last two years

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Hours after the economic survey was presented by Finance Minister Miftah Ismail, PTI Chairman Imran Khan told the people that they will now know what inflation is. Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan said on Thursday that the Economic Survey 2021-22 launched by the government proved the performance of his government.

Commenting on economic reforms, Imran Khan said that the tax revenue rose to Rs6 trillion while the exports surged to \$32 billion during PTI government's tenure.

He said that today economic survey endorsed that Pakistan was making progress in last two years, adding that huge amount of money was coming from foreign countries during Musharraf era. The PTI chairman went on to say that the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth was nearly 6% during the



last couple of years and growth in different sectors was also evident. He said the government endeavored to lift the underprivileged class, adding that the people would experience the real taste of inflation in the utility bills of next month.

The former PM further said they did not succumb to the pressure of International Monetary Fund (IMF) and thought for the people. The foreign remittances witnessed a record

increase due to trust in the PTI government by overseas Pakistanis. Recalling the achievement of his government in the agriculture field, Imran Khan said agriculture production witnessed a 4.4pc increase, while the price of the crops of farmers was provided to them on time. Taking a jibe at the government, Imran Khan said that inflation is touching sky-high since the 'imported government came into power.

IMF agreement not in public interest: Tarin

ISLAMABAD: Former finance minister Shaukat Tarin has asserted that the agreement with International Monetary Fund (IMF) is not in the public interest. Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, the former finance minister said that the PTI-led government had refused to accept IMF's conditions of raising prices of electricity and petroleum products. "Instead, our plan was to cover the capital by increasing the tax base," he added.

Shaukat Tarin pointed out that the agreements made by the incumbent government with the Fund were not in the public interest. "Instead of taking a stand against such IMF's conditions, the government has laid down in front of the Fund," he added. He further said that former prime minister Imran Khan went to Pakistan's friends and the IMF to rescue the country from economic woes that began before the PTI came to power.

The former finance minister alleged that the economic team of the present regime has released the statistics of PTI government.

With Rs9.5tr outlay

Government to present budget FY 2022-23 today

ISLAMABAD: The incumbent coalition government is all set to present budget for the fiscal year 2022-23 in the Parliament on June 10 (Friday), with a special focus on fiscal consolidation to contain budget deficit. The budget would be presented by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Miftah Ismail. According to official sources, the budget has been formulated while considering the existing challenges being faced by economy at domestic and international fronts.

Hence, mitigating people's suffering, transforming agriculture sector, promoting Information Technology (IT), boosting industrial and bolstering businesses would be the main focus of the document. The budget was being prepared in close coordination between all departments and ministries involved in budget related events including the presentation of the budget in the Parliament and launching of the Economic Survey, they added.

Keeping in view the robust growth of revenues during the current fiscal year (2021-22), the government is likely to set the revenue collection target at over Rs.7 trillion for the fiscal year 2022-23. The coalition government has decided to allocate Rs800 billion for the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) in the next fiscal year, said sources. A development



budget worth Rs800 billion has been proposed for the next financial year, out of which Rs538 billion will be allocated for federal ministries and departments.

It has been proposed to allocate Rs 121 billion to the National Highway Authority (NHA), while Rs96 billion has been proposed for water resources. Rs50 billion has been proposed for the development of the merged tribal districts in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, while Rs96.36 billion has been proposed in the development budget for Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. Sources further said that in the energy sector, a development budget of Rs49 billion has been proposed for Pakistan Electric Power Company (PEPCO) and Rs 33 billion for Rail-

ways. Meanwhile, the government has decided to allocate Rs 25 billion for Atomic Energy Commission, while Rs41.87 billion will be allocated to Higher Education Commission (HEC) and Rs2.5 billion for Aviation. Rs84 billion has been proposed for energy sector, Rs83bn for water schemes while Rs39 billion will be given to Housing Ministry and Planning. Moreover, the Ministry of Climate Change will be given Rs9.5 billion. It has been proposed to allocate Rs10.47 billion for the Ministry of Home Affairs, Rs 12 billion for the Ministry of Health, Rs 12 billion for the Ministry of Food Security and Rs3.1 billion for Maritime Affairs.

Brotherhood

Ambassador of Iran, Seyed Ali Mohammad Hossenei called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad on Thursday.



Photo: PID

Pak-Iran trade, economic potential should be tapped: PM

Urges Parliament to condemn BJP leaders' blasphemous remarks

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Thursday called for tapping the vast potential existing in the areas of trade and economic cooperation between Pakistan and Iran by overcoming barriers and exploring new avenues of collaboration. The prime minister, in a meeting with Ambassador of Iran Seyed Ali Mohammad Hossenei, who called on him here, emphasized the early finalization of Polan-Gwadar project that would provide additional 100 MW of electricity from Iran to Pakistan.

He thanked Iran for its timely assistance in controlling forest fire in Balochistan, highlighting that it was a testament to the strong fraternal bond that exists between our two countries and peoples.

The prime minister conveyed his warm greetings to the Iranian leadership and highlighted the importance of close fraternal ties between the two countries, based on shared geography, common heritage and people-to-people linkages.

He also emphasized that in view of the historic relations, the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations this year, should be celebrat-

ed by both countries in a most befitting manner.

In the regional context, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif conveyed gratitude for Iran's consistent support on the issue of Kashmir, especially by the Iran's Supreme Leader. He expressed the hope that with the continued support of the international community, the people of Kashmir would achieve their right to self-determination, in accordance with

Govt fulfills promise of providing cheaper wheat flour to people in KP: PM

the UN Security Council resolutions, and their own wishes.

Highlighting the precarious humanitarian and economic situation in Afghanistan, the prime minister underlined that the people of Afghanistan should be provided access to the frozen assets. He appreciat-

ed the close coordination between the two countries on the situation in Afghanistan.

Ambassador of Iran, Seyed Ali Mohammad Hossenei reiterated felicitations from the Iranian leadership to the prime minister on assumption of office and reaffirmed commitment to enhance bilateral cooperation in all areas of mutual interest.

He also highlighted close consultations between the two countries on important regional and international issues, including Afghanistan. While emphasizing the importance of high-level exchanges, the prime minister renewed his invitation to the Iranian leadership to visit Pakistan, at an early date. PM for parliamentary debate, resolution to condemn BJP leaders' blasphemous remarks

Prime Minister Shehbaz suggested the parliament to hold a debate and adopt a resolution to condemn the blasphemous remarks by the office bearers of the BJP → the ruling party in India.

The prime minister, in his brief remarks during the joint session of the parliament, endorsed the proposal by Minister for Economic Affairs Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and asked the Speaker National Assembly to allocate an hour on Monday to discuss the issue.

Chaudhry brothers to meet to remove differences

Staff Report

LAHORE: Chaudhry brothers have decided to hold important meeting as Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) divided over political issues. Sources privy to the matter said, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi and Chaudhry Wajahat Hussain will meet soon while it has also been decided to convene an early meeting of PML-Q members of National and Provincial Assemblies and party organization. Earlier, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain's younger brother Chaudhry Wajahat's son Chaudhry Hussain Elahi has parted ways with the party.

He made the announcement on his official twitter handle. Chaudhry Moonis Elahi, son of Punjab Assembly Speaker Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi, and Member National Assembly also retweeted his Chaudhry Hussain Elahi's tweet. "I've always said my

country is first for me and keeping that in mind I have decided that my political journey with PMLQ must come to an end. Will be deciding my political future with Moonis Elahi but cannot be in a party that supports Shehbaz Sharif's Imported Government," Hussain Elahi announced on Twitter.

On the other hand, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday visited the house of the PML-Q chief, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, in Lahore. PM Shehbaz Sharif inquired about the health of Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain. He prayed for the quick recovery of the political leader. During the meeting, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain forwarded his recommendations for the upcoming fiscal year of 2022-23. Chaudhry Sahab's recommendations are people-friendly, and will definitely make them part of the budget, PM Shehbaz Sharif was quoted as saying.

Govt bars private companies from buying Russian oil: Hammad

ISLAMABAD: Former Energy Minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Hammad Azhar has asserted that the incumbent government was also barring private companies from buying oil from Russia. Talking to a news channel, the former federal minister claimed that Bangladesh is also close to an agreement to buy cheap oil from Russia, reiterating that the PTI-led government would have bought Russian oil in April if they were still in power. Hammad Azhar further said the fuel companies have Rs600 billion in oil profits while the KP and Punjab governments were also paying Rs100 billion respectively. "Rs300 billion was set aside for oil subsidy. If we could get cheap oil from Russia, we would have saved this amount," he added.

In response to a question, he said that the PTI government had started talks with Russia in mid-March. "On March 29, we received a call from Ambassador in Moscow, who informed that Russia was interested in selling oil cheaper," he added. The former finance minister said that the "imported" government was also barring private companies from buying oil from Russia.

Jl workers breach blockages to reach Indian High Commission

ISLAMABAD: Jammāt-e-Islami (JI) workers broke through security blockades to record their protest outside the Indian High Commission against the derogatory remarks recently made by two leaders of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) against the Holy Prophet (PBUH). According to details, the demonstrators pelted stones at the police forcing them to retreat. The police had barred the protestors from entering the Red Zone.

Repetitive announcements were made from the stage to the workers not to enter the Red Zone. However, the angry protestors started pelting stones on the police party, forcing the officials to retreat. On June 7, Pakistan summoned Indian Charge d' Affaires and conveyed categorical rejection and strong condemnation of the highly derogatory remarks made by two senior officials of BJP about the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

The foreign office spokesman in a statement shared that it was conveyed that these remarks are totally unacceptable and have not only deeply hurt the sentiments of the people of Pakistan but of Muslims across the world.

PTI senators boycott parliament's joint session

Female MNAs hold protest outside Parliament

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Faisal Javed has said that PTI senators would not participate in parliament's joint session Thursday. The PTI leader took to Twitter and said that the electoral reforms bill to be presented and passed in the parliament's joint session today will deprive overseas Pakistanis of their right to vote. While the NAB reforms bill's purpose is to give a renewed NRO to the 'imported government', he added.

He said that the abolishment of the electronic voting machine (EVM) would raise questions about the result of the upcoming elections. The government had already passed the bills from the National Assembly and the Senate, but the President had sent the bills back for review raising legal and moral concerns. The head of the



state had advised the Parliamentary committees to review both the bills. The bills were passed in a hurry by the National Assembly on May 26 and by the Senate on May 27, 2022, the president remarked.

Female members of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Thursday held

a protest outside the Parliament House. During the protest, they also tried to break into the Parliament's building, while the police officials closed the gates. The PTI members were much eager to move inside as they even climb on the gate and continued with the attempts to get into the Parliament house.

Joint Parliamentary session passes Election Act Amendment Bill

Bills will be sent to President Alvi once again for approval

ISLAMABAD: The Joint Sitting of Parliament on Thursday approved "The Elections (Amendment) Bill, 2022" to conduct pilot projects in bye-elections before using I-Voting and Electronic Voting Machines in general elections. It is pertinent to mention that earlier, the bill was passed by both Houses of Parliament in last month and sent to President Dr Arif Ali for his assent to make it law.

But, the President returned the bill to the government, observing that the amendments were passed by parliament in haste and without due diligence.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi rejected President's observations and objections by terming them as baseless. Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar said legislation is sole prerogative of parliament and President cannot dictate the legislature.

Joint Session of Parliament also passed "The National Accountability Bureau (Amendment), Bill, 2022" aimed at preventing misuse of law for political engineering and victimization of opponents.

The bill was earlier passed by Senate and National Assembly and was sent to President Dr Arif Ali for his assent to make it law but he returned the bill to parliament, along with his observations and objections for consideration. Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar, while tabling the bill, rejected the observations and objections, except that the NAB chairman may declare any place as sub-jail.

The bill proposed that NAB ordinance will not be applicable to all matters pertaining to federal, provincial or local taxations, decisions of the federal or provincial cabinet and constitutional bodies, as well as procedural lapses in performance of any public or

government work. It states that Chairman and Deputy Chairman NAB will be appointed by Federal Government. The Chairman will be appointed by Federal Government after consultation between the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly.

The law minister, speaking on the floor of the NA criticised the NAB for keeping politicians incarcerated for prolonged periods and said: "In Islam, it is a rule that the person who blames another person has the burden of proving the crime. We had sent the NAB law to Islamic Ideological Council (ICC). The ICC also noted that the burden of proving the crime was on the person accusing the other," Tarar said. The law minister added NAB was used for "political engineering" and the person who was accused had to prove his innocence — as opposed to the teachings of Islam.

We will bring country out of darkness: Maryam

Says govt working day, night to improve economic situation

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: PML-N leader Maryam Nawaz has said that all power plants that were closed in previous government are now running and by July 5,000 additional megawatts will be added to the grid. She said that government is working day and night to improve economic situation of the country "We are not sitting and lamenting, we have given plan to the people and will deliver it," she said while talking to media after Avenfield case hearing in Islamabad High Court.

"Those should be criticized who aggravated the matter, we have good intentions and will work hard to guide the country out of the darkness," PML-N leader asserted. "I deem it better to go to the people for new mandate. When they announced to come to Islamabad with hordes, the PML-N decided to remain steadfast and not to give Pakistan to these hordes," PML-N leader said.

Maryam Nawaz said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is well aware of the problems being faced by the public but blamed previous government for the prolonged power outages. The PML-N leader said that PTI government left up to 10 hours of load shedding but new government instead of complaining is taking practical steps to resolve the crisis. We are removing the landmines laid down by Imran Khan, she added.

Reacting to a statement of former Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid about Imran Khan having prior knowledge of the no-confidence motion against him, PML-N vice president said that if former premier knew about the motion why did he made false claims of foreign conspiracy behind his ouster. Agenda of spreading anarchy and unrest should be encouraged, she added.

Earlier in the day, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) heard pleas of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)



ISLAMABAD: Vice President Pakistan Muslim League (N) Maryam Nawaz addressing press conference after her hearing at High Court in Federal Capital. ONLINE PHOTO by Sultan Bashir

vice president Maryam Nawaz and her spouse Capt. Safdar against their sentences in Avenfield reference. The hearing was conducted by Justice Aamir Farooq and Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kiyani. Maryam Nawaz, Captain retired Safdar along with party leaders appeared before the court under strict measures.

During the hearing Justice Aamir Farooq remarked that after evidence it should be look into whether the co-accused helped in the offence or not. Amjad Pervaiz Advocate said that after amendments in the NAB ordinance, it will not come into force from back dates. "Now a law has been made to write letters to other countries to seek legal assistance," he said. "No testimony recorded with regard to the price of the property in this case," Maryam Nawaz's counsel further said. "The NAB didn't describe by a witness account the source of purchase or the price," the lawyer argued. The court later adjourned further hearing of the case until June 16.

PTI MNAs must verify their resignations: Marriyum

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb says the PTI members of parliament should verify their resignations instead of storming the parliament and creating chaos in the country. Talking to newsmen outside the Parliament House in Islamabad on Thursday, she said the country is no more under political revenge of PTI rather there is rule of law now and anyone trying to take law into their hands will have to face consequences. The Minister said the government is working hard to provide relief to the people as the PTI looted the national economy during the last four years.

Govt taking steps for uplift of South Punjab: Governor

Baligh-ur-Rehman says all departments will be transferred to South Punjab gradually, South Punjab Secretariat to be made fully empowered

Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Punjab Governor Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rehman on Thursday said the incumbent government was keenly interested in uplift of South Punjab with an aim to resolve the problems of the people at their doorsteps.

He expressed these views while addressing a meeting held at Governor House Lahore regarding South Punjab Secretariat. Additional Chief Secretary South Punjab Saqib Zafar gave briefing to Governor.

He said all the departments will be transferred to South Punjab gradually and South Punjab Secretariat will be made fully empowered. Baligh said that



immediate steps were required for the development of various sectors of South Punjab.

He said the agriculture was one of the most important sectors and it was the need of hour to introduce modern technology in this sector to put the country on way to progress and prosperity.

The Punjab governor said that a

permanent strategy was also required in Cholistan to deal with the effects of drought. He said that work would be made for the promotion of livestock and tourism in South Punjab. Giving briefing, Additional Chief Secretary South Punjab Saqib Zafar said the performance of various departments of South Punjab Secretariat was improved due to monitoring.

He said the department of education, South Punjab has established first ever Transgender School and Subh-e-Nau school and it has also the distinction of holding schools Olympics and elections of Student Council.

He said the Department of Agriculture, South Punjab has played a vital role

in increasing the production of cotton and wheat. Similarly, monitoring of health centers and THQs has increased their service delivery. Likewise, steps have been taken for uplift of Livestock in South Punjab and tree-plantation, he added.

Saqib Zafar said the Planning and Development Department had the unique honor of conducting "Development Dialogue" in which representatives of international organizations participated.

It was further informed in the briefing that construction work on building of South Punjab Secretariat Multan was underway with rapid pace while 400 kanals of land has been acquired for Bahawalpur Secretariat.

Govt to host Int'l Kashmir conference in Muzaffarabad: PM AJK

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan has said that an international conference on Kashmir issue will be held in Muzaffarabad soon in which intellectuals and delegates from all over the world will be invited.

The PM said this while talking to former MLA Abdul Rashid Turabi, President Tehreek-e-Kashmir Europe Muhammad Ghalib, Mahmood Sharif and senior journalist Shakeel



Turabi who called on him here on Thursday.

Speaking on the occasion, the PM said that the conference besides helping to evolve a comprehensive policy would provide participants a unique opportunity to share their expertise and

opinion vis-a-vis the issue. Denouncing the Indian government's belligerence and hostile policies, the PM said, "We won't allow India to hold hostage the Kashmiri Muslims".

He said that for the successful culmination of the

ongoing Kashmir movement the base camp's role was of utmost importance. Lauding the sacrifices of veteran Kashmiri Hurriyat leader Syed Ali Geelani (late), the PM said, "great people like Syed Ali Geelani are born in centuries".

UN Women, Nishat Mills to promote gender equality

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: The private sector is increasingly being recognized not only as a driver of economic growth, but also as a promoter of sustainable social development.

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and Nishat Mills Limited (Apparel Division)



signed an agreement to strengthen their cooperation

and promote gender equality in the workplace through

capacity building initiatives on harassment and redressal mechanisms and gender responsive policies and procurement, among others.

The agreement was signed today during a signing ceremony in Lahore by Sharmela Rassoof, Country Representative, UN Women Pakistan and Wajeeha Khalid-Business Head, Nishat Mills Ltd (Apparel Division).

ACCA recommended budget proposal for FY2022-23

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: In the budget proposals released yesterday by ACCA (the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants), the global body for professional accountants has suggested that the Government/political parties and businesses should sign a "charter of economy" for the next 10-15 years to keep the policies and their implementation consistent.

Pakistan must focus on lowering its import bill by bringing down all non-essential imports and improving exports is the second major step. The proposal also talks about shifting the tax burden to the country's higher-income population and subsidising the cost of living of middle and lower-income cadres. All profes-

sionals should compulsorily be brought into the tax net. There is a dire need to take significant strides for documentation of the economy and increase the capacity of FBR to collect more taxes.

The global body for professional accountants has urged the government to reduce tax rates to a single digit and ensure broadening of the tax net by adopting Data Analytics and Artificial Intelligence leveraging rich data sources at government's disposal such as NADRA. Rationalisation, standardisation and automation of Tax Laws & administration to minimize harassment of taxpayer.

The proposal suggests that for economic recovery Government should encourage savings and announce incentives for local industry manufacturing

to encourage use of domestic products. Large agricultural landowners should be taxed at minimal rates i.e., 7%. The Roshan Digital Program aimed at overseas Pakistanis should continue to evolve. Proper legislation and rationalization can help improve the situation for mining and can also result in attracting FDI.

The global body has shown concern as the unemployment rate was 5.8 percent according to the Pakistan Economic Survey, 2019-20 with the highest unemployment (11.56 percent) was prevalent among the age 20-24 indicating youth unemployment. Social protection programs and its offshoots as well as low-cost housing initiatives targeting the lower middle class and poor segments should be continued.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, Mr. Lal Khan son of Buda Khan allottee of plot No. 93-D Area Development Scheme Talagang has appointed General Power Attorney to Mr. Noor Muhammad son of Ahmed Khan vide registered deed No. 170/4 dated 02-07-1996 from Sub registrar Talagang. Further Mr. Noor Muhammad son of Ahmed Khan General Power Attorney has wish to transfer of plot namely Malik Naseer Ahmed Khan son of Noor Muhammad Malik.

If anyone have objection of above advertisement submit their objection within fifteen days of this advertisement otherwise objection will not be entertained.

Deputy Director/ Secretary District Housing Committee Chakwal.

Reon Energy, Artistic Milliners announced 8.5MW solar power project

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Artistic Milliners, and Reon Energy today announced an 8.5 MW captive solar power project. The project is set to be installed across Artistic Milliner's 7 units located in Korangi, Landhi and Port Qasim industrial areas in Karachi.

The 8.5 MW solar PV project is expected to produce approximately 13.5 GWh (Gigawatt hours) annually. The output energy will be used on-site resulting in substantial savings for the company in cost of energy and will also cut around 8,279 tonnes of CO2 equivalent emissions annually.

Speaking of the project,



Omer Ahmed, Chief Executive Officer, Artistic Milliners stated "Artistic Milliners has been a forerunner in the global textile industry and has spearheaded denim innovation and sustainability across all its processes. The 8.5 MW Solar power project is an additional step towards our commitment to a sustainable future."

"The 8.5 MW solar power project while increasing productivity in the textile value chain can go a long way in accelerating growth in the industry, increasing its contribution to the national GDP and supporting the livelihoods of several people," said Mujtaba Khan, Chief Executive Officer, Reon Energy.

Public-Awareness drive

Daraz celebrates 'World Environment Day'



Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Daraz is one of the leading e-commerce marketplaces across South Asia. It has created the fastest growing, interactive platform, to provide the most convenient access to the widest range of products and services, round-the-clock, on-the-go. Besides its robust commercial ventures, Daraz has also launched many resourceful initiatives for social-development. As the World Environment Day was commemorated on the 5th of June, Daraz celebrated this occasion by hosting an "Environment Day Drive", in collaboration with other entities, at the Sea View (Backside of Chunky Monkey)

The vibrant event began at 9:30 in the morning, as hundreds of people gathered for a Beach-Cleaning and awareness campaign about 'Environmental-Sustainability'. This colorful ceremony concluded with some entertaining engagements, giveaways, refreshments and a photo-session.

It is a matter of serious concern that Pakistan's Fossil Carbon-Dioxide (CO2) emissions were over 178 million tons in the year 2016, which was approximately 0.50% of the Global Carbon-Footprint. Daraz believes that the pollution levels in Pakistan must be reduced, through collective efforts, to ensure a safe and healthy future for the whole world. Over the past year, Daraz has been consciously trying to reduce its carbon footprint by using more sustainable materials in its packaging. In the past 12 months alone, Daraz was able to save 600 tons of carbon emission through using recycled packaging.

VU signs MoU with three universities of South Balochistan



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: To empower Southern Balochistan, the Virtual University of Pakistan signed a historic memorandum of understanding with three universities of South Balochistan. These include the University of Gwadar, the University of Turbat, and the Balochistan University of Engineering and Technology, Khuzdar.

The MoU was signed by the Rector, Virtual University of Pakistan, Prof. Dr. Arshad Saleem and Prof. Dr. Abdul Razzaq Sabir, Vice-Chancellors, University of Gwadar; Prof. Dr. Jan Muhammad, Vice-Chancellor, University of Turbat, Dr. Ehsanullah Kakar, Vice-Chancellor, Balochistan University of Engineering & Technology, Khuzdar at Virtual University. On this occasion, Prof. Dr. Arshad Saleem said that this MoU will help in uplifting the educational standards of province of Balochistan in general and South Balochistan in specific. He said that according to the MoU, the Virtual University of Pakistan and the three partner institutions will collaborate in academic programs by sharing/ extending the facilities to students and faculty along with sharing of academic data, publications, and information.

Development of joint academic programs/trainings under the "Digital Skills Training & Support Program for Southern Balochistan" of the Virtual University of Pakistan, access to laboratories, provision of space/building for establishing labs/office and accommodating the Mobile/ Smart Bio Lab(s) of the Virtual University of Pakistan at the partner Universities will be the main focus.

CCP conducts search, inspection of 3 companies

Staff Reporter

LAHORE: As part of an ongoing investigation into the prima facie violations of Section 4 of the Competition Act 2010, the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) on Wednesday carried out search and inspection of the offices of three companies (undertakings) based in Lahore, engaged in the supply of steel structures to DISCOS across Pakistan, on the suspicion of facilitating a possible bid-rigging/cartelisation in the procurement of steel structures by various power distribution companies (DISCOS).

Three different teams of duly authorized officers of the CCP entered and searched the premises of the respective undertakings and seized

pertinent information. The search and inspections were carried out under Section 34 of the Act during which the office of the undertakings fully cooperated with the CCP's search teams by handing over the documents and computer-stored information relating to the suspected role of the respective undertakings in the alleged anti-competitive activities.

During the investigation, the enquiry committee analyzed the five years (2015 - 2020) tender documents provided by the DISCOS which revealed that only a few companies participated in the bidding process of steel structures floated by DISCOS apparently in a collusive manner which may constitute prima facie contravention of Section 4(2)(e) of the Act.

EBM recognized for gender diversity at workplace

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: English Biscuit Manufacturers (EBM), a leading FMCG company, was named among the top ten companies at the Employer of Choice: Gender Diversity Awards 2022, organized jointly by International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Pakistan Business Council (PBC).

Facilitated by UK Aid, these awards are aimed at recognizing the efforts of the private employment sector in promoting women empowerment and helping women become valuable assets for their organizations while also encouraging other business to do the same. EBM's Executive Director, Shahzain Mumir, accepted the award on behalf of the Company.

Speaking at the occasion, Shahzain said, "With women at the decision-making table, EBM is staying true to its commitment of promoting gender diversity." With women holding one-third of senior leadership positions, including the CEO, EBM not only supports women through gender-friendly policies, but also fosters a culture that encourages them to break the glass ceiling.

In addition to being recognized as one of the frontrunners for providing equal opportunities to women, EBM also won the top position at the "Best Place to Work Awards" in the FMCG Industry, earlier this year. The company thus continues to be recognized for its efforts for being a people-first organization.

Asia's largest cattle market

Sacrificial animals continuously arriving at Super Highway



Asif Ali Syed

KARACHI: The sacrificial animals are continuously coming to Asia's largest cattle market located at the Super Highway from all over Pakistan to perform the Sunnat e Ibrahim. More than 6,000 sacrificial animals have reached the market that also include sheep and goats. The process of establishing pens in VIP blocks at the Super Highway Cattle Market has been expedited. Stalls owners are decorating places with their own style. The beautiful animals of Sahiwal have come into the market.

According to the details, the big cattle market continues to have animals from all over Pakistan to perform the duty of Sunnat e Ibrahim. The animals brought for this purpose have increased the number of beautiful sheep and goats which the citizens were anxiously waiting for. Bulls, cows, goats, and camels are brought to the market for sale from all over the country. Stalls owners are decorating pens in their own style. Some have set up shami-ana, and some are erecting frames. Most of the stalls are ready. Sacrificial animals have started reaching the market and citizens are rushing to the market to see and buy the animals.

OPPO F21 Pro 5G achieves new highs of anticipation



Spokesman Report

LAHORE: The wait is finally over. The most awaited OPPO F21 Pro 5G is officially available to purchase online and in stores nationwide.

With fans swooning over its incredible design and fastest internet connection due to 5G enabled, 6nm processor, and camera capabilities, the OPPO F21 Pro 5G has been very well received since its launch.

With its exquisite style and unique Mega lens & Mega portrait feature, the phone has witnessed huge anticipation across the stores on its first sales day.

Powered by Qualcomm® Snapdragon™ 695 5G Mobile Platform built on a 6nm process, slim and sleek design along with good battery life, OPPO F21 Pro 5G ensures an exceptional user experience. The phone has a powerful 4500mAh battery that comes with 33W SUPERVOOC Flash-charging technology. With 128GB of ROM and 8GB RAM, which can be extended by 5GB from OPPO's RAM expansion, promising great power efficiency.

It comes in two stunning colors including Cosmic Black and the unique Rainbow Spectrum. It is available to purchase in stores and at 'Daraz' for a retail price of PKR 69,999/-.



Islamabad
23° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 3:14 am
Zohr 12:07 pm
Asr 5:06 pm
Maghrib 7:17 pm
Isha 9:00 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance 115
PIA Flight Info 114
PIA Cargo 9280979
Railway Inquiry 117
Railway Exchange 9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi 5555489

NdcTech partners with Nutshell Communications

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: NdcTech has entered into a strategic communication partnership with Nutshell Communications (Private) Limited. Nutshell Communications will provide external stakeholder engagement, corporate branding and strategic communication services to NdcTech.

An agreement in this regard was signed by both parties recently at the NdcTech head office by Ammara Masood, CEO & President NdcTech, and Rabia Ahmad, Director & Chief Operating Officer, Nutshell Communications.

The signing was witnessed by Muhammad Azfar Ahsan, Founder & CEO Nutshell group, and senior officials from both organizations.

NdcTech empowers banks and financial institutions wherever they are on their paths of transformation and partners with them to create lasting value. NdcTech does this to build Banks of the future. It is an award-winning partner of Temenos, working with 100+ banks globally and possessing a rich history of 22 years, bringing innovative offerings to clients seeking to strengthen their banking capabilities. Their services comprise of core modernization, digital transformation, managed services and banking on the cloud. NdcTech's team of hundreds of Temenos certified consultants serve clients and deliver transformational services in over 21 countries globally.

President urges efforts to empower women

Highlights steps taken to enhance access to financial services



Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has urged the need to accelerate efforts for the economic empowerment of women and to bring them into the mainstream of the national economy, adding that the latest Information and Communication Technology tools could help in paving the way for women's financial inclusion.

He expressed these views while addressing the 1st Business Women Excellence Awards, organized by the Islamabad Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IWCCI) to acknowledge and appreciate Pakistan's successful women entrepreneurs, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

The event was attended by the founder president of IWCCI, Samina Fazal, President IWCCI, Naima Ansari, members of IWCCI, women entrepreneurs, members of the diplomatic community and senior officials.

Addressing the ceremony, the President urged the need to economically empower women by encouraging them to participate in economic activities, improving their access to credit and finance to start their own businesses, and improving their access to branchless banking services.

He said that he was a great proponent of utilizing Pakistan's huge youth bulge by providing them with quality and skill-based education to enable them to contribute to national development. He said that women, along with youth, remained the

largest untapped resource, which needed to be fully harnessed for Pakistan's socio-economic development.

The President highlighted that steps had been taken to enhance women's access to financial services and the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) was providing business loans to women entrepreneurs, however, the number of women availing these loans was low.

He said that the digital inclusion of women in the financial sector could help bring financial empowerment of women as they can market their products locally and internationally using the latest technology tools.

He called upon the members of the chambers of commerce across the country to make their chambers gender-balanced with the proportional representation of women. He said that as they were the custodians of trade, business and investment, therefore, they should encourage their daughters and sisters and other relatives to come out of their homes and play an active role in running the business enterprises.

The President said that Hazrat Khadija (RA) was a working woman who had employed many men including our beloved Prophet (PBUH) to carry forward her trade. This, he added, should be a role model for all Muslim women. He further added that the mother of Moulana Mohammad Ali and Moulana Shoukat Ali was an active political figure whereas the wife and

sister of Quaid Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah remained side by side with Quaid-i-Azam during his entire political struggle to win a separate homeland for the Muslims of India.

He regretted that women stopped working after marriages and it was the collective responsibility of the society to encourage women to continue to work by providing them with a conducive and women-friendly environment at the workplace.

He said that it was unfortunate that in some parts of the country, women were being denied their inheritance and property rights. He appreciated the fact that Federal Ombudsperson for Protection against Harassment was also working to safeguard women's property and inheritance rights and was helping women get justice in case of the illegal occupation of their properties.

President IWCCI, Ms Naima Ansari also addressed the occasion. She said that IWWCI was playing an active role in facilitating and encouraging women to start their own businesses besides helping them develop linkages with the business community.

The Founder President of IWCCI, Ms Samina Fazal, said that women entrepreneurs were contributing to national development by creating employment opportunities for others and paying taxes to the Government. Earlier, women entrepreneurs from different sectors were handed over Business Excellence Awards trophies by President Dr Arif Alvi.

Protest

ISLAMABAD: Members of All Government Employees Grand Alliance are shouting slogans during protest in the favour of their demands outside Finance Department at Pak Secretariat.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

DIPLOMATIC CORNER

Pakistan, Azerbaijan commemorate 30 years of diplomatic ties



Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in collaboration with the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Islamabad, organized a special event and a photo exhibition at the Foreign Office to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomat-

ic relations between Pakistan and Azerbaijan.

Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood and Ambassador Khazar Farhadov of Azerbaijan formally inaugurated the exhibition. The photographs on display had been carefully curated to showcase the rich history of leadership-level engagement between the two

countries as well as important milestones in the bilateral relationship.

Speaking on the occasion, the Foreign Secretary said that Pakistan-Azerbaijan relations had evolved into a robust and multi-dimensional partnership since the formal establishment of bilateral ties in 1992. He highlighted that the two



countries had a long-standing tradition of supporting each other on their issues of core interest.

The Foreign Secretary recalled Pakistan's support for Azerbaijan's position on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. He appreciated Azerbaijan's principled stance on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, noting that Azerbaijan had been a consistent advocate for the rights of the Kashmiri people as a member of the OIC Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir.

While expressing satisfaction with the state of bilateral

relations, the Foreign Secretary reiterated Pakistan's resolve to further strengthen and diversify its cooperation with Azerbaijan, particularly in the economic, trade and cultural domains.

Ambassadors and senior diplomats from the Central Asian States as well as Turkey participated in the event. Members of the media and representatives from the Multicultural Center of Azerbaijan, which has recently been established at the National University of Modern Languages (NUML), were also in attendance.

Health Corner

Treating cancer without chemo or radiation

ISLAMABAD: Before a patient can undergo T cell therapy designed to target cancerous tumors, the patient's entire immune system must be destroyed with chemotherapy or radiation. The toxic side effects are well known, including nausea, extreme fatigue and hair loss.

Now a research team, led by UCLA's Anusha Kalbasi, MD, in collaboration with scientists from Stanford and the University of Pennsylvania, has shown that a synthetic IL-9 receptor allows those cancer-fighting T cells to do their work without the need for chemo or radiation. T cells engineered with the synthetic IL-9 receptor, designed in the laboratory of Christopher Garcia, PhD, at Stanford, were potent against tumors in mice, as published Wednesday in Nature.

"When T cells are signaling through the synthetic IL-9 receptor, they gain new functions that help them not only outcompete the existing immune system but also kill cancer cells more efficiently," Kalbasi said. "I have a patient right now struggling through toxic chemotherapy just to wipe out his existing immune system so T cell therapy can have a fighting chance. But with this technology you might give T cell therapy without having to wipe out the immune system beforehand."

Kalbasi, a researcher at the UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center and an assistant professor of radiation oncology at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, began the work while under the mentorship of Antoni Ribas, MD, PhD, a senior investigator on the study. The study was also led by Mikko Siurala, PhD, from the laboratory of Carl June, MD, at Penn, and Leon L. Su, PhD, of the Garcia Lab at Stanford.

"This finding opens a door for us to be able to give T cells a lot like we give a blood transfusion," Ribas said.

Ribas and Garcia collaborated on a paper published in 2018 that focused on the concept that a synthetic version of interleukin-2 (IL-2), a critical T cell growth cytokine, could be used to stimulate T cells engineered with a matching synthetic receptor for the synthetic IL-2. With this system, T cells can be manipulated even after they have been given to a patient, by treating the patient with the synthetic cytokine (which has no effect on other cells in the body). Intrigued by that work, Kalbasi and colleagues were interested in testing modified versions of the synthetic receptor that transmit other cytokine signals from the common-gamma chain family: IL-4, -7, -9 and -21.

"It was clear early on that, among the synthetic common-gamma chain signals, the IL-9 signal was worth investigating," Kalbasi said, adding that unlike other common-gamma chain cytokines, IL-9 signaling is not typically active in naturally occurring T cells. The synthetic IL-9 signal made T cells take on a unique mix of both stem-cell and killer-like qualities that made them more robust in fighting tumors. "In one of our cancer models, we cured over half the mice that were treated with the synthetic IL-9 receptor T cells."

Kalbasi said the therapy proved to be effective in multiple systems. They targeted two types of hard-to-treat cancer models in mice — pancreatic cancer and melanoma — and used T cells targeted to cancer cells through the natural T cell receptor or a chimeric antigen receptor (CAR). "The therapy also worked whether we gave the cytokine to the whole mouse or directly to the tumor. In all cases, T cells engineered with synthetic IL-9 receptor signaling were superior and helped us cure some tumors in mice when we couldn't do it otherwise." (Courtesy Science Daily)

PAC concludes theater festival



Staff Reporter

RAWALPINDI: The theater festival has come to an end at Punjab Arts Council.

Drama Ghatri was presented on the last day of the festival, written and directed by Muhammad Aslam Mughal. The cast of the play included Dildar Khan, Sapna Shah, Ismail Bashir, Raja Sattar, Rizwana Khan, Gulnaz Rani, Ehsan Qureshi, Faisal Raja, Ansar, Saleem Raza and Abdullah. The special guest of the play was Naheed Manzoor. Play highlights the plight of young girls who run away from home and parents situation afterwards. Naheed Manzoor said that the theater festival has strengthened the tradition of drama. The festival is a reflection of social values. Punjab Arts Council enjoys the dignity of its social service. There is no shortage of talent in Pakistan.

The way the Arts Council has successfully organized the Theater Festival, they all deserve congratulations. Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmed said that every drama was the cause of enhancing the prestige of the theater festival. In this regard, all the theater groups are undoubtedly deserving of tribute. Punjab Arts Council will continue to provide such opportunity to the viewers of drama. Assistant Director Mohammad Suleiman said that after watching the performances of young artists, I can say with that theater drama can never end, it will live forever.

We have to take serious theater forward so that the viewers get rid of the frivolous and meaningless dramas. In Theater Festival, William Pervez performed Drama Do Dooni Char, Sulaiman Sunni performed Drama Char Deewar, Arshad Minhas performed Drama Cufew, Asma Butt presented Drama Naqal Makani. At the end of the ceremony, Naheed Manzoor also distributed shields, cheques and certificates to all the directors of the drama.

MAAP-PAS-ANSO hybrid workshop held in Islamabad

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: World Environment Day is celebrated on 5th June every year to bring awareness among the masses about the importance of environmental conservation.

This year the slogan for this day was "Only one Earth" which means that we have only one planet to live on and we need to live sustainably in harmony with nature. To celebrate world environment day, a hybrid workshop on "Ecosystem Restoration: One-Health and Pandemics" was organized by the Pakistan Academy of Sciences (PAS) in collaboration with the Alliance of International Science Organizations (ANSO) and MEXT Alumni association of Pakistan (MAAP).

The theme of this workshop emphasized on connecting human, animal and environmental health in a balanced way so that none of them is undermined because the human-health is closely connected to the health of animals and our shared environment.

The resource persons in the workshop were leading foreign experts from different countries i.e., USA, UK, Japan, China, and Pakistan. They shared their views and their research outputs and discussed development in the area of one health and pandemic.

This workshop included two technical sessions. The Chief of the inaugural session of the hybrid workshop was Prof. Dr. Khalid Mahmood Khan, President, PAS.

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Seven decades of Indian brutalities in Kashmir



Analysis

Deedar Ali Bangwar

Picturesque and fascinating, Kashmir is cradled high in the lofty green Himalayas and hailed all over the world for its extraordinary natural beauty and geopolitical site. It has been under assault and humanitarian bloodbaths for over seven decades but remains irresolvable. Nevertheless, hundreds of thousands of conflicts have been resolved successfully like "the Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland and the Falkland Islands, a long-lived dispute was also resolved through a referendum under UN leadership. Unfortunately, Kashmir is still disputed. Kashmir has been referred to as the most dangerous place on Earth. The prospect of two nuclear powers facing off across such a comparatively small space is frightening indeed. Since the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, this unresolved land and the people who live there have been at the root of constant tension between the world's most populous democracy, India and Pakistan three major wars have been fought between those protagonists over the years only heighten the fear that now exists given their advanced technology.

Global and regional implications aside, the instability and lack of any conclusive resolution to the political dispute have left the population of Kashmir divided and uncertain about their future. A land of immense beauty, Kashmir has seen its once burgeoning tourist industry fade completely in the face of military incursions and terrorist activity. Pakistan and India are neighbours and nuclear powers and have numerous unresolved controversies and problems topped by the lingering and burning Kashmir issue. Pakistan enjoys cordial and friendly relations with all other countries in the region. It is pertinent to speak here that India is not only illegally occupying the Jammu and Kashmir territory for more than seven decades, but it is also denying the Kashmiris their basic right to self-determination and is persistently resorting to brutalities.

Cities through its security forces on the residents who are living in the longest lockdown and curfew since August 5, 2019, and are committing gross human rights violations while the international community just sometimes condemns mournful incidents in the occupied territory and the UN Security Council is also helpless in forcing its resolutions for a free and fair plebiscite to let the Kashmiris decide their future themselves. India's struggles to integrate Kashmir into Indian Union did not achieve because the main Kashmiri leaders and parties opposed these endeavours. The Kashmiris want that should themselves decide about their political future, as committed to them by the UN

Resolution of 1948-49. Indian leadership contests this and uses force to crush this desire. This has resulted in an eternal dispute between the Indian authorities and the people of Kashmir. India has been using a security establishment to govern Kashmir which frequently resulted in human rights violations in Kashmir Indian actions are driven by the consideration of keeping Kashmir under its influence irrespective of human rights or other costs. The unnecessary design of security forces and state power by India has the Kashmir Valley into a "Human Tragedy". The Indian government use security forces establishment to suppress Kashmiris. The Kashmiri people want freedom from India and decide their political future on their own. This is not acceptable to India and uses force to control Kashmiris.

The political situation seized a disastrous spin in 1987 when the people blamed the Indian government for rigging the local elections in a trial to prop up their representative as the chief minister of J&K. One of the separatist leaders, Sayeed Salahudeen, approached the Indian government that he was who was ready to give up the demand for emancipation if he was allowed to contribute in the J&K state elections. Salahudeen was heading for a landslide victory, but at the instance of Farooq Abdullah, the incumbent chief minister, the election consequences were manipulated, and Sayeed was deprived of what would have been a legitimate victory. Sayeed escaped to Pakistan in disgust, where he found Hijbul Muja-

hedeen to combat the self-termination of Kashmiris. The circumstance from then on has gone from bad to worse as Sayeed has been instrumental in sending armed militants to India.

International human rights organizations such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and Physicians for Human Rights have regularly reported human rights mayhem in occupied Kashmir. Their reports can be divided into two periods. Those that were documented between 1990 and 2003, when militancy in Kashmir was severe and relations between the two countries were less than normal pay the least. And those that were filed after the militancy had considerably dwindled and a thaw in relations between the two countries had set in. For the first period, the 1996 report of Human Rights Watch Asia and for the second period, the 2004 report of the European Parliament's Committee of Foreign Affairs are worth mentioning. The Watch report holds the Indian government accountable for summary executions, torture, illegal detentions, disappearance, rape cases, and election-related intimidation of voters.

It is estimated that the human rights situation began worsening from 1995 onward when the Indian government began systematically using "renegades"-described by the Watch as India's secret, illegal army, for its objective is observed that the Indian government did not make any public investigation into anyone of the documented cases of torture, nor has it ever announced that a number of the security fore-

ces was prosecuted or penalized for torture. Several horrible incidents took place in Kashmir which raised the potential threat of war between India and Pakistan. South Asia is thought by many observers to be the most dangerous place in the world, with both antagonists armed with nuclear weapons. Kashmir had been in dispute between India and Pakistan since the inception of Pakistan. It is a site where both countries constantly face off. In January and June of 2002, India was poised to attack Pakistan because of terrorist military action against Indian targets in Kashmir.

The political history of Kashmir since 1947 shows that the Kashmiris have resisted Indian actions to integrate Kashmir fully into the Indian federation. The Kashmiris have tackled the wrath of Indian security forces but they did not change their mind on the future of Kashmir. This problem has negatively affected the relations between India and Pakistan. There is a necessity to pursue a tranquil political solution to the Kashmir dilemma. For this purpose, Pakistan and India should hold a regular discussion on evolving methods to implement the UN resolutions in Kashmir. Meanwhile, the Indian Government should adopt ways to control human rights mayhem by its security forces in the Indian administered Kashmir and build an environment for a solution to the Kashmir dilemma.

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Indian Islamophobia & Muslim World

The Islamic world's denunciation of India for its domestic Islamophobic rhetoric and attacks on the community is part of a trend where the Narendra Modi government's perceived excesses are being noticed and reviled the world over. There is a widening perception that the Modi government's apparent policy failures and contempt for democracy are diminishing India's geopolitical standing across the world, with the present controversy threatening the Islamic world's trade relations with India, and endangering the vast Indian diasporas these countries harbour.

Several Arab-Islamic countries from across Asia, Africa and the Middle East, and spearheaded by the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the 57-member Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), have condemned the Indian government for its alleged excesses against Muslim citizens, the latest being shocking anti-Prophet utterances on national television by the spokeswoman of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

As calls for boycotting Indian products and for repatriating the Indian settlers resounded in these countries, and Indian envoys were summoned by many of their foreign offices to record their protest, the BJP-led government suspended the spokeswoman, Nupur Sharma, and also expelled Delhi BJP media in-charge Naveen Jindal for similarly provocative comments. Many felt, however, that as Indian citizens are today being routinely arrested under the draconian sedition law, which provides for life imprisonment, simply for remarks, writings or social media posts, even forwards, critical of the Prime Minister and other BJP leaders, Sharma's and Jindal's public comments should have invited at least comparable action.

However, the absurdity of such selective action was clear from the fact that Sharma issued no apology, but simply a statement informing that she wished to withdraw her remarks, and the government, in turn, assigned her and her family high security on fears of reprisals following her televised comments. The concerned television channel too has not been questioned on the episode, when there has often been swift official action against certain media on various grounds.

In another foreign policy gaffe, India had Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu embarking on a state visit to Qatar even as outrage was building up in the Gulf countries. Qatar's Deputy Emir abruptly cancelled a state banquet he was to host for Naidu, though on health grounds and the Vice President also called off his scheduled press conference in Doha. Upon his arrival on Saturday, Naidu was received by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Soltan bin Saad Al Muraikhi, who the next day summoned Indian Ambassador Deepak Mittal to convey his country's protest over the comments.

An economic and diplomatic backlash can have disastrous consequences for India, which has enjoyed enduring ties with most Islamic countries despite the communal polarisation arising from the inexorable, but unstated, march towards a Hindu rashtra (Hindu nationhood).

Russia, Ukraine war & GCC's Diplomacy

Dr. Abdel Aziz Aluwaisheg

Last week's twin meetings between the Gulf Cooperation Council foreign ministers and officials from Russia and Ukraine provided an opportunity to clarify the GCC's position on the Russia-Ukraine conflict and explore avenues for cooperation with the two countries. The bloc enjoyed close economic ties with both before the crisis erupted in February. The GCC countries all voted in favor of the UN General Assembly resolution on March 2, when they joined 135 other nations in demanding an end to Russia's operations in Ukraine. Following last week's meetings, the GCC issued its quarterly press statement, which included several sections representing its members' collective position on the conflict. This position is based on the principles of international law, the UN Charter and the need to "preserve the global system based on respect for a state's sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence, non-interference in its internal affairs, and refraining from the use of force or threats thereof to resolve international disputes."

The GCC ministers expressed support for mediation efforts to resolve the crisis and called for a cessation of hostilities and for dialogue to resolve the crisis politically. Some individual member states have offered to mediate such talks.

Last Wednesday's meetings, while focused on discussing the current crisis between the two neighbors, also sought to explore possible avenues for cooperation between the GCC and each of the two countries. Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan

chaired the GCC side in both meetings, which were also attended by foreign ministers from the other GCC states. Ukraine was represented by Andriy Yarmak, head of President Volodymyr Zelensky's office, and Dmytro Kuleba, its foreign minister. Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov headed the Russian delegation.

There was a special focus at the two meetings on the impact of the crisis on food security, especially its devastating effects in the Middle East and North Africa and in other countries that are dependent on imports from Russia and Ukraine. According to the World Bank, these two countries account for 29 percent of global wheat exports, 62 percent of sunflower oil and significant shares of other necessary food products. The conflict has exacerbated food price inflation in emerging markets and developing economies, affecting the poorest and most vulnerable communities.

This crisis came on top of a global food supply system that was already fragile from two years of COVID-19 disruptions, droughts, currency devaluations and worsening fiscal constraints. Countries with a high share of wheat imports from Ukraine and Russia have been hardest hit, including MENA states that depend on wheat from the Black Sea region because of its proximity and the fact that wheat is their main staple food. According to the World Bank, the highest immediate risk is to those countries still awaiting shipments for the second half of the year, such as Egypt, the world's largest importer of wheat, which is waiting for 6.6 million tons. Turkey imports 4 million tons, Bangladesh also close to 4 million tons, and Iran imports 1.7 million tons. Others, such as Lebanon, Tunisia, Yemen, Libya and

Pakistan, have also been affected. Concerned about food shortages in neighboring countries as a result of the closure of export facilities in Ukraine, the GCC ministers last week declared their strong support for "all efforts" aimed at facilitating the export of food and other humanitarian supplies from Ukraine. The good news is that both sides in the conflict have welcomed such efforts, but the lack of trust between them will make it difficult for them to collaborate on a reliable mechanism to resume exports from Ukraine's Black Sea ports. Each party is concerned that the other may use the system to advance its military objectives under the cover of food shipments.

Therefore, the UN can handle the situation, as the organization has long experience in managing such systems during wars. Although Iraq's "oil for food" UN program was fraught with corruption, it did manage to provide sufficient food to Iraq through the sale of its oil. The UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism in Yemen has also managed, when allowed by the Houthi militia, to inspect and verify shipments coming into the port of Hodeidah and facilitate the movement of humanitarian assistance and food imports. Besides support for a UN-managed food export mechanism for Ukraine, several initiatives were discussed and will be pursued by the GCC in the coming weeks, including the establishment of joint bodies for greater economic cooperation and for regular and sustained political dialogue with both parties to the conflict.

The writer is the GCC assistant secretary-general for political affairs and negotiation, and a columnist for Arab News. Courtesy Arab News



Surviving against planet's extreme heat

Kristie L Ebi

Although nearly all heat-related deaths are preventable, heatwaves kill thousands of people worldwide every year. At this very moment, an extreme heatwave in India and Pakistan, affecting about one billion people, is "testing the limits of human survivability," warns Chandni Singh, a lead author for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Sixth Assessment Report. In April, the average maximum temperature for northwest and central India was the highest in 122 years. This is not just a South Asian problem. In recent years, similarly extreme conditions occurred in the United States, Australia, Europe, Scandinavia, and Japan, resulting in thousands of hospitalisations and excess deaths. Extreme heat is also linked to increases in premature births, low birthweight babies, and stillbirths; reductions in worker productivity; higher rates of chronic kidney disease of unknown origin; and increases in suicide.

Early-warning and response systems require more than just a single threshold for determining the start of a heatwave. Effective systems also should include collaborative processes to ensure that interventions account for local capacities and constraints. Health ministries will need to work closely with (among others) hydrometeorological services, police and fire departments, emergency services, agencies responsible for elder care, and trusted voices for vulnerable populations (such as adults over 65) and marginalised communities. Resources should not be a barrier. Effective early-warning systems already exist worldwide, including in low-resource settings such as Ahmedabad, India. Moreover, organisations like the Global Heat Health Information Network are collecting and sharing data on local and national experiences and best practices. The demand for additional guidance is growing rapidly, in tandem with the increasing frequency and severity of heatwaves.

But most of today's early-warning systems do not

explicitly account for the risks of a changing climate. To be more adaptive, planners should adopt timelines for reviewing changes at the beginning and end of the summer season, while also developing regional collaborations to ensure consistent messaging. There will also be a greater role for tiered early-warning systems that account for multiple thresholds, such as temperature readings combined with local knowledge of particularly vulnerable populations. For example, initial warnings might be issued several days before the peak of a heatwave to alert at-risk groups such as older adults, young children, and pregnant women. A second set of warnings could then be issued at somewhat higher temperatures for outdoor workers and people engaged in sports or related activities, followed by a third set of warnings for the general public at the usual threshold for declaring a heatwave. These warnings would need to be paired with effective communications, so that people are properly motivated to take the appropriate measures to stay cool.

Even after these improvements, early-warning systems should then be stress-tested to determine their robustness to unprecedented heat. This could be done through desk-based exercises to identify weaknesses. Stress tests should incorporate not just heatwaves but also compound risks such as back-to-back events: a heatwave combined with a wildfire; or a heatwave coinciding with a pandemic, as the Pacific Northwest experienced in 2021. Vulnerability mapping can be an effective tool to help decision-makers determine where interventions are needed most to protect human health and well-being. A much warmer future requires urgent and immediate investments that capitalise on best practices and lessons learned from existing heat adaptation plans. Proven models need to be scaled up to enhance resilience and sustainability. Unprecedentedly higher temperatures are survivable, but not unless we prepare for them.

The writer is Professor of Global Health and Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences at the University of Washington. Courtesy Gulf Times

Global Islamic finance industry set to grow this year: S&P

The sector is still held back by certain structural weaknesses

DUBAI: The global Islamic finance industry will see double-digit expansion again in 2022-2023 after 10.2 percent growth in total assets in 2021, according to S&P Global Ratings.

"Growth last year was supported by Islamic banking assets in some Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and Malaysia, sukuk issuances exceeding maturities, and the solid performance of the Islamic funds industry," said Mohamed Damak, a credit analyst at S&P Global Ratings.

Higher commodities prices will underpin a stronger recovery in many core Islamic finance markets. Moreover, most of these countries are relatively resilient to macroeconomic shocks resulting from the Russia-Ukraine conflict. This will support the industry's prospects for 2022-2023 but global headwinds could change the picture, the report said.

The Islamic finance industry is, however, still held back by structural weaknesses, namely the complexity inherent to transactions and the



correlation of performance with oil prices given concentration in commodities-exporting countries.

The industry's geographical distribution has not materially changed over the past decade, suggesting that

it may be struggling to attract interest beyond traditional markets, he said. Zawya

IILM lauds regular supply of short-term sukuk

ABU DHABI: The International Islamic Liquidity Management Corporation (IILM) held its 28th Governing Board meeting today in Abu Dhabi, chaired by H.E. Khaled Mohamed Balama, Governor of the Central Bank of the United Arab Emirates and Chairman of IILM. The meeting was attended by Their Excellencies governors of central banks and monetary authorities of member states.

During the meeting, the Governing Board discussed the reports from the Chairs of other IILM committees covering executive management, audit, risk management and Shari'ah compliance matters. Furthermore, the Governing Board discussed initiatives to fulfil its mandate to develop and issue regular Shari'ah-compliant financial instruments to facilitate effective liquidity management for institutions that offer Islamic financial services, despite volatility in global markets.

The corporation is an international organisation established in 2010 by central banks, monetary authorities and multilateral organisation, issued regular short-term sukuk across varying tenors and amounts to cater to the liquidity needs of institutions offering Islamic financial services.

The IILM has issued a total of USD 7.23 billion worth of short-term sukuk instruments to the market in the last six months, averaging more than USD 1 billion short-term sukuk per month. Its regular offerings include 19 series of sukuk across varying tenors from one to six months.

The IILM's 12th General Assembly followed the Governing Board's meeting to approve the latter's audit proposals.

His Excellency Balama commented: "As Islamic finance attracts greater demand, the IILM aims to solidify its position as a leading support hub for international Islamic finance. We are proud to be an integral part of the infrastructure to support Shari'ah-compliant options for the global financial services market and our growing investor base." Zawya

Pak Qatar Family Takaful signs MoU with UMH

To provide Medical Services to Pak Qatar Takaful health members

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Pak-Qatar Family Takaful Limited (PQFTL) recently signed an agreement with Usman Memorial Hospital (UMH) in order to provide quality medical services. UMH is one of the best secondary care hospitals in Karachi, delivering quality healthcare at affordable rates in a comforting environment through trained and caring staff.

The ceremony took place at Pak-Qatar Takaful's Head Office. On behalf of PQFTL, the MOU was signed by its CEO, Azem Iqbal Pirani, and CEO Ms. Sahar Senan, representing Usman Memorial Hospital, in the presence of senior officials from both

the organizations.

"With the addition of Usman Memorial Hospital to our growing list of care partners, we are now even more strongly aligned with our long-term vision of providing quality healthcare protection to our members. It is always a pleasure to work with such like-minded partners who share our vision and goal of offering Shari'ah-compliant solutions to our customers" stated Azeem Pirani, CEO of PQFTL.

Speaking on the occasion CEO Ms. Sahar Senan said that "We are very pleased to have Pak Qatar Family Takaful as our partner and we at Usman Memorial Hospital will ensure offering high-quality health care services to its Pak Qatar members".

BankIslami sponsors Freelance Fest 2022

President & CEO, Syed Amir Ali says hundreds of millions of dollars can be earned via the gig economy

Staff Reporter

LAHORE: BankIslami, Pakistan's leading Islamic financial institution, sponsored the Freelance Fest 2022-one of the most comprehensive conferences on freelancing in the country.

The two-day event included keynote speeches, panel discussions and training sessions regarding the gig economy and a blended line up of Pakistan's most noted members of the freelancing community, regulators, bankers, and the academia to collectively share insights on how each of these support the future of work in Pakistan. The event was also attended

by leadership from the public and private sectors to discuss the role of developing economic sector in the nation's future.

Topics covered in the Freelance Fest included financial lifecycle of a contingent workforce; the legal, policy and regulatory future of the gig economy; a safety-net for the independent workforce; freelancers' perspective to leading a new world of work; freelancer today, founder tomorrow; re-inventing the talent supply chain for online enable work; freelancing leading to agency; freelancing platforms versus independently; and the future of global e-commerce. Additionally, there were also vari-

ous product launches.

Commenting on the occasion, BankIslami President & CEO, Syed Amir Ali noted, "Hundreds of millions of dollars can be earned via the gig economy, and the evolving economic and regulatory climate should bring confidence in the freelancers of Pakistan. Events like Freelance Fest are essential for the youth to not only be able to learn from the best in the industry, but find the path to success while being able to troubleshoot any obstacle novice freelancers face. Leaders from across relevant industries shared their knowledge and the visionary freelancers have had the chance to create lasting

connections with their peers and the knowledge giants gracing the event. We are extremely pleased to be an important part of this outstanding opportunity, and look forward to seeing the resultant change."

A conference of this magnitude draws attendees including business leaders, investors, entrepreneurs and academia from around the world, promoting more opportunities for growth, collaboration and investment within the Islamic Finance ecosystem of Pakistan. BankIslami remains at the forefront of driving change across the Shari'ah-compliant banking industry in Pakistan.

Poverty Reduction

IsDB Institute organizes Global Forum on Islamic Finance

SHARM EL-SHEIKH: Islamic Development Bank (IDB) Institute has organized the 16th World Bank Forum on Islamic Finance under the theme "Poverty Reduction through Social Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship" on the sidelines of the IDB group's annual meetings, currently being held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt.

IsDB President, Dr. Mohammed Al-Jasser, said in his speech at the forum that the economic crisis that resulted from the Coronavirus pandemic has increased poverty rates and inequality of opportunities worldwide, adding that there are more than half a billion people around the world who have fallen under the poverty line during the pandemic.

He pointed out that the economic situation has reached its worst state, and one out of every 3 member states of the Bank is living in poverty, adding that the fight against poverty has always been at the fore-



front of the objectives of the Bank's partnerships with member states and various institutions.

"The pandemic prompted us to intensify efforts, as we studied optimal cooperation with member states to reduce poverty, expanded partnership with the Oxford Initiative, and presented an integrated initiative with more development projects," Al-Jasser said, indicating that some member states succeeded in reducing poverty and reduc-

ing the effects of the pandemic, and there are many experiences that contributed to achieving positive results for those affected.

He noted that there is a global consensus that the problems facing the world are difficult to deal with governmentally only, calling for the need to join the efforts of funding institutions, development agencies, and civil society through innovative solutions that enhance social responsibility.

QIB awarded best Islamic Bank of year in ME, Qatar, UK

DOHA: Qatar Islamic Bank (QIB) received the 'Best Islamic Bank in the Middle East, Qatar, and the UK' awards at The Banker Islamic Bank of the Year Awards 2022 in recognition of its continuous growth and solid performance at the local, regional and international levels.

QIB continues to revolutionise the digital banking scene in Qatar with innovative digital products and services catering to the everyday needs of its customers, from account opening to the instant financing and instant credit card. The Bank is dedicated to the continuous implementation of its long-term digital strategy while keeping customers at the core of its priorities, and remains committed to offering the best, fastest, and most trusted banking products in Qatar.

With its vision is to be "the most customer-centric, efficient bank in Qatar", QIB is determined to place itself as a leader in Islamic banking to better serve its retail and corporate customers through innovative products and services and an unparalleled customer experience. The Bank recently launched the first ever Digital Credit Card in Qatar on its Mobile App, and introduced innovative features including the Sneak Peak, the Dark Mode, and



an exclusive personalized mode for its Private and Tamayuz members, leading the industry in digital banking in Qatar. With the goal of making the banking experience even simpler and more efficient for its corporate and SME customers, QIB continues to improve the Corporate App and has recently introduced a new service to open a corporate account online and in five simple steps.

Commenting on this recognition, Bassel Gamal, QIB's Group CEO said: "We are

pleased to receive these prestigious awards from The Banker magazine showcasing our commitment to providing our customers with the best Shari'ah-compliant banking products and services. This recognition is a testament to our strategic vision and customer-centric approach in addition to our efforts to reshape the banking scene in Qatar and beyond. I would like to extend my appreciation to QIB's Board of Directors, the entire QIB team and our customers for their trust and support."

ADIB awarded customer experience certificate by ICXS

Highlights the bank's distinguished achievement in the field of customer service

ABU DHABI: Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank, a leading Islamic financial institution, has announced today that it was awarded the International Service Excellence certificate by the International Customer Experience Institute (ICXS), receiving a score of more than 90%. This result highlights the bank's distinguished achievement in the field of customer service, becoming the first bank in the Middle East and North Africa region to obtain this certificate from the British Standards Institution (BSI), classified under the "international distinguished services" category, which is the highest category of this certificate.

ICXS is the first and only internationally approved specification that specializes in improving customers' experience from a comprehensive perspective and at all interaction points. The certificate also aims at helping institutions manage and improve customer experience and improve the quality of services provided.

A specialized team of evaluators from the BSI had conducted field visits to ADIB headquarters and Sheikh Zayed Road branch in Abu Dhabi to review the systems and methodologies applied in the bank and the results achieved in the field of customer service.

Samah Awadallah, Acting Global Head of Retail Banking at ADIB, commented: "We are proud to receive an outstanding score that reflects our commitment to our customers to providing the highest quality service. Obtain-



ing this certificate came as a result of an integrated team effort from all the bank's departments. Key factors that

contributed to the positive score were the commitment of management towards enhancing customers' experience,

monthly review of service performance, focus on digital experience and channels, competency within the Customer Excellence Team, and openness and transparency in data collection mechanisms."

Maher Al Riz, Head of Customer Excellence Group at ADIB, said: "The ICXS certificate comes in line with the bank's strategy in serving customers, which focuses on several levels, the most important of which are the culture of excellence in services, listening to the our customers, improving the customer experience in all service delivery channels, and improving the products and services provided by the bank. This is through conducting monthly performance and focus reviews in order to raise the level of services, especially digital services, and raise the performance of the Customer Excellence Management Team."

The International Service Excellence level is the highest of the three levels awarded by the ICXS, and requires a score of at least 90% to achieve. It is the only standard in the world that focuses on improving the entire customer journey at all interaction points.

This achievement comes in addition to a set of distinguished milestones that ADIB has recently achieved, the most important of which is obtaining the international standard certificate in managing the complaints system ISO 10002 and the international standard in managing the system for listening to the customers ISO 10004. Agencies

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
41,798.84	41,553.16	
Day's High	Day's Low:	
41,994.62	41,553.16	
Index Value	Change	
3,551,649,700	+245.68	
Percentage	Time	
+0.59%	9 Jun, 2022 5:00 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
7,567.97	-25.03	
Percentage	Time	
-0.33%	9 Jun, 11:33 am GMT+1	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
32,910.90	-269.24	
Percentage	Time	
-0.81%	8 Jun, 5:09 pm GMT-4	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
28,246.53	+12.24	
Percentage	Time	
+0.043%	9 Jun, 3:15 pm GMT+9	
Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	144	145.25
Bahrain Dinar	533.32	537.82
Canadian Dollar	160.13	161.48
China Yuan	28.95	29.2
Danish Krone	25.55	25.9
Euro	213	215.5
Hong Kong Dollar	27.5	27.85
Indian Rupee	2.58	2.66
Japanese Yen	1.5	1.55
Kuwaiti Dinar	654.18	659.18
Malaysian Ringgit	45.64	46.09
New Zealand \$	129.74	130.94
Norwegian Krone	21.26	21.56
Omani Riyal	521.53	526.03
Qatari Riyal	55.09	55.59
Saudi Riyal	53.1	53.9
Singapore Dollar	145.5	146.8
Swedish Korona	20.51	20.81
Swiss Franc	205.66	207.41
Thai Bhat	5.81	5.91
U.A.E Dirham	54.4	55.2
UK Pound Sterling	250.5	253
US Dollar	200.5	202.5

Digital Pakistan

USF Board approves award of 8 contracts of over Rs10b

To provide internet connectivity to about 3.3 million people through High-Speed Broadband services and OFC connectivity

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The Universal Service Fund (USF) Board approved award of 8 contracts worth approximately over PKR 10 billion to provide internet connectivity to about 3.3 million people through High-Speed Broadband services and Optic Fiber Cable (OFC) connectivity in the un-served and under-served areas of Balochistan, Punjab, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) provinces.

The contracts were awarded to Jazz, PTCL, Ufone and Telenor. The completion time for all projects would be 16 Months from the date of Contract signing. The USF Board also approved the annual budget of USF for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-23, over PKR 32 billion. The Secretary MOITT & Chairman USF Board, Mohsin Mushtaq Chandna chaired the 82nd Board of Directors (BoD) meeting of USF at the USF Office on Thursday.

In his message; Federal Minister for IT and Telecom Syed Amin-Ul-Haque, while congratulating the USF Board on approval of the projects, said, "From July 2018 to June 2022, USF has launched a record 57 projects of worth PKR 62 billion which speaks volumes about its performance and a proof of its commitment to connect all the un/under-served communities of Pakistan, enabling them to compete better in an economic environment that is constantly changing in response to technology evolutions."



professionals cannot only get decent jobs through the ICT but also play their role in stabilizing the national economy.

He said that the USF annual development budget for digital connectivity has increased from Rs, 18 billion to Rs, 31 Billion in FY 2022-23 which will increase connectivity in backward areas and strengthen ICT activities. "Efforts are being made to eliminate digital disparities in urban and rural areas. USF has launched projects in remote and backward areas of the four provinces of the country" he added.

Syed Amin-Ul-Haque said that Prime Minister Mian Shahbaz Sharif wants to increase ICT exports. This is possible only if broadband services are available in rural and backward areas as well as urban areas so that talented young ICT

professionals cannot only get decent jobs through the ICT but also play their role in stabilizing the national economy.

While addressing the meeting, Secretary MOITT & Chairman USF Board, Mr. Mohsin Mushtaq Chandna said, "Under the leadership of Federal Minister, Syed Amin Ul Haque, Ministry of IT and Telecommunication through USF is accelerating its efforts in enabling the rural and remote communities of Pakistan with access to a better standard of living and financial opportunities."

The Chief Executive Officer of USF, Haaris Mahmood Chaudhary apprised the Board members about the current projects. He expressed his sincere gratitude to the Federal Minister,

Syed Amin Ul Haque, Chairman of USF Board, Mohsin Mushtaq and the Board members and key stakeholders for their visionary leadership and said, "USF is ending the fiscal year FY 2021-22 with record performance and aims to further build its momentum and break all previous records in FY 2022-23."

According to the details, the Board approved the award of 5 high-speed mobile broadband contracts worth approximately PKR 5.25 billion to Jazz, Ufone and Telenor for providing 3G/4G services in the isolated districts of Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan. These projects will benefit around 1.23 million people living in 1,011 unserved muazas of Lodhran, Vehari, Sheikhpura, Nankana Sahib, Kasur, Sialkot, Narowal and Gujrat districts in Punjab, Thatta, Sujawal, Tando Muhammad Khan, Badin, Hyderabad, Umakot and Tando Allahyar in Sindh and Loralai in Balochistan, thereby covering an approximate unserved area of 10,574 sq. km. Furthermore, the Board also approved the award of high-speed mobile broadband services for National Highways and Motorways contract worth PKR, 449 Million to Jazz for providing 4G services to commuters on M-4 motorway respectively. Under this project, an unserved road segment of 70.67 km passing through districts of Hafizabad, Faisalabad, Toba Tek Singh, and Khanewal & Multan will be provided with 4G mobile internet connectivity.

Delay in IMF deal worries investors

Stabilizing rupee difficult unless foreign loan arrives, says Mian Zahid Hussain

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance and Former Provincial Minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Wednesday said those who spread rumours of financial emergency have caused severe damage to the economy and action should be taken against them.

Despite the government's denial of the imposition of a financial emergency, the situation is not returning to normal, which is worrying, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the delay in the agreement with the IMF has started draining the rupee as investors are not

ready to believe statements and they want something concrete.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that the currency market is in turmoil due to which the falling dollar has started stepping up again and the rupee has started depreciating which is disturbing.

The rupee had started stabilizing after the government sharply increased the prices of petroleum products and electricity tariffs, but rumours have changed the situation, he said, adding that the government officials should not make further statements to improve the situation, but should finally

take an immediate loan from China. He said that it is difficult for the rupee to remain stable against the dollar unless foreign loans are realized.

Mian Zahid Hussain added that in the current financial year, Pakistan has imported \$20 billion worth of petroleum products, \$9 billion worth of food items, \$4 billion worth of palm oil, \$2 billion worth of cotton, \$1 billion worth of tea and \$4 billion worth of vehicles.

It is not difficult to estimate from these figures that the current trade and current account deficit of Pakistan are due to unnecessary and irre-

sponsible imports, he observed. The present government has to significantly reduce unnecessary imports while promoting agriculture in the country. The import of unnecessary food items has to be stopped.

Due to the current difficult economic situation, import and trade costs are increasing, while the government will have to import large quantities of oil to end load shedding, which will increase costs to increase the burden on the treasury.

The price of LNG in the international market is also rising which is worrying but despite all the problems, the economic situation is not as bad as is being perceived in the currency market. Foreign exchange reserves are now nine billion dollars, while they are

JS Bank wins 3 accolades at GDEIB Awards 2021



Staff Reporter

KARACHI: JS Bank recently won three awards for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) at the prestigious GDEIB Awards 2021 held at a local five-star hotel in Karachi.

For the second consecutive year, the Bank has been recognized for its visible efforts in the areas of DE&I structure and implementation, work-life integration, and community & philanthropy. These awards honor players from the market who champion the cause of DE&I within their organization through their vision, values, policies, and actions.

Basir Shamsie- President & CEO and Myra Khan- Head of Legal from JS Bank were invited to receive the awards.

While sharing his views, Basir Shamsie said, "JS Bank is an ambassador of DE&I, where it has set certain benchmarks for the betterment of its people. We have implemented multiple initiatives and HR policies at our Bank for women's empowerment and for differently-abled individuals.

These awards bring us a step closer to our vision of achieving higher standards within the spectrum of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion."

ICCI organizes business conference in Azerbaijan

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) leading a 120 member business delegation visited Azerbaijan and organized a very successful "Business Opportunities Conference" in Baku, which was attended by a large number of business community of Azerbaijan.

ICCI delegation was representing various sectors including marble & granite, construction & real estate, building materials, pharmaceuticals, textiles, light engineering, IT & telecom, food, healthcare etc. Sahib Mammadov, Deputy Minister of Economy of Azerbaijan was the Chief Guest of BOC.

Speaking at the occasion, Sahib Mammadov, Deputy Minister of Economy of Azerbaijan welcomed the ICCI delegation and said that their visit



would open a new window of growing trade and economic relations between Azerbaijan and Pakistan. He said that a business delegation of Azerbaijan would also visit Pakistan in coming months to further strengthen business linkages between the two countries and ICCI should host them. He said that Azerbaijan was establishing many Special Economic Zones that offered 10-year tax holidays and invited Pakistani investors to invest in these SEZs and improve their business prospects.

Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that the main purpose of organizing Business Conference in Baku is to provide a platform to the business communities of both countries to interact and explore bilateral cooperation in areas of interest. He said that the geo-strategic locations of Pakistan and Azerbaijan provided them easy access to their respective regional markets, therefore,

close cooperation would help them in promoting their trade and exports. He thanked the Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan, Ambassador of Pakistan to Azerbaijan and President Pak-Azerbaijan Economic Cooperation Chamber for their cooperation & support to make the visit of ICCI delegation very successful.

Bilal Hayee, Ambassador of Pakistan to Azerbaijan lauded ICCI for bringing a big delegation to Azerbaijan and hoped that it would strengthen business linkages between the two countries and help improve bilateral trade ties. He said that an IT Expo of Pakistan would be organized in Baku in near future to introduce the potential of Pakistani IT companies in Azerbaijan. He said that after the start of direct flights, efforts were afoot to establish road links between Pakistan and Azerbaijan that would help in improving bilateral trade relations as well.

TECNO all set to unveil Camon 19 series

Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The leading smartphone brand, TECNO is all set to unveil its most anticipated phone globally - the Camon 19 series. The launch is to take place above the hustle and bustle of the streets of New York City atop the iconic Rockefeller Center on June 14, 2022.

TECNO has also announced that it is among the first to make Android 13 beta available on its latest Camon 19 Pro 5G and shared plans to update to Android 12 on its CAMON 18 series. Moreover, the new Camon 19 series is reported to come with four different variants to match the unique style of



the masses.

Apart from being the most anticipated smartphone of the year, TECNO CAMON 19 Series recently won the world-renowned iF Design Award 2022 where it was praised for its Stylish & innovative design and the camera module. It also won the MUSE Design Award 2022 for the Product Design of its Art Edition.

However, this is the first time a smartphone manufacturer will be unveiling a new product from the heights of the Rockefeller Center.

BOP-Digital Kissan Portal launched



Staff Reporter

LAHORE: BOP launched its first indigenously developed Digital Kissan Portal on June 09, 2022. Speaking at the occasion, Zafar Masud (President & CEO - The Bank of Punjab) emphasized upon the impending need to digitize onboarding of agriculture clients which involves account opening and credit applications. He added that the launch of BOP's Kissan Portal will bring in more efficiency and enhance bank's outreach.

At the launch, other senior executives of BOP were also present.

The President appreciated the untiring efforts of Agriculture Credit Division, Digital Banking Division and Information Technology Group in making this portal live. Speaking at the occasion, he said, "This facility will enhance farmer's capacity and ability to reach out to the bank from where they are, through a smart phone or laptop or tablet.

consumption and circuit area to a game-changing "optical iris" that provides a unique identifier for optical fibers. It is designed to help carriers manage their network resources, cutting time and costs associated with broadband deployment.

The announcement came in the context of intellectual property rights, the protection and sharing of which Huawei believes is critical to the tech ecosystem.

"Protecting IP is key to protecting innovation," said Huawei's Chief Legal Officer, Song Liuping. "We are eager to license our patents and technologies to share our innovations with the world.

This will help broaden the innovation landscape, drive our industry forward, and advance technology for everyone," he added.

"Huawei is constantly changing itself, and constantly showcasing to the world the value of IP from China," said Tian Lipu, President of the International Association for the Protection of Intellectual Property's China Chapter.

By the end of 2021, Huawei held more than 110,000 active patents across over 45,000 patent families. It has more granted patents than any other Chinese company, has filed the most patent applications with the EU

Patent Office, and ranked fifth in terms of new patents granted in the United States. For five straight years, Huawei has ranked No. 1 worldwide in terms of Patent Cooperation Treaty applications.

Alan Fan, Head of Huawei's IPR Department, said the value of Huawei patents has seen wide recognition in the industry, especially in mainstream standards such as cellular technology, Wi-Fi, and audio/video codecs.

"In the past five years, more than two billion smartphones have been licensed to Huawei's 4G/5G patents. And for cars, about eight million connect-

ed vehicles licensed to Huawei patents are being delivered to the consumers every year," Fan said.

Huawei is also working actively with patent license administration companies in offering "one-stop" licenses for mainstream standards. "Over 260 companies—accounting for one billion devices—have obtained Huawei's HEVC patent licenses through a patent pool," Fan said. He added that the company is in discussions to establish a new patent pool to give the industry "quick access" to Huawei's patents for Wi-Fi devices worldwide.

Huawei is also discussing joint licensing programs for 5G patents

with licensing experts and other leading industry patentees.

Liu Hua, Director of World Intellectual Property Organization Office in China, praised Huawei's sustained focus on innovation, saying: "We look forward to seeing Huawei continue to take part in high-level global competition with innovation at its core."

For Manuel Desantes, former Vice President of European Patent Office, given the vast number of changes in the world these days, what matters most is no longer the number of registered patents or inventions. "The IP system should assure that the

creations that merit protection are those that bring actual value," he said.

This marked the third innovation and IP-themed event Huawei has hosted on its innovation practices. Every year, Huawei invests over 10% of its sales revenue into R&D.

In terms of R&D expenditure, Huawei ranked second in the 2021 EU Industrial R&D Investment Scoreboard. In 2021, the company increased its R&D investment to CNY142.7 billion, representing 22.4% of our total revenue. Over the past decade, Huawei's total R&D investment surpassed CNY845 billion.

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Huawei announced a batch of key inventions as part of its biennial "Top Ten Inventions" Awards at the "Broadening the Innovation Landscape 2022" forum held at its Shenzhen headquarters. The award is designed to recognize inventions that could create new series of products, become important commercial features of existing products, or that generate considerable value for the company and the industry.

The awarded inventions range from an adder neural network that significantly reduces power

Babar breaks more records as Pakistan defeat West Indies

Second ODI will be played today, while the third ODI will be held on Sunday

Our Correspondent

MULTAN: Babar Azam was at his brilliant best as Khushdil Shah's late cameo ensured Pakistan did enough to sneak past Shai Hope and the West Indies in Multan.

Babar Azam continues to make a mockery of opposition bowlers and the Pakistan captain was at it again in Multan as he helped himself to yet another ODI century.

It was Babar's third century on the trot and it also meant he becomes the first player in the history of men's ODIs to score three consecutive centuries on two separate occasions.

If that's not enough then consider the fact that Babar's innings also saw him become the quickest player to notch 17 ODI centuries and the fastest to complete 1,000 ODI runs as captain.

Not bad for a 27-year-old who is seemingly still on the improve and recently targeted becoming the first player to be ranked No.1 in all three formats of the



game.

Babar wasn't the only player to reach three figures in Multan, with West Indies opener Shai Hope scoring his 12th ODI century with a stylish 127 that helped the Caribbean side post a highly competitive score of 305/8.

While Hope's innings is unlikely to receive the same amount of plaudits as

Babar's, it was a knock of similar class and really laid the platform for West Indies' big total.

Hope smashed 15 fours and one massive six during his 134-delivery stay, with his 154-run stand with No.3 Shamrah Brooks a particular highlight.

It looked like Pakistan's run chase was going to prove futile when Babar and

Mohammad Rizwan were dismissed in quick succession, but finisher Khushdil Shah had other ideas.

The left-hander smashed four sixes and scored an unbeaten 41 during the closing stages of the chase to ensure Pakistan drew first blood in the three-match series.

It was only Khushdil's fifth ODI, but he is making a name for himself as a reliable closer after he performed a similar role with aplomb against Australia in March.

The second ODI will be played today, while the third ODI will be held on Sunday. The ICC Cricket World Cup Super League series between these two sides mark the return of international cricket in Multan - ending a long 14-year wait - having last hosted Bangladesh in April 2008.

The series was rescheduled from December 2021, due to a Covid-19 outbreak in the West Indies team, to June this year. Crucial CWCSL points will be up for grabs.

Mohammad Hasnain allowed to resume bowling



Our Correspondent

LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board has announced that fast bowler Mohammad Hasnain's bowling action has been found to be legal after the amount of elbow extension in the reassessment was within the 15-degree level of tolerance permitted under the ICC Illegal Bowling Regulations. As such, he can now resume bowling in international cricket and all domestic cricket worldwide.

Hasnain was suspended from bowling following tests conducted on his bowling action at the ICC's accredited testing centre in Lahore on 21 January. The test report, which was reviewed and verified by the Cricket Australia's independent expert, had found his bowling action to be illegal.

Hasnain underwent reassessment of his bowling action on 21 May at the ICC's accredited testing centre in Lahore and the report was again verified by the Cricket Australia's independent experts, as required under the ICC regulations.

Hasnain was reported for a suspect bowling action in January during Cricket Australia's domestic cricket competition.

Javed Chohan greets national cricket team

Our Correspondent

LAHORE: Director General Sports Punjab Javed Chohan has congratulated the national cricket team on winning the first One-day International cricket match by 5 wickets against the visiting West Indies at Multan cricket stadium.

In his greeting message on Thursday, Director General Sports Punjab Javed Chohan praised the excellent performance of skipper Babar Azam (103), Imamul Haq (65), Rizwan (59), Khushdil Shah (41 not out) and fast bowler Haris Rauf (4 wickets) in the first match of ODI series. He also lauded an excellent century from West Indian player Shai Hope.

Director General Sports Punjab Javed Chohan expressed his hope that Pakistan cricket team will also continue their winning streak in the remaining matches of ODI rubber.

Secretary Sports visits E-Rozgaar Centers

Our Correspondent

LAHORE: Secretary Youth Affairs and Sports Punjab Asadullah Faiz visited E-Rozgaar Centers at Punjab University and Lahore College for Women University (LCWU) here on Thursday.

Secretary Youth Affairs and Sports Punjab Asadullah Faiz was accompanied by Director Youth Affairs Syed Umair Hassan and other officials during his visits. Secretary Youth Affairs and Sports Punjab Asadullah Faiz visited different sections of E-Rozgaar Centers and reviewed the existing facilities there. He also enquired from male and female students about the facilities of E-Rozgaar Centers.

Talking on this occasion, Secretary Youth Affairs and Sports Punjab Asadullah Faiz said this is a computer era and it is the right time for our youth to become aware of modern technology. "The students of various colleges and universities are being imparted Web Designing, E-Commerce and Digital Media Marketing training at these E-Rozgaar Centers," he added.

Secretary Youth Affairs and Sports Punjab Asadullah Faiz said that Youth Affairs and Sports Department Punjab is establishing E-Rozgaar Centers in various educational institutions to make youth of the province skilled and self-reliant. "Many students of the province are earning crores of rupees after getting valuable training from Youth Affairs Department's E-Rozgaar Centers," he added.

Postpone AFCON qualifiers: Cisse

JOHANNESBURG: Senegal coach Aliou Cisse wants the September Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) qualifiers postponed to allow the five countries representing the continent at the World Cup to play friendly matches.

Cameroon, Ghana, Morocco, Senegal and Tunisia have qualified for the November 21-December 18 Qatar tournament and the African sides have only a September 19-27 window and one week before the World Cup kick-off to prepare.

The withdrawal of Zimbabwe from Group K means Morocco are free to play warm-up games in September, but the other four teams face two African qualifiers each.

Cameroon are scheduled to play Namibia, Ghana to meet Angola, Senegal to tackle Mozambique and Tunisia to face Libya home and away. Speaking to the media in Dakar after Senegal snatched a last-gasp 1-0 victory over Rwanda on Tuesday, Cisse called on the Confederation of African Football (CAF) to delay the next two rounds of qualifying. "The best thing (to) help the five (African) selections that have qualified (for the World Cup) is to stop the (qualifiers) in September," said the former Paris Saint-Germain midfielder-cum-defender.

PCB introduces CA Divisional U19 tournament

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Four hundred and eighty teenage cricketers will get an opportunity to participate in the newly-launched 24-team Cricket Associations Divisional U19 Tournament. The event will run from 10-16 June in five Cricket Associations, while the event will be held from 11-17 June in the Southern Punjab Cricket Associations' jurisdiction.

These 480 cricketers are a combination of players who had excelled in the recently-concluded 93-team City Cricket Association (CCA) U19 tournament and those enrolled into the PCB's 100 Best Programme but are above 16 years of age and under 19 years of age.

The best performers from the CA Divisional U19 Tournament will be joined by

the outstanding performers from last year's National U19 Championship (three-day) and Cup (one-day) tournaments in the 2022-23 National U19 Championship and Cup, which will be held from between 26 June and 13 August.

The CA Divisional U19 Tournament is a new addition to the PCB domestic calendar and will serve as a launching pad for the National U19 Championship/Cup. The additional event in the PCB Pathways Programme supplements the increase in teams from six to 12 in last year's National U19 events.

Nadeem Khan, Director-High Performance: "The CA Divisional U19 tournament is an important addition to

the PCB Domestic Cricket Calendar as it will not only provide more clarity to the PCB Pathways Programme, but will also provide additional matches to the budding cricketers in a more competitive and challenging environment at the age-group level.

"The CA Divisional U19 tournament is also a reward to the high-performing players from the CCA U19 tournament and will also serve as an incentive for them to move up the ladder, provided they continue to demonstrate high-level skills, fitness and performances."

Each of the six Cricket Associations will field four teams with each side to comprise 20 players.

Balochistan CA teams will comprise players from the Quetta, Rakhsan, Loralai, Zhob, Makran, Kalat, Naserabad and Sibi divisions; Central Punjab will comprise players from the Lahore, Faisalabad, Sargodha, Gujranwala and Sialkot divisions; Kyber Pakhtunkhwa sides will include players from the Peshawar, Kohat, Malakand, Hazara, Mardan, DI Khan and Bannu divisions; players from Islamabad, Rawalpindi, AJK and Gilgit-Baltistan will form the Northern CA squads; Sindh CA sides will have players from the Sukkur, Larkana, Benazirabad, Mirpurkhas, Karachi and Hyderabad divisions; while Southern Punjab CA teams will include players from the Multan, Bahawalpur, DG Khan and Sahiwal divisions.

Ukraine beat Ireland after WC heartbreak

DUBLIN: Viktor Tsygankov lifted Ukraine's spirits after their painful failure to qualify for the World Cup as the midfielder clinched a 1-0 Nations League victory over the Republic of Ireland on Wednesday.

Tsygankov struck with a fine free-kick early in the second at Dublin's Aviva Stadium. Ukraine held on to that slender lead as they bounced back from the 1-0 defeat against Wales on Sunday that ended the war-torn nation's bid to qualify for this year's World Cup.

While Ukraine won't be going to Qatar for the World Cup, their impressive response to such a devastating loss epitomised the spirit in Oleksandr Petrakov's side.

Of course Petrakov's players have far greater concerns as the Russian invasion continues in their homeland.

The Irish FA had handed out 3,500 tickets to Ukrainian refugees and there were other pockets of blue and yellow around the Aviva Stadium.

"This is a very difficult time. The Ukrainians who came to see us play in Ireland were accepted by the incredible Irish hospitality and people," Petrakov said.

"You took our women and children who were basically risking their lives back in Ukraine. I want to thank the whole island. "Those Ukrainians in the stand just wanted to see some positivity from the team but they are really longing to go home to Ukraine."

"We made them a little bit happier tonight. That is the major achievement in my view."

Petrakov had admitted the emotional and physical impact of the events in Cardiff combined with the ongoing war had taken its toll on his players.

He made 10 changes after the Wales game and the understudies were good enough to extend Ireland's winless run in the Nations League to 12 games.

"Overall I'm happy with the result and with the attitude and performance. It is a very positive thing for the team especially after such a bitter result in Wales. We turn the page and we look forward to our future," Petrakov said.

Ireland's hopes of winning the Nations League B group already look forlorn ahead of Scotland's visit to Dublin on Saturday following successive defeats by Armenia and Ukraine.

Vitaliy Mykolenko drilled an early attempt wide as playmaker Mykola Shaparenko started to make his influence felt.

As the tempo settled, so too did Ukraine and Shane Duffy had to throw himself into the path of Serhiy Sydorchuk's drive before Caoimhin Kelleher dealt ably with Oleksandr Zubkov's well-struck effort.

Ireland were spared with eight minutes of the half remaining when Taras Kacharaba's strike was ruled out for offside during the build-up following a VAR review.

SBP, POA to conduct doping awareness camp

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Director General Sports Punjab Javed Chohan has said that Sports Board Punjab in collaboration with Pakistan Olympic Association (POA) is going to conduct a 2-day doping awareness camp for Pakistan's Commonwealth Games contingent at Nishtar Park Sports Complex E-Library on June 11 and 12, 2022.

Director General Sports Punjab Javed Chohan said this while addressing a press conference along with Secretary General POA Khalid Mahmood at National Hockey Stadium on Thursday.

Director Youth Affairs Syed Umair Hassan, Chief Sports Consultant Hafeez Bhatti, PRO SBP Abdul Rauf Roofi and other officials were also present on this occasion.

Addressing the press conference Director General



Sports Punjab Javed Chohan said the prime objective of Sports Board Punjab's doping awareness camp is to make aware Pakistan athletes, coaches, manager and team officials of the troubles of doping.

Director General Sports Punjab Javed Chohan said that Sports Board Punjab will hold a series of activities in the collaboration of POA in future which will be advantageous for players and coaches, manager and team officials to a great extent. "POA has a wider sports mandate and has affiliation with top international sports bodies. There

is no doubt that POA could be beneficial for the sports community in many ways".

Director General Sports Punjab Javed Chohan further said that doping awareness camp will not be restricted to Punjab only. "The camp proceedings will be aired through the Zoom system across the country. All district sports officers, athletes, and other officials of the province will be engaged in this valuable activity through Zoom technology," he added.

Speaking on this occasion, POA Secretary General Khalid Mahmood thanked Director General Sports

Punjab Javed Chohan for conducting a doping awareness camp. "During the 2-day camp, medical experts such as Dr Asad Abbas Shah, Dr Lubna, Dr Waqar and Ada Jaffery will deliver lectures Charter of Good Conduct, Harassment and how an athlete can protect himself/herself from the menace of doping. The Pakistan contingent will exhibit respectable conduct in the upcoming Commonwealth Games scheduled to be held in Birmingham, England from July 28 to August 8, 2022," he expressed his hope.

POA Secretary General Khalid Mahmood said that during the camp, the medical experts will caution the athletes and coaches to avoid the use of performance-enhancing drugs which is unlawful and punishable under World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) laws.

Perez to promote title credentials in Baku

BAKU: Sergio Perez has fond memories of last year's Azerbaijan Grand Prix and this weekend the Mexican finds himself returning to the fast and furious streets of Baku as a viable contender for the world championship.

'Checo' arrives on the Caspian Sea coastline fresh from his Monaco triumph and with the ink barely dry on a two-year extension to his Red Bull contract.

Monaco, following three second-place finishes, lifted Mexico's most successful F1 driver to within 15 points of his world champion teammate Max Verstappen.

Ferrari's Charles Leclerc is only six points in front of Perez heading into this eighth round of the 22-race season which welcomes

back fans for the first time since the Covid pandemic.

"He's in this championship just as much as Max is," Red Bull boss Christian Horner stated in the aftermath of Perez's third career win after Azerbaijan in 2021 and in Bahrain the season before.

Babar was helped in Monaco by his team's pit stop prowess with Ferrari bungling theirs but Horner warned the Italian constructor's faster car will be hard to stop "over the coming races".

Baku has a reputation for serving up the unexpected, with cars hurtling down the Neftchilar Avenue, the longest straight on the calendar, at 350kmh, before snaking through the sinuous old town framed by Baku's medieval city walls.

It's unpredictable nature is borne out by the results, with a different driver winning each edition since Nico Rosberg won the first Grand Prix held there, the European, in 2016.

Verstappen readily concedes it's not one of his favourite weekend destinations after last year's dramatic tyre blow out with the chequered flag his for the taking continuing his sorry sequence of never making the podium.

The Dutchman had to settle for third in Monaco but still came away satisfied at extending his title lead over Leclerc, who judged his home race as "a freaking disaster" after starting from pole to finish fourth.

The man from Monaco has seen the title momentum he established with wins in Bahrain

and Australia disappear with Red Bull on a five-timer after annexing the last four races.

"Everything went against us... we'll come back stronger," said Leclerc, that sentiment echoed by his team boss.

"We are pretty aware: being competitive is a fact; winning is another task and it's another level of difficulty. And I think as a team we are still progressing, learning, and maybe it will take some more time," said Ferrari principal Mattia Binotto.

While Red Bull and Ferrari are dominating the early season limelight Mercedes have struggled to unleash the full potential of their car.

Upgrades in Barcelona last month looked encouraging as Toto Wolff's under pressure team



sought to iron out the 'bouncing' that has bedevilled their performance.

The Silver Arrows' undoubted speed should make deposited seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton and his astute new teammate George Russell a force to be reckoned with in qualifying.

won for Red Bull from 10th on the grid.

The Australian's trademark smile has been tested this term as he struggles to make a mark in his McLaren, collecting only 11 points to 48 for his teammate Lando Norris.

At Monaco he more or less agreed with team boss Zak Brown that so far his move to the team had failed to meet expectations.

"No one's going to be harder on me than myself," he said.

"I know that I don't want to be racing around in 10th, 12th places.

"I still believe I can be at the front and belong at the front, so it's been a little bit more, certainly, testing at times, in terms of us trying to get up there and maximise myself in this car.