



**Ghee to be available at Rs 300/kg at USC: Marriyum**

Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Marriyum Aurangzeb announces a major reduction of Rs. 250 in per kilogram ghee price by the present government and says the commodity will be available at all utility stores across the country at Rs 300/kg whereas a bag of 10- kg flour was already being provided at utility stores across the country at Rs. 400.



**Government on crutches, about to fall: Sh. Rashid**

Former Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid says coalition government is supported by crutches and they are going to fall soon. The people of Pakistan are in worst condition ever because of the shortages of electricity, water, gas and ghee. Everyone is trying to get rid of the current government. China is giving aid to Pakistan because of the Pakistan Army. No one is ready to give you a single dollar.

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**Parliamentary affairs**

Islamabad: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif called on by Speaker National Assembly, Raja Parvez Ashraf, Minister for Planning Mr. Ahsan Iqbal was also present.



Photo: PID

**NA debate**

**MNAs condemn BJP leaders' derogatory remarks**

**Our Correspondent**

ISLAMABAD: The lawmakers in the National Assembly here on Monday strongly condemned the derogatory remarks uttered by India's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders against Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad Peace Be Upon Him (PBUH). Participating in the discussion on the sanctity of Allah Almighty's last Prophet Hazrat Muhammad Rasool Allah Khatmun-Nabbiyyin (SAWW), MNA Syed Imran Ahmad Shah termed the derogatory remarks as an unfortunate incident and asked the Muslim community across the country to show unity on this issue.

He said that Indian leaders had hurt the sentiments of about 1.5 billion Muslims living across the globe. He asked the government to approach the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and United Nations Organization (UNO) for highlighting this important issue. He urged

that the people involved in this crime should be punished. MNA Moulana Abdul Akbar Chitrali said it was the fundamental part of Muslims' faith to love Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) more than their children and parents. He suggested the government to call back Pakistan's High Commissioner from India and expel Indian High Commissioner from Pakistan.

MNA Sabir Hussain Kaim Khani said all Muslims were ready to sacrifice their lives for sanctity of Prophet Hazrat Muhammad Rasool Allah Khatmun-Nabbiyyin (SAWW). Minister for Religious Affairs Mufti Abdul Shakoor while participating in the debate asked Muslims living across the world to exhibit greater unity and shun their difference and give a strong reaction to India on this issue.

While criticizing the World Human Rights Organization, he said, that it was unfortunate that they all remained silent on this important issue.

**De-seating defecting MNAs**

**PTI challenges ECP's decision in SC**

*Imran Khan wants immediate dismissal of ECP decision*

ISLAMABAD: The PTI Monday moved the Supreme Court to challenge the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) decision of not unseating its defecting members of the National Assembly (MNAs.) Ex-prime minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan, through his lawyer Faisal Chaudhry, submitted a petition to the top court seeking the immediate annulment of the ECP's decision to dismiss the reference against the party

members. The PTI chairman had sent a declaration to former National Assembly speaker Asad Qaiser, seeking the disqualification of 20 party members after they decided to vote against him in the no-confidence motion.

But the votes of the dissident MNAs were not needed to oust Khan from power as the then-Opposition had enough votes to send the government packing in the wee hours of April 10. APP

**India's ugly face exposed before world: PM**

*Says India unleashed brute state apparatus to browbeat Muslims*

**Staff Report**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Monday said that India had unleashed its brute and oppressive apparatus to browbeat Indian Muslims into submission. Commenting on the unabated persecution of Muslims in India by the Narendra Modi-led regime pursuing the Hinduism ideology, the prime minister said the whole plan was to further marginalise the the Indian Muslims politically, economically and culturally. "The whole plan is to further marginalise them politically, economically & culturally. The reality of India's "democratic face" is before the world to see," the prime minister remarked on Twitter.

Before the premier, the Foreign Office strongly condemned the heavy-handed treatment by the Indian authorities of the Muslims who were registering a peaceful protest after Friday prayers over the derogatory remarks issued

in India resulted in the killing of two innocent Muslim protesters and injuring of thirteen others in Ranchi city.

Pakistan's Foreign Office spokesperson, in a press release on Sunday, said that the footage of

in India appealed to fellow Muslims on Monday to suspend plans for protests against derogatory remarks about the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) made by two members of the ruling Hindu-nationalist party.

The message to avoid big gatherings was circulated after demonstrations took a violent turn last week, leading to the death of two Muslim teenagers and the wounding of more than 30 people, including the police. "It is the duty of every Muslim to stand together when anyone belittles Islam but at the same time it is critical to maintaining peace," said Malik Aslam, a senior member of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, a Muslim organisation that operates in several Indian states.

**India plans to further marginalise Muslims on political, economic, cultural grounds: PM**

by two members of the ruling political party Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) about Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The indiscriminate and widespread use of brute force by the Indian authorities across various states

Indian forces unabashedly opening fire on unarmed protesters in Ranchi city was horrific beyond belief. In Uttar Pradesh alone a total of 227 people had been arrested so far. Leaders of prominent Islamic groups and mosques

**Pakistan likely to exit FATF's grey list**

**Staff Report**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will likely exit the grey list Financial Action Task Force (FATF) as it has achieved 32 conditions out of 34 under the two different action plans of FATF. According to sources, the four-day meeting of the Paris-based global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog will start today (Tuesday) in Berlin, in which matters regarding Pakistan will be discussed on June 15 and 16.

Under the 2018 action plan of the FATF, the country has implemented 26 out of 27 points while it met six out of seven points under the 2021 action plan. Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar will lead the Pakistani delegation at the FATF meeting.

**Federal govt stands by PML-Q: Zardari**

*Says making Pakistan self-reliant top priority of coalition Govt*

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: Former president and Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari said on Monday that the federal government stands by the Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) and the PML-Q stand by the national government. The former president visited federal minister Chaudhry Salik Hussain's residence and met PML-Q president Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, federal minister Tariq Bashir Cheema, Chaudhry Shafay Hussain and Chaudhry Salik Hussain.



Lahore: Former president and PPP co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari visited federal minister Chaudhry Salik Hussain's residence and met PML-Q president Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain.

the PML-Q stands firm with the national government and is fulfilling its promise.

Tariq Bashir Cheema said that making self-reliant is the top priority of the PPP and coalition government. Asif Zardari said this during a meeting with Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q)

leaders and federal ministers Tariq Bashir Cheema and Salik Hussain who called on him on Sunday. He said that prosperity of Pakistan is bound with the prosperity of farmers. Speaking on the occasion, Tariq Bashir Cheema and Salik Hussain said that special relief has been given to the farmers in the budget. They said that restoring the confidence of farmers and foreign investors is the top priority of the coalition government.

**Govt to close dormant bank accounts**

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has decided to close thousands of dormant bank accounts belonging to various administrative departments. According to details, the Finance Ministry has directed the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) to issue instructions to commercial banks to shut down the government's dormant accounts and transfer all available balances to a single account. A notification, issued in this regard, stated that the federal government now follows a "cash management and treasury single account policy," according to which, all government funds will be deposited in a single account.

The Ministry of Finance has also prohibited the departments to keep funds in any other accounts instead of the Federal Consolidated Fund. "There are thousands of government dormant bank accounts with zero bank balances," it added. The ministry further said that it has been decided to close the dormant bank accounts belonging to government departments. APP

**Pakistan, ADB discuss Country Partnership Strategy**

*Miftah lauds ADB's support for reform programmes*

**Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: Director General, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Eugene Zhukov here on Monday apprised the Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Miftah Ismail about the Country Partnership Strategy for Pakistan 2021-25, which is aligned with the government's development vision. He was talking to finance minister during a meeting, which among others were also attended by Country Director ADB, Yong Ye, Secretary Finance, senior officers from Finance and Economic Affairs Divisions.

Policy based programmes for energy sector, women inclusive finance sector development, public-private partnership reforms and SOE sector development plan were also discussed. A proposed counter cyclical Support Facility (CSF) to help mitigate the impact of external shocks by the ADB was also discussed. In addition, it was also shared that various agreements in field of social protection, energy,



Islamabad: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Mr. Miftah Ismail held a meeting with Mr. Eugene Zhukov, Director General, Asian Development Bank at Finance Division. Photo: PID

and urban infrastructure are already ongoing in Pakistan with the assistance of ADB. Welcoming Eugene Zhukov and the team from ADB, Finance Minister Miftah Ismail appreciated ADB's support in continuation of reform and development agenda in Pakistan. The Finance Minister apprised the delegation on the macro-economic situation and various budgetary and non-budgetary measures being undertaken by the present government to correct the imbalances. It was also shared that irre-

spective of severe fiscal and monetary challenges, the present government was focusing on effective structural reform measures for putting the economy on path of inclusivity and sustainability. The Finance Minister thanked the ADB delegation for their support and assured them of full support and speedy implementation of the ongoing programs. Meanwhile, the finance minister also held a meeting on facility confirmation of LCs for oil imports. The meeting was attended by

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar, Chairman Federal Board of Revenue, Governor State Bank of Pakistan, Chairman Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority and senior officers.

The meeting discussed issues regarding opening of LCs for oil imports and steps for resolving the issues for smooth supply of energy chain in the country. After, comprehensive deliberation on the pragmatic way outs, the chair directed the relevant authorities to expedite the process for resolving these issues.



## Narrative

Federal Minister for Commerce Naveed Qamar addressing an opening ceremony of MC12 in Geneva on Monday.



Photo: PID

## Punjab Budget

# Govt, opposition end deadlock after successful talks

*PTI, PML-Q to give tough time during budget session*

LAHORE: The Punjab government and the opposition have reached an agreement to end the deadlock over the budget session after holding successful talks. Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) leader Khalil Tahir Sindhu said that the talks with the opposition turned out successful and matters were settled amicably. He said that Chief Minister Hamza Shahbaz is reaching Punjab Assembly and the budget session will be started soon.

The government and opposition lawmakers have also started reaching the Punjab Assembly building after the successful dialogues. The Punjab government and the opposition reached an agreement and constituted a committee for its implementation. A two-member committee was formed which included Raja Basharat and Malik Ahmed Khan that will ensure the acceptance of all demands during its session.

It was learnt that the chief secretary and the Punjab inspector general will give clarifications before the House. Earlier, the government and oppo-

sition headed towards a deadlock over 'conditions' prior to the unveiling of the Punjab budget for the fiscal year 2022-23. The unveiling of the Punjab budget 2022-23 has been delayed due to a lack of agreement between the government and the opposition. Prior to the Punjab budget session, a meeting of the business advisory committee was held in the Punjab Assembly.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) demanded the government withdraw cases against its leaders and activists, whereas, the Inspector General (IG) Punjab police should tender an apology before the advisory committee. The opposition party also demanded the withdrawal of cases against the Punjab Assembly staffers. The Chief Minister's Office has rejected the conditions tabled by the opposition. They added that the government team put new conditions after holding conditions with the Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shahbaz.

The Punjab government adopted a stance that a thorough investigation will be held on cases against

the provincial lawmakers to ascertain the facts about the scuffle in the Punjab Assembly during the election of the chief minister. The government team said that no agreement will be signed without the probe against the lawmakers. Sources said that there is a deadlock between the government and the opposition after the rejection of the conditions from both sides which led to a delay in the provincial budget. The budget would not be presented in the Punjab Assembly till an agreement between the government and opposition.

Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) and Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) have decided to give a tough time to the PML-N-led coalition government during the passage of the Punjab budget today.

It was decided during a meeting of the parliamentary party headed by MPA Sibtain Khan that the opposition parties will lodge a strong protest during the tabling of the Punjab budget. "We will respond to the government's failure during the assembly session," another PTI lawmaker Fayaz ul Hasan Chohan said.

## Rs 4 per unit

## NEPRA okays power tariff hike

*5,673MW power shortfall causes hours-long outages*

ISLAMABAD: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) Monday increased the power tariff by Rs3.99 per unit on account of fuel charges adjustment (FCA) for April 2022 amid worsening power outages across the country. According to a notification issued in this regard, the FCA for April 2022 will be charged with the bill of June 2022, which will be paid by all consumer categories of all 10 distribution companies, except for life-line and K-Electric consumers. The Rs3.99 increase will put a burden of around Rs58.5 billion on consumers, including GST.

The said adjustment shall be shown separately in the consumers' bills on the basis of units billed

to the consumers in the month of June 2022 by the XWDISCOs. "XWDISCOs shall reflect the fuel charges adjustment in respect of April 2022 in the billing month of June 2022," the notification read. It is worth mentioning that earlier this month, the regulatory body had raised the basic power tariff by Rs7.9078/kWh for the next fiscal year 2022-23 increasing the burden of inflation on the people of Pakistan.

The decision had been taken in line with the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) demands and the power distribution companies' requests. Currently, the basic power tariff is Rs16.91 per unit and with an increase of Rs7.9078 per unit, it will be more than Rs24 per unit.

### Stock, currency market reject budget: Tarin

ISLAMABAD: Former Finance Minister Shaukat Tarin has asserted that the negative response of stock and currency markets has rejected the coalition government's budget. Taking to his official Twitter handle, Shaukat Tarin wrote: "[Finance Minister] Miftah Sahib, the markets don't lie. Stock and currency market's [negative] response indicates they have rejected your budget."

"Inflation of 24 [percent] which will increase further because of power and gas tariffs, continue to bedevil the common man who has been crushed," Shaukat Tarin said, reiterating the demand for fresh elections. Meanwhile, former Information Minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader has asserted that the stock market's condition and the rise in Dollar have reacted to the Budget. "All sections of the intelligentsia are worried over the childish economic policies of the import-ent government. Leadership of both the institutions should take steps for possible solution instead of seeing the country sinking," he wrote on Twitter. Agencies

### Elahi orders Ata to leave PA Hall

#### Bureau Report

LAHORE: Punjab Assembly Speaker Chauhdry Pervaiz Elahi has ordered provincial government spokesperson and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Ata Tarar to leave the assembly hall. According to details, the Punjab assembly speaker has summoned sergeant-at-arms to take Ata Tarar out of the ongoing provincial Budget session.

"Ata Tarar should leave the PA Hall voluntarily", Speaker Punjab Assembly Pervaiz Elahi said. He warned that there will be no conducive environment for Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shehbaz unless Ata Tarar leaves the House. Chauhdry Pervaiz Elahi noted that he would not allow anyone to present the provincial budget for the next fiscal year. He also adjourned the Punjab Assembly session for 10 minutes.

Earlier in the day, the Punjab government and the opposition reached an agreement to end the deadlock over the budget session after holding successful talks. PML-N leader Khalil Tahir Sindhu said that the talks with the opposition turned out successful and matters were settled amicably.

### Ukraine war led inflation in Pakistan: Bilawal

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) chairman and Foreign Minister Pakistan Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Monday said that Pakistan will remain neutral in Russia-Ukraine war but the war led to inflation in Pakistan.

The Foreign Minister told media persons that connecting the former PM's visit to Russia with no-trust motion is a big misunderstanding, adding that we are also neutral as like former government was in this war.

He went on to say that the food security and inflation are Pakistan's biggest challenges and we want the conflict to be resolved through diplomacy and dialogue between the parties. Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari will travel to Tehran on a two-day official visit tomorrow. Agencies

### Money laundering case

## No need to detain PM, CM for probe: Court

*Court issues written order of Shehbaz, Hamza interim bails approval*

#### Bureau Report

LAHORE: A special court in Lahore hearing the money laundering case against Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shehbaz stated that the investigation officer (IO) to date has not demanded the detention of accused for further investigation. According to details, Special Judge Central - Ijaz Hassan Awan - has issued a 22-page detailed verdict regarding confirmation of bails to the PM Shehbaz and CM Hamza in Rs16 money laundering case.

In the written order, the Court pointed out that the investigation officer (IO) to date has not mentioned in his diary that the accused

were required to be in custody for further investigation.

The judgment read that according to Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), a politician gave Rs14 million to Shehbaz Sharif against a ticket of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). "However, the agency could not provide the name of the politician to date," it stated.

The court, in the written order, stated that the prosecution could not establish through evidence that Shehbaz Sharif was a shareholder or director of Ramzan Sugar Mills. The court added that although Hamza Shahbaz was the CEO of the Ramazan Sugar Mills, the prosecution was not able to prove that the accounts - used to launder money - were opened on his

orders. The order said that the FIA started investigating Hamza and PM Shehbaz when they were already in the NAB's custody. Following this, the FIA did not interrogate them for the next five months.

Once they were released from NAB's custody, the court said FIA asked them to appear before it. "This shows that the prosecution wanted to arrest them again after their release, which shows its mal intent," the order added. The allegation about gratification, corrupt practice, abuse of official authority, and commission requires further probe during the trial as at this stage cogent evidence is not available," the order concluded.

## CEC taking instructions from PML-N leadership: Imran Khan

*Says national security will be in danger if agriculture sector not sustainable*

#### Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) chairperson and former Prime Minister Imran Khan on Monday while taking a dig at the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja Said every week CEC takes instructions from Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shahbaz and PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz for rigging. Addressing the farmers, the PTI chairman said that national security is in jeopardy till agriculture is restored, adding that Pakistan can only increase its wealth if it focuses only on agriculture.

Rebuking the current government, he said the condition of farmers is bad and current rulers have no idea how their act will destroy the economy. The former prime minister said that our government had a record production of crops but the Americans slaves were imposed on us to implement their policies and load shedding has increased in the country, in the last two months.

Imran Khan added that electricity prices have also increased, this government was not brought for the betterment of the country, they broke the record of inflation for 3 and a half years. Infact they have come to fulfill foreign agenda. He went on to say that the various parties in the govern-

**Khan says farmers are given subsidies all over the world**

ment wanted to close corruption cases against their members, weaken institutions like the National Accountability Bureau and the Federal Investigation Agency and rig the next general elections in collusion with the Election Commission of Pakistan.

PTI Chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan warned of food insecurity in the country if the coalition government does not focus on

giving targeted subsidies to farmers. The party chairman said: "Farmers are given subsidies all over the world and if the agriculture sector is not sustainable, this would put national security in danger." The former prime minister said that the country cannot move forward if farmers are ignored. "This will lead to food insecurity in the country," he added.

Commenting on the rising inflation, the ex-premier said that the farmers showed a record production during the PTI government's tenure as it had provided subsidies to them. "Cotton production increased by 17%, sugarcane by 9.4%, and sugar production by 24% during the PTI's tenure," Khan added. He said that the prices of petrol, electricity, and ghee had increased during the incumbent government's tenure.

Talking about his government's efforts to provide ease to the farmers, the PTI chairman said his government provided a Rs132 billion subsidy on urea fertiliser. "Our government tried its best to help farmers," he reiterated.

## ECC extends relief package, okays infrastructure projects

#### Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet here on Monday approved extension in the Prime Minister's Relief Package besides approving infrastructure projects and many supplementary grants for various ministries and divisions. The meeting of ECC was chaired by Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Miftah Ismail. It was attended by Minister of State for Finance and Revenue, Dr. Aisha Ghous Pasha, Minister of State for Petroleum Division, Musadik Masood Malik, Federal Secretaries, Chairman FBR, Chairman OGRA and senior officers, according to press statement issued by the finance ministry.

The cabinet committee approved extension in the Prime Minister's Relief Package-2020 up to June 30, 2022 on all five essential items and

allowed that Ghee would be sold on all Utility Stores Corporation (USC) outlets throughout the country @ Rs. 300/kg from June 9, 2022 irrespective of the higher market prices. The ECC further approved allocation of funds Rs. 3,447.60 million in favor of USC through Supplementary Grant. The ECC after considering incoming Haj 2022 and financial constraints of Pakistan International Airline Corporation Limited (PIACL) approved payment of GST @ 17% i.e Rs. 1.596 billion approximately on total rental value of Rs. 9,388 billion of four (04) A320 leased aircrafts on monthly installments over the lease term starting from the date of arrival of aircrafts, including 1 already arrived.

The summary for payment of Sales Tax for leased aircrafts on installments basis was presented before ECC by Ministry of Aviation which argued that due to financial constraints,



PIACL was not in a position to pay GST on the total rental value in lump sum. Ministry of Communications presented a summary on requirement of additional funds for construction of Gilgit-Shandoor road, N-140. Rs. 2000 million were allocated in the Federal Budget 2021-22, whereas actual requirement of funds to acquire land and make payments of certified liabilities is Rs. 6,000 million. The ECC accorded approval of Rs. 4,000 million as additional

funds for the project "Construction of Gilgit-Shandoor Road, N-140."

Petroleum Division submitted a summary for enhancement of Oil and Gas production from TAL blocks vis-a-vis provisional allocation of gas price. Keeping in view the shortage of gas in the country, the ECC conditionally allowed M/s MOL to commence production from Tal block namely Mamikhel South. TAL JV was given the 2012 Policy Price on provisional basis till further decision of the Government. Ministry of Energy, Power Division submitted a summary on tariff rationalization for power sector. The ECC after detailed discussion approved the annual rebasing plan with certain modifications. The ECC also directed Power Division to recommend subsidy reform adjustment for unprotected consumers which was approved in December 2021 but not implemented.



# Higher education budget raised by 20pc: Rana Tanvir

The Minister says govt would award more financial benefits to universities which produce quality results in future

Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Rana Tanvir Hussain said on Monday that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) led coalition government had raised the development budget for higher education to Rs 110 billion from 91 billion in the budget 2022-23.

Talking to the media at the inauguration of Picture Exhibition at the National College of Arts (NCA), he said that previous government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) had cut the higher education budget during the past year, adding that PML-N has always given priority to the education sector.

To a query, he said the PML-N



government had raised the higher education budget to Rs 120 billion from mere Rs 34-34 billion during its previous tenure between 2013 and 2018.

The Minister expressed the hope that the premier higher education institutions like the NCA would provide quality education to students and play their role in raising educational standards in the country.

Rana Tanvir asked the NCA Vice Chancellor to devise some short term and long term plans for the betterment of varsity, adding that his responsibilities had increased manifold after up-gradation of the college into university. He lauded the VC Prof. Dr. Murtaza Jafri's efforts for embracing modern technologies and producing quality graduates over the years.

The federal minister Education said he had urged the Vice Chancellors Committee meeting at the Higher Education Commission (HEC), Islamabad to focus on quality rather than becoming slaves of commercialism in the higher education. He said that previous government fell a pray to raising numbers of universities instead of maintaining quality in the higher

education.

The Minister said the government would award more financial benefits to the universities which produce quality results in future.

The education minister said that the Single National Curriculum (SNC) does not mean lowering academic standards, adding that the SNC guidelines may be revised, adding that the SNC would remain in vogue as a bench mark but the institution would be given freedom in the teaching of subjects.

He, however, said that the subjects like Islamic Studies would be taught as per the recommendations of the SNC.

He dispelled the impression that the SNC was being rolled back, adding that the education could not be chained to keep pace with the world.

# First batch of China's vocational college inaugurated in Sindh

BELJING: The first branch of China's vocational college on electric engineering in Pakistan was inaugurated in Sindh recently.

Sindh Technical Education and Vocational Authority (STEVTA), Government Monotechnic Institute (GMI), Mehrabpur, Tang International Education Group, and Yantai Vocational College, China signed an agreement last week on joint training of talent and inaugurated the Sino-Pak international College on the ceremony.

This is the second Sino-Pak international College under "CCTE" model in Sindh Province. The first one was inaugurated in collaboration with Government Polytechnic Institute, Dadu on May 21, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Monday.

"CCTE", short for China-Pakistan Dual Diploma/Degree & China-Pakistan Cooperation, Chinese Language Courses & Chinese



Commercial Cultural Courses, Technical Education Subjects & Technology in Education and Further Education & Employment", is a model developed by Tang International Education Group. Students of CCTE programs will learn in Pakistan for the first two years and in China for the third year before obtaining degrees from both sides.

Li Jinsong, President of the Tang International Education Group, said on the inauguration ceremony that power shortage was a sore

point in Pakistan's economic development.

He expected the joint education program in Sindh, where there were many thermal and wind power plants, could cultivate more talent in electric engineering to meet the market demand, serve the long-term development of local enterprises, and promote people-to-people bond between the two countries.

Wen Jinxiang, president of Yantai Vocational College also attended the ceremony.

He said that STEVTA,

GMI Mehrabpur, Tang International Education Group, and Yantai Vocational College would jointly develop the curriculum standards. He expressed his hope that the program could be sped up to produce professional, modern, and international talent for the development of Pakistan and China.

Saleem Raza Jalbani, Chairman STEVTA, said that since the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries in 1951, technological sector, especially technology education, had been one of the priorities in bilateral cooperation.

According to Dr. Ghulam Mustafa Suhag, Managing Director of STEVTA, STEVTA recognized the importance of learning from China's experience, introducing Chinese technologies and disciplines, and collaborating with Chinese universities to train talents for CPEC construction and Pakistan's development.

# Punjab CM approves budget proposals for FY2022-23

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shahbaz approved on Monday the budget proposals for the next fiscal year 2022-23 during a special session of the provincial cabinet. The government decided to allocate the portfolio of finance minister to Sardar Awais Leghari to present the budget.

The Rs3.226 trillion budget for the fiscal year 2022-23 has been termed 'Roshan rahein naya sawera'.

The cabinet approved an increase in the salaries and pensions of government employees and a 15% special allowance. Besides it, permission was granted for the MoU about free medication for all cancer patients.

Commenting on the budget, CM Hamza said the provincial government has worked day and night to prepare the "best" budget.

"The budget proposals include relief measures for the people and has been prepared with consultation from all political and administrative authorities," he added. Agencies

# 11 national universities participate in webinars on Linguistics

MULTAN: A series of webinars were organized under the patronage of Islamia University Bahawalpur providing a platform to scholars, academics and students from eleven national universities and two colleges from across the country to speak their minds on linguistics.

Almost a month-long activity began last month on May 16 and continued till June 11 during which senior faculty members participated as speakers, says an official release issued here.

Vice Chancellor IUB, Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob (T.I), Dean Faculty of Arts and Languages Prof. Dr. Jawed Hassaan Chandio, department of English Linguistics, IUB, had taken the initiative, enabling exchange of views on linguistics. A similar series of webinars was also organized by the department of English Linguistics last year, 2021.

Speakers spoke on different domains of Linguistics and English Linguistics such as Phonetics, Morphology, Discourse, Stylistics, Critical Thinking, Translation Studies, Communication Skills and Language Disorders.

# PPP Senator Malik Shahadat Awan receives warm welcome

KARACHI: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Senator Malik Shahadat Awan was received warmly at the airport by the leaders of Tanzeem-ul-Awan Sindh on his arrival in Karachi from Islamabad after becoming Minister of State for Law.

At the airport, Malik Farooq Awan, Chairman Tanzeem-ul-Awan Sindh Pakistan, Sindh Vice President Dr. Malik Hameedullah Awan, Malik Ijaz Awan, Malik Safer Awan and other officials of Tanzeem-ul-Awan Sindh were present for the reception. Malik Farooq Awan, Chairman Tanzeem-ul-Awan Pakistan (Sindh) congratulated all the Awan community and said that Alhamdulillah, all Awan community is proud of May Allah grant Shahadat Awan the courage and strength to serve the country and the nation in his official duties.

The entire team of Tanzeem-ul-Awan, especially the youth who worked hard day and night for the prestigious program, welcomed all the participants, especially the workers and officials of Pakistan Peoples Party, Tanzeem-ul-Awan and Pakistan Muslim Alliance Diwan from all parties and nations. I would like to thank all the participants who joined in the joy of the members and added to our happiness. I am deeply grateful and grateful to all the partic-



ipants. Share your love. I assure you that people from any forum or any tribe who have shared this joy and honored us, we will always cherish their honor and be with them at every opportunity. That's how they will stand Tanzeem-ul-Awan Pakistan Sindh Youth's role in the efforts and arrangements of this program has been the most important for which Tanzeem-ul-Awan Youth deserves the credit.

Vice President Tanzeem-ul-Awan Sindh Karachi Dr. Malik Hameedullah Awan said Lawyer, if called the best Minister of Law and Justice in the

75-year history of Pakistan, it would not be out of place. This party has become the best political leader in Pakistan. Shahadat Awan is an important political leader but he has been chosen as the Minister of Law and Justice by Asif Ali Zardari, a friend of the man and friend of the uncrowned king of politics and the young dynamic and future Prime Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. In the eyes of those who understand, there is a good and commendable choice which deserves less praise. I still remember the day when Asif Ali Zardari was bound in political vengeance and false cases.

# Denim Int'l Gases signs contract with DUHS

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Denim International Gases, a leading manufacturer of International Standard Industrial and Medical gases, has signed a tender contract with DOW University of Health Sciences (DUHS), DOW International Dental College Hospital and Sindh Infectious Diseases Hospital & Research Centre in May 2022 for supply of Liquid and Compressed Medical Gases.

Denim International Gases, is an ISO certified manufacturer of medical and industrial gases situated in Port Qasim, Karachi. Supplying high quality gases to various sectors of the country since 2013. The company has a highly

qualified and experienced team with over 40 years of gases manufacturing experience.

COO Engr. Nazir Ahmed of Denim International Gases states "This is a great achievement as our plant offers the purest form of oxygen at 99.999% purity in Pakistan for hospitals and we foresee to continuously invest in technologies to ensure a safe and stable Pakistan. Our supply to Dow is a testament to our focus on sustainable growth in the medical gases sector as a duty to our Nation."

Denim International Gases was one of the key players in supply of medical gases to various hospitals during the peak months of the Covid-19 pandemic.

# Carrefour partners with Mastercard to celebrate Mondays

Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Carrefour, owned and operated by Majid Al Futtaim in Pakistan, has introduced 'Mastercard Mondays'. Through this offer, in-store customers who spend above 5000 rupees through their Mastercard will get a chance to enter a raffle draw to win exciting weekly prizes including a mobile phone and memorabilia signed by Wasim Akram. Online shoppers making purchases through Carrefour's mobile app will also benefit from this offer by availing an instant discount of 1000 rupees on all transactions made on their Mastercard above 5,000 rupees.

The offer will be applicable for all purchases made on a Monday between June 13 to July 18 at all Carrefour stores

in Karachi, Lahore & Islamabad or through Carrefour's online website or mobile app using a Mastercard for payment.

Talking about the Mastercard Mondays offer, Umer Lodhi, Country Manager of Carrefour Pakistan said: "We are thrilled to have partnered with Mastercard to elevate everyday retail and make Mondays more exciting for everyone. We look forward to welcoming our valued customers so they can avail the special offer and enter to win fantastic prizes."

In addition to the convenience of in-store shopping, Carrefour also offers its delivery service through the Carrefour Pakistan app and customers can use MyCLUB to gain instant discounts, earning, and redeeming points.

# Govt providing flour at subsidized rates: SACM Abrar Ahmad

Staff Reporter

ATTOCK: Special Assistant to Chief Minister Punjab Abrar Ahmad has said that govt is trying its level best to provide flour at subsidized rates and for the purpose sale points have been set up across the province.

He said this during his visit to Attock. He was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Attock Muhammad Zulqarnain and other officers. SACM Abrar Ahmad directed the concerned officers to ensure proper monitoring of the subsidized flour sale points. He also interacted with the people present at sale points. He also presided over the meeting of price control committee.

Meanwhile DC Attock Muhammad Zulqarnain visited different health facilities of the district which included THQ Hospitals Fatehjang, THQ Hospital Pindigheb, THQ Hospital Jand and Basic Health Unit Jabbi. During his visit he visited different areas of the health facilities, checked attendance of the staff and also visited under construction Trauma Centers at THQ Hospital Fatehjang and Jand. During his visit to BHU Jabbi, he directed the concerned to ensure biometric attendance of the staff. The DC also checked medicines and other record of the health facilities and got briefing about the facilities being provided to the patients. Deputy Commissioner also paid surprised visits to Khushalgarh check post and fertilizers sale points at Ikhlas and Fatehjang. He also asked the farmers who had come there to purchase fertilisers, to carry out purchase as per their needs and not to involve themselves in hoarding. Later DC Attock paid a surprise visit to District Jail Attock to check cleanliness of the prisoners barracks, dining hall and different other facilities being provided to the prisoners.

# Rain, gusty winds predicted for scattered KP places

PESHAWAR: The Regional Meteorological Center Peshawar on Monday predicted that rain-thunderstorm associated with strong gusty winds are expected at scattered places in Abbottabad, Mansehra, Haripur, Battagram, Kohistan, Torghar, Shangla, Chitral, Lower & Upper Dir, Swat, Bunner, Malakand, Bajaur, Mohmand districts.

However, rain-thunderstorm and dust raising winds can also occur at isolated places in Mardan, Swabi, Charsadda, Nowshera, Peshawar, Khyber, Kohat, Hangu, Karak, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, D.I.Khan, Tank, South & North Waziristan, Orakzai & Kurram districts.

The highest temperature recorded in the province was 44°C each in Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan districts. APP

# GB NADRA centres being renovated

GILGIT: Regional head of NADRA Col (r) Mehmud Beg on Monday said that all new centers in Gilgit-Baltistan were being renovated to facilitate public.

NADRA centers in Central Hunza and Sikandarabad, Nagar, are being shifted to new buildings to bring these centers at par with the standards of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, said a press release.

NADRA centres are also being renovated in Tangir, Darel, Jaglot, Danyore, Phander, Ishkonan, Gamba, Tisar, Thagas, Chorbat, Keris and Daghoni.

In order to increase reach and accessibility, a mobile vehicle will also be put to service to reach 'far flung' areas, it added. Agencies

# Growers advised to complete rice cultivation by June 30

FAISALABAD: Agricultural experts have advised farmers to complete rice cultivation till June 30 for getting a better and high yield.

A spokesman for the Agriculture Department said on Monday that the government was providing subsidy to farmers for increasing rice production in the country.

He said that farmers belonging to Faisalabad, Jhang, Chinot, Gujranwala, Sheikhupura, Okara, Sialkot, Nankana Sahib, Bahawal Nagar, Narowal, Kasur, Gujrat, Lahore, Hafizabad and Mandi Bahaud-Din should avail from this facility by cultivating rice over maximum space of their lands.

He said that approved varieties had better resistance against various diseases, weather conditions and insect attacks. Therefore, the growers should prefer cultivation of approved varieties of rice to get maximum finance benefit.

# AIOU expands its educational network

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open (AIOU) has extended its educational network to the entire world through enrolling a number of students from different countries.

Students from 27 countries including United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Australia, Italy, China, and Saudi Arabia have enrolled in 35 different programs offered in Spring Semester 2022.

The ratio of male to female students is 53 percent for males and 47 percent for females.

Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof. Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum said that AIOU is targeting to increase enrollment of the international students up to ten thousand within the upcoming three years.

AIOU has been able to achieve this important milestone because of the digitalization of its key academic, administrative and financial opera-

tions. It is pertinent to mention here that AIOU has digitized its educational system and expanded it across the globe.

AIOU is offering educational services to international students through an online management system. Assignment submission and mode of exams will be online for international students.

Director, Directorate of International Collaboration and Exchange, Dr. Zahid Majeed, gave an online briefing to international students on the submission of assignments, participation in workshops and examinations, other academic activities and procedures.

He said that the university would provide all possible facilities to its students and if in case of any issue, students may email their queries. APP

# SECP expands investment opportunities for income funds

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD, JUNE 13: In a major move to provide ease of doing business and expand investment avenues for mutual funds, the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has allowed mutual/income funds to invest in "A" or above rated banks.

This permission will substantially expand the range of banks, where the income funds can make deposits, thus enabling funds to negotiate better returns for their unit holders.

It is pertinent to mention here that the 'A' category banks are categorized

as 'Stable' by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). Earlier, the mutual/income funds could only make investments in A+ rated banks and Development Finance Institutions (DFIs).

Currently, the accumulated assets of the mutual fund sector is Rs1.2 trillion, out of which around Rs300 billion is invested in Income Funds whereas Rs561 billion is invested in the Money Market Funds. By bridging the gap between Income Funds and other income/savings products with similar risk profile, the funds industry will be able to tap more into the potential Rs12.5 trillion savings and fixed deposits, currently held by banks.





Islamabad

23° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr .....3:13 am  
Zohr .....12:08 pm  
Asr .....5:08 pm  
Maghrib .....7:19 pm  
Isha .....9:03 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 .....555489  
CAA ..... 9281092

HOSPITALS

CMH .....561111  
MH .....561116  
MH .....561116  
Cantt Hospital .....9270907-11  
DHQ .....5556311-4  
RGH .....9290301-7  
Holy Family .....9290322-7  
PIMS .....9261170-79  
Polyclinic ..... 9218300-09  
Shifa International .....4603666

DEPARTMENTS

CDA ..... 921334-43  
CDA ..... 9208301-04  
Met Office ..... 9250360-6  
RDA ..... 5555864  
TMA ..... 5770886  
Cantonment Board ..... 9270151-3  
Islamabad Metropolitan  
Corporation ..... 9209224  
Potohar Town ..... 9209224  
Rawal Town ..... 5773343

COMPLAINTS

Water Tanker Service  
E-7, F-10 & F-11 9204654  
G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8, 9203883  
G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8 9266316  
Wapda Islamabad .....9217579-80  
Sui Gas Complaint ..... 119, 9272249  
Wasa Water Tank  
Rawalpindi .....0331-5022125

Several vehicles fined for wrong parking

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) was taking strict action against wrong parking and fined several vehicles on Tuesday.

A campaign was launched against wrong parking following Senior Superintendent of Police (Traffic) Syed Mustafa Tanvir directions to ensure smooth flow of traffic in the city, a news release said.

The SSP (Traffic) had directed all zonal DSPs to ensure implementation on traffic laws through courteous Attitude with citizens. He said people should be treated politely and briefed them about traffic laws.

The SSP (Traffic) said that it is the right of pedestrian to use footpath and no parking would be allowed there. He said vehicles should be parked at lots specified at shopping centers.

He directed the ITP to educate citizens on traffic laws so it can be implemented in true letter and spirit.

"It is our top priority to ensure convenience for road users by maintaining traffic discipline and every possible effort will be made for the purpose," the SSP maintained. Agencies

President for imparting IT skills to Differently abled students

Dr Arif Alvi stresses the govt and civil society should work closely to ensure effective inclusiveness of DAPs

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has emphasized the need for the provision of specialized computers and software capable of helping visually and hearing-impaired students in order to impart digital and IT skills to help them earn handsome income.

He made these remarks while talking to the differently-abled female students of the National Special Education Complex, Khuzdar, Balochistan, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Monday.

The President keenly listened to the views and aspirations of the differently-abled students and on their demand advised the provincial authorities to take all necessary steps needed to upgrade the school to the secondary level, improve and modernize its curriculum and equip the school with modern-day teaching techniques so that its students could continue their education.

He also advised the local public representatives, private NGOs and relevant federal and provincial departments to join hands and extend all necessary assistance to equip the school with modern-day



teaching aids for imparting quality and market-oriented skills to the students in order to make them useful and productive citizens.

He called upon the government as well as the private sector to take necessary measures to improve the ease of access for the differently-abled persons (DAPs) to public buildings, hospitals, recreational facilities, public transport, streets and roads.

He stressed that the government and civil society should work closely to ensure effective inclusiveness of DAPs in society through suitable education, skill development, training and placement at appropriate positions in both public and private sectors.

He said that the ICT Rights of Persons with Disability Act, passed in 2020, binds the Government of Pakistan to ensure that every DAP shall have a right to be respected and to lead a decent life with equal opportunities to participate in educational, social, economic, cultural and all other activities in the society without any discrimination.

The students are visiting Islamabad as a part of their educational activities. The National Special Education Complex, Khuzdar is the only educational institute for disabled students in the Southern region of Balochistan where 160 male and female students are enrolled in primary-level education and skill development programs.

Flowers Art

ISLAMABAD: First Lady Samina Alvi are taking interest in the making of flowers decoration pieces on stall during competition, which is organized by Floral Art Society at a local hotel.



Photo: Online

COMSTECH launches Capacity Building Program for Yemen

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: COMSTECH in collaboration with Yemen embassy and Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Government of Yemen announced COMSTECH-CCoE Yemen Program in a press conference in Islamabad at COMSTECH Auditorium on Monday.

The press conference was addressed by the Minister of Science and Technology, H. E. Mr. Agha Hassan Baloch, the Ambassador of Yemen, Mohammed Motaahar Alashabi, the Coordinator General COMSTECH, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Vice Chancellor, Health Services Academy (HSA), Prof. Dr. Shahzad Ali Khan, Chairman Board of Governors, University of Lahore (UoL), Mr. Awais Raouf, Co-Director of the International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS), University of Karachi, and Mr. Ali Sattar, Director, Science Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



The Minister of Science and Technology appreciated the efforts of the Coordinator General COMSTECH and the Ambassador of Yemen for their efforts to plan and launch this important capacity building program for the Yemeni national. He appreciated the generous offering of fully funded fellowships by University of Lahore, Health Services Academy and International Center for Chemical and Biological Sciences. Baloch urged the launch of

more such tailor made country specific programs for other OIC countries to cater their specific needs. He appreciated COMSTECH programs and reiterated the full support by the Ministry of Science and Technology to COMSTECH programs.

The Ambassador of Yemen thanked COMSTECH for launching this program. He appreciated the leadership of Prof. Choudhary and his efforts for launching many capacity building programs for OIC states. He extended thanks from the people of Yemen to the Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the fellowships offering institutions. He offered full support of the Yemen embassy whenever required for coordination between COMSTECH and the Government of Yemen.

Coordinator General COMSTECH Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary welcomed the guests and appreciated the efforts of the Ambassador of Yemen for his interest and efforts in planning and launching this joint program. Prof. Choudhary thanked the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their full support to this and other programs of COMSTECH. He said that this program aims to provide opportunity to the Yemeni scholars and scientists to benefit from the excellence of the three top-class member institutions of the COMSTECH Consortium of Excellence.

Health Corner

Blood Donor Day

Blood donation is a gift of life

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Blood donation is a gift of life that improves health and reduces premature mortality but many patients in need of blood transfusion do not have timely access to safe blood. Safe and effective blood transfusion is a vital component in improving health care delivery and preventing the spread of blood-borne diseases worldwide. However, in developing countries like Pakistan, there is a great challenge of availing safe and adequate blood. An adequate and sustainable supply of safe blood can be assured by non-remunerated voluntary and unpaid blood donors as the rate of transfusion transmissible infection is lowest among them.

World Blood Donor Day takes place on 14th June every year. The Day is celebrated to raise global awareness of the need for safe blood and blood products for transfusion and to highlight the critical contribution voluntary, unpaid blood donors make towards the national healthcare system. For 2022, the World Blood Donor Day slogan is "Donating blood is an act of solidarity. Join the effort and save lives". To commemorate this occasion, an awareness seminar along with a blood donation camp was organized at Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Medical University (SZABMU) in collaboration with Regional Blood Center, Islamabad, Safe Blood Transfusion Services Programme (SBTP) to highlight the roles that voluntary blood donations play in saving lives, and to raise public awareness about the easily preventable genetic disorders of thalassemia which overburden the national blood supply. The participants were briefed about the programme objectives, and how Regional Blood Center, Islamabad is working to ensure safe and rational blood supply, along with educational and motivational



To commemorate this occasion, an awareness seminar along with a blood donation camp was organized at Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Medical University (SZABMU) in collaboration with Regional Blood Center, Islamabad, Safe Blood Transfusion Services Programme (SBTP), Ministry of National Health Services Regulations & Coordination. The seminar aimed to highlight the pivotal role Regional Blood Centers are playing in serving humanity across the country, to acknowledge the services of voluntary unpaid donors, and to raise public awareness about the easily preventable genetic disorders of thalassemia which overburden the national blood supply.

Vice Chancellor, Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Medical University, Prof. Dr. Tanvir Khaliq, along with Dr. Aamna Latif, In-charge Regional Blood Center Islamabad graced the occasion and reiterated the need for continuous education for the youth in the context of encouraging them towards becoming a voluntary blood donor and raising awareness about the prevention of genetic disorder like thalassemia.

The seminar was attended by the student and faculty members along with the enthusiastic team of The Blood Heroes (TBH) who have been on the forefront with Regional Blood Center Islamabad in blood drives, and awareness campaigns for mobilizing the youth towards the selfless act of voluntary blood donation.

After the seminar, Dr. Yasir Waheed, Director Office of Research, Innovation & Commercialization (ORIC), and Head of the Department Molecular Biology, Dr. Mohsin Shahzad, had a meeting with the senior officials from Regional Blood Center Islamabad. The meeting aimed to establish linkage with the Regional Blood Center Islamabad, and to encourage collaboration for conducting research in the concerned areas of transfusion medicine, infectious diseases, and genetic diseases.

Raise in Tobacco Taxes: Small step in right direction

Health experts express satisfaction over government's decision to increase taxation on tobacco products

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Health experts have expressed satisfaction over government's decision to increase taxation on tobacco products. In a press release shared by Society for Protection of Rights of the Child (SPARC), the experts applauded the move by government to increase taxes for the first time in four years. The experts also put forward their recommendations for future to save millions of lives from harms of tobacco.

Malik Imran Ahmed, Country head Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids (CTFK) said, that every year tobacco industry tries to manipulate policymakers in order to fill its coffers at expense of lives of more than 170,000 people who die due to diseases caused and aggravated by usage of tobacco products. He expressed satisfaction that this year the government has not listened the deceptive tactics of big tobacco industry and raised taxes on tobacco products.

Khalil Ahmed Dogar, Program Manager, SPARC stated that government should have considered the growing inflation rate while finalizing the taxes on tobacco products for fiscal year 2022-23. He mentioned that due to increase in inflation and hike in dollar price, the prices of tobacco should be raised accordingly.

He mentioned that although this is a small step but it is in right direction because this tobacco products will not only reduce the tobacco consumption and its accessibility but will also keep the minors off from tobacco.

Shariq Ahmed, CEO, Chromatic Trust stated that the country is facing a severe shortage of funds to combat the poverty crisis. The government needs to remain steadfast to overcome any challenges thrown by big tobacco industry. The next steps are strict implementation of laws regarding graphic health warnings, promotion and advertising bans, and smoke-free places.

23 outlaws held in capital

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad police have arrested 23 criminals from different areas in the city and recovered narcotics and weapons with ammunition from their possession.

Kohsar police arrested three accused namely Shamoan Masih, Waheed Masih and Imran alias Baggi and recovered 2,200 gram heroin and 1120 gram hashish from their possession, a news release on Monday said.

It said that Golra police arrested five accused namely Sohail, Niaz, Arshad, Michael and Jibrán and recovered three 30 bore pistols with ammunition and one dagger from their possession. Noon police arrested two accused during snap checking namely Wajahat, Sarwar and Sonia Bibi involved in drug peddling and recovered 1,118 gram ice, 1,115 gram heroin, one 44 bore gun and one 30 bore pistol from their possession.

Moreover, Korla police arrested two accused namely Jawad and Ali and recovered 1,485 gram hashish from their possession.

Bhara Kahu and Industrial Area police arrested two accused during snap checking namely Nazakat alias Sani, Tahir and Faisal and recovered three 30 bore pistols with ammunition from their possession, it added.

Secretariat and Tarnol police arrested two accused namely Rohail Abbas and Pervaiz Khan and recovered two 30 bore pistols with ammunition. Nilore police team arrested two accused namely Masood and Faisal involved in possessing illegal weapons and recovered one Kalashnikov and one 30 bore pistol with ammunition from their possession, the news release said.

Sustainable Progress

Experts call for accelerated efforts to meet SDGs

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: In order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), representatives of civil society at a consultation session have called for accelerated efforts to meet these goals within the stipulated timeframe as it would ensure sustainable progress.

They highlighted and discussed the bottlenecks, lacunas and challenges in the budgets, policies and strategies towards achieving the SDGs.

Purpose of the consultation, organized jointly by Awaz CDS and UGOOD in Islamabad, was to review the progress on government's official Voluntary National Review (VNR) through Peoples Scorecard and collect input from the civil society organizations on the subject.

The event was part of the series of consultations which will be organized countrywide to gather information from informed civil society about the government's performance on achieving the SDGs. Around 35 members from civil society organiza-



tions (CSOs) participated in the consultation, mostly from organizations led by women, youth, transgender, people living with disabilities and minority groups. The consultation was supported by Sightsavers Pakistan, VSO and A4SD.

In his opening remarks, CEO UGOOD Syed Ishtiaq Gillani appreciated the participants for attending the consultation and hoped their valuable findings would help in shaping the accurate data base on SDGs.

Participating in the consultations, Country Director Sightsavers Munazza Gillani praised Awaz

CDS-PDA and UGOOD for arranging such an inclusive event representing all, PLWDs, trans genders, youth and men and women.

She shared Sightsavers' initiatives and collaborations with both CSOs and government to make the entire SDGs process inclusive. She emphasized on inclusion as well as availability of PLWDs disaggregated data for all goals.

Chief Executive Awaz CDS Pakistan Zia ur Rehman gave a detailed orientation about the event's objectives and deliberations. He informed the participants about AwazCDS and Pakistan Development Alliance (PDA), on behalf of civil society, are in the process of developing a spotlight report on SDGs parallel to government's official VNR report which it intends to present in the UN.

Similarly, the spotlight report which will be developed through gathering information from people and depicting real, on ground situation with regard to performance and progress of Pakistan on SDGs at the same forum, he said.



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# BJP's radicalism & Muslim world

**Baria Alamuddin**

In a few short years, under the stewardship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has lurched from secular democracy to demagogic theocracy. Although Hinduism has traditionally coexisted amicably with many other religious beliefs, India's governing Bharatiya Janata Party champions Hindutva — until recently a radical fringe ideology committed to rendering 276 million non-Hindus second-class citizens, or even non-citizens. The BJP's primary target has been India's 200 million Muslims, and the eradication of India's cultural heritage as a synthesis of Islamic and Indic traditions. Muslim-majority states have demonstrated this month that BJP incitement against the Prophet Muhammad is a red line, with assertive diplomatic demarches and spontaneous public support for boycotts. The Gulf states are among India's largest trading partners. With billions of dollars in remittances from over eight million Indian workers throughout the GCC keeping the Indian economy afloat, this is a warning shot for the BJP's anti-pluralism agenda. The Gulf States potentially wield a powerful economic veto over the BJP and other Asian leaderships who seek to oppress or eradicate their Muslim popula-

tions. Nevertheless, many BJP-affiliated commentators who routinely incite hatred against Muslims question why the Indian government "compromised" with Muslim states by sidelining the officials responsible for the most recent offensive comments. Despite more than 20 nations from the Islamic world speaking with one voice, BJP firebrands offensively accused these states of acting on behalf of Al-Qaeda and fomenting Hindu-Muslim conflict. In 1984 I was the last journalist to interview Indira Gandhi, hours before she was assassinated by her two Sikh bodyguards in retaliation for bloody incidents a few months earlier at the Golden Temple in Amritsar. She expressed optimism to me that a society rooted in religious tolerance would overcome these tragic events. She recalled her own upbringing, going trekking with her father in Muslim Kashmir as an example of how India's cultural traditions and diverse peoples were intrinsically interlinked. Tensions, pogroms and communal bloodletting in India will only worsen; Modi is likely to win a third term in 2023 through his populist stoking of endless culture wars, and the BJP figures most likely to ultimately succeed him are even more radical and divisive than he is. The Congress party, long dominated by the Gandhi fami-

ly, is in complete disarray after performing dismally in the 2019 elections. In India's largest state, Uttar Pradesh, there have been dozens of murderous attacks by Hindu mobs who often accused their victims of cow slaughter. The BJP inevitably sided with the killers. When the party won the 2017 state elections a radical Hindu cleric responsible for inciting these vigilante actions became chief minister. Modi's unilateral redrawing of Kashmir's status in 2019 has dramatically escalated levels of repression in this troubled region. Tensions have also soared around the Babri mosque in Ayodhya, which was destroyed by Hindu nationalists in 1992; authorities have now given the go ahead for construction of a Hindu temple on the site. The V-Dem Institute in Sweden has categorised India as an "electoral autocracy," and it has tumbled to 53rd position in the Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index. Both reports blame the BJP for assaults on civil liberties. Evidence has been faked to justify the detention of activists and political opponents, and media suppression is blatant and routine; over the past decade hundreds of legal cases have been filed against journalists using a colonial-era sedition law. Incompetent responses to the COVID-19 pandemic gave rise to mass burnings of bodies. Botched

lockdowns prompted millions of destitute migrant workers to flood out of cities, accelerating the spread of the virus, while Modi encouraged maskless political rallies and super spreader million-person Hindu pilgrimages. As the authors of a recent book on India observed: "The pestilence hadn't gutted India's health system, it merely showed it for what it was." Militant BJP-affiliated academics claim that India invented nuclear weapons, stem-cell technology, aircraft and the internet — thousands of years ago! It is one thing for BJP members to wallow in such ultra-nationalist nonsense, but when this constitutes the raw material for school textbooks, we should fear for future generations. Post-independence India always seemed like a miraculous impossibility: Of the world's 10 most populous nations, only the US and India are long-established democracies. For decades this immensely large but immensely poor nation organized orderly elections and smooth transitions of power, while constituting a pillar of the global non-aligned movement. Modi nevertheless finds himself feted by the West as a bulwark against China and Russia. Western leaders appear to believe that they can combat belligerent autocrats in one location by cosying up to equally dangerous figures elsewhere. Just witness

those politicians who argued that an oil boycott against Russia could be achieved by slashing sanctions against Iran. Developments in India run in parallel to populist tendencies elsewhere. A US Congressional investigation is currently laying bare how close America came to a coup by its sitting president on Jan. 6, 2021. The reliance of some Republicans on "white grievance" to mobilize their supporters has exact parallels in the BJP's Hindu supremacism. Likewise, Israel's apartheid policies reduce Palestinians to precarious non-citizens. Just as in India, Israel devolved from decades of being politically dominated by the centrist Labor Party to surrendering its democracy to ever-more ruthless and messianic extreme-right coalitions. Elsewhere, there are similar demagogic playbooks operating in Iran, Turkey, Russia, Hungary and Brazil. Thus, the BJP is just one manifestation of a populist pandemic that has infected the planet. This fever will break only when citizens wise up and choose real leaders who are genuinely committed to making lives better — not quasi-fascists who cling to power by triggering race wars, inciting genocide, and pouring fuel on the fires of hatred and intolerance. *The writer is an award-winning journalist and broadcaster in the Middle East and the UK. Courtesy Arab News*

## Iconic New Gwadar International Airport

New Gwadar International Airport (NGIA) is a new greenfield airport being built in Gwadar, Pakistan, managed and operated by Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority (PCAA). To be owned by a joint venture between Pakistan, Oman, and China, the airport will handle domestic and international operations. The airport development is a part of the \$56bn China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) development, which is a cornerstone of China's One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative.

The \$246m greenfield airport to be built across an area of 4,300 acres will be the biggest in Pakistan and will also become the nation's second airport capable of handling A380 aircraft upon its commissioning in 2022. It is expected to stimulate the development in Gwadar peninsula and boost trade between Pakistan and China.

The airport will be operated under open sky policy and will be developed under the guidance of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). New Gwadar International Airport project was initiated as an early harvest high-priority project of the CPEC programme in 2014. It was approved by the Executive Committee of National Economic Council (EC-NEC) in January 2015.

The project is being funded through a grant agreement signed between China and Pakistan in May 2017. Soil testing on the project site was started in January 2018 and involved drilling of 300 boreholes in various locations. The groundbreaking ceremony was held in March 2019, with construction scheduled to be completed in 2022.

The test flight from new Gwadar International Airport would be started from December this year as the construction work on site has been expedited, an official of Gwadar Development Authority said. The new \$246m greenfield Gwadar International Airport (NGIA) being built at an area of 4,300 acres would be made operational before the deadline which was September 2023.

The government has expanded the 50-bed Pak-China Friendship Hospital Gwadar to 150 beds state-of-the-art medical centre in order to ensure best health care facilities for the people of Gwadar. The authority would ensure state-of-the-art free medical facility to the inhabitants of port city of Gwadar from January next year.

The quarters concerned were making all out efforts to expedite the infrastructure and development projects for its timely completion. The GDA said the authority has expedited the implementation of old town rehabilitation plan of Gwadar to provide best infrastructure and provide every facility to masses of port city. With the support of federal government, the project worth Rs 3.3 billion for old town rehabilitation of Gwadar was in full swing to set city on modern lines to end the sense of deprivation among the people of area.

The federal government would be funded 67 shares of the total cost while Balochistan government would bear the remaining cost for the development of old town rehabilitation under the Gwadar development plan. Under the plan, water drainage, supply and distribution of utility projects would be completed soon, besides ensuring the supply of clean drinking water to the port dwellers.



## Covid-19 vaccination in Pakistan: Impact, Perspective for future

**Professor Bushra Jamil**

Covid-19 pandemic has presented a number of challenges to mankind and will not end with the virus disappearing from the face of the earth. It is now widely believed that worldwide, enough people will gain immune protection from vaccination and from natural infection leading to less transmission and much less Covid-19-related hospitalizations and death, even as the virus continues to circulate, as endemic. According to Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus of World Health Organization, the acute phase of the pandemic may end by mid-2022, if about 70 percent of the world gets vaccinated, highlighting the importance of vaccine-induced immunity as the single most important factor in ending the pandemic.

However, varying levels of interventions and unpredictable emergence of Variants of Concern (VOC) in addition to population and environment-related factors, periodic increases in cases to outbreak or epidemic, well beyond the endemic levels, are likely to occur.

Vaccines are among the most effective interventions in modern medicine and save millions of lives each year. Ever since Edward Jenner's first use of a vaccine against smallpox in 1796, the use of vaccines has become indispensable to the eradication of infectious diseases.

Vaccines work by training and preparing the body's natural defenses and the immune system to recognize and fight off the viruses and bacteria they target. After vaccination, if the body is later exposed to those disease-causing germs, the body is immediately ready to destroy them, thus preventing illness. Vaccines represent the least expensive and most simple way to protect against devastating epidemics and have played a pivotal role in combating the Covid-19 pandemic.

Currently, re-exposure and evolution of new variants is driving the pandemic. Covid-19 vaccines may not prevent infection after exposure to SARS-CoV-2. The main benefits of these vaccines include prevention of symptomatic infection and development of serious disease requiring hospitalization and death from Covid-19. Prevention of severe symptomatic disease indirectly leads to economic benefits as well, by preventing hospitalizations, decreasing burden on health systems, avoiding long-term disability, and reducing absence from work.

Pakistan's Covid-19 control strategy has been lauded by international organizations including the WHO. The effective vaccination plan, tailored to local needs (like other non-pharmacological interventions) was successful in containment of disease. Seven different types of vaccines were rolled out in phases for healthcare workers, elderly, immunosuppressed (high risk groups) and general population. All vaccines were found to be effective with negligible adverse events. Vaccinated individuals were noted to be 7 times less likely to develop severe symptomatic disease requiring hospitalization.

Immunity to SARS-CoV-2 wanes over time and breakthrough infections have been reported in persons who have completed a primary vaccination series. A subsequent additional dose of the vaccine (i.e. a booster dose) has been shown to restore vaccine effectiveness against infection and severe/critical disease. First booster dose is now recommended 5 months after the primary series and second booster dose may be administered 4 months after the first booster dose.

As countries transition over time to managing Covid-19 as an endemic disease, the world may reach a long-term state of disease prevention similar to that seen with the flu, with annual or twice yearly booster doses. In the short term, an accelerated rollout of booster doses of Covid-19 vaccines is likely to be one of the best protections against

new VOC-fueled wave of the disease.

The pandemic to endemic transition would be complete when the overall Covid-19 disease rates become static — neither rising, nor falling. However, endemicity should not be considered a benign phenomenon. A disease can be endemic and yet be widespread and deadly. Endemicity does not imply that evolution has somehow tamed a pathogen so that life simply returns to 'normal'. There can still be disruptive waves arising from endemic infections, as seen with other infectious diseases like measles.

Persistence of SARS-CoV-2 as an endemic virus, perhaps with seasonal epidemic peaks, may be fueled by pockets of susceptible individuals and waning immunity after infection or vaccination; emergence of VOCs that escape vaccine-induced immunity and re-entries from zoonotic reservoirs are factors which will impact long term behavior of the virus and its ongoing transmission in different populations.

In light of the extensive infection rate and the enormity of cases, hospitalization and severe illness, fourth dose of vaccination is being recommended for those aged 18 and older, those with pre-existing conditions and risk factors for severe Covid-19 illness, for their caregivers and for anyone else at high risk for exposure to a confirmed Covid-19 patient in their line of work. Studies show that those vaccinated with the fourth vaccine are twice as protected against infection than those vaccinated with three doses, and 3 to 5 times better protected from severe illness compared to those vaccinated with three doses.

Pakistan is currently offering first and second booster doses to eligible groups. Guidelines, policies and plans are being regularly reviewed and updated based on available international data to protect health of our people.

*Prof. Bushra Jamil is Consultant Infectious Diseases, The Aga Khan University, Member NCOC, MINHSRC; PHEOC, NIH Islamabad*

## Ukraine war & Russia's brain drain

**Monica Pinna**

Before Russia's war with Ukraine, director Anna Demidova used to run an independent theatre company in Moscow. But the Kremlin's so-called 'special military operation' changed all that.

At the start of March, she decided to leave Russia in protest against the invasion.

Anna is convinced about the social and political role that art can play. I met her in Berlin's central district of Mitte, where she had recently moved in the hope of a fresh start.

She explained to me that her family, fearing for her safety, had pushed her to leave Russia following her frequent participation in anti-war protests inside the country.

"Before Putin started this war, I was trying to invest my all, as a person, as a citizen, and also as an artist to make people understand that we need more responsibility, that we should participate in our political life. Because people do not understand politics. They're not interested. They don't give a f\*ck about what's going on in Russia."

On a personal level, Anna told me that the invasion represented the end of everything, making her feel all that she had been trying to achieve, was pointless.

"One part of me couldn't understand what was happening, but the other part of me also understands that this is the logical continuation of what Putin has been doing over the last 20 years."

"Our country became more militaristic. My grandfather and all my relatives were saying that a war should never happen again. The motto for the celebrations to mark the end of the Second World War was 'never again'. But

at some point, Putin transformed that to 'we can repeat that'. Which is absolutely insane."

The crackdown on freedom of speech inside Russia has also led to many journalists fleeing the country. Meeting fellow professionals forced to leave, stirred a lot of emotions inside me.

Our job, as journalists, consists of being witnesses for the public by shining a light on both society and events. This still costs many lives each year.

According to UNESCO, 55 journalists were killed in 2021. Many journalists have and continue to be killed in Ukraine, while reporters also remain at risk inside Russia.

Angelina Davydova, a well-known environmental journalist from Saint Petersburg, took one week to pack her world in a suitcase.

"I realised that if I want to continue my work and if I want to continue expressing publicly what I think in media but also on my social media, I have to make a decision. Either I stay in the country and become silent, or I stay in the country and I always have fear if I continue speaking publicly, or I leave the country — and I decided to leave the country."

"I always thought that even when we had some negative political trends, there was still space for people to do something. What I see now is that many of these concrete and specific actions have been crushed by this very high political decision [going to war], which doesn't really have to do anything with the life of people in the country or their well-being or their future."

Whether it's journalists and artists denouncing Russia's curbs on free speech, or techies using their skills to give online space to dissidents, all those I met are determined to use their skills to promote change from abroad.

*Courtesy Euronews*



# Indian Muslim groups urge followers to shun protests

*JI Hind calls for Muslim solidarity, says maintaining peace is 'critical'*

NEW DELHI: Leaders of prominent Islamic groups and mosques in India appealed to fellow Muslims on Monday to suspend plans for protests against derogatory remarks about the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) made by two members of the ruling Hindu-nationalist party.

The message to avoid big gatherings was circulated after demonstrations took a violent turn last week, leading to the death of two Muslim teenagers and the wounding of more than 30 people, including the police.

"It is the duty of every Muslim to stand together when anyone belittles Islam but at the same time it is critical to maintaining peace," said Malik Aslam, a senior member of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, a Muslim organisation that operates in several Indian states.

Early this month, two senior members of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) made blasphemous remarks that offended Muslims. A party spokeswoman made the offending comment

in a television debate and a party spokesman on social media.

The BJP 'suspended' both of them and said it denounced any insult towards any religion, and police have also filed cases against the two.

Read BJP receives flak from Muslim countries over Islamophobic remarks. Police arrested at least 400 suspected rioters during unrest in several states and curfews were imposed and internet services were suspended in some places.

Many Muslims in India have been questioning their place in society since Modi came to power in 2014. Critics say Modi's BJP has pursued a confrontational line, promoting the idea that India is a Hindu nation and rounded on "anti-national" opponents, which many Muslims see as an attempt to marginalise them, a community that makes up 13% of India's billion-plus population.

Authorities in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh on Sunday demolished the home of a Muslim man linked to the protests, drawing the condemnation of constitutional experts and rights

groups. Muslims and rights groups interpreted the destruction of the house as punishment for the protests but state authorities said it was because it was illegally built on public land.

"We are not demolishing houses to stop Muslims from protesting as they have all the right to take to the streets," an aide to the state's hardline Hindu leader told Reuters.

Modi has not commented on the anti-Islam remarks that sparked the protests even as condemnation grew abroad.

Countries including Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Oman and Iran, important trade partners for India, have lodged diplomatic protests.

Modi-led Hindutva government is on a spree to bulldoze the houses of Muslim citizens who participate in protests, this time, against remarks by the ruling BJP leaders on Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

As Israel is doing with Palestinians in Al-Aqsa and other parts of illegally occupied Palestine, India under Modi

is repeating the same with its Muslim citizens in India and also in occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

In one such latest incident, Hindutva-inspired Indian police demolished the residence of one Javed Shah, on the charge of masterminding anti-blasphemy protests in the BJP-led Uttar Pradesh state of India.

This was the third demolition of "illegal properties" owned by Muslims in two days in the state as UP Police also arrested 304 persons in a massive crackdown over the anti-Prophet (SAW) remarks of two BJP spokespersons, from eight districts.

On Saturday, the "illegal properties" of two other Muslims identified as Muzammil and Abdul Vakir, both local residents, were similarly brought down by bulldozers in Saharanpur.

UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had recently reiterated that "miscreants", a term loosely referred to Indian Muslims, particularly those who raise voice against excesses of the BJP government, would face stern action in case they disturbed law and order.

# India is trouble maker in region: Kashmiri diaspora

**Sohail Anjum Malik**

LONDON: Seeking an immediate end to illegal occupation of Jammu and Kashmir by India, hundreds of Kashmiri demonstrators and their allies rallied on roads and streets in the United Kingdom (UK) on Sunday putting pressure on the government to hold India accountable for its war crimes and crimes against humanity inflicted on the people of the UN-designated disputed region.

The pro-Kashmir demonstrators gathered at the UK Parliament Square and marched towards the Indian High Commission in London raising slogans to free Kashmir from illegal Indian occupation.

Raising slogans and placards that sought immediate release of Kashmiri resistance leader Muhammad Yasin Malik who was given life imprisonment by Indian court in a politically motivated case.

The iconic Kashmiri leader Malik has been active in Kashmir freedom struggle since 1980s and is being considered most popular



in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). His commitment with ongoing Kashmir liberation movement was the big challenge for Indian military establishment that arrested him with the support of Indian government in a false case of 1990s and was not even given the right to hire the lawyer for his defence.

Besides Malik other Kashmiri leaders like Shabir Shah, Masarat Alam Bhat, Asiya Andrabi, Fehmeeda Sofi, Nahida Nasreen, Zaffar Akbar Bhat, Ayaz Akbar, Altaf Shah, Naeem Khan, Peer Saifullah and Mehraj Uddin Kalwal are also behind the bars in false and politically motivated cases.

The supporters of

Kashmiri freedom struggle vowed to continue to campaign until last Indian occupying trooper is withdrawn from Indian Illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

The rally's "Free Yasin Malik and All Political Prisoners" of IIOJK was organised by all UK-based all Kashmiri diaspora groups urging the UK government and international community to force India halt its atrocities in IIOJK.

The demonstrators raised massive sloganeering outside Indian High Commission, questioning the credentials of its so-called democracy when India is brazenly violating international law and the UN resolutions on IIOJK.

President Tehreek-e-Kashmir TeK UK Raja Fahim Kayani urged the participants to become voice of Kashmiris in IIOJK.

"It is an obligation on us, those living in the European and western countries to become voice and mouth pieces of people of IIOJK," said Kayani, addressing the marchers which included women and children.

"India has imposed a graveyard silence in IIOJK through the military might. Whoever seeks right to self-determination is being abducted and charged on farce and fake cases thus Indian military regime has spread terror in IIOJK," said Kayani.

"But we will not let Indian military regime to have an easy walk in IIOJK; we will hold it accountable from London to Washington to Geneva to New York," said Kayani, announcing to intensify lobbying efforts on Kashmir in world capitals.

The Kashmiri leader said it was incumbent on diaspora groups to form a unity of purpose and action to "name and shame India for its illegal occupation of Kashmir."

# Week of tribal clashes in Sudan's Darfur kill 100

CAIRO: Tribal clashes over the past week in Sudan's war-ravaged Darfur have killed around 100 people, the U.N. refugee agency and a tribal elder said Monday, the latest surge in violence in the restive region.

Toby Harward, a coordinator with the UNHCR, said the fighting grew out of a land dispute between Arab and African tribes in the town of Kulbus in West Darfur province. Local Arab militias then attacked multiple villages in the area, forcing thousands of people to flee, he said.

Abkar al-Toum, a tribal leader in the town, said the dead included at least 62 bodies found burned after militias set more than 90 villages on fire. He said many people were still unaccounted for. He claimed the attackers gained control of water resources, aggravating the humanitarian situation in the area. He did not elaborate.

Abbas Mustafa, a local official, said authorities have deployed more troops to the area. He said the past week of fighting displaced at least 5,000 families.

Harward called for "neutral joint forces" to provide protection for civilians in the area. "If there is no intervention or mediation, & violence is allowed to continue, farmers will not be able to cultivate & the agricultural season will fail," he said in a series of posts on Twitter.

The news outlet Radio Dabanga reported that the fighting reached the nearby province of North Darfur, causing partial damage to two villages there.

The U.N. envoy for Sudan, Volker Perthes, said he was "appalled again" by the clashes in Kulbus. "The cycle of violence in Darfur is unacceptable & highlights root causes that must be addressed," he said on Twitter.

The fighting was the latest bout of tribal violence in Darfur. It came as the country remains mired in a wider crisis following an October military coup. The takeover upended Sudan's transition to democracy after a popular uprising forced the removal of longtime autocrat Omar al-Bashir in April 2019.

Since late last year, eruptions of tribal violence and surges in the fighting in Darfur have killed hundreds of people. In April, after a similar bout of clashes killed over 200, the Sudanese military said it deployed a brigade to the province.

However, the violence has raised questions over whether Sudanese military leaders are capable of bringing security to Darfur.

# 'Algeria's ties with Russia behind row with Madrid'

MADRID: Spain's economy minister on Monday linked Algeria's decision to break a decades-old friendship treaty with Spain that has frozen economic links with what she described as the North African country's increasing alignment with Russia.

In an interview with Catalunya Radio, Nadia Calvino said that in recent International Monetary Fund meetings she has chaired, she noticed "that Algeria was more and more aligned with Russia, and as such, it (the decision) didn't surprise me."

Algeria suspended the two-decade-old friendship treaty with Spain last

Wednesday. The move was seen as retaliation after Madrid came out in support of Morocco's attempts to keep Western Sahara under its rule. Algeria supports the territory's independence movement.

On Friday, the EU warned it was prepared to take action to defend the interests of its members.

Algeria then appeared to do a U-turn when its mission at the European Union issued a statement saying the country had never suspended the treaty.

Algeria continues to block trade, however, and the Algerian

Foreign Ministry on Saturday called the European response "hasty and unfounded." In a strongly worded communique, it added that the issue was "a political disagreement of a bilateral nature" between Madrid and Algiers that should not concern the EU.

Calvino welcomed the EU move, adding that the treaty suspensions would be a drag on the Spanish economy. She said "the most important thing at this moment is that Algeria changes its position and retreats."

Spanish officials say they are hopeful that talks with Algeria will resolve the issue

soon.

Spain's chief worry has been that the suspension might affect important gas supplies from Algeria, but both the Spanish and Algerian governments have said this won't happen. Algeria supplies 23% of Spain's gas needs.

Spain and the rest of the 27-nation bloc are hustling to find alternatives to Russian energy imports to protest Russia's war in Ukraine.

Industry Ministry figures show Spain exported 2 billion euros (\$2.1 billion) in goods to Algeria last year while its imports were valued at nearly 5 billion euros.

# Ukrainian forces pushed back from center of Severodonetsk

*Severodonetsk capture to open road for Moscow to another city*

KYIV: Ukraine said Monday its forces had been pushed back from the center of key industrial city Severodonetsk, where President Volodymyr Zelensky described a fight for "literally every meter."

The cities of Severodonetsk and Lysychansk, which are separated by a river, have been targeted for weeks as the last areas still under Ukrainian control in the eastern Lugansk region.

Regional governor Sergiy Gaiday said Monday Russian forces were "gathering more and more equipment" to "encircle" Severodonetsk, and that they

had "pushed our troops from the center and continue to destroy our city."

The local Azot chemical plant, where hundreds of civilians have reportedly taken refuge, was being "heavily shelled," Gaiday said.

In Lysychansk, bombardments killed three civilians, including a six-year-old boy, he said.

Severodonetsk had been "de facto" blocked off after Russian forces blew up the "last" bridge connecting it to Lysychansk Sunday, Eduard Basurin, a representative for pro-Russian

separatists, said Monday.

"The Ukrainian units that are there, they are there forever. They have two options: to surrender or die," Basurin said.

On Sunday, Zelensky said the latest fighting in Severodonetsk was "very fierce," adding that Russia was deploying under-trained troops and using its young men as "cannon fodder."

Russia's massed artillery in that region gave it a tenfold advantage, the commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian military, Valeriy Zaluzhny, said Sunday.

"Every meter of Ukrainian land there is covered in blood

— but not only ours, but also the occupier's."

The capture of Severodonetsk would open the road for Moscow to another major city, Kramatorsk, in their steps toward conquering the whole of Donbas, a mainly Russian-speaking region partly held by pro-Russian separatists since 2014.

Russia's Defense Ministry said on Monday its missiles had destroyed a large quantity of weapons and military equipment in Ukraine's eastern Donbas region, including some that had been sent by the United States and European nations.



The ministry said high-precision air-based missiles had struck near the Udachne railway

# Sweden ready to address Turkish security fears

STOCKHOLM: NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said Monday he was "glad" that the Swedish government has confirmed its "readiness to address Turkey's concerns as part of assuming the obligations of future NATO membership."

After decades of military non-alignment, Russia's war in Ukraine pushed Finland and Sweden to apply to join NATO in May. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, however, accuses the Nordic nations of supporting Kurdish militants deemed by Turkey to be terrorists and has vetoed their entry into the alliance until they change their policies.

Sweden is taking "the Turkish concerns very seriously" and "not at least their security concerns when it comes to the fight against terrorism," said Swedish Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson and added that her "ambition is that we should have these matters resolved."

Stoltenberg said Sweden "has already started to change its counter-terrorism legislation" and that the Scandinavian country "will ensure that the legal framework for arms exports will reflect their future status as a NATO member with new commitments to allies."

"These are two important steps to address the concerns that Turkey has raised," he said.

"The aim is to solve those issues as soon as possible, to be able to welcome Finland and Sweden as full members as soon as possible," he said.

Stoltenberg declined to say whether the matter should be resolved before the NATO summit in Madrid on June 28 or before the Swedish Parliament election on Sept. 11. Sweden and Finland have been invited to attend the meeting in Spain.

After Monday's talks, Stoltenberg and Andersson went for a boat ride in the lake next to a Swedish government manor southwest of Stockholm.

On Sunday, Stoltenberg met with Finnish President Sauli Niinistö in Finland, saying that Turkey has "legitimate concerns" over terrorism and other issues that need to be taken seriously.

# U.S. envoy in Lebanon for talks

BEIRUT: U.S. energy envoy Amos Hochstein arrived in Beirut on Monday for talks with Lebanese officials on a maritime border dispute with Israel over the development of a gas field.

Lebanon invited Hochstein to Beirut after objecting to the arrival of a vessel operated by London-based Energen (ENOG.L) off the coast on June 5 to develop a gas field known as Karish.

Israel says Karish is part of its exclusive economic zone, but Lebanon says the field is in contested waters and should not be developed until the two countries conclude their indirect talks to delineate their maritime borders.

Those talks fizzled out last year after Lebanon pushed its claim in the disputed zone from a boundary known as "Line 23" further south to "Line 29," adding around 1,400 square km (540 square miles) to its claim, including part of Karish.

To overcome the impasse, Hochstein proposed a field-swap that would create an S-shaped boundary instead of a straight line, but Lebanon did not officially agree to the proposal, official sources said.

In his first trip to Lebanon since the suspended talks, Hochstein will meet with caretaker energy minister Walid Fayyad and deputy speaker of parliament Elias Bou Saab on Monday, officials told Reuters.

He will meet with President Michel Aoun on Tuesday morning, the presidency said.

Hours before Hochstein's arrival on Monday, Aoun hosted a group of independent parliamentarians who have insisted that Lebanon maintain Line 29 as its negotiating position.

# Iraqi leaders vow to move ahead

BAGHDAD: Iraqi leaders vowed Monday to move forward with efforts to form a government following the shocking resignation of 73 lawmakers from parliament during a prolonged political impasse.

But the unprecedented mass withdrawal by members of powerful cleric Muqtada al-Sadr's bloc dramatically alters the political landscape, throwing government formation talks into further doubt.

It is a huge gamble by al-Sadr, one of the most influential politicians in Iraq with a large street following, leaving his political movement out of parliament for the first time since 2005.

The surprise move is an attempt to break a persistent political impasse eight months after general elections were held.

Al-Sadr emerged as the winner of the October vote, giving him 73 out of Parliament's 329 seats. Since then, the two sides have been locked in a cutthroat competition for power, even as the country faces growing challenges including an impending food crisis resulting from severe drought and the war in Ukraine.

# North Korea plans crackdown

SEOUL: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and his top deputies have pushed for a crackdown on officials who abuse their power and commit other "unsound and non-revolutionary acts," state media reported Monday, as Kim seeks greater internal unity to overcome a COVID-19 outbreak and economic difficulties.

It wasn't clear what specific acts were mentioned at the ruling Workers' Party meeting on Sunday. But possible state crackdowns on such alleged acts could be an attempt to solidify Kim's control of his people and get them to rally behind his leadership in the face of the domestic hardships, some observers say.

Kim and other senior party secretaries discussed "waging a more intensive struggle against unsound and non-revolutionary acts including abuse of power and bureaucratism revealed among some party officials," the official Korean Central News Agency said.

Kim ordered the authority of the party's auditing commission and other local discipline supervision systems to be bolstered to promote the party's "monolithic leadership" and "the broad political activities of the party through the strong discipline system," KCNA said.

Kim has previously occasionally called for struggles against "anti-socialist practices" at home in the past two years amid outside worries about his country's fragile economy that has been battered by pandemic-related border shutdowns, UN sanctions and his own mismanagement.

The North's elevated restrictions on movement in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak could cause a further strain on the country's economic difficulties, some experts say.

A German government spokesperson declined to confirm a media report on Monday that Chancellor Olaf Scholz would travel to Kyiv on Thursday with French President Emmanuel Macron and Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi.

Online magazine Focus, citing Italian newspaper La Stampa, earlier reported that the three European leaders would travel to the Ukrainian capital on Thursday, adding a specific date to a Bild am Sonntag report on Sunday that they planned to go before a Group of Seven summit at the end of June.



**Bull & Bears**  
PSX 100-Share  
Index Fluctuation

**Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index**

Current	Prev. Close
40,879.93	42,014.73
Day's High	Day's Low:
42,069.65	40,834.97
Index Value	Change
3,228,188,282	-1134.80
Percentage	Time
-2.7%	13 Jun, 2022 5:00 pm

**Europe: FTSE 100 Index**

Index Value	Change
7,182.97	-134.55
Percentage	Time
-1.84%	13 Jun, 3:34 pm GMT+1

**USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average**

Index Value	Change
30,685.50	-707.29
Percentage	Time
-2.25%	13 Jun, 10:35 am GMT-4

**Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average**

Index Value	Change
26,987.44	-836.85
Percentage	Time
-3.01%	13 Jun, 3:15 pm GMT+9

**Open Market Forex Rates**

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	142.5	143.75
Bahrain Dinar	536.97	541.47
Canadian Dollar	157.95	159.3
China Yuan	28.55	28.8
Danish Krone	25.72	26.07
Euro	212.5	214.5
Hong Kong Dollar	28.4	28.75
Indian Rupee	2.58	2.66
Japanese Yen	1.47	1.51
Kuwaiti Dinar	656.48	661.48
Malaysian Ringgit	45.86	46.31
New Zealand \$	128.61	129.81
Norwegians Krone	20.78	21.08
Omani Riyal	525.09	529.59
Qatari Riyal	55.47	55.97
Saudi Riyal	53.85	54.6
Singapore Dollar	144	145.3
Swedish Korona	20.26	20.56
Swiss Franc	204.38	206.13
Thai Bhat	5.81	5.91
U.A.E Dirham	55.5	56.3
UK Pound Sterling	250	252.5
US Dollar	203	205

# KP Govt presents Rs1,322b balanced budget for FY2022-23

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has presented Rs1,322 billion balanced budget for financial year 2022-23 including an allocation of Rs1108.9 billion for settled districts and Rs223.1 billion for merged tribal districts.

Presenting its four budget at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly floor, Finance Minister Taimur Salim Jhagra said that the volume of the current budget is Rs913.8 billion including Rs789.8 billion for settled districts and Rs124



billion for merged tribal districts.

He said total development budget of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was Rs418.2 billion including Rs319.2 billion for settled districts and Rs99 billion for merged tribal districts.

Regarding revenue and receipts collection, the minister said that total receipts was estimated at Rs1,332 billion including Rs750.9 billion to be collected from federal taxes receipts and Rs68.6 percent as one percent share of divisible pool on war on terror.

He said Rs31 billion would be collected through oil and gas royalty and surcharge and Rs61.9 billion through net hydel power in accordance of MoU 2015-16 and arrears.

The minister said Rs85 billion would be collected through provincial tax and non-tax revenue, Rs4.3 billion under the head of foreign program assistance (FPA) for settled districts and Rs208.7 billion grant for merged tribal districts besides Rs212.7 billion receipts through other resources. APP

## For Higher Growth

# Strategy evolved to modernize agriculture

*Agriculture sector, backbone of country's economy, expected to grow by 3.9% during fiscal year 2022-23*

ISLAMABAD: The government has devised a comprehensive plan for agriculture Modernization to enhance agriculture productivity on modern lines and help promote overall economic growth of the country.

The National Action Plan specially has focus on capacity building, germplasm resources, agricultural product processing, agricultural technology extension, fishery science and technology, aquaculture, and aquatic product processing, official sources said. The action plan also includes establishment of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) free zones, market information and agricultural trade and cooperation for agricultural development.

According to official document, other initiatives proposed for fiscal year 2022-23 in agriculture sector include, corporate agriculture farming, deceleration of FMD Free Zones and local production of FMD vaccines and mechanization harvesting and post harvesting processes.

Agriculture sector, the backbone of country's economy is expected to grow by 3.9 percent during the upcoming fiscal year



(2022-23).

However, the projected agriculture growth performance at 3.9 percent would mainly contingent upon revival of cotton and wheat production, consistent availability of water, certified seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and agriculture credit facilities.

Revival of both these crops would not only support growth momentum but will also ease out Balance of Payment pressures through lesser import requirements.

It is pertinent to mention here that during the current fiscal year, agriculture sector exceeded its envisaged targets of

Annual Plan 2021-22 (3.5 percent) given the strong crop sector performance.

Agriculture sector posted growth of 4.4 percent against the last year growth of 3.5 percent. The Production of important crops including sugarcane, rice and maize crops achieved record production with impressive increase in per acre yield.

Although, cotton production remained below target during 2021-22, however, it was 17.9 percent greater than the crop output of last year. Keeping in view almost 7 percent reduction in area under cultivation, the performance of cotton crop is also impressive.

However, wheat yield was affected by urea availability and disruptions in irrigation water supply, increase in rust prevalence and high temperatures in the last fortnight of March (heat wave), according to the document.

Meanwhile, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) had assigned annual indicative agricultural credit disbursement target of Rs. 1,700 billion for 2021-22, which was 24.5 percent higher than last year's disbursement of Rs. 1,366 billion. APP

# Privileges of elite resulting in economic catastrophe

*Rewarding influential through borrowing suicidal, 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 Monday said subsidies and relaxations given to the upper class should be withdrawn in order to bring the Pakistani economy back from the brink of disaster. Rich should not get subsidized electricity, gas, fuel and other commodities while every type of income including the agricultural income should be taxed, he said.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the elite who have been reaping undue benefits for seventy-five years will have to fulfil their responsibility and

discharge obligations otherwise the country will default.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that oil, gas, electricity and other facilities should be provided to the billionaires at an extra cost while targeted subsidies should be provided to the poorest people.

In order to correct the system of the country, the system prevailing in the neighbouring countries for decades should be understood where the poor get essentials at cheaper rates than the rich, he said.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the country's politics and economy have been entangled by the elite who are stealing

billions of rupees of electricity and gas along with taking trillions of rupees in benefits but for the sake of Pakistan this system has to be changed.

Mian Zahid Hussain further said that the state of political instability in the country is such that despite serious threats to the economy, the new government wasted more than a month in thinking about the decision to increase the price of oil while many difficult decisions are still pending.

Internationally, oil is found in one well out of ten while Pakistan's average is one successful well in four but daily extraction stands at 77 thousand barrels while the rest of the oil needs to be imported

by spending 20 billion dollars.

During the previous government, the oil import bill was increased by more than 100% but local extraction was not encouraged and petrol was sold cheaply for popularity which pushed the country to the brink of disaster.

Mian Zahid Hussain further said that Pakistan is called an agricultural country but more than 14 billion dollars are being spent on the import of agricultural commodities for which there is no justification.

The agricultural elite is earning more than Rs800 billion but paying nothing in taxes which has misbalanced the economy. The economic woes of the country will be further aggravated if the process of giving benefits to the rich by borrowing dollars is not stopped, he warned.

# Pakistani companies won regional awards in Huawei ME Partner Summit

## Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Huawei Middle East Partner Summit is an annual event which focusses on celebrating the success of the partners across the Region. Huawei has always valued and appreciated the work our esteemed partners put into conducting business and focused on giving the credit where it's due, when it comes to acknowledging the trust, effort and sheer hard work of our business partners and their resources. Partners are the extended arms for Huawei and have brought quality in the business they conduct and will be an epitome of pride for Huawei.

Steven Yi, President Huawei Middle East and Africa Area stated on the occasion that; "2022 is a critical time in Enterprise Networking. Cloud-network Synergy is becoming essential for providing ubiquitous intelligence for every enterprise".

Alaa Elshimy, Managing Director and Senior Vice President Enterprise Business Group, Huawei Middle East stated on



the occasion that; "Huawei hopes to grow the whole pie with its partner, enabling them to reap the most benefits from the new value chain. For this reason, our goal goes beyond winning alone: We aim to win together, with our partners and our customers".

Outstanding partners from Pakistan were invited to the Middle East Partner summit including AppInSnap, CMC, Hew Horizon, Wateen solutions, Ptel, Transworld to appreciate and celebrate their success of

the past and to motivate them to keep up with amazing work to unlock new potentials and reach new heights of success.

Speaking of Success, AppInSnap has been the Excellent Huawei partner this year by unlocking Silver Partner status in just 5 months and Gold partner status in just 8 months. AppInSnap team have showed great support in Huawei and have complete trust in Huawei Products & Solution and their abilities to solve organizational tech challenges. AppInSnap has managed

to secure some fascinating deals in the FSI sector of Pakistan. The journey to emerge from an ISV to a competent SI for Huawei in financial services industry and commercial market and developing partner lead pipeline and with a very high conversion ratio is just amazing. Hence, winning themselves the "Pakistan Partner of the Year Award".

Mr. Farhan, the CIO of AppInSnap stated on the occasion that; "I, being the CIO of AppInSnap, always believe that small opportunities are always the beginning of great achievements. Like our trusted Supplier, Huawei; we strive to be undeniably good".

Ziad Aslam CEO NERA Telecommunications stated on the occasion that; "It is really appreciable how Huawei invests time in their partners and how hospitable their management is. We had very productive networking at the event and especially the meeting with Mr. Gao will definitely help propel our business cooperation with Huawei"

# Philip Morris (Pakistan) wins three GDEIB Awards

## Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Philip Morris (Pakistan) Limited (PMPKL), in recognition of its efforts for workplace diversity and inclusivity, has won the Global Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Benchmark (GDEIB) Awards in three categories of Advancement & Retention, Job Design, Classification & Compensation, and Work Life Integration, Flexibility & Benefits.

The awards were assessed on merit-based scores on a scale of 1-5 including Best Practice, Progressive, Proactive, Reactive, and Inactive with a mission to help organizations become sustainable through inclusive cultural and behavioural change.

PMPKL has undertaken multiple initiatives to incorporate inclusivity and diversity in the organization, some of which include; Women's Inspirational Networks, SmartWork, power hours, full mental health coverage, health screening checkups, enhanced parental leaves, and, routinely communicating with employees through internal podcasts and emails to motivate to take time off from work and focus on their mental and physical health. Additionally, PMPKL launched the 'MakeYourComeBack'

Program, a 3-month project, for women who took a break and wanted to return to the workforce.

PMPKL has also been taking part in yearly audits by the Equal Salary Certification (an independent not-for-profit organization) since 2019, achieving the ESC annually and becoming the first multinational company in Pakistan to have ever achieved the certification. Furthermore, PMPKL has been recognized as a Top Employer 2022 for its excellence in

people practices which reflects the company's employee-centric approach, strong commitment, and an agile mindset.

Mirela Spagovic, Director People and Culture at PMPKL, expressing her gratitude at the recognition of the company's efforts by GDEIB, said, "At PMPKL, we see diversity as a strength and are committed to building an inclusive culture and workplace. Therefore, our focus is on creating an environment where our employees have an equal opportunity to participate, use their skills, share their ideas and perspectives, and feel valued. We are continuously working to ensure a supportive place to inspire and empower employees and to achieve equity in workplace."

# KMBL clients win accolades at 14th Citi-PPAF Micro-Entrepreneurship Awards

## Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Seven of the best-performing clients of Khushhali Microfinance Bank (KMBL) were short-listed to win prestigious accolades at the "14th Citi-PPAF Micro Entrepreneurship Awards - 2022". Five of these seven shortlisted candidates, personally attended the ceremony organized by Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) and Citi Foundation in Islamabad, to recognize the achievements of successful micro-entrepreneurs across Pakistan.

The Citi Micro-entrepreneurship Awards Programme is a resourceful initiative, to showcase Pakistan's real success stories to a global audience, to enrich the nation's image. These awards recognize the achievements of the most successful micro-entrepreneurs across Pakistan, who have effectively utilized Micro-Loans, to build sustainable businesses and revenue streams to elevate their quality of life. They are enabling socio-economic growth for their families, communities, and the nation, despite resource constraints and extraordinary challenges. Following are the brief profiles of the KMBL customers, shortlisted for the awards.

"Through access to finance, Khushhali Microfinance Bank has enabled its clients to escape the poverty cycle. Our clients have used loans to make their financial decisions independently to expand their trade and business," said President KMBL, Ghalib Nishtar acknowledging the award.

"I would like to congratulate all the winners. I hope this achievement provides inspiration to other people with dreams of accomplishing their goals. KMBL is always there to support Pakistanis with a vision. I believe, people will let the possibilities inspire

them more than the obstacles to discourage them", he further added.

Naik Bano a resident of Jutial, Gilgit, was born in 1973 and is married with 3 children now. She had no funds to start her own small business. When she got a 30,000 Rupees loan from KMBL, she invited to produce Gilgit's cultural embroidery products like bed sheets, cushions, bed sets, and hand-crafted pieces. She is now able to get medical treatment for her child (suffering from Cancer), while her other two children have also joined the school. Gaining prosperity, she has repaid her loan and is now training other women in her village too.

Rawaila Jan - a single mother living in Haripur, was granted multiple loans from KMBL to invest in her own livestock and dairy business, which grew rapidly to acquire many goats and 3 buffaloes. Good profitability has enabled her to repay her loans on time, educate her 3 daughters and build her own house too. This business is also planning to hire a few neighborhood women.

Zaib-Un-Nisa from Nomal, Gilgit, got a loan for her Agriculture, vegetables and Dry-Fruits business and was able to timely pay off the loan. She plans to produce and sell a special bread of Gilgit - Azrukh too. Her family is now getting good nutrition, while her 5 kids are studying in English-Medium private schools. She has also inspired other women in her region to earn additional income and support their husbands.

Anwar Jan - a lady from Muzaffarabad took a loan to invest in her home-based, Milk-Selling and Grocery business which has grown very rapidly, to provide a healthy income for her family.

# BOP launches its 'BOP Khaas Premium Banking'

## Spokesman Report



LAHORE: The Bank of Punjab (BOP) has launched its flagship proposition for affluent customers under the brand name of BOP 'Khaas'. BOP Khaas proposition is aimed at meeting the unmet segment needs of High-Net-Worth individuals through innovative products and services. The 'Khaas' brand also comes with its own unique brand identity and brand positioning.

The proposition consists of a personalized service model with dedicated Relationship Managers and access to our Premium 'Khaas' lounges across Pakistan, to meet the needs of our customers. It also offers superior service through our entire branch network and our dedicated contact center. It also comes with rich product suite and preferential rates for our 'Khaas' customers.

Speaking at the launch ceremony, Zahid Mustafa (Group Chief - Consumer & Digital Banking Group-BOP) mentioned that BOP is well placed to offer exciting features to affluent customer segment. The richness of our offering is not only limited to our products & services, but also showcases Pakistan's vibrant culture & heritage through various elements of BOP 'Khaas'. Hand crafted welcome kits, paintings made by local budding artists, and feature walls in our lounges with pottery from all over Pakistan will surely excite our customers. In addition, our unique 'Khaas' vertical Debit Card comes power-packed with exclusive features and benefits.

Gracing the same occasion, Zafar Masud (President and CEO - BOP) talked about how BOP is catering to various customer segments through its customized solutions. This is in line with our motto #HarFardKaKhaayal. BOP 'Khaas' is a big step forward in the right direction for the Bank.



# Pakistan whitewash West Indies in ODI series

Consolidate 4th spot in Super League

Our Correspondent

MULTAN: Pakistan's lower middle-order batting emerged successful from a stern test to help the home side win the third One-Day International by 53 runs on the Duckworth-Lewis-Stern Method and sweep the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Super League series against the West Indies by 3-0 here on Sunday.

In front of another packed to capacity crowd on a day that saw play halt for approximately an hour due to a dust storm, which reduced the match to 48 overs a side, Pakistan slipped from 85 for no loss in the 17th over to a precarious 117 for five in the 25th over before recovering to post a commanding 269 for nine.

The bowlers then overcame the West Indies' counterattack to dismiss the visitors for 216 in 37.2 overs. Akeal Hosen fought a lone battle, hitting two fours and six sixes in a 37-ball 60, while Keacy Carty scored 33 and Shai Hope and Keemo Paul contributed 21 runs apiece.

The West Indies entertained a holiday crowd with 15 fours and 10 sixes after Pakistan had struck 20 fours and four

sixes.

Shadab Khan followed up his match-winning 86 with figures of four for 62, Hasan Ali took two for 29, while Mohammad Nawaz, who took four for 19 on Friday, bagged two for 56. Like Shadab, Nawaz was also returning to ODI cricket after recovering from an injury.

Mohammad Haris, who had earlier earned a second-ball duck, kept wickets and accounted for three batters. Similarly, Shah Nawaz Dahani, who became the 235th cricketer to represent Pakistan in ODIs, picked up a wicket in his second over to finish with figures of 6-0-36-1.

The star of the match was all-rounder Shadab, who was playing his first complete ODI series since July 2021 and had been under fire for being ineffective and inconsistent since the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2019.

The 23-year-old pulled Pakistan out of a deep hole with a gutsy and courageous career-best 86 off 78 that included four fours and three sixes. Together with Khushdil Shah (34), Shadab added 84 runs for the sixth wicket and then another

40 for the eighth wicket with Mohammad Wasim.

It was Shadab's measured and well-constructed innings that helped Pakistan to collect 78 runs from the last 10 overs to reach 269 for nine, which looked highly unlikely after the middle-order had collapsed like a house of cards against Nicholas Pooran, who before this match, had only bowled three deliveries in international cricket.

Pooran returned figures of 10-0-48-4, but more importantly broke the back of Pakistan's middle-order at a time when they were ready to shift gears after Fakhar Zaman (35) and Imam-ul-Haq (62) had provided Pakistan an 85-run first wicket stand.

Pooran picked up four of the five top-order batters, dismissing Fakhar, Imam, Mohammad Haris (0) and Mohammad Rizwan (11). Babar Azam, who suffered a rare failure when he scored just one, was trapped in front of the wickets by Hayden Walsh.

Nevertheless, Shadab held the innings together and in partnership with Khushdil, rebuilt the innings on a wicket that

had no demons. Shadab waited patiently for the loose deliveries but when they came his way, they were severely punished as he continued to nudge and push the ball around to keep the scoreboard moving.

He was eventually out on the first ball of the last over as he attempted a 'Dilscoop' to find his middle stump disturbed.

While Shadab dominated the match with 86 and four for 62, Imam stole the honours of the series when he finished as the leading run-getter with 199 runs at 66.66 with a strike-rate of just under 94. His last 10 scores in 50-over cricket have been 57, 0, 1, 56, 103, 106, 89 not out, 65, 72 and 62, a hallmark of a top batter.

Pakistan have strengthened their fourth position in the Super League with 90 points in 15 ODIs of five series and have three series (9 ODIs) remaining. They will play the Netherlands in August and New Zealand in January, while time of the Afghanistan series is yet to be decided. Seven of the 13 sides in the Super League plus hosts India will qualify directly for the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023.

## Sri Lanka host Australia in key series

COLOMBO: Both teams have been starved of 50-over cricket of late and will be looking to use this five-match series as good preparation for next year's ICC Cricket World Cup in India.

However, the five ODIs are not a part of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Super League.

The hosts have included Under 19 World Cup breakout star Dunith Wellalage in their squad and it will be interesting to see if the young all-rounder gets the chance against the world-class Australia line-up.

Sri Lanka will also be buoyed by their victory in the final T20I of their recent three-game series against Australia as skipper Dasun Shanaka found form with a hard-hitting half-century.

Australia have been dealt a recent blow with injuries



to key players Mitchell Starc (finger) and Mitch Marsh (calf) and the duo will be sidelined for the opening two matches of the series, while young all-rounder Cameron Green will not be used with the ball during those games as the Aussies manage his workload ahead of the Test series.

That means more overs for part-timers like Glenn Maxwell and Marcus

Stoinis, while Test skipper Pat Cummins is expected to play a role during the ODI series alongside fellow quicks Josh Hazlewood and Jhye Richardson.

A hamstring injury to Kane Richardson will see the tall right-arm miss the entire series, with fellow seamer Scott Boland drafted into Australia's squad.

The opening two matches of the series will take place

in Kandy, with the series then switching to R.Premadasa Stadium in Colombo for the final three games.

You have to go back to the ICC Cricket World Cup in 2019 to find the last time Sri Lanka took on Australia in a 50-over contest and it was skipper Aaron Finch that led the way on that occasion at The Oval in London.

Finch scored a superb 153 from just 132 deliveries that helped Australia post a massive score of 334/7 and that was always going to be too tough for Sri Lanka to chase down as Mitchell Starc took four wickets to help dismiss the island nation for 247 in reply.

Many of Australia's XI from that match will once again feature during this series, while Sri Lanka boast many fresh faces and a new skipper in star all-rounder Dasun Shanaka.

## Grant makes history with Scandinavian Mixed win



SWEDEN: Sweden's Linn Grant made history on Sunday when she became the first female winner of a European men's tour event with a nine-shot triumph at the Scandinavian Mixed.

The tournament, featuring men from the DP World Tour circuit and women from the Ladies European Tour (LET) all playing the same course, saw the 22-year-old Swede claim her third title in just six starts this season. "I just hope that people recognise women's golf, more sponsors go to the LET and hopefully this pumps up the women's game a little bit more," she said. Grant did not put a foot wrong at Halmstad Golf Club, stretching her overnight lead from two shots to seven with five birdies in the first six holes.

She kept her card clean with three successive pars despite pouring rain before making another birdie on the tenth. Grant picked up further shots at the 11th and 14th to get to 24 under par and win by the biggest margin on the DP World Tour - the rebranded European Tour - so far this season. "It's huge. Just playing at home and having the crowds here, my family by my side, boyfriend on the bag - it's crazy and I'm proud of myself," Grant told europeantour.com. "Pontus (Grant's caddy and boyfriend) has been amazing, keeping me calm and doing everything right. The crowds are, like always, amazing. Swedish crowds!" When asked if she particularly wanted to beat the men this week, Grant said: "For sure - the most important thing! 'It's a nice feeling. All week I just felt like it's the girls against the guys and whoever picks up that trophy represents the field.'" Henrik Stenson, the 2016 British Open champion, finished in a tie for second on 15 under alongside Marc Warren. Tournament co-host Annika Sorenstam hailed Grant, who was born in Helsingborg where her grandfather settled after leaving Scotland.

## ACP mountaineers meet President

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of mountaineers meet President of Pakistan in a meeting held at Aiwan-e-Sadr Islamabad.

The President appreciated the achievements of young mountaineers Shehroze Kashif, the youngest mountaineer of the world who climbed K-2 n also 5 peaks above 8000-M. Sirbaz Khan who climbed 21 peaks above 8000-M.

The third mountaineer was Abdul Joshi who has climbed Mount Everest and other two peaks above 8000-M, besides rescuing foreigners from high mountains. The President stressed the need to engage marketing experts for resource generation not only for further projects if



mountaineers but to develop a career path for their sustainability.

He also advised mountaineers to equip themselves with digital n effective writing and communication skills to highlight their

achievements to attract sponsors as well. Secretary, IPC Ahmed Hanif Orakzai, Col R Asif Zaman, DG PSB assured the mountaineers for their support to translate their dreams into reality. Abu Zadar Sadiq,

President, Karrar Haideri, Secretary Alpine Club of Pakistan, Waqar Ahmed, Secretary to President, Asif Ali Alvi, Direct General, Adil Ansari Media Consultant (P) were also present at this occasion.

## Inter-Divisional Table Tennis Championship starts

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Asadullah Faiz inaugurated Inter-Divisional Table Tennis Championship as the first event of Kohsar Sports Festival 2022 at Government Girls High School, Rawat on Monday.

Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Asadullah Faiz inaugurated the Inter-Divisional Table Tennis C'ship by playing a brief ceremonial match with Divisional Sports Officer Faisalabad Rana Hamad. He also visited Rawat School and appreciated the game of young table tennis players.

Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Asadullah Faiz also planted a sapling at Bansra Gali. He also announced to give table tennis sports gear to local table tennis players.

All Divisional Sports Officers of Punjab including Director

Sports Nadeem Qaiser, Waheed Babar (Rawalpindi), Rana Nadeem Anjum (Multan), Atta ur Rehmen (DG Khan), Manzar Shah (Sargodha), Maqsood ul Hasan (Bahawalpur), Rana Hamad (Faisalabad) and a large number of players and sports enthusiasts were also present on this occasion. Director Sports Nadeem Qaiser is supervising the all events and arrangements of Kohsar Sports Festival.

Meanwhile, Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Asadullah Faiz also inspected a sports ground in Bhurban. The staff concerned gave a thorough briefing to Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Asadullah Faiz about the ground which will be developed as a multi-purpose sports venue after the consultation of local stakeholders.

Earlier, Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Asadullah Faiz also attended Kohsar Sports Festival Sufi Night on Sunday



night. All Divisional Sports Officers and a large number of players were also present on this occasion. They lauded the performance of different artistes during Sufi Night.

Talking to media at the inaugural ceremony, Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Asadullah Faiz said that Kohsar Sports Festival, being held under the auspices of Sports and Youth Affairs Department Punjab, is

being revived after a long time of 9 years which is definitely a positive development. "The basic purpose of Kohsar Sports Festival is to promote healthy activities in the society. There is no cast, colour and creed in sports and the participation of all segments of society in sports events will help a lot in presenting soft image of Pakistan among world community".

Secretary Sports and Youth

## Tuba Hassan declared ICC Women's Player of Month



DUBAI: In her very first month in international cricket, the Pakistan star has taken home the ICC Women's Player of the Month for May 2022.

Pakistan's Tuba Hassan only made her international debut in the T20I series against Sri Lanka in May and won the prestigious Player of the Month award in her first nomination.

In doing so, she became the first Pakistan player to win the ICC Women's Player of the Month award.

In her maiden international game, Hassan recorded brilliant figures of 3/8, which fetched her the Player of the Match award on debut. She struck with her second international ball to dismiss Anushka Sanjeevani and subsequently scalped Harshitha Madavi and Kavisha Dilhari.

In the next two games, she picked up a wicket each but was miserly in her economy. She finished the series with five wickets at an average of 8.8 and an economy rate of just 3.66 and was named the Player of the Series in Pakistan's 3-0 clean sweep.

Hassan saw off competition from her captain Bismah Maroof and 17-year-old Trinity Smith from Jersey to win the POTM award.

Former Pakistan international and member of the voting panel Sana Mir lauded Hassan for her dream debut saying, "Tuba has shown a lot of confidence and skill to make an impact for Pakistan in her debut series. She has been working hard for some time and it is really heartwarming to see her celebrating success in her first series for Pakistan."

## Root adds World Test Championship feat to his records

LONDON: The plaudits continue to arrive for England batter Joe Root, who is breaking multiple records during the current Test series against New Zealand.

Root brought up his 27th Test century with a splendid knock in the first innings of the second Test against the Kiwis in Nottingham and in the process became the first player to score more than 3,000 runs in World Test Championship history.

The 31-year-old has 10 World Test Championship centuries to his name and nearly 1,000 more WTC runs than his closest challenger in Marnus Labuschagne of Australia with 2,180 runs.

Root's most recent knock saw him draw level on the same amount of centuries as Australia great Steve Smith and India veteran Virat Kohli, while the right-hander is one of only two England players to have scored more than 10,000 Test runs in total.

The reigning ICC Test Player of the Year has also jumped into second place on the Test batter rankings, with Labuschagne the only player ranked in front of him.

It has led to Root receiving plenty of praise from his fellow team-mates, with fellow centurion Ollie Pope describing the former skipper as the best English player of all time.

"We're seeing England's greatest ever," Pope told BBC Sport. "Watching him do what he's doing at the moment, it's amazing. A joy to be a part of."

## PHF announces 36 players for physical fitness camp

Our Correspondent

LAHORE: The Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) has announced a 36-player physical fitness camp in Abbottabad from June 15 in preparation for the Commonwealth Games Birmingham, which will continue for two weeks. Camp Commandant Olympian Khawaja Junaid has been directed to report.

The camp officials will be team manager Olympian Khawaja Junaid, head coach Siegfried Aikman, physical trainer Daniel Berry, video analyst Nadeem Lodhi, physiotherapist Adeel Akhtar while players include Abdullah Ishtiaq Khan, goalkeeper (Mari Petroleum), Akmal Hussain and goalkeeper (WAPDA). Waqar goalkeeper (WAPDA), Muneeb-ur-Rehman Goalkeeper (Sui Southern), Mubashir Ali (WAPDA), Ammad Shakeel Butt (National Bank), Mohammad Abdullah (Mari Petroleum), Mohammad Hamad Anjum (WAPDA), Rizwan Ali (Pakistan Air Force), Abdul Manan (Sui Southern), Umar Bhatta (WAPDA), Rana Abdul Waheed Ashraf (WAPDA), Ghazanfar Ali (Mari Petroleum), Muhammad Salman Razaq (WAPDA), Roman Khan (WAPDA), Moin Shakeel (WAPDA), Junaid Manzoor (National Bank), Ejaz Ahmed (WAPDA), Abdul Hanan Shahid (WAPDA), Afraz (Mari Petroleum), Arbaaz Ahmed (Mari Petroleum), Ahmed Nadeem (Mari Petroleum), Ehtesham Aslam (Mari Petroleum), Hassan Amin (Multan) Aqeel Ahmed (WAPDA), Tazeem Al Hassan (WAPDA), Abdul Rehman (WAPDA), Murtaza Yaqub (WAPDA), Arshad Liaqat (Bahawalpur), Abuzar (National Bank), M Shahzeb Khan (Karachi), Noheez Zahid Malik (National Bank), Rana Sohail Riaz (Sui Southern), Azfar Yaqub (Sui Southern), Muhammad Sufyan (Pakistan Navy), Umair Sattar (Mari Petroleum).

The Commonwealth Games will be held in Birmingham, England from July 28 to August 8.

## Pakistan pip India in latest ICC ODI team rankings

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan have usurped India in the ICC Men's ODI Team Rankings after completing a clean sweep over West Indies in Multan.

Babar Azam's side jumped a spot to No.4 in the latest ICC Men's ODI Team Rankings after the series win over West Indies in Multan. Before the start of the series, Pakistan were placed fifth in the rankings with a rating of 102. But the 3-0 clean sweep over the Windies had boosted them to No.4 with rating of 106, leaving India behind at 105.

Pakistan have enjoyed a brilliant last couple of years in the 50-over format. Apart from the blip against England away from home, they have taken on all comers and emerged victorious, including 2-1 series wins against Zimbabwe and South Africa.

They defeated Australia by the same margin when they came to visit Pakistan for the first time since 1998. West Indies stood no chance against Pakistan as they were rampaged 3-0. This period of resurgence has come under the captaincy of Babar Azam, who has led by example for Pakistan in all formats of the game. With his recent century in the first match against West Indies, he became the first batter to score three consecutive ODI centuries twice, having previously achieved the feat in 2016 as well.

And with a fifty in the second ODI, he broke the world record for most consecutive 50+ scores (9) in men's international cricket across all formats.