



# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



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جب نماز میں ہو تا ہے تو وہ اپنے رب سے  
سرگوشی کرتا ہے۔ اس لیے وہ اپنے سامنے  
یادیں طرف نہ تھو کے ہاں بائیں طرف یا  
پاؤں کے نیچے تھو کہے۔  
(صحیح بخاری: جلد 1، صفحہ 413)

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## FATF declares our action plans as complete: Khar

Minister for State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar says FATF has declared both Action Plans completed by Pakistan. The international community has unanimously acknowledged the country's efforts. Our success is the result of 4 year of challenging journey. Pakistan reaffirms resolve to continue the momentum and give our economy a boost.



## PTI govt set record economic growth in two years: Tarin

The former Federal Finance minister Shaukat Tarin says the PTI government had set record economic growth in the last two years, and save the country from the adverse affects of pandemic and now Pakistan's removal from FATF's is another feather PTI's leader Hamid Azhar cap's. The incumbent government should not blame the PTI government for economic crises because economy was growing, exchange rate was strong.

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### Weekly inflation jumps by 3.38%

ISLAMABAD: Sensitive price Indicator (SPI) based weekly inflation for the week ended on June 16 for the combined consumption group, witnessed an increase of 3.38 percent as compared to the previous week. SPI for the week under review in the above mentioned group was recorded at 189.07 points against 182.88 points registered in the previous week, according to the latest data of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) said Friday. As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 27.82 percent. The weekly SPI with base year 2015-16=100 is covering 17 urban centers and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. Sensitive Price Indicator for the lowest consumption group up to Rs 17,732 witnessed 2.85 percent increase and went up from 189.06 points in last week to 194.44 points during the week under review. Meanwhile, the SPI for the consumption groups from Rs 17,732-22,888; Rs22,889-29,517; Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs 44,175 increased by 3.45 percent, 3.10 percent, 3.12 percent and 3.10 percent respectively. During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 36 (70.59%) items increased, 06 (11.76%) items decreased and 09 (17.65%) items remained stable. The items, which recorded increase in their average prices on WoW basis, included chicken (12.10%), potatoes (6.89%), cooked daal (5.90%), pulse gram (5.29%) and cooked beef (5.19%), non-food items diesel (28.91%), gents sponge chappal (26.76%), gents sandal (15.40%), petrol (11.43%), electricity charges for q1 (6.63%) and cigarettes (6.27%), with joint impact of (2.53%) into the overall spi for combined group of (3.38%). Agencies

### Food inflation

Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Makhdoom Murtaza Mehmood along with Secretary Ministry of Industries and Production, Imdad Ullah Bosal called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad on Friday.



Photo: PID

### Hail Indonesia

# Timely import of edible oil averts crisis: PM

Says Pakistani notarized documents will be accepted in over 100 countries

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif says timely import of edible oil from Indonesia has averted the impending oil crisis in the country. Talking to Minister for Industries and Production Makhdoom Murtaza Mehmood in Islamabad on Friday, the Prime Minister said the 2.5 million metric tons of edible oil being imported from Indonesia will reduce oil prices in the country. The edible oil will be transported to Pakistan with the help of 10 ships. The Prime Minister appreciated the special efforts of Federal Minister for importing edible oil

from Indonesia. Pakistani notarized documents will now be accepted in over 100 countries after President Dr Arif Alvi approved the instrument of accession to the Apostille Convention to become its member. The development was announced by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on his official Twitter handle. "Pakistan's accession to Apostille Convention will facilitate [and] ease a significant burden on Pakistanis traveling [and] living abroad. "Creating smooth processes for our citizens is a priority for us. Now Pakistani notarized documents will be accepted in 100+ countries," the prime minister wrote. In another tweet, PM Shehbaz Sharif wrote: "Our citizens will be able to notarize their important legal documents such as marriage certificate, degrees and more via MOFA [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] designated officials in Pakistan." According to the prime minister the notarized documents will be internationally accepted without the need for any further verification. Meanwhile, Head of Prime Minister's Strategic Reforms Salman Sufi informed that the accession to Apostille Convention has been approved, terming it a big relief for overseas Pakistanis. "[Foreign Office] is working to implement [and] notify notaries across Pakistan to attest documents which will be acceptable at all Hague convention signatory countries," Salman Sufi wrote on Twitter. Once Pakistan formally becomes a member of the Apostille Convention, the documents attested in accordance with the treaty's requirements will be accepted in the 122 countries that are a part of this Convention and vice versa.

### Bailout

## Pakistan seeks us support on IMF plan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has sought support from the United States for the revival of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme as the global lender has not yet agreed to a staff-level pact despite the tough measures by the government. According to details, Finance Minister Miftah Ismail and Minister of State for Finance Ayesha Pasha met with US Ambassador Donald Blome and sought Washington's support for the revival of the IMF programme. Blome was apprised that the government has proposed fiscal consolidation equal to 2.2 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in difficult circumstances. The US ambassador was informed that despite three rounds of talks and several virtual contacts, the IMF did not even share the draft of the Memorandum for Economic and Financial Policies (MEFP) with Pakistan. The US is the largest shareholder in the IMF and has in the past too played a role in helping Islamabad complete the fund's programme reviews. The Ministry of Finance did not officially comment on the article. Officials have claimed that the memorandum forms the basis of any staff-level agreement and without finalization of the MEFP no formal staff-level agreement can be signed. Pakistani officials further said that after the increase in petroleum prices and electricity tariffs, it was hoped that the global lender would be ready for staff-level negotiations. "However, the IMF is now demanding to withdraw tax incentives and collection of 150 billion additional revenue from the salaried class," the officials added. The government has already massively increased fuel prices and abolished all subsidies. APP

### PTI ignited

## Govt will control inflation: Marriyum

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb vowed on Friday that the present government would "extinguish the fire of inflation" ignited by former Prime Minister Imran Khan. In a tweet, the minister said that Imran Khan himself was hiding in Bani Gala but calling masses to take to streets. Imran, instead of giving call of protest to the people, should mourn his inefficiency and incompetence, she said in a statement. Marriyum said that Imran Khan should realize that the masses do not support those who bargain national and public interest for a few diamonds, some hundreds of kanals of land and some financial benefits. People do not support liars, hypocrites and do not respond to the call of inefficient and incompetent looters and violators of the Constitution, she maintained. She urged Imran to apologize to Allah Almighty and the people while acknowledging his responsibility for inflation and economic catastrophe in the country. People know that Imran brought inflation and he reached an agreement with the IMF on weak grounds, she remarked. She said by violating the agreement with IMF Imran Khan endangered Pakistan's reputation in the comity of nations. "People won't come out with those who shot and killed innocent policemen," she remarked adding that Imran had created economic catastrophe and inflation and the present government was doing its best to clean it up. Agencies

### 5th BPC

## Pakistan, Mexico vow to further deepen, broaden ties

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Friday expressed its commitment to further deepen and broaden its ties with Mexico, particularly in the areas of trade, investment, science and technology, and people-to-people exchanges. This commitment was underscored by Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, Additional Secretary (Americas), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who led the Pakistan delegation during the 5th round of Bilateral Political Consultations (BPC) between Pakistan and Mexico held in virtual mode. The Mexican delegation was headed by Ms. Amparo Anguiano, Director General for Africa, Central Asia and the Middle East at the Mexican Foreign Ministry. Pakistan's Ambassador to Mexico also participated in the meeting. During the BPC, the entire spectrum of bilateral relations as well as regional and multilateral issues were discussed, a press release issued here by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said. The Additional Secretary thanked the Mexican government for supporting Pakistan in obtaining the



Observer Status in the Pacific Alliance and hoped for enhanced cooperation with Latin America through the Alliance. He highlighted that Pakistan was firmly focusing on imperatives of geo-economics and pursuing policies which would promote peace, growth, development, and regional connectivity. The Pakistan side also underscored the importance of deeper diplomatic engagement including through reopening of Mexico's resident Mission in Islamabad. Views were exchanged on closer collaboration on consular matters. Both sides expressed satisfaction at the cooperation between both countries at various international forums especially

## Dollar ascends to Rs209

Bureau Report

KARACHI: The dollar continued its climb against the Pakistani Rupee on Friday, ascending to Rs209 in interbank trade. The greenback was trading at Rs209 on Friday afternoon (12:28pm), according to the Forex Association of Pakistan. On Thursday, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) said that the local currency recorded a decrease of Rs1.21 (or 0.58%) as it hit Rs207.67. On Wednesday, the local currency shed Rs1.3 (or 0.63%) against the greenback to close at Rs206.46. Traders said the rupee has been losing ground due to the balance of payment crisis and falling foreign exchange reserves. But, the International Monetary Fund's remarks on the measures announced in the budget added new pressure on the domestic currency. The IMF has asked Pakistan to take "additional measures" to strengthen the budget and bring it in line with the key objectives of the fund programme. APP

## FATF retains Pakistan on grey list

Announces to conduct 'on-site' visit after 'Pakistan completes action plans'

BERLIN: The global money laundering and terror financing watchdog Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has retained Pakistan on its grey list despite implementing all targets. The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has acknowledged that Pakistan has "substantially completed its two action plans", saying that the watchdog will now schedule an on-site visit to verify the implementation of the measures. However, Pakistan has not been officially removed from the FATF's grey list. In a statement, the watchdog acknowledged that Pakistan has completed both its action plans and this showed the necessary political commitment was in place to sustain implementation and improvement in the future. "The FATF will continue to monitor the Covid-19 situation and conduct an on-site visit at the earliest possible date to verify the implementation and sustainability of the country's money laundering and counter-terrorism financing measures," it added. The FATF also acknowledged Pakistan continued political commitment to combating both terrorist financing and money laundering, which it said had led to significant progress. Maintaining the tradition of international compliance, Pakistan has achieved targets set forth by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) with the support of Pakistan Army. Pakistan proved to be a responsible state by implementing all the points and the Armed Forces of Pakistan also played a key role in this and ensured the imple-



mentation of all points in collaboration with the government and national institutions. Pakistan Army also thwarted Indian conspiracy to black list Pakistan. Under FATF, 27 out of 27 points of terror financing and 7 out of 7 points of money laundering were implemented. The two action plans together contained 34 points. This action plan based on anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing was completed after 4 years of continuous efforts. To move Pakistan from Gray List to White List in consultation with the government in this regard, on the orders of the Chief of Army Staff, a special cell headed by DGMO was set up in GHQ in 2019. When the GHQ cell took charge of this task, there was progress on only 5 points. At that time, the cell created coordination mechanism between more than 30 departments, ministries and agencies and also made these departments, ministries and agencies to implement the mechanism. Pakistan is likely to exit from Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey list as FATF's plenary meeting is concluding in Berlin on Friday. As per sources of finance ministry, the recent updates on the plenary meeting in Berlin show good signs of a decision in Pakistan's favour. While the consent and consultation of other countries in the meeting is also significant. FATF can vote against keeping Pakistan in grey list. Pakistan will have to submit a compilation report in the last week of June regarding all 27 task while a delegation of FATF will come to Pakistan for the on-site visit. The on-site visit team of FATF can come to Pakistan in last week of July and will visit all the related institutions. FATF meeting in Berlin also praised Pakistan for their efforts. Agencies



## Labourers' rights

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf is in photograph with Ch Yaseen General Secretary CDA Union and Paolo Pozzo Director ISCOS after a meeting here at Parliament House



Photo: Online

# No change in Pakistan's policy towards India

## FO clarifies FM Bilawal's remarks about India

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Office Spokesperson Asim Iftikhar says Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's remarks regarding relations with India in his address at a think-tank event are being interpreted out of context and portrayed incorrectly. In response to some media queries and press reports about remarks made by Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari regarding relations with India in his address at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, the Spokesperson that there is no change in Pakistan's policy on India on which there is national consensus.

He said Pakistan has always desired cooperative relations with all its neighbours, including India.

The Spokesperson added that Pakistan has consistently advocated constructive engagement and result-oriented dialogue to resolve all

outstanding issues, including the core Jammu and Kashmir dispute. Asim Iftikhar said that the Foreign Minister clearly articulated this perspective, referring to India's illegal and unilateral

**Indian unabated hostility and retrogressive steps in IOJK hurt peace & cooperation: FO**

actions in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir since 5 August 2019. Asim Iftikhar said Foreign Minister's remarks are better understood in the overall context of his key message of conflict resolution that he

emphasized in his address at the event.

In response to some media queries and press reports about remarks made by Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari regarding relations with India in his address at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), the foreign office spokesperson stated that the statements were being "interpreted out of context and portrayed incorrectly." "There is no change in Pakistan's policy on India on which there is a national consensus. Pakistan has always desired cooperative relations with all its neighbours, including India. We have consistently advocated constructive engagement and result-oriented dialogue to resolve all outstanding issues, including the core Jammu and Kashmir dispute," the statement said.

It added that India's unabated hostility and retrogressive steps, however,

have vitiated the environment and impeded the prospects of peace and cooperation. "The onus, therefore, remains on India to take the necessary steps to create an enabling environment conducive to meaningful and result-oriented dialogue," the statement said. The foreign minister clearly articulated this perspective, referring to India's illegal and unilateral actions in the Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IOJK) since 5 August 2019, describing them as an assault on the rights of the Kashmiri people, as well as rising Islamophobia in India, that created an environment conducive to meaningful engagement, it added. "The foreign minister's remarks are better understood in the overall context of his key message of conflict resolution that he emphasised in his address at the think-tank event," the statement concluded. APP

## PSX ends week on positive note

100 index gains 441 points

KARACHI: The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Friday opened on a positive note after optimism among investors regarding reports of Pakistan's exit from FATF as the KSE-100 index gained 441 points in the early day trade. According to details, the KSE-100 index crossed the 42,000 mark and traded at 42,171 points today after the upward trend in the stock market. German ambassador to Pakistan Bernhard Schlagheck had said that Germany admires Pakistan's efforts to meet the FATF requisites, they could exit the FATF grey list year.

According to details, the German ambassador to Pakistan said that Pakistan could exit the FATF grey list



this year. Pakistan will also renew its GSP+ status for the European Union (EU) in 2023, he added. A Pakistani delegation, led by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar is currently in Germany, attending a crucial session of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

According to details, the delegation, headed by Hina Rabbani Khar, has left

for Berlin to attend the crucial meeting of FATF. The delegation includes officials from foreign and finance ministries and other senior officials concerned. The four-day meeting of the financial watchdog is taking place in Berlin from June 13 and will announce its decision on grey list today.

It is pertinent to mention here that Pakistan has implemented 26 out of 27 items on the action plan it first committed to in June 2018 of FATF after which the chances of Pakistan getting out of the grey list have become clear. Pakistan has been on the grey list for deficiencies in its counter-terror financing and anti-money laundering regimes since June 2018. Agencies

**\$17.6 Billion**

## Textile exports up 28.6pc in 11 months

ISLAMABAD: The exports of Pakistan textile commodities surged by 28.26 percent during the first 11 months of the fiscal year (2021-22) as compared to the corresponding period of last year, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) said. The textile exports were recorded at \$17,623.635 million in July-May (2021-22) against the exports of \$13,740.113 million July-May (2020-21), showing growth of 28.26 percent. The textile commodities that contributed in trade growth included cotton cloth the exports of which increased by 30.24 percent to \$2,236.855 million during the current year as compared to the exports of \$1,716.216 million last year.

The other commodities that witnessed growth in trade included cotton year, the

exports of which grew by 24.18 percent, from \$896.039 million to \$1,112.713 million and raw cotton by 1009 percent from 0.593 million to \$6.577 million. Likewise, the exports of cotton (carded or combed) increased by 1450 percent, from \$0.064 million to \$1.632 million, yarn (other than cotton yarn) by 109.68 percent, from \$28.912 million to \$60.624 million whereas the exports of knitwear increased by 36.44 percent, from \$3,405.133 million to \$4,646.029 million.

Exports of bed wear increased by 21.68 percent, from \$2,472,782 million to \$3,008,838 million, towels by 21.66 percent, from \$838.505 million to \$1,020.111 million, ready made garments by 30.63 percent, from \$2,706.902 million to \$3,535.959

million, art, silk & synthetic textile by 29.34 percent, from \$326,152 million to \$421,860 million, made up articles (excluding towels and bed wear) by 15.19 percent, from \$421.860 million to \$780.180 million whereas the exports of all other export materials increased by 21.58 percent, from \$780.180 million to \$692,797 million.

The only commodity that witnessed negative growth in trade was tents, canvas and tarpaulin, the exports of which declined by 2.16 percent, from \$101.653 million to \$99.462 million. Meanwhile, on year-on-year basis, the textile exports from the country increased by 56.08 percent by growing from \$1,051,933 million in May 2021 to \$1,641,901 million in May 2022.

## US vows to enhance coop with Punjab govt

US Consul general calls on CM Hamza

**Bureau Report**

LAHORE: The United States Consul general Lahore William K. Makaneole called on Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shabbaz on Friday. During the meeting, views were exchanged on Pak-US relations, parliamentary and other matters of mutual interest while William K. Makaneole congratulated and expressed good wishes to Hamza Shabbaz on assuming Punjab CM

office.

On this occasion, the US Consul general said that the United States of America values its relations with Pakistan and would further enhance cooperation with the Punjab government in various fields.

The Punjab CM said that relations between Pakistan and the United States are multi-faceted, adding that he wanted to promote bilateral relations in agriculture, environment, water shortage and other fields.

**Energy crisis**

Sindh closes markets at 9pm to save electricity



KARACHI: In an attempt to save energy, the Sindh government on Friday announced the closure of all markets including shopping malls by 9pm across the province. A notification was also issued by Home Department in this connection. According to a notification, markets will be closed by 9pm, marriage halls at 10.30pm and restaurants at 11pm. "All markets, shopping malls and shops shall be closed by 9pm," the notification read. Milk shops, bakeries and carriage vehicles for dairy products have been exempted from timing restrictions. All marriage halls, banquets, ceremonies shall be closed by 10:30 pm, the notification stated. The order comes into force with immediate effect and will remain in force for a period of one month, it added.

The measure, which will remain in effect till July 16, is in response to the prevalent outages, and load shedding of the electricity and seeks to reduce the shortfall between the supply and demand of electricity, according to the notification. All markets and shopping malls shall close by 9pm, the notification said, adding that this does not extend to medical stores, pharmacies, hospitals, petrol pumps, CNG stations, bakeries and milk shops. Agencies

**Long march vandalism**

ATC extends interim bails of PTI leaders

LAHORE: An anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Lahore on Friday further extended the interim bail pleas of 13 PTI leaders, including former federal ministers Hammad Azhar, Shafiqat Mahmood and Yasmin Rashid in a case pertaining to the alleged vandalism and damage of property during the party's May 25 long march. The ATC had granted interim bails to the politicians soon after issuing non-bailable arrest warrants for them last Friday. At the outset of the hearing, Azhar, Yasmin and Aslam Iqbal appeared before the court while a plea seeking exemption from the court was presented for former education minister Shafiqat Mahmood. The counsel representing PTI leaders said that Mahmood couldn't appear before the court due to a surgical operation he underwent today. He further stated that the police are not informing the defendants about the charges they are facing.

Meanwhile, the police told the court that some of the accused leaders have joined the investigations while some have not. Accepting the requests for extension, the ATC granted extension in the interim bails of PTI leaders till June 28. Speaking to the media outside ATC, Yasmin said that it is first time in history that politicians are standing outside an anti-terrorism court with a label of terrorists over a political affair. She called out Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah, saying that "we are mothers and sisters but we are enough [ ] to deal with [ ] you."

"Just come out once and we'll tell you. The tyranny you have adopted against the women, children and elderly [...] we will not forgive you ever," Yasmin said. She said Sanaullah should forget about it if he thinks he can terrify PTI leaders by building terrorism cases against them because "we weren't born on a day to fear." Agencies

**Mafia tactics**

## Sudden deaths of witnesses, investigators 'suspicious': Imran Khan

Lauds PTI govt for implementing FATF action plan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan on Friday shared details of the sudden deaths of witnesses and investigators part of cases against Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his family members. Taking to Twitter, the former prime minister shared the names of the witnesses and investigators and the case they are part of against the Sharif family. He termed it an attempt by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his associates 'brought in through US regime change conspiracy' to use mafia tactics to save their corruption and money laundering.

Imran Khan said that questions would arise over the sudden deaths of witnesses and investigators.

Previously, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman and former prime

minister Imran Khan has said that the current rulers are playing political games just to get NRO-II. Imran Khan, while addressing PTI workers in Islamabad, urged that it is necessary to end the rulership of the thieves in the country at the earliest. He asked PTI workers to complete preparations before his next announcement against the incumbent government.

Regarding the corruption cases against the current rulers, Imran Khan said that those who were investigating the cases against Shehbaz Sharif and his sons have died in mysterious circumstances. He said that the cases will be dissolved by ending the powers of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and the National Accountability Bureau (NAB). "I am telling you from the first day, the political game is being



played for NRO-II."

Imran Khan said that his government not only saved Pakistan from being blacklisted but also completed 32

out of 34 action plans and his government submitted a compliance report on the remaining two items in April, on the basis of which the Financial Action

Task Force (FATF) has now declared Pakistan's action plan complete. The former prime minister in a series of 'tweets' about global money laundering and terror financing watchdog's decision to retain Pakistan on its grey list despite implementing all action plan, said that Pakistan was nominated for grey listing by FATF in Feb 2018 and had to complete the most challenging action plan ever given to any jurisdiction.

He said, "When my government took over, we faced dire prospect of Blacklisting by that body. Our past compliance history with FATF was also not favourable." He wrote, "I constituted a FATF Coordination Committee headed by key minister Hammad Azhar. The committee had representation from all government departments &

security agencies relevant to our FATF action plan. The officers worked day & night in the first instance to avoid blacklisting." Imran Khan said, "FATF repeatedly praised work & the political will my govt demonstrated. We not only averted blacklisting, but also completed 32 out of 34 action items. We submitted compliance report on remaining 2 items in April based on which FATF now declared Paks Action Plan as completed." "I am confident that prerequisite onsite visit of FATF team to confirm completed work on our action plan will pass successfully," he said adding that Hammad Azhar, members of his FATF coordination committee & officers who worked on this task performed exceptionally well. The whole country is proud of you. Agencies



# Ahsan directs to start int'l flights from Quetta airport by Aug 14

*Planning Minister says direct Hajj flights from Quetta to Jeddah would also be started*

ISLAMABAD: Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal on Friday directed to operationalise international flights from Quetta Airport by August 14 to facilitate overseas Pakistanis from Balochistan.

It would particularly enhance the connectivity of the people of province with the middle East, which hosted a large number of Pakistani diaspora working there, he said while chairing a meeting to finalise the pricing model of fares for airports in Balochistan for higher traffic volumes and enhanced air-connectivity of the provinces.

Advisor Maritime Affairs Jawad Khokhar, Additional Secretary Planning Dawood Muhammad Bareach, secretary aviation, Balochistan chief secretary, Pakistan International Airlines chief executive officer and Civil Aviation Authority deputy director general attended the meeting.

Ahsan Iqbal said direct Hajj flights from Quetta to Jeddah would also be started, which would facilitate the pilgrims hailing from the province, who currently used the indirect routes via Karachi / Islamabad.

The meeting was told that the PIA

was operating 30 flights weekly to three cities of Balochistan.

The minister said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had directed to mainstream the flight operations for the people of Balochistan and to alleviate their sense of isolation.

He observed that the dynamic pricing model being practiced currently, created hike in fare pricing which discouraged the people to opt for air travel. He directed to devise a fair price structure mechanism that "is static which does not lead to skyrocket the airfares. It is our utmost priority to

address the low volume of domestic flights connecting the people of Baluchistan to other parts of the country." Ahsan Iqbal stressed that all airlines like Serene, Air Sial and others should also operate on Balochistan routes for maximum facilitation of the people of province.

He also directed to ensure inauguration and shifting of flight operations from old Gawadar Airport to New Gawadar Airport on March 23, 2023. It would be a gift for the people of Balochistan on Pakistan Day, he added. Agencies

## OGDCL provides Good Health, Quality Education

*Construction of OGDCL block at govt girls high school Chakwal*



**Staff Reporter**

CHAKWAL: OGDCL under its CSR programme is proactively playing its role in providing Good Health, Quality Education, Clean Water, Infrastructure, renewable energy, clean Environment and healthy sports activities to the communities residing around its operational areas so that they enjoy peace and prosperity. OGDCL Executive Director (Services), Mr. Zia Salahuddin, inaugurated the OGDCL block at Government Girls High School, Mulhal Mughlan Tehsil and District Chakwal on Wednesday 16 June 2022.

The Community, the School Staff, Children and the District Education officials were very appreciative of the role played by the OGDCL in uplifting this facility. Mr. Zia assured the stakeholders regarding OGDCL's unwavering resolve for improving lives of the communities residing close to its operational areas.

Speaking at the Ceremony, Mr. Zia Salahuddin, Executive Director (Services), OGDCL highly appreciated the serious and positive implementation of the School, construction organization and local government and expressed his pleasure upon completion of the project well on time. He also expressed his trust that with this construction along with the enthusiasm and devotion of teachers and the interest of competent authorities, the teaching and learning activities at this school will gain more proud achievements in the future.

# Awami Theater Festival 2022 kicks off at ACP Karachi



**Staff Reporter**

KARACHI: "Awami Theater Festival 2022" organized by Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi kicks off. Provincial Minister for Culture, Education and Tourism Syed Sardar Ali Shah inaugurated the festival on this occasion.

President Arts Council Ahmed Shah, Joint Secretary Asjad Bukhari, Iqbal Latif, Kashif Grami, Shakeel Khan, Adam Rathore, Shakeel Siddiqui, Raf Lala, Kashif Khan, Shakeel Shah, Zakir Mastana, Saleem Afridi, Pervaz Siddiqui, Younis Memon, Ali Hassan, Tasneem Rana A large number of actors were present.

Noman Khan performed the duties of moderator. Provincial Minister for Culture and Education Syed Sardar Ali Shah

said that there is no weapon bigger than culture to fight extremism. He said that in order to eradicate extremism, cultural activities have to be promoted, Ahmad Shah is a dynamic man, many people in the society are able but they are not able to do anything like Lucknow. Nawab Wajid Ali Shah made a fairy house in the same way Ahmad Shah made Arts Council Karachi a fairy house.

"We are happy to see the Arts Council. We have to add color to our education system. We will soon start music classes in educational institutions for which 1500 music teachers will be provided jobs on merit basis," he said. Theater is not just a name for entertainment, it has a message, the culture department is working for the promotion of theater

in Sindh, which will be led by Ahmad Shah, I would announce a cash prize of Rs. 50,000 per theater for all theater performers. President Arts Council Muhammad Ahmad Shah said that, the Arts Council's fund is for our artists. He said that Pakistan should be like the "Awami Theater Festival". Arts Council Karachi has always played an important role in restoring the colors of the city.

Syed Sardar Ali Shah himself is interested in art and culture. He has a keen eye on the history of the world including the units of Pakistan and the culture of Sindh. We have a lot of work to do for the welfare of the artists. In the pandemic, the Department of Culture, Sindh and the Arts Council of Pakistan, Karachi, distributed checks to the artists, as

well as for rations and medical treatment. Many artists have been given health insurance, he said, adding that he considers himself very lucky that Allah Almighty has helped him. I think it is worthwhile to serve others, goodness is a fragrance I want it to spread far and wide, at the end the President Arts Council Muhammad Ahmad Shah presented flowers to the Provincial Minister Syed Sardar Ali Shah. Director Shakeel Shah's play "Gold Medal" was presented at the inauguration of Awami Theater Festival 2022. A large number of citizens were present on the occasion. Awami Theater Festival will present 26 theaters on a daily basis till July 7, covering various regional languages, including Urdu. There will be 2 theaters on Sunday.

## Ombudsman Punjab provides Rs44.29m financial relief to 32 complainants

**Staff Reporter**

LAHORE: On the orders of Ombudsman Punjab Maj (R) Azam Suleman Khan, a total financial relief valuing Rs.44.29 million has been provided to 32 complainants of various districts including Lahore, Gujranwala, Rahim Yar Khan, Bahawalpur, Vehari, Multan, Faisalabad, Hafizabad, Bahawalnagar, Sahiwal, Toba Tek Singh, Mianwali, Mandi Bahauddin, Dera Ghazi Khan, Multan, Sargodha, Sheikhpura and Gujrat.

A spokesman of the office of ombudsman Punjab announced this in a statement issued here on Friday.

The spokesman added that the complaints were related to different departments including education, irrigation, health, buildings, solicitor's office, agriculture, WASA, labor, University of Agriculture Faisalabad, Municipal Corporation Faisalabad, collector (consolidation) Multan, ADC (R) T T Singh, executive engineer highways division Mianwali, AC Malakwal, district accounts office, Punjab Workers Welfare Board and district benevolent fund board. This relief has been provided to the applicants against their complaints relating to non-provision of financial assistance, family pension, monthly grant, gratuity, arrears of salary, the release of monthly pension, and reimbursement of CDRs, the spokesman added.

# SECP holds first in series of Design Thinking Workshops for LLP

**Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: Resolving problems through digitization of processes and by using structured method of gathering public opinion are at the heart of Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan's (SECP) transformation agenda. It is with the aims of fulfilling these expectations and facilitating end-users, that SECP has embarked upon holding a series of design thinking workshops before starting its digital transformation journey.

SECP's first 'Design Thinking Workshop' on Registration and Compliance for Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs) was conducted in Lahore, on Thursday, in collaboration with SECP's implementation consultant Ernst & Young (EY).

This approach is a problem-solving framework that is rooted in empathy and understanding of the customer needs. Embracing design thinking puts customers at the heart of product to deliver a superior customer experiences and achieve strong business result.



The primary focus of these workshops is to facilitate the end-user in company registration, filing and compliance, and to bring efficiencies in turnaround times (TATs). By implementing state of the art systems, SECP will also be able to better perform its regulatory role in serving its customers. During the workshop, the SECP officials stressed the importance of voice of customer' and in helping SECP better address the needs of end-users.

Design thinking experts from Ernst & Young's International team shared their global experiences of Design thinking workshops, where citizen-cen-

tric governments are using a digital-first approach to improve, digitize and automate interactions and internal processes.

Representatives from EY Pakistan facilitated the workshop with interactive activities designed to highlight the problems and ideation of possible solutions.

Participants also discussed various scenarios about how the SECP could directly engage with its end-users through digital technologies. They talked about their experience of LLP registration, and shared their ideas to facilitate businesses community.

## Mirza Abdul Rehman rejected Govt's decision to close markets

**Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: Mirza Abdul Rehman, Chairman Coordination FPCCI and Honorary Coordinator Federal Tax Ombudsman while rejecting the decision of the government to close commercial power feeders and markets and shops in the evening said that the government's decision would not only destroy the country's economy and businesses but also increases the unemployment in the country. He said that the majority of the population of the country, especially the poor people, work in these markets and shops to earn bread and butter.

The government's decision to forcefully close the markets and shops in the evening and cut off the electricity will create a negative impact. Similarly the closure of this industry will destroy the business and the poor people will suffer from unemployment and also will be victimized by inflation and the crimes will be increased.

Mirza Abdul Rehman further said that the inflation in prices of oil, gas, electricity and dollar have led to disastrous inflation. He also stated that the announcement of Rs 2,000 by the government is ridiculous and the government should take the stockholders in confidence before making difficult decisions. Raising the prices without prior thinking would lead to a cyclone of inflation. The poor people are already facing difficulties of life and these sort of decisions will lead them for suicide.

He further stated that withdrawal of all privileges, facilities and protocols from all federal ministers, ministers of state, advisors, bureaucrats and technocrats, and top government officials will set an example for the nation and business community. He urged the govt to take all stakeholders into confidence and provide them opportunities of ease of doing business in view of the current situation of the economy. He said that the government should move ahead with a proper roadmap to bring back the crippled economy on track and also facilitate /provide relief to the traders and business community.

## VC IUB visited National Institute of Health Islamabad



**Spokesman Report**

BAHAWALPUR: Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob, Vice Chancellor of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur visited National Institute of Health Islamabad and met with Executive Director Major General Prof. Aamir Ikram. Dr. Fazal Mahmood, Director Health Project was also present on the occasion.

During the visit, health education, training and technical cooperation were discussed between the two institutions. On this occasion, cooperation in research from the Islamia University of Bahawalpur in preparation of snack and venom serum for antidote of snake venom was also discussed. The Vice Chancellor also visited the Biological Scream Laboratory and observed its preparation. It was stated in the briefing that 70% of the antidote for the bite of venomous snakes is prepared in the same laboratory and the remaining 30% is exported. On this occasion, mutual cooperation and collaboration was indicated by both sides.

## President AJK seeks British premier's role in resolution of Kashmir dispute

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

MUZAFFARABAD: President Azad Kashmir Barrister Mehmood Chaudhry on Friday presented a memorandum to the British Prime Minister Boris Johnson urging him to use his political and diplomatic clout to resolve the lingering dispute in line with Kashmiris' wishes and aspirations.

Seeking an early and amicable settlement of the long pending dispute, the AJK president asked the British premier to influence the government of India to grant Kashmiris their promised right, the right to self-determination, put an immediate end to the human rights violations and help secure early release of Kashmiri Hurriyat leader Muhammad Yasin Malik who was convicted and sentenced to life in prison by an Indian court recently.

# KBT announces Engro as lead partner for KB22

**Staff Reporter**

KARACHI: Karachi Biennale Trust (KBT) has announced Engro Corporation as the lead partner for the upcoming third Karachi Biennale (KB22) in October 2022.

On the momentous occasion of 75th anniversary of Pakistan, Engro and Karachi Biennale will pool their resources, experience and network, to expand their audience reach, particularly amongst the youth that constitutes a large part of the population. As the lead partner, Engro is contributing Rs 75 million for Karachi Biennale 2022.

Linking history with the future, the Karachi Biennale 2022 will take place from October this year at 8 venues in different parts of Karachi that are accessible to public audiences. The Biennale has invited local and international artists from 11 countries selected by the curator Faisal Anwar and his team. These artists will engage with heritage sites and explore the physical and cultural legacy of the city, with the latest and most innovative technology. Some of the venues are heritage sites that will open their doors for the first time.



Entrance to Karachi Biennale is free for the general public as the event looks forward to welcoming visitors for two weeks, packed with art exhibitions, performative works, guided tours, artist's talks and workshops. With these immersive visual art experiences, the Biennale visitors will embark on a journey into tomorrow without losing sight of the past and present. Expressing her thoughts about the partnership at the signing ceremony, Umer T. Ansari - Head of Marketing and Corporate Communications, Engro Corporation,

said that, "The partnership between Engro and Karachi Biennale is based on a shared vision of creating unforgettable experiences for the citizens of Karachi. The Biennale exhibition is about connecting with public and heritage spaces, providing an impetus to arts and culture, and a creative exchange of ideas by some of the best local and global talent. As we celebrate the 75th anniversary of Pakistan, we truly hope that the world-class interplay of arts and technology at the Karachi Biennale inspires positive energy and collective action from all citizens for a more prosperous Pakistan."

## MEI: Pent-up demand drives global leisure

**Staff Reporter**

KARACHI: After a turbulent two years, new research from the Mastercard Economics Institute (MEI) reveals that global leisure and business flight bookings have surpassed pre-pandemic levels, while spending on cruise lines, buses and trains saw sharp improvements this year. A new report, Travel 2022: Trends and Transitions, delivers critical insights across 37 markets about the global state of travel in a post-vaccine and less restricted chapter of the pandemic era.

Importantly, if flight booking trends continue at their current pace, an estimated 115 million more passengers in Eastern Europe, Middle East and Africa will fly in 2022 compared to last year, according to an analysis by the Mastercard Economics Institute. Key findings through April 2022 include:

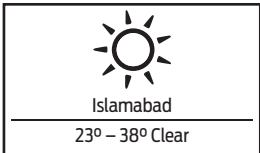
Leisure and business flights surpass pre-pandemic levels: Travel recovery has been a largely consumer story for much of the pandemic. By

the end of April, global leisure flight bookings surpassed 2019 levels by 25%; short- and medium-haul leisure flight bookings were up 25% and 27%, respectively.

Hard-hit transportation industries see spending rebound: Recent spending levels point to greater comfort with group travel. Global spending on cruises gained 62 percentage points from January to the end of April, though remains below 2019 levels. Buses are back at pre-pandemic levels, while passenger rail spend remains 7% below.

Travel spending shifts back to experiences over things: For the better part of a year, international tourists spent more on experiences instead of souvenirs when in destination. Experiential spending is now 34% above 2019 levels; the areas seeing the largest spending increases are F&B outlets (72%) and amusement parks, museums, concerts and other recreational activities (35%). In the U.K., spending growth each month in 2022 more than doubled compared to 2019 levels, currently 140% for April.





**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 3:13 am  
Zohr ..... 12:09 pm  
Asr ..... 5:09 pm  
Maghrib ..... 7:20 pm  
Isha ..... 9:04 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

Islamabad ..... 9222596  
Rawalpindi ..... 9270601-20

**ENQUIRY**

Edhi Ambulance ..... 115  
PIA Flight Info ..... 114  
PIA Cargo ..... 9280979  
Railway Inquiry ..... 117  
Railway Exchange ..... 9270831-5  
WASA Rawalpindi ..... 5555489  
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 ..... 9221334-43  
CDA ..... 9208301-04  
Met Office ..... 9250360-6  
RDA ..... 5555864  
TMA ..... 5770886  
Cantonment Board ..... 9270151-3  
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation ..... 9209224  
Potohar Town ..... 9209224  
Rawal Town ..... 5773343

**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

# Pakistan highly values its ties with Iran: Asad Mahmood

Federal Minister for Communications holds meeting with Iranian ambassador

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications and postal services Asad Mahmood has said that Pakistan and Iran enjoy multi-dimensional relations. Pakistan highly values its friendly and brotherly relationship with neighboring country Iran which are time tested. We have complete trust, mutual understanding and convergence of views on all bilateral, regional and international issues.

He expressed these views while meeting with Iranian ambassador to Pakistan Seyed Muhammad Ali Hosseini in Ministry of Communications here today. Secretary Communications/Chairman National Highway Authority Capt Muhammad Khuram Agha and other senior officers of



Ministry of Communications & National Highway Authority were also present.

Federal Minister for Communications and Postal Services Mr. Asad Mahmood said, although current trade volume between the two countries is low to the tune of approx 1 million US\$, however, Pakistan is committed to take all possible measures to increase the bilateral trade volume to

the level of US \$ 5 billion. To increase the bilateral trade, an additional border crossing point at Gabd (near to Gwadar)-Reemdan has recently been operationalized by Pakistan. The purpose of agreement on International Transport between Pakistan and Iran aims to facilitate trade traffic from Turkey to Pakistan through Iran, while Iranian goods and passengers can have access to

China through Pakistan. Pakistan may have the benefits of access to other Central Asians Republics and Europe through Turkey with operationalization of this agreement. Mr. Asad Mahmood further said, Quetta-Taftan Road is trafficable, however for further improvement of road various, projects are being undertaken. The Federal Minister for Communications and Postal Services Mr. Asad Mahmood stressed upon the need of making visa conditions easier to facilitate the Pakistani traders and visitors.

Iranian ambassador to Pakistan Seyed Muhammad Ali Hosseini said, Iran-Pakistan are bound in age old cultural, religious and linguistic similarities. Trade and economic cooperation between the two brother countries need to be enhanced.

## Mesmerising

ISLAMABAD: A view of dark cloud on the sky during pleasant weather in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

## For Rehabilitation Centre

CDA provides land to Narcotics Control Ministry

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) had decided in principal to allocate land to the Ministry of Narcotics Control for setting up a rehabilitation centre for the drug addicts.

The decision to this effect was taken in the CDA's board meeting chaired by its Chairman Amer Ali Ahmed. All the board members were also present.

The board also approved the alignment of the Margalla Highway and its links including Shah Allah Dita and Bharaku.

Moreover, the board principally approved regularization of 140 lower staff, subject to the fulfillment of codal formalities, scrutiny, rules and regulations, and recommendations of departmental recruitment committee. The CDA Board also approved the post of pediatrician in BPS-19 in the Capital Hospital to provide better health services to the staff and residents of Islamabad.

# Air University organizes career fair for students

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: To enhance the professional growth of students and promote industry-academia linkages, Air University conducted Career Fair 2022 at its university premises today.

The career fair provides excellent opportunities to students for gainful employment as well as to strengthen its partnership with prospective employers. At the same time it provides an opportunity for prominent national and multinational companies to connect with fresh, energetic talent and position themselves as preferred employers.

More than 100 national and international organizations representing multiple industries and sectors participated in the Career Fair. Students and recruiters took part in different activities including extensive on-spot screening interviews, sharing information as well as exchanging resumes. Moreover, company representatives also counselled students regard-



ing their career choices and job market requirements.

Vice Chancellor Air University, Air Marshal (Retd) Javed Ahmed said that such events provide common platform to students and job providers so the talent gets the recognition and ways to channelize their inner strengths and energies and employers get the best for their

companies.

He mentioned that post COVID 19, virtual networking options are very important as employers and employees both prefer to connect through virtual platforms.

He further added that as part of CPEC interventions government should ensure provision of university at every 1000 KMs which can serve as a major prosperity tool to help Pakistan promote education and overcome economic problems.

Director Digital Time Communications, Nazakat Hussain appreciated the role this industry-academia-youth linkage is playing in the youth employment. He said that such collaborations will go a long way in the economic and social development of country by polishing talent and creating a talent pool.

The Diabetes Centre also participated in the career fair not only to hire fresh graduates but also raised awareness among the youth about the diabetes and its symptoms.

# Mondelez Pakistan contributes to upliftment of local school

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: With a spirit to uplift local communities through facilitation of essential needs like education, Mondelez Pakistan, one of the country's leading manufacturers of chocolates and confectionary items, has uplifted a community school located near the organization's Hub factory. The educational institution, which is run as a non-profit by a local lady and doesn't charge for the knowledge it offers, has been provided with basic necessities using in-house resources from the Mondelez manufacturing unit.

Education is a fundamental pillar that boosts the capacity of individuals and societies to progress and conquer new horizons. With this objective at its core, Mondelez Pakistan continues to pursue a wide range of opportunities where it can give back to the communities where it operates. Shouldering the responsibility of equipping the local school with furniture, fans, lights and electricity wiring along with plants for landscaping,



the company aims to provide students with a conducive learning environment. With all the donated resources coming from materials available at the site of the Mondelez factory including plants from the nursery and desks from wood scraps, an element of sustainability has also been added to the equation.

"At Mondelez, we take pride in growth with the communities that we operate in. As a socially responsible entity, we believe it is our duty to facilitate surrounding ecosystems and infrastructures as much as we can. It brings us joy to undertake this initiative of uplifting the local school with basic necessities and more so that children studying here can enjoy the learning process, paving the way for them to become future leaders," commented Usama Majeed, Manager Corporate and Government Affairs, Pakistan.

The school is open to all members of the local community and is amongst a diverse range of CSR efforts that Mondelez Pakistan undertakes on a constant basis.

## Health Corner

### Treating peanut allergy: infants under 12 months

ISLAMABAD: UBC researchers demonstrated in 2019 that pre-schoolers can safely overcome peanut allergies with a treatment called oral immunotherapy.

Now they have evidence that the earlier pre-schoolers start this treatment, the better.

This real-world study focused on infants younger than 12 months old and reveals that not only is oral immunotherapy effective against peanut allergies, it's even safer for this age group than it is for toddlers and older pre-schoolers.

"This treatment is affordable, very safe and highly effective, particularly if we can get the treatment going before the infant is 12 months old," said Dr. Edmond Chan, the study's senior author who is also a clinical professor and head of allergy and immunology in UBC's department of pediatrics at the BC Children's Hospital Research Institute.

The study, recently published in the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology: In Practice, looked specifically at outcomes for a group of 69 infants among a larger study group of 452 children aged five and under.

Oral immunotherapy is a treatment protocol in which a patient consumes small amounts of the allergenic food — in this case, peanut flour — with the dose gradually increased to a determined maximum amount. The aim is to desensitize the child until they can have a full serving of peanut protein without triggering a dangerous reaction. To sustain their immunity, the child must continue to eat peanut products on a regular basis long term.



For this study, children visited a pediatric allergist in a community or hospital clinic approximately every two weeks to receive their peanut dose. Parents gave the same daily dose at home between clinic visits. After eight to 11 clinic visits, the children had built up to a "maintenance dose" of 300 milligrams of peanut protein, or the equivalent of about 1.3 grams of peanuts.

Clinicians recorded any symptoms or reactions, and advised parents how to manage reactions at home.

Forty-two infants completed the build-up period plus one year of maintenance dosing. At the end of it, none of them had more than a mild reaction to a 4,000-gram dose of peanut protein, compared to 7.7 per cent of the children aged one to five who completed the protocol.

Seven infants dropped out along the way. Four experienced reactions beyond mild, but none required epinephrine injections. Another 20 did not have their peanut tolerance assessed at the end, either by choice or because of long wait lists.

Even before beginning the treatment, infants were shown to be at less risk than toddlers and pre-schoolers. In initial testing, only 33.9 per cent of infants had a reaction beyond mild, in comparison to 53.7 per cent of one-to-five year olds.

"Despite infants showing the best safety, we were still very satisfied with the safety of this treatment for older pre-schoolers. The risk of a severe reaction is much lower than it is for school-age kids," Dr. Chan noted. "Many of the interventions we use in medicine, such as medications or surgical procedures, carry a small amount of risk that is outweighed by the benefit. If this treatment is performed by well-trained allergists and clinicians then I'm really comfortable with the risk. It's actually very safe."

As for effectiveness, the treatment worked equally well for both age groups. After a year of one peanut per day, approximately 80 per cent of the children had developed a tolerance for 4,000 milligrams of peanut protein in one sitting — the equivalent of roughly 15 whole peanuts.

The first step in trying to prevent peanut allergies among at-risk children is to introduce them to age-appropriate, peanut-containing foods such as peanut butter or peanut flour at around six months of age. If the infant still develops a peanut allergy, Dr. Chan's research suggests that oral immunotherapy can be an effective alternative to avoiding allergens for a lifetime. Trying to avoid allergens altogether carries different risks, such as poor quality of life, social isolation and anxiety. (Courtesy: Science Daily)

## VC NSU lauds efforts of Academic Council

Meeting of the National Skills University Islamabad Academic Council held



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The first meeting of the Academic Council of National Skills University Islamabad was held under the chairmanship of Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Mukhtar. In this meeting, all members of the Academic Council, including Prof. Dr. Anwar Khattab, Dean, Faculty of Engineering and Technology, Mirpur University of Science and Technology, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, participated.

At this historic meeting, the Vice Chancellor, National Skills University Islamabad, welcomed all the members and highlighted the efforts of the University and its role in promoting academic activities, especially in high-tech skills/vocational education.

The members of the Academic Council approved curricula of eight skill education, providing academic departments of the University and associated matters.

The Academic Council stressed adapting the University's educational programs to the United Nations Sustainable Development Principles. Worth mentioning that National Skills University Islamabad also has the unique honor of being a UNESCO-UNEVOC Center. At the end of the meeting, the Vice Chancellor appreciated the efforts made by the Academic Council members to improve the educational programs.

## MICO World Limited registered itself with PTA

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: MICO World Limited, a social media company, registered itself with Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) under the "Removal and Blocking of Unlawful Online Content (Procedure, Oversight and Safeguards) Rules, 2021".

MICO World Limited, a Hong Kong based company, has been registered by PTA as a Significant Social Media Company (SSMC) under Rule 7 (6) of Removal and Blocking of Unlawful Online Content (Procedure, Oversight and Safeguards) Rules 2021. The SSMC submitted application under the Rules for registration of two apps i.e. MICO and YoHo which was approved by the Authority. Representatives of the tech company attended the event held today at PTA headquarters and completed the registration process.



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# India is becoming a Hindu-fascist enterprise

**Arundhati Roy**

Over the last few months, authorities in Indian states governed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have started bulldozing the homes, shops, and places of business that belong to Muslims merely suspected of participating in anti-government protests. The Chief Ministers of these states have proudly flaunted this policy in their election campaigns.

To my mind, this marks the moment when a deeply flawed, fragile democracy has transitioned – openly and brazenly – into a criminal, Hindu-fascist enterprise with tremendous popular support. We now appear to be ruled by gangsters fitted out as Hindu godmen. In their book, Muslims are public enemy number one.

In the past, Muslims have been punished with pogroms, lynchings, targeted murders, custodial killings, fake police "encounters" and imprisonment under false pretences. Bulldozing their homes and businesses is only a new – and highly effective – weapon added to this list.

In the ways in which this phenomenon is being reported and written about, the bulldozer has been invested with a sort of divine, avenging power. This menacing machine with its huge metal claw that is used to "crush

the enemy", is being portrayed as a mechanical, comic-strip version of a mythical God slaying demons. It has become the talisman of the new, avenging, Hindu nation. Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson posed next to one during his recent visit to India – it is hard to believe that he did not know exactly what he was doing and who he was endorsing. Why else would a head of state do something as bizarre as posing with a bulldozer during a state visit?

For their part, government authorities insist they are not targeting Muslims and are merely demolishing illegally constructed properties. A sort of municipal clean-up mission. That reasoning, of course, is not even meant to be convincing. It is meant as mockery, and to instil terror. The authorities and most Indians know that most of the construction in every Indian town and city is either illegal or quasi-legal.

On June 16, for example, tens of thousands of young men furious with the BJP government's new army recruitment policy went on a violent rampage across North India. They burned trains and vehicles, blocked roads, and in one town they even burned the BJP office. But most of them are not Muslim. So their homes and families will remain safe.

In the two general elections of 2014 and 2019, the BJP has shown convincingly that it does not need the vote of India's 200 million-strong Muslim popula-

tion to win a majority in Parliament in the national elections. So, in effect, we are looking at a sort of disenfranchisement. That will have dangerous corollaries. Because once you are disenfranchised, you don't matter. You become inconsequential. You can be used and abused. This is what we are witnessing now.

Even after high-ranking

The practice of bulldozing Muslim homes and businesses for purely punitive reasons is proof that India is 'transitioning pretty brazenly into a criminal Hindu fascist enterprise', says author Arundhati Roy.

BJP officials publicly insulted everything Muslims hold most sacred, the party did not lose the backing of, or receive meaningful criticism from, its core support base.

There have been significant protests by Muslims in response to these insults. The protests were understandable, because the incident came on the back of so much violence and brutalisation. Except that as inevitably happens, some among the protestors called for a blasphemous

law, which the BJP would probably be more than happy to pass, because then almost all commentary about Hindu Nationalism could also be criminalised under that law. It would effectively silence all criticism and stunt all intelligent commentary about the political and ideological pit into which India is falling. Other individual protestors, one from an important political party, All India Majlis-E-Itehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) called for hanging and others called for beheading – all of which serve to confirm every stereotype about Muslims that the Hindu right works so hard to perpetuate. Across the high walls of insults and death threats from either side, no conversation appears possible.

The polarisation that followed the protests has only increased support for the BJP. The BJP spokeswoman who delivered the insult has been suspended from the party, but has been openly embraced by its cadres. Her political future appears bright.

Today in India, we are living through the political equivalent of a scorched-earth policy. Everything – every institution that has taken years to build – is being destroyed. It is stupefying. A new generation of young people will grow up entirely brainwashed, with no connection to the history or the cultural complexity of their country. The regime – with the help of a media made up of about 400 TV channels, countless websites and

newspapers – keeps up a continuous drumbeat of bigotry and hatred, fuelled by hate-spewing stock characters on either side of the Hindu-Muslim divide.

Within the cadre of the Hindu right there is a new, aggressive far-right displaying a palpable restlessness the Modi government is increasingly hard-pressed to control, because they are the BJP's core support base. On social media, it is now routine to encounter open calls for the genocide of Muslims. We have reached the point of no return. What those of us who stand against this, and especially the Muslim community in India, needs to think about is, how can we survive this? How can we resist it? These are hard questions to answer, because today in India even resistance itself, however peaceful, is considered a heinous crime almost akin to an act of terrorism.

The views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect Al Jazeera's editorial stance.

*Arundhati Roy is the author of The God of Small Things, which won the Booker Prize in 1997 and has been translated into more than forty languages, and The Ministry of Utmost Happiness, which was long-listed for the Man Booker Prize 2017. Roy has also published several works of non-fiction, including The Algebra of Infinite Justice, Listening to Grasshoppers and Broken Republic. She lives in Delhi.*

## Accelerating global recession

It remains to be seen if the Powell gamble will work in slowing global inflation. The accelerating inflation, the highest in more than four decades, has piled pressure on US financial policymakers to hike the borrowing rate. Short-term borrowing costs are now in a target range between 1.50 per cent and 1.75 per cent. Faced with a tricky situation, the US opted for the bitter pill of raising the interest rate by a surprising 75 basis points, the biggest rate hike since 1994, as it seeks to tame inflation, despite warning that the decision may increase the risk of global recession.

The central bank has the tools and the resolve to push the inflation down and next month, the Fed will raise the rate by "either a 50-basis-point or a 75-basis-point. The persistent inflation rate would remain elevated at 5.2 per cent at the end of the year well above its target of 2 per cent. However, the rate to slow down to 2.6 per cent in 2023, a seemingly ambitious target is expected. Thus a hawkish policy that may lead to a slowing of the economy with an increasing risk of recession, amid the lingering supply chain disruption, high oil prices and the Russian-Ukraine war.

During the pandemic, the US Federal Reserve as well as other central banks worldwide kept the borrowing rate close to zero to keep the economy going. The US economy is ready for unusually large rate hike pointing to the strong job market. In the region, most Gulf central banks, in the UAE, Bahrain and Qatar, followed US move, raising their key rates by 75 basis points. Saudi Arabia, which similarly pegs its currency to the US dollar, chose a smaller raise, 50 basis points, citing recent reports that inflation in the kingdom was slowing slightly. A volatile market reaction to the Fed's decision means it will take some time to see if the Powell gamble will work in slowing the inflation without accelerating a global economic recession, although analysts doubt that he can pull it off.

In this backlash, Central banks across Europe raised interest rates some by amounts that shocked markets, and hinted at even higher borrowing costs to come to tame soaring inflation that is eroding savings and squeezing corporate profits. Fuelled initially by soaring oil prices in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, inflation has broadened out to everything from food to services with double digit readings in parts of the continent. Such levels have not been seen in some places since the aftermath of the oil crisis of the 1970s.

The Swiss National Bank and the National Bank of Hungary both caught markets off guard with big upward steps, just hours after their US counterpart the Federal Reserve lifted rates by the most in almost three decades. The Bank of England meanwhile lifted borrowing costs by the quarter point markets had expected. The moves come just a day after the European Central Bank agreed on plans in an emergency meeting to contain borrowing costs in the bloc's south so it could forge ahead with rate rises in both July and September.

The day's biggest moves came in Switzerland where the SNB raised its policy rate to -0.25% from the -0.75%, a step so large, not a single economist polled by Reuters had predicted it. The first SNB hike since 2007 is unlikely to be the last, however, and the bank could be out of negative territory this year. The new inflation forecast shows that further increases in the policy rate may be necessary in the foreseeable future.



## Important backbone for effective cooperation

On its official website, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) published recently the Final Report of the Election Observation Mission (EOM) on the Presidential Elections in the Republic of Uzbekistan that took place on 24 October 2021. In this regard, an OSCE/ODIHR delegation is expected in Uzbekistan with a visit to officially present the Report and discuss its aspects.

For the first time in the history of national elections, the 2021 presidential election in Uzbekistan was observed by a delegation of the OSCE/ODIHR, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly as well as the European Parliament. On the voting day, the ODIHR EOM was joined by delegations from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the European Parliament, thus forming the International Election Observation Mission that comprised 365 observers from 44 countries.

In this regard, one should note that it was for the first time that both the representative delegation of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, consisting of about 100 lawmakers from 27 nations as well as the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the Secretary General, and the delegation of the European Parliament observed the election of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

In accordance with the methodology of the OSCE/ODIHR, the Office's work on the results of election observation is carried out directly in the post-election period. The ODIHR's post-election cooperation with the OSCE participating State comprises three key areas, namely, the publication and submission of the final report and the continuation of further work based on the

proposed recommendations.

On 22 April 2022, the OSCE/ODIHR circulated the ODIHR EOM Final Report on the 2021 Presidential Election in the Republic of Uzbekistan. The submission of the final report is an effective mechanism for moving from monitoring to assisting the participating States in furthering the work on the implementation of recommendations. By sending a final report to a participating State, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights expresses its willingness to visit that country to present its report on the spot and discuss its recommendations.

Typically, the ODIHR delegation submitting the final report is led by the head of a relevant election observation mission, a senior member, or the Office director. Such a trip to the country takes place 3-9 months following the elections. During the visit, the final report is formally presented before a number of officials in charge, and the sides discuss its conclusions and recommendations. In addition, bilateral, parliamentary meetings, briefings and roundtables deliberations are likely to follow the presentation.

In particular, on 15 October 2020, the Law "On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" was passed, which entered into force in January 2021. The Law "On Amendments and Addenda to the Criminal and the Criminal Procedure Codes of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Administrative Liability" adopted 25 December 2020 modified, respectively, the Criminal, Criminal Procedure Codes and that of Administrative Liability, providing for the liberalization of criminal punishment for insults and defamation (repeal of custodial punishment), while on 7 June 2021, a law was passed to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (New York, December 13, 2006).

Important in the proper execution of ODIHR recommendations has been the development by the CEC of a number of legal acts, including those in a new edition, in regards to the preparation and conduct of presidential elections. These provisions and instructions take into account a number of recommendations of the final report. Thus, out of 32 recommendations of the OSCE/ODIHR final report on the results of monitoring the parliamentary elections, 21 recommendations were accepted.

The Presidential Decree "On the New Strategy for the Development of Uzbekistan for 2022-2026" and the State Program "The Year of Ensuring Human Interests and Development of the Mahalla" provide for the implementation of measures to further refine the electoral legislation and practice. These efforts include the upgrading of the Unified Electronic List of Voters and the Information System for Management of the Electoral Process, as well as the elevation of the authority of the electoral system.

Currently, the CEC houses a working group composed of representatives of the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Cadastre Agency, the State Center for Personalization and other interested ministries and departments, whereas the second group comprising CEC staff are tasked with studying the practice of organizing the activities of elective bodies in foreign nations. Building on the outcomes, proposals are to be devised to perfect the electoral legislation, and corresponding regulatory acts will be developed. Thus, election campaigns and their assessment by ODIHR election observation missions as well as other international and foreign experts have a significant impact on the

formation and development of a democratic electoral system in our country.

In particular, according to the conclusions of the Final Report on the results of observation in the 2021 voting, the election took place against the backdrop of reforms in the social, political and economic spheres initiated by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev under his 2017-2021 Development Strategy, referred to in the wider political discourse as "New Uzbekistan". It is acknowledged that in recent years Uzbekistan has made significant progress in the process of preparing and holding elections, fundamentally reforming the electoral legislation, which contributed to the implementation of the OSCE/ODIHR recommendations.

The activities of the CEC in preparing and holding elections are highly appreciated in the Final Report, which stresses that, despite the problems associated with COVID-19, the Commission organized its activities in a professional, high-quality and efficient manner within the time frame stipulated by law. The openness of the election process, the efforts undertaken to deliver conditions favorable for persons with disabilities and a number of other aspects of the organization and conduct of elections are given positive evaluation.

The document also offers some remarks related to the electoral process. Meanwhile, according to the CEC, some shortcomings may not be such due to the peculiarities of legislative regulation and practice, regional, national and cultural prerequisites. The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights presented 24 recommendations in its Final Report and expressed

its readiness to fully support Uzbekistan in perfecting the electoral process. In this regard, an interdepartmental working group was set up to analyze the Final Report in detail, study its recommendations and develop proposals for their realization. The working group comprised all participants in the electoral process, experts and specialists, representatives of political parties, civil society institutions, scholars and practitioners.

International experts from the United Nations Development Program, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), and the OSCE Project Coordinator Office in Uzbekistan were also involved in the study of the final document. They provided assistance in conducting a comparative analysis of the report with universal documents of the UN, the OSCE and other acts of international law that define the standards for democratic and free elections, as well as with comparison with international practice.

During the pending visit of the OSCE/ODIHR delegation, the sides are expected to conduct comprehensive review of the recommendations outlined in the Final Report. Joint efforts will be continued to further develop the electoral legislation and raise the effectiveness of the electoral practice in Uzbekistan. In conclusion, one can note that extensive work has been carried out in Uzbekistan to effectively use the essential opportunities to implement the OSCE/ODIHR recommendations. This, in turn, will contribute to the democratic development of our country through the introduction of best practices that meet international standards in the field of elections.

*The writer is permanent member of the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Uzbekistan*

### Letter to the Editor

#### Cesarean business

In a sick society, doctors are more than a messiah. People in our society respect them as their parents, but unfortunately, the dignity service has been maligned by shameful businesses. In the recent past and now, the number of cesarean births has been increased abruptly. According to Pakistan's demographic and health survey, one in five babies comes into the world by c-section. According to the WHO, a c-section would be allowed in that case when there is a serious risk of health to the child or mother. Doctors, private hospitals and pharmaceutical companies are getting an enormous amount of money by doing shameful business. It is hard to hear a normal delivery in the surroundings. Strong action and laws should be enforced to ease such kinds of practices. The government should take strong measures against those doctors that are involved in such malpractices.

*Nasir Hussain from Shahdadkot, Sindh.*



## Russia presses assault, Ukraine given possible path to EU

*Ukraine claims to destroy a Russian boat carrying air defense systems*

LYSYCHANSK: The European Union's executive arm recommended putting Ukraine on a path to membership Friday, a symbolic boost for the embattled country but one that did not slow a Russian onslaught in the east that is taking civilian lives and flattening cities.

The possibility of membership in a union created to safeguard peace on the continent and that stands as a model for the rule of law and prosperity fulfills a wish of President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and the many Western-looking citizens resisting Russia's invasion.

The latest embrace of Ukraine by its European allies also marks another setback for Russian President Vladimir Putin, who launched his war nearly four months ago, hoping to pull his ex-Soviet neighbor back into Russia's sphere of influence. Putin was scheduled to address Russia's showpiece economic forum in St. Petersburg on Friday, but his speech had to be delayed because the forum's website was hit with a cyberattack.



The European Commission's recommendation that Ukraine become a candidate for membership will be discussed by leaders of the 27-nation bloc during a summit next week in Brussels. The war has increased pressure on EU governments to fast-track Ukraine's candidate status. But the

process is expected to take years, and EU members remain divided over how quickly and fully to open their arms to new members.

Support for Ukraine from Western countries — both political and military — has been key to its surprising success in the face of larger and better

equipped Russian forces. Zelenskyy has also clamored for more immediate support in the form of more and better weapons to turn the tide in the country's eastern Donbas region.

Russia pressed its offensive there Friday, leaving desperate residents struggling to make sense of what the future holds for them.

"We are old people, we do not have a place to go. Where will I go?" asked Vira Miedientseva, one of the elderly residents grappling with the aftermath of an attack Thursday in Lysychansk, which lies just across the river from Sievierodonetsk, a key focus of battles in recent weeks that Russians have nearly captured.

The Ukrainian navy claimed Friday that it destroyed a Russian boat carrying air defense systems to a strategic island in the Black Sea. In a statement on social media, the navy said that the Vasily Bekh was used to transport ammunition, weapons and personnel to Snake Island, which is vital for protecting sea lanes out of the key port of Odesa.

## Russia cuts natural gas exports to European countries

PRAGUE: Russia reduced natural gas to Europe again Friday, including cutting flows by half to Italy and Slovakia and completely to France, as countries have worked to ease their dependence on Russian supplies amid the war in Ukraine.

It marks the third day of significant reductions to the fuel that powers industry and generates electricity in Europe, which also have hit Germany and Austria. It has further spiked already-high energy prices that are driving record inflation in the European Union.

Russia has blamed a technical problem for the cuts to the key Nord Stream 1 pipeline serving Germany and France, saying equipment being refurbished in Canada was stuck there because of Western sanctions. Leaders in Germany and Italy called the reductions a political move, and

it's escalated the energy tensions in Europe, following Russia's previous cutoff of natural gas to Poland, Bulgaria, Finland, the Netherlands and Denmark. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Friday that the reductions are "blackmail (against) both individual countries and Europe as a whole."

Russia told Slovakia's state-controlled gas company SPP that it would reduce deliveries to the country by 50%, SPP director Richard Prokypcak told a conference in Bratislava. The reason for the reduction has not been made clear.

Russian state-owned energy giant Gazprom told Italian gas company Eni on the same day that it would supply only 50% of the amount of gas requested for Friday, reducing the flow to one of Europe's biggest importers of Russian gas for a third day.

Gazprom reduced by 15% Italy's requested delivery on Wednesday. The ANSA news agency reported the Russian company dropped it by 35% on Thursday. Italy gets 40% of its gas from Russia but has been working to find alternative sources in countries like Algeria.

And France is no longer receiving any natural gas from Russia. The French gas network operator GRTgaz said Russian supplies via Germany came to a halt Wednesday, after dropping by 60% over the first five months of the year.

The operator said Friday that despite the halt in Russian supplies, no disruptions to gas supplies are expected this summer, in part thanks to more shipments via Spain. France normally gets about 17% of its natural gas from Russia, but overall gas is a relatively small part of France's energy

mix, at about 16%.

The cut in supplies to France was "a consequence of the already-known reduction" of gas supplies via the Nord Stream 1 pipeline, German Economy Ministry spokesman Stephan Gabriel Haufe said. He didn't have further details of specific reasons for the cut.

Russia has said Canadian sanctions prevented German partner Siemens Energy from delivering equipment that had been sent there to be overhauled. The German government said maintenance shouldn't have been an issue until the fall and the Russian decision was meant sow uncertainty and push up prices.

"Both we and Germany and others maintain it's a lie, there's a political use of gas" by Russia, Italian Premier Mario Draghi said in Ukraine's capital, Kyiv, on Thursday.

## EC recommends Moldova gets candidate status

BUCHAREST: The European Union's executive arm recommended on Friday granting Moldova — a tiny, non-NATO country that borders Ukraine — EU candidate status, marking the beginning of its path to joining the 27-nation bloc that will be contingent on a series of key reforms.

The European Commission's proposal was made on the same day that it recommended the same status be given to war-torn Ukraine, and it is conditional on Moldova enacting a series of reforms, such as the rule of law, cleaning up rampant corruption, and addressing human rights issues.

Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said Friday that "Moldova has taken a decisive step towards reforms, with a clear mandate from its citizens."

"It is on a real pro-reform, anti-corruption and European path for the first time since independence," she said, noting that the former Soviet republic "still has a long way to go."

The EU's existing 27 member states will discuss the recommendation during a summit next week in Brussels. Even if candidate status is granted, it will likely take years for Moldova to become an EU member.

Moldovan President Maia Sandu reacted to the Commission's proposal in a statement calling it "a huge step" that "solidifies our European aspirations, encourages and strengthens our conviction that we are on the right path."

"The recommendation is based on the understanding that our country will undertake additional efforts in key areas such as justice reform, the fight against corruption, public administration and human rights," Sandu said.

She said the Commission will monitor progress in those areas until the end of 2022, and that Moldova is expecting EU Member States to support the recommendation at next week's European Council meeting.

## Israeli forces shoot dead three Palestinians

JERUSALEM: Israeli forces shot dead three Palestinians and wounded eight others early Friday during a military operation in the occupied West Bank, the Palestinian Health Ministry said.

The ministry did not say how the casualties occurred.

Palestinian media quoted witnesses as saying Israeli

troops opened fire at a car in the northern West Bank town of Jenin and killed three passengers.

Heavy exchanges of gunfire were heard in videos circulated on social media before the incident involving the car. Afterward, footage on social media showed a bullet-riddled vehicle with bloodstains and residents

inspecting it.

There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military, which carries out frequent overnight raids in Palestinian-controlled parts of the West Bank to arrest suspected and wanted Palestinian militants. Most of the arrest raids were in Jenin, the hometown of several Palestinian assail-

ants who took part in a recent string of attacks that killed at least 19 Israelis.

Hundreds of angry residents gathered outside a Jenin hospital, chanting slogans of "God is Great" and calls for revenge, before carrying the three bodies on stretchers and walking through the town in a spontaneous protest.

## Diversity, opportunity, safety: what attracts foreign residents to Hong Kong

HONG KONG: A visitor to Hong Kong may be first amazed by the variety of food the city has to offer: in addition to traditional Chinese food, one can easily find Japanese sushi, Thai curry and Spanish paella within a short walk.

An international business and financial center boasting openness and diversity, Hong Kong is home to some 600,000 non-Chinese residents, many of whom have stayed here for decades.

Since its return to the motherland in 1997, Hong Kong has become more inclusive and diverse, with an increasing number of foreign residents and a more favorable environment for them to live and thrive.

**INCREASING DIVERSITY** Living in Hong Kong for more than 20 years, Pakistani Abdus Samee sees the city as his second home.

Speaking fluent Cantonese, the 22-year old now lives a lifestyle shared by many Hong Kongers: spending long hours in the workplace during weekdays while going hiking and cycling with friends during the days off.

But the process of social integration never comes easy for

Samee, who once struggled to communicate with his classmates in school.

Like many foreigners, Samee was faced with language barriers as a child. But with the help of a non-profit organization specialized in helping ethnic minorities adapt to the society, Samee quickly picked up Cantonese and English as well as some Mandarin Chinese.

"I was grateful for what they did for me and was determined to do something similar for kids with the same challenge," he said.

Thanks to his language skills, Samee landed a job at the multi-cultural ethnic-link teen center, organizing educational and social events to help people from different cultural backgrounds integrate into the society.

"Lending a helping hand always makes me happy. My parents are also very proud of me," he said.

Samee came to Hong Kong at the age of one together with his father, who made a living in the logistics industry in Hong Kong before turning to become a security guard. Samee's grandfather also worked in logistics in Hong Kong.

"Before Hong Kong's return to the motherland, many foreigners such as the Pakistanis and Indians came here working in the disciplinary forces or in the logistic industry," he said.

"But now, their jobs vary and could span across many different sectors," he said.

Whatever their occupation and cultural background, people in Hong Kong share the same qualities of caring and hard-working, Samee said.

The latest census data showed that the number of non-Chinese in Hong Kong accounted for 8.4 percent of the total population in 2021, an increase of 0.4 percentage point from that in 2016.

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) government has been stepping up efforts to boost social integration, partnering with non-profit institutions to offer the ethnic minorities support in education, employment and equal opportunities.

**SHARED OPPORTUNITY** For Marites Mata, opportunity is exactly what attracted her to Hong Kong 25 years ago.

After graduating from college, Mata followed a path that many

Filipinos choose: to work in Hong Kong as a foreign domestic helper.

The reason is realistic and compelling: in Hong Kong she would earn a better paycheck to support her family back home.

A bread earner for her family, Mata managed to purchase a house in the Philippines using her savings and supported the education of her son.

"Sometimes I feel I am a strong woman. I am very proud of my job," she said.

Mata said she felt grateful as her employer respected her and treated her like a family member. On her 49th birthday this June, the family bought her a big cake to celebrate.

Mata, meanwhile, also enjoys Hong Kong for its beautiful scenery and modern infrastructure. She visited the Ocean Park, went hiking with friends, and enjoyed singing and dancing in the parks on Sundays.

In Hong Kong, there are more than 300,000 foreign domestic helpers, most of whom are Filipinos and Indonesians. Hong Kong offered them the chance to earn a better living, while their hard work enabled Hong Kongers to



explore more career opportunities.

To protect the rights and interests of the foreign domestic helpers, the HKSAR government has been improving labor legislation, adjusting up the minimum wage standard, and making sure that the helpers enjoy free accommodation, free food and free medical care from employers.

**SAFETY FOR PROSPERITY** When asked about the most attractive thing in Hong Kong, Amakiri Jefferson from Nigeria did not hesitate to pop up a word: safety.

## Shutdown in Srinagar against B7P leaders' blasphemous remarks

SRINAGAR: In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, people observed shutdown, on Friday, to register protest against the derogatory remarks made by BJP leaders on the holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

Most of the shops and business establishments were shut in old city areas, popularly known as downtown, in and around the Lal Chowk city centre and other parts of Srinagar.

The occupation authorities deployed Indian troops and police personnel in strength in Srinagar and elsewhere in the Kashmir Valley to prevent people from thwarting demonstrations against blasphemous statements of the BJP leaders.

Fearing massive anti-India demonstrations, the occupation authorities also locked the historic Jamia Masjid, Srinagar, and other mosques in the territory and disallowed people to offer Juma prayers.

## President Xi to host 14th BRICS Summit

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping will host the 14th BRICS Summit in Beijing on June 23, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson announced here Friday.

Spokesperson Hua Chunying said the Summit will be held in virtual format under the theme of "Foster High-quality BRICS Partnership, Usher in a New Era for Global Development."

Hua said President Xi will host the High-level Dialogue on Global Development in Beijing on June 24. The Dialogue will be held in virtual format under the theme of "Foster a Global Development Partnership for the New Era to Jointly Implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," and BRICS leaders and leaders of relevant emerging markets and developing countries will attend the event.

President Xi will attend the opening ceremony of the BRICS Business Forum in virtual format and deliver a keynote speech on June 22, Hua said.

## Indian police fire on crowd protesting army recruitment plan

SECUNDERABAD: Indian police fired at an angry mob who set trains on fire Friday during protests against a new short-term military recruitment scheme that have flared around the country.

Authorities are reeling from a sudden and violent backlash after this week announcing a plan to modernize India's 1.4 million-strong armed forces that would strip benefits and job security from aspiring soldiers.

Hundreds of protesters stood on rail tracks in the southern city of Secunderabad, burning piles of debris to block passenger services and setting alight carriages on at least four trains.

Officers fired live rounds to disperse the crowd, an AFP photographer at the scene witnessed, with at least one demonstrator wounded in the incident.

Local police and officials in Telangana state could not be reached for comment.

Protests have raged in several cities around the country since Thursday and have been especially fierce in the eastern state of Bihar.

Crowds there have set fire to more than a dozen trains and attacked the residence of the state's deputy chief minister, as well as offices belonging to the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

More than 100 people have been arrested across Bihar, senior police officer Sanjay Singh told AFP.

"Video recordings are being made of protests," he added. "Protesters will be identified and action will be taken against them." Authorities imposed a curfew in Gurgaon, a satellite city of New Delhi, and temporarily closed some metro stations in the capital to stop unrest spreading.

## Colombia faces presidential choice between leftist, populist

BOGOTA: Colombians can count on one thing: The country's presidential politics will drastically change after Sunday's runoff election.

The contest in the South American country lacks a front-runner and presents voters with a choice between the man who could become the first leftist to lead the nation and a populist millionaire who promises to end corruption.

The guaranteed departure from long-governing centrist or right-leaning presidents has led both sides to play into people's fears. Want a former rebel as president or an unpredictable businessman?

Polls show Gustavo Petro and Rodolfo Hernández — both former mayors — practically tied since advancing to the runoff following the May 29 first-round election in which they beat four other candidates. They haven't debated each other, but a court ordered them Wednesday to do so.

Petro, a senator, is in his third attempt to become president, and his strongest rival is again not another candidate but voters' marginalization of the left due to its perceived association with the nation's armed conflict. He was once a rebel with the now-defunct M-19 movement and was granted amnesty after being jailed for his involvement with the group.

"Anyone but Petro," reads graffiti in northern Bogota, the capital city he governed in the mid-2010s. Petro, 62, obtained 40% of the votes during last month's election and Hernández 28%, but the difference quickly narrowed as Hernández began to garner the so-called antipetrista votes.

the premise of his business, and everything.

"If there is no security, there is no nightlife in Hong Kong, and economic development is even more impossible," Jefferson said.

Since the implementation of the national security law in Hong Kong, social stability has been restored. For Jefferson and many of his business partners, this means a safer and more predictable business environment.

In his spare time, Jefferson likes to go to Lan Kwai Fong for a drink with his friends and play football with local people. He hopes that after the pandemic, he could organize a football match with the local community.

"Hong Kong is my home. I believe in the government and what they do is the best for the people," he said.

John Lee, the newly appointed sixth-term chief executive of the HKSAR, has envisioned Hong Kong to become a place characterized by an abundance of vitality, opportunity, hope and caring in the next five years.

"I believe that with joint efforts, we can make Hong Kong, 'the Pearl of the East,' shine brighter," Lee said.



## Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
42,140.76	41,730.16	
Day's High	Day's Low:	
42,420.64	41,730.16	
Index Value	Change	
7,206,495,468	+410.60	
Percentage	Time	
+0.98%	17 Jun, 2022 5:00 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
7,021.89	-22.14	
Percentage	Time	
-0.31%	17 Jun, 3:49 pm GMT+1	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
29,700.32	-226.75	
Percentage	Time	
-0.76%	17 Jun, 10:49 am GMT-4	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
25,963.00	-468.20	
Percentage	Time	
-1.77%	17 Jun, 3:15 pm GMT+9	
Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	144.5	145.75
Bahrain Dinar	550.6	555.1
Canadian Dollar	160.5	161.85
China Yuan	30.83	31.08
Danish Krone	28.92	29.27
Euro	219.5	223
Hong Kong Dollar	26.37	26.72
Indian Rupee	2.65	2.73
Japanese Yen	1.6	1.66
Kuwaiti Dinar	673.22	678.22
Malaysian Ringgit	46.89	47.34
New Zealand \$	129.2	130.4
Norwegians Krone	20.64	20.94
Omani Riyal	538.33	542.83
Qatari Riyal	56.2	56.8
Saudi Riyal	55.6	56.4
Singapore Dollar	150	151.3
Swedish Korona	20.19	20.49
Swiss Franc	206.53	208.28
Thai Bhat	5.92	6.02
U.A.E Dirham	57	57.9
UK Pound Sterling	256.5	260
US Dollar	209	211

## Post budget conference

# Punjab presents people-friendly budget despite odds: Leghari

*Says no new tax has been imposed in the budget*

LAHORE: Provincial Minister Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari has said that in the given difficult economic situation in Punjab, the present government presented a people-friendly budget for FY 2022-23 with focus on providing social protection to the common man.

Addressing the post budget conference here on Friday, he added that the balanced and pro-poor budget has a total outlay of Rs 3,226 billion with a hefty amount of Rs 685 billion for Annual Development Programme (ADP) and no new tax has been imposed in the budget.

Leghari said that Rs 685 billion development budget (ADP) will be utilized on sectors which will help resolve the problems of price-hike,

energy crisis and social disparity. He explained that 40 percent (Rs 272.6 billion) of the ADP will go to Social Sector entailing education, health, water supply and sanitation, women development and social welfare; 24 percent to Infrastructure (roads, bridges, buildings etc.); 6 percent to Production (industry), 02 percent to Service sector, and 28 percent to other public welfare-oriented programmes and special initiatives.

Leghari said that global financial crunch, high crude oil prices and decreased exports of the country were the major factors marred Pakistan's economy. While the PTI led previous government, he added, had also played havoc with the provincial economy on all fronts particularly the CPEC due to its bad

governance and inapt handling of the affairs. The last three and half years of PTI led coalition government had been worst years in terms of development, he added.

Providing relief to under-privileged segments of society is the top most priority of Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shehbaz Sharif, therefore, government has set aside Rs 200 billion for Awami Relief Package for provision of wheat flour on subsidized price of Rs 490 per 10kg bag instead of Rs 650, he said. In addition to this, a mega discount package is being launched under which the poor people will be provided edible, grocery and other commodities as well as travelling facilities on discounted rates. The poor farmers will also be provided ferti-

lizers and agricultural inputs on subsidized rate, he said and added that a hefty amount of Rs 142 billion has been allocated for this package.

He said that maintaining its track record, the present government is not going to impose any new tax and continue with the policy of putting no burden on the lower strata of the society regarding tax revenue collection. The government is adhering to a people-friendly policy of bringing the influential and wealthy people into tax club, he added. The Provincial Minister disclosed that there will be no new sales tax (ST) on services during next fiscal year, adding that besides giving relief in sales tax on services, no ST slab is increased on any service so as to facilitate the small businesses.

# WB, IFC delegation hold meetings with KP officials



Staff Reporter

PESHAWAR: A mission from World Bank Group and International Finance Corporation visited Peshawar on Friday. The mission was comprised of Mr. Douglas Zhihua Zeng Senior Economist, Ms. Kiran Afzal Senior Private Sector Specialist and

Mr. Charles Schneider Senior Private Sector Specialist.

The team called on the Additional Chief Secretary to deliberate on ongoing projects of GOKP with the support of WBG and IFC. CEO KP-BOIT also attended the meeting. Areas of cooperation were discussed during the meeting including mines & minerals processing zones in Newly Merged Districts, healthcare, I.T and Tourism. The Additional Chief Secretary requested World Bank and IFC team for cooperating in these areas.

The meeting was followed by a workshop session by the World Bank at the KP-Board

of Investment & Trade office on Special Economic Zones and Small Industrial Estates. At the start of the workshop session, CEO KP-BOIT, Dr. Hassan Daud Butt gave a brief presentation about KP, KPBOIT and its Role, the policy frameworks for industrialization in KP, and Investment opportunities in Key sectors in KP. The world bank delegation was also briefed about economic zones in Rahakai SEZ. The presentation was followed by a workshop session by Mr. Douglas.

The session focused on the global experiences of the countries with SEZs and SIEs and associated policy and regulatory frameworks including investors incentives, especially focusing on China. Moreover, topics like best practices for tax rebates and other incentives that can be offered by the public sector to SEZs & SIEs, and how to create congenial market conditions for developing the SEZs & SIEs were also discussed during the session.

# KCCI, CCP pledge to prevent anti-competitive practices

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Karachi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI) held an advocacy session with the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) where the representatives of the chamber apprised the CCP of different competition issues and sought its help in creating a level playing field and removing entry barriers in the different sectors.

From KCCI, the advocacy session was attended by President KCCI Muhammad Idrees, Vice President KCCI Qazi Zahid Hussain, KCCI Managing Committee Members, and from CCP by the Chairperson Ms. Rahat Kaunain Hassan, Member Mujtaba Ahmad Lodhi, and Director Generals Noman Laiq and Asfandiyar Khattak.

While speaking on the occasion, Ms. Rahat Kaunain Hassan said that the CCP has imposed penalties of up to Rs70 billion for different violations of the Competition Act on various sectors. However, the recovery remains paltry due to the fact that most of the undertakings have challenged the CCP's orders in the higher courts where the due process of judicial review is underway. The real effectiveness of the CCP's orders will be felt once the judicial review process is complete, particularly in the cartel cases that call for prioritization for the harm it incurs to the economy, she



KARACHI: President Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Muhammad Idrees presenting crest to Chairperson Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) during her visit to KCCI.

added. The Chairperson further said that as an institution, the CCP is accountable for its mandate, but in the pending cases, the review process has to take its course.

Ms. Rahat Kaunain Hassan said that as against the general impression, the CCP is not a price regulator, but it only intervenes where the prices of goods and services are affected by anti-competitive practices such as abuse of dominance and cartelization. The main job of the CCP is to make sure that markets are functioning in compliance with the competition rules and regulations. She further said that the CCP is not against businesses; rather the Competition Law is pro-business and pro-growth, however, without strict enforcement of the law, a competition culture cannot prevail. She informed that as per OECD reports/esti-

mates, prices can go down 25-30 percent if cartels are busted.

During the session, members of KCCI brought several issues and competition-related matters to the CCP's notice. The Chairperson offered that the CCP can change its regulations to exempt the Chambers of Commerce from charging of fee for filing formal complaints in endeavouring to address concern in resolving competition issues.

She informed that the informant reward scheme and leniency provisions are available which the business community can benefit from and help the CCP in identifying the anti-competitive issues. She assured the CCP's full support in resolving the competition issues and creating a level playing field.

# Steps taken for economic reforms are insufficient

*Tax system should be made balanced, says Mian Zahid Hussain*

Staff Reporter

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 Friday said the steps taken for reforming the economy are insufficient.

The recent measures have increased the burden on the people to an unbearable level and they have not been able to bear any more burden, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that instead of imposing more burden on the people, the elite should be targeted, tax should be imposed on agricultural income and failed companies

sucking six hundred billion rupees from the national treasury should be sold.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that power and gas line losses should be controlled which are over Rs700 billion while taxes on the industrial sector should be reduced which will speed up the industrialization process, develop the economy, provide employment to the people and generate billions of rupees in revenue for the government which can be used to provide relief to the people.

He said that the priorities of the governments have been wrong for decades due to

which now the government has to spend 71 percent of its revenue on interest payments while global market conditions, local political tensions and reckless use of resources have eroded confidence in the rupee which has led to a steady decline in its value, leading to further inflation and unrest.

The business leader noted that the government's response to the rapidly changing situation and challenges has been insufficient, which has exacerbated the economic woes.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the government should increase its revenue and reduce expenses to provide relief to the people as this is the only option.

The process of giving annual relief of about three thousand billion rupees to the elites should be stopped while one-third of that should be given to the poor.

At present, the government is spending Rs200 on current expenditure against earning Rs100 in revenue and it is importing different items worth 220 dollars against exports of 100 dollars due to which the debt has increased to Rs4 trillion which is enough to bankrupt the country.

In many developed countries, the number of cars owned by the government is less than 100 and no officer is given a car for personal use but the number of such cars in Pakistan is close to one and a half lakh.

# Business community to hold protest on Sunday

Staff Reporter

PESHAWAR: The business community on Sunday called for a peaceful protest on the call of former Prime Minister Imran Khan over rising inflation and further increase in petrol prices in the country.

Ghulam Bilal Javed President Peshawar Traders Chamber said that citizens are facing difficulties as everything including flour, ghee, poultry, pulses, vegetables and fruits are too expensive in different cities.

Speaking on the occasion, Ghulam Bilal Javed said that it was unfortunate for Pakistan that an incompetent, unprofessional, none serious and money launderer was imposed on 220 million

people of Pakistan, which destroyed Pakistan's economy in just two months.

Business leaders have demanded the Prime Minister to reverse the hike in prices otherwise all commodities including buses and wagons will become more expensive and the people will be overburdened with further inflation.

The meeting was attended by Major Arshad Mahmood, father of businessmen Amin Hussain Babar, Ghulam Hussain Chand, Sanaullah Khan Saraf, Shahriar Khan Saraf, Munawar Khurshid, Hasnain Shiraz, former advisor to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Arif Yusuf, Engineer Hamidul Haq, Nisar Babar, Haji Qadir and others.

# TECNO: Camon 19 Series launched

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: The globally eminent smartphone brand, TECNO unveiled its latest CAMON 19 series at Rockefeller Center, New York. The stylish phone comes with some of the best photography features for its fashionista users.

To overcome the traditional challenges associated with nighttime photography and low-light conditions, TECNO Camon 19 series comes with a 64MP bright night portrait photography technology and the industry's slimmest 0.98mm bezel. As released before, the phone supports Samsung's RGBW color filter sensor technology, which enables light intake to be enhanced by 30 percent.



Sharing his thoughts, Jack Guo, General Manager of TECNO said, "The TECNO CAMON 19 series is the answer for consumers around the world who are seeking a premium smartphone that combines style and performance with an elevated photographic experience". He added, "We're very proud to introduce the TECNO CAMON 19 series and continue to reinforce TECNO's commitment to exploring more possibilities in the fusion of technology, innovation, and design."

# Huawei: Fostering Talent Development to Strengthen Pakistan's ICT Infrastructure - I

Dr. Waqar Mehmood

In Pakistan, and in countries across the globe, the Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the growth of tech ecosystems, due to the growing human capital in the country and rising investments in technology startups. Multiple news publications in Pakistan reported that start-ups had raised US 240 million dollars in investment in 2021. The figure was US 66 million dollars in 2020. Technology has the potential to fundamentally alter how government works in Pakistan and can help fundamentally alter the cost, effectiveness, transparency, and efficiency of government.

To strengthen this promising dynamic for the future development of Pakistan, it is more necessary than ever to support digital talent. As a country of 220 million people, almost two-thirds of whom are under the age of 30, Pakistan draws natural comparisons to Indonesia - which has rapidly emerged as one of the most vibrant technology ecosystems outside the U.S. and China. The rapid emergence of Pakistan's technology ecosystem on the international stage has been no accident - it's the result of a confluence of changing facts on the ground and shifting dynamics in talent development as a result of the pandemic.

One company that has contributed vastly to this technological shift is Huawei Technologies Pakistan; for the past 24 years, other than providing B2B ICT solutions and services in Pakistan, the company has always been actively involved in technology transfer and local talent training in order to promote the development of the youth. One of Huawei's most prestigious programs to cultivate local ICT talent and sow its investment in the country's potential has been an annual international ICT competition that allows the winners of the domestic chapter of the competition to travel to China to compete in the final for a grand prize of US \$ 20,000. It provides

them a hands-on experience with exposure to other motivated, innovative, youthful individuals from all over the world to create an environment of progress and mutual learning.

In the last competition, more than 15,000 students and 450 universities across Middle East countries enrolled in the Huawei ICT Competition, of which 1000 students got the Huawei certification. Being an international competition, it is one of the most influential events in its field. Star pupil of team one, under the mentorship of Muhammad Salman from Huawei's Academy Support Center at UET Lahore, Bhagchand Meghwar won

despite coming from humble beginnings, stating, "I come from a village where there aren't a lot of resources on hand, so it is like a dream for me to win such a prestigious competition."

Pakistani teams were shining stars at the final competition stage in Riyadh. After going through a rigorous test, they proved their own capability, securing the first and second positions. A significant milestone that marked the start of a new chapter in the life of these students, their future career development and preparedness to be an active future contributor to Pakistan.

To be Concluded



## PK Pakistan's Adventure Tourism

# Event marks successful Belgian Expeditions of K2, Nanga Parbat

Event was arranged as a part of the diamond jubilee celebrations

### Spokesman Report

BRUSSELS: The Embassy of Pakistan Brussels organized an event about Pakistan's adventure Tourism, to mark successful Belgian expeditions of K2, Nanga Parbat and Broad Peak at the chancery.

The Ambassador of Pakistan to Belgium, Luxembourg and the European Union, Dr. Asad Majeed Khan welcomed the participants to the Embassy.

The participants included renowned Belgian mountaineers, Stef Maginelle, Sofie Lenaerts, Niels Jaspers, Luc Beirincx and Wouter Noterman, who had recently climbed K2, Nanga Parbat, Gasherbrum I & II and Broad Peak, as well as a group of trekkers who will be undertaking trekking expedition in Pakistan next month.

In his remarks, Ambassador Khan highlighted Pakistan's potential as one of the most attractive tourism destination in the world. He elaborated that Pakistan has the most beautiful and undiscovered touristic sites with huge untapped tourism potential. He explained that Pakistan's tourism industry has significantly developed with improved touristic infrastructure and visitor facilities.

Referring to the recently released report by the World Economic Forum (WEF) last month, Ambassador Khan highlighted that Pakistan has moved six points up in the International Travel and Tourism Development Index 2021.



The index ranks the countries based on the set of factors and policies that help stable and sustainable growth of the travel and tourism industry in each country, he added.

He said that the expedition of the Belgian climbers will be a source of inspiration to local and international travellers especially mountaineers, trekkers and adventure tourists.

During the event, the climbers shared their personal mountaineering experi-

ences at the K2, Nanga Parbat, Broad Peak, Gasherbrum I & II, Biafo Glacier and Snow lakes in Karakoram Mountains as well as their interaction with the hospitable local population from the area. They also shared video presentations of their mountaineering expeditions in Pakistan.

While speaking on the occasion, Mr. Niels Jaspers said that K2 is the most attractive Peak in the world and for him climbing K2 was a huge dream coming

true with extreme pleasure and excitement. In her remarks, Ms. Sofie Lenaerts said that the biggest reward of their visit to Pakistan was the connection which they made with the most friendly and hospitable local people of Pakistan. Whereas Mr. Jens said that "Pakistan is a hidden gem with amazing hospitality and mysterious attractions."

The event was arranged as a part of the diamond jubilee celebrations of the 75th Independence Day of Pakistan.

## Rickshaw adventure to promote sports tourism of Pakistan

### Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: A group of eight foreign tourists is departing for Khunjerab Pass via Babusar top by rickshaws.

The departure ceremony held at Pakistan Sports Board where leader of the team Julian shared his plan and earlier experiences of such ventures. He explained they are going to explore the life, culture, tourism and sports potential of mountain region of Pakistan.

Shahid Islam, the Deputy Director General, Pakistan Sports Board was the Chief Guest at this occasion. He warmly welcome the team and appreciated their choice to explore sports tourism in Pakistan.

Abu Zafar Sadiq, President, Alpine Club of Pakistan also highlighted the importance of mountain sports tourism in Pakistan.



He stressed the need of promotion of sports tourism in Pakistan. He hoped that the team would highlight their explored mountain tourism and sports world of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan through their Vlogs, stories and photography.

Ejaz Malik (R) Air Vice Marshal, from Discover Pakistan TV and magazine "Fascinating Pakistan" also appreciated the efforts Alpine Club of Pakistan to promote sports tourism in Pakistan. He assured that the team would not only enjoy the mountain treas-

ures while travelling to Khunjerab but hospitality of local would be a feast for them.

Karrar Haideri, Secretary, Akram Awan, Najeb Khatkhat, Abdul Wahid, Muhammad Tariq Abbasi, Unsa Kiyani were also present at this occasion.

## England smash world-record 498-4 against Netherlands

AMSTELVEEN: England hit a world record one-day international score of 498-4 against the Netherlands in Amstelveen on Friday, with three men scoring centuries in the run blitz.

Eoin Morgan's side beat their own mark of 481-6 set against Australia at Trent Bridge in 2018, in the first match of the three-game series. Jos Buttler, who finished on 162 not

out, plundered his ton off just 47 balls -- missing his own record for the fastest England century by just one ball -- while Phil Salt and Dawid Malan also made three figures. Liam Livingstone, batting at number six, made the fastest 50 in England's ODI history off just 17 balls -- the joint second-fastest of all-time. The men in blue made their intentions clear early in their innings when Salt

smacked Dutch right-arm medium pacer Shane Snater for six -- the first in slugfest of 25 sixes and 36 fours to follow -- in near-perfect batting conditions. The Lancashire-based right-hander pulled a short ball over deep-midwicket, landing just over the ropes to the ongoing delight of cheering England fans, many of whom made the trip by car across the Channel for the game.

## Multan Division crowned CA U19 divisional champions

### Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Three wickets apiece from Ali Arshad and Huzaifa Ayub led Multan Division to a seven-wicket win over Dera Ghazi Khan in the final of the Southern Punjab-leg of the inaugural Cricket Associations Divisional U19 Tournament. The 50-over final was played at the Multan Cricket Stadium.

Earlier, on Thursday, five Cricket Associations winners were decided. Loralai-Zhob Division, Lahore Division, Hazara-Mardan Division, AJK Division and Benazirabad-MirpurKhas were crowned champions in Balochistan, Central Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Northern and Sindh jurisdictions respectively.

**Southern Punjab Cricket Association**  
After being put into bat, D.G Khan Division were dismissed for 105 in

the 41st over against Multan Division. Opening batter Hamza Nawaz top-scored with a 74-ball 36, hitting five fours. Spinners Ali and Huzaifa bagged three wickets each for 21 and 17 runs, respectively.

In reply, Multan Division successfully chased down the target in the 26th over for the loss of three wickets. Muhammad Uzair Mumtaz top-scored with 29 off 43 balls. He also topped the batting chart in the Southern Punjab-leg with 236 runs from four outings in the tournament. Hamza Nawaz from D.G Khan Division was second on the list, scoring 223 runs from three matches.

Muhammad Aqib Asghar representing Sahiwal Division bagged seven wickets from three matches. D.G Khan's Muhammad Sheraz Khan took six wickets from three outings and Huzaifa Ayub representing Multan Division finished with five wickets from three matches.

**Balochistan Cricket Association**  
Loralai-Zhob Division won the tournament beating Quetta-Rakhsan Division by six wickets in the final held at the Bugti Stadium. Muhammad Uzair representing Quetta-Rakhsan Division scored 165 runs from four matches at 41.25. Muhammad Yousaf representing the champion team scored 161 runs from four outings in the tournament. Uzair's teammate Yasir Khan scored 159 runs at 39.75.

Ejaz Ahmed representing Loralai-Zhob Division took 10 wickets from four matches. Naseerabad-Sibi Division's Muhammad Qasim and Jahangir Khan Quetta-Rakhsan Division grabbed seven wickets apiece from three outings in the tournament.

Central Punjab Cricket Association  
The Central Punjab-leg was won by Lahore Division as they beat Faisalabad Division by 21 runs in the final held at the Pak Lions Cricket Academy Ground in Lahore. Ali Zoraiz

## Reigning Queen's champion Berrettini into last eight

LONDON: Reigning Queen's champion Matteo Berrettini needed three sets to see off Denis Kudla as he reached the quarter-finals of the grass-court tournament on Thursday.

Berrettini won 3-6, 7-6 (7/5), 6-4 but the victory was anything but straightforward for the 26-year-old. The Italian fell behind as his American opponent took a tight first set before Berrettini, beaten in last year's Wimbledon singles final by Novak Djokovic, edged a second set tie-breaker. Berrettini then broke serve in the ninth game of the deciding set before he served out for the match after a draining two hours and 47 minutes on a sun-drenched centre court at Queen's, in south-west London. World No 10 Berrettini will now play Tommy Paul in the semi-finals after the American's emphatic 6-1, 6-4 defeat of three-time Grand slam champion Stan Wawrinka.

The 37-year-old Wawrinka missed most of 2021 with a foot injury that required two surgeries and the Swiss player, now a lowly 290 in the world rankings, is trying to work his way back to form. Berrettini's success means there are at least two seeds still involved in the Wimbledon warm-up event following Marin Cilic's win on Wednesday. Rank outsider Ryan Peniston also remains involved, with the last British player left in the draw continuing a memorable week in front of his home crowd thanks to a three-set win over Argentina's Francisco Cerundolo.

The 26-year-old, playing in his first ATP Tour main draw, had already knocked out world number five and French Open finalist Casper Ruud on Tuesday. And Peniston, a lowly 180 in the rankings prior to this week, was at it again with a 6-0, 4-6, 6-4 win in two hours over Cerundolo that saw him into the last eight. Wimbledon wildcard Peniston survived cancer as a baby before going on to join the professional tennis ranks after learning his trade in France and at the University of Memphis. It took Peniston just 20 minutes to complete a first-set 'bagger' on Thursday but Cerundolo put paid to hopes of a quick win by levelling the match before breaking at the start of the decider.

## Medvedev cruises into Halle last-eight

HALLE WESTFALEN: World number one Daniil Medvedev defeated Ilya Ivashka for the second time in six days to reach the Halle grass court quarter-finals on Thursday.

Medvedev triumphed 7-6 (7/4), 6-3 over the 42nd-ranked Ivashka having also got the better of the Belarusian in the quarter-finals at 's-Hertogenbosch last week. Top seed Medvedev fought off three set points at 4-5 in the opening set before going on to clinch it in a tie-break. The second set was far more straightforward with the 26-year-old Russian wrapping up victory in one hour and 36 minutes. "He is a great player," said Medvedev.

"He had a lot of bad luck with injuries at the beginning of the season. At the end of last season he was playing really great tennis. "I've known him since I was very young, we actually played each other in Futures, Challengers, and on the ATP Tour. He beat me once in Davis Cup, which is a really important tournament. "He knows how to play well on grass, so I'm really happy that two times in a row I managed to pass a tough test." Medvedev next faces seventh seed Roberto Bautista Agut for a place in the semi-finals. Halle is a warm-up event for Wimbledon but Medvedev and his fellow Russian and Belarusian players won't be there after being banned following the invasion of Ukraine.

## Denisov fears for life after speaking out

MOSCOW: Former Russian international footballer Igor Denisov has said he fears for his life after criticising his country's invasion of Ukraine. "I don't know, maybe for these words they will put me in prison or kill me, but I tell you the facts," the 38-year-old said in an interview broadcast on YouTube.

"For me, it was not even a shock but a horror... a disaster," he continued of his initial reaction on hearing of the invasion. One of the rare Russian sporting figures to speak out against the war, Denisov insisted he "loves (his) country" and does not intend to leave Russia.

Russian authorities have introduced a law providing for up to 15 years in prison for any publication of information about the army deemed false, including the simple fact of using "war" or "invasion" to describe the conflict in Ukraine, which Denisov appeared to be doing in his interview, the words of which are then replaced by a crackle in the audio.

"I want everything to be good and peaceful here," continued the former Zenit Saint Petersburg midfielder who revealed he wrote to President Vladimir Putin asking him to stop the military operation. "I told him: 'I am ready to kneel in front of you'," he said. Denisov spent most of his career at Zenit and Lokomotiv Moscow, where he played until 2019. He was capped 54 times for Russia, including a spell as captain.

Already in January 2021 he spoke out in favour of jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny. Few Russian athletes have criticised the invasion of Ukraine, although on the first day of the operation, footballer Fedor Smolov posted a message on Instagram expressing his opposition.

## Magnussen living the dream despite nightmare run

MONTREAL: Back in Formula One after he thought that chapter in his life was over, Kevin Magnussen said on Thursday he is living a dream that not even frustrating engine failures and a nightmare string of DNF's can wake him from.

After 127 Formula One starts Magnussen arrives at this weekend's Canadian Grand Prix still chasing a maiden win but the Haas driver sounded more like a world champion than someone who has failed to finish three of his last four races.

The hard-charging Dane had an eye-opening start to his F1 comeback, picking up points in three of his first four races, including a superb fifth place in the season opener in Bahrain.

"Don't ever feel sorry for us," Magnussen told Reuters. "When you get an opportunity through the back door you don't expect it is very easy to enjoy and appreciate it."

"I was expecting Formula One to be a closed chapter in my life. I wasn't even dreaming it. It is more than a dream come true."

Magnussen's comeback is his second in a career that started with McLaren in 2014 before stalling after a year on the sidelines in 2015. Informed by email on his birthday that McLaren were casting him aside, he joined Renault at short notice before the start of the 2016 season and moved to U.S.-owned Haas for 2017.

At the end of the 2020 season, Haas parted company with both Magnussen and Romain Grosjean in favour of young guns Mick Schumacher, son of seven-times world champion Michael, and Russian Nikita Mazepin.

## Duplantis dominates at Oslo Diamond League

OSLO: Sweden's Mondo Duplantis battled through rain and cold to dominate the men's pole vault at the Oslo Diamond League on Thursday, while home favourite Jakob Ingebrigtsen raced to victory in the mile.

As large parts of Europe baked in unseasonably hot conditions, a soaked Duplantis came in at 5.60m and sailed over 5.80m with his closest rivals, the Norwegian pair of Sondre Guttormsen and Pal Haugen Lillefosse, both crashing out at 5.86m.

Duplantis cleared 5.92m before then setting a new meet record of 6.02m, a full 22cm ahead of the field.

"I felt good jumping despite it being a hectic day with the rain coming on and off-it was tiring coping with that but I'm happy with 6.02m," said world record holder and Olympic champion Duplantis. In the absence of injured 400m hurdler Karsten Warholm, all Norwegian eyes were on Ingebrigtsen in the famed 'Dream Mile' and he did not disappoint as he became the first home runner to win the race as five of the top seven posted personal bests.

both batters occupied the top two spots in the batting chart with 184 and 134 runs, respectively.

Muhammad Shoaib and Aimal Khan representing the champion team topped the bowling chart with 11 and 10 wickets, respectively. Muhammad Zubair from Peshawar-Kohat Division bagged nine wickets from four outings in the tournament.

**Northern Cricket Association**  
AJK Division defeated Gilgit Baltistan Division by 10 wickets to clinch the title at the House of Northern in Islamabad. Rawalpindi's Saad Masood with his all-round performance topped the batting and bowling charts. He scored 237 runs from three outings at 79 and bagged eight wickets. Faraz Khan representing AJK Division scored 187 runs from four matches. Gilgit Baltistan Division's Husnain Nadeem scored 165 runs from four matches with two half-centuries.

AJK Division's Abidullah grabbed eight wickets from four matches.

**Sindh Cricket Association**  
Benazirabad-MirpurKhas beat Karachi Division by eight wickets at the Academy Oval of Hanif Mohammad High Performance Centre in Karachi. Mirza Saad Baig, representing Karachi Division, topped the batting chart with 268 runs from four outings at 89.33. Mohammad Arbaaz Khan and Muhammad Hassan Iqbal representing the winning team occupied the second and third spot with 208 and 166 runs, respectively.

Shahzaib Aziz representing Benazirabad-MirpurKhas topped the bowling table with nine wickets from three matches. Abdul Moez, Mohammad Umar Sherani and Syed Tayyab Hussain representing Karachi Division, Benazirabad-MirpurKhas Division and Hyderabad Division, respectively bagged seven wickets apiece.