

Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فہرمان رسول
رسول اللہ ﷺ نے فرمایا کہ اچھے خواب اللہ کی طرف سے ہوتے ہیں اور برے شیطان کی طرف سے ہیں تم میں جو کوئی بر خواب دیکھے جو اسے ناپسند ہو تو اسے چاہئے کہ لڑائی یا کسی طرف تھوڑے اور اس سے اللہ کی پناہ مانگے وہ اسے ہرگز نقصان نہیں پہنچائے گا۔
(بخاری، حدیث نمبر 7005)
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Pakistan grateful to China for continued support: Bilawal

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari says Pakistan is grateful to President Xi Jinping, Foreign Minister Wang Yi and the people of China. The people of Pakistan are grateful for the continued support of their all-weather friend. Chinese consortium of banks has today signed the RMB 15 billion loan facility agreement, the people of Pakistan are grateful for the continued support of our all weather friends.



British, EU MPs to raise Kashmir issue: President AJK

Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) President Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhary says many members of Britain and European Union (EU) parliaments have committed to raise their voices against human rights violation in illegally Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK). The members also pledged to raise their voices against unjust conviction of Kashmiri leader Yaseen Malik.

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Investment

Islamabad: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chairing a meeting of a delegation of Bahraini businessmen lead by H.H Sheikh Khalid Mohammad Salman Al Khalifa on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

Thanks to expats as RDA deposits cross \$4.5b: PM

Says Pakistan to provide relief assistance to quake-hit Afghans

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday thanked the overseas Pakistanis for sending \$57 million in a day that helped the Roshan Digital Accounts cross \$4.5 billion in total deposits. "Happy that yesterday State Bank received \$57 million, the largest inflow in a day ever," he said in a tweet. The prime minister thanked the overseas Pakistanis for reposing trust in their motherland. He expressed full support and patronage to the Roshan Digital Account scheme. "Our government stands firmly behind the Roshan Digital Account scheme," he said. PM Sharif termed overseas Pakistanis an asset to the country, who always contributed positively towards strengthening the national economy. "We assure to come up to your expectations after overcoming the economic crisis," he said. He said the government was taking steps for providing facilitation to the expatriates. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday expressed grief over the loss of lives due to the earthquake in Afghanistan and vowed to provide relief assistance to the affected people. He said Pakistan would provide all possible assistance to the people of Afghanistan. "We are with our Afghan brothers and sisters in this difficult time," he remarked. Shehbaz said he had issued directives to the Pakistani authorities concerned to provide necessary relief assistance to the government of Afghanistan. "We are deeply saddened by the damage caused by the earthquake, especially in the Paktika region," he said.

Imran Khan's mental condition pitiable: Maryam

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PMLN) vice president Maryam Nawaz on Wednesday while lashing out at Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and the former Prime Minister Imran Khan said that she has started to feel pity over Imran Khan's mental condition. Taking to Twitter, the PML-N vice-president shared a screenshot in which Imran Khan said that he could not imagine that Shehbaz Sharif would be made the prime minister. Sharing this screenshot, Maryam Nawaz wrote that the poor man [Imran Khan] has been deeply and irreparably traumatized because as much as he worked hard to make false cases against Shehbaz Sharif and get him out of the field through foul play but Allah reversed his trick. Maryam Nawaz further wrote that even in his sleep, he would sing the tune of 'Neutral Neutral', adding that she has started to feel pity over his mental health.

NSC meeting

Talks with TTP to be held under constitution: Rana Sanaullah

Says negotiations will be given full ownership of the parliament

Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday chaired an in-camera meeting of the National Security Committee and discussed talks with proscribed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and situation along the Pak-Afghan border. The meeting was attended by national, parliamentary and political leadership, members of parliament and military leadership. It was informed that a committee led by the government and comprising civil and military representatives was holding talks with the TTP. But any final decision in this regard would be taken with the approval of the parliament under the Constitution of Pakistan and keeping in view the future guidance and complete consensus.

The meeting was attended by military leadership, leadership of



Islamabad: Federal Minister for Interior Rana Sana Ullah along with Federal Minister for Information & Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb, addressing a Press Conference in Islamabad on Wednesday.

the parliamentary parties, ministers, members of National Assembly and Senate and other officials. The meeting was briefed about the overall security situation in

on administrative matters of Pakistan-Afghanistan border maintaining that Pakistan has always played a very responsible and positive role for peace and stability in Afghanistan and will continue to do so. The meeting expressed the confidence that the Afghan soil will not be allowed to be used against Pakistan. The meeting maintained that Pakistan's efforts and sacrifices in war against terrorism have been acknowledged by the world.

After the meeting Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah said on Wednesday that talks with banned Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) will be held within the ambit of the law and the Constitution. Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah along with Information Minister Mariyum Aurangzeb held a press conference after attending NSC meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Pak-China sign \$2.3b loan facility agreement

Miftah says inflows are expected within a couple of days

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Wednesday signed a RMB 15 billion (\$2.3 billion) loan facility agreement with a Chinese consortium of banks which is expected to aid the depleting foreign exchange reserves and depreciation of the local currency. Finance Minister Miftah Ismail announced the development on his Twitter handle, revealing that the inflows are expected within a couple of days.

"We thank the Chinese government for facilitating this transaction," he said. The agreement with Chinese banks is expected to bolster the country's reserves and enable it to make import payments while lending some support

to the rupee as well which has lost over 34% since the start of the outgoing fiscal year 2021-22. The development comes as a massive relief to economic policymakers after foreign exchange reserves held by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) fell below \$9 billion as of June 10, with the level staying at less than six weeks of import cover.

Taking to his Twitter, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari also acknowledged China for its support. Bilawal wrote: "Grateful to President Xi Jinping, Foreign Minister Wang Yi and the people of China." He added that the people of Pakistan are grateful for the continued support of our all-weather friends.

Local POL production up by 0.33% in 10 months

Oil, gas reserves discovered in Punjab, Sindh

ISLAMABAD: Overall production of petroleum commodities has witnessed an increase of 0.33 percent during the first ten months of fiscal year 2021-22 as compared to corresponding period of fiscal year 2020-21. The Petroleum, Oil and Lubricants (POL) products that showed positive growth include Jet Fuel Oil, the production increased by 27.41 percent during the period under review, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

During July-April (2021-22), the production of Kerosene Oil, High Speed Diesel, Lubricating Oil, Jute Batching Oil, Solvent Naptha, and other petroleum products witnessing increase of 7.42 percent, 0.69 percent, 11.73 percent, 5.10 percent, 8.35 percent, and 9.85 percent respectively. However, the production of Kerosene Oil decreased 71.48 percent, Motor Spirits 16.86 percent, Diesel Oil NOS by 78.89 percent, Furnace Oil by 10.43 percent, Jute Batching Oil by 29.72 percent, Solvent Naptha by 42.98 percent, LPG 0.92 percent and Petroleum Products NOS by 2.08 percent, the data added.



On year-on-year basis, the production of POL products has witnessed an increase of 4.37 percent during April 2022 as compared to the output of April 2021. During the months under review, the production of Jet Fuel Oil increased by 43.97 percent, high Speed Diesel by 7.34 percent, and Lubricating Oil by 3.86 percent. However, the production of Kerosene Oil decreased 71.48 percent, Motor Spirits 16.86 percent, Diesel Oil NOS by 78.89 percent, Furnace Oil by 10.43 percent, Jute Batching Oil by 29.72 percent, Solvent Naptha by 42.98 percent, LPG 0.92 percent and Petroleum Products NOS by 2.08 percent, the data added.

It is pertinent to mention here that the overall output of Large Scale Manufacturing Industries (LSMI) in the country during the first ten months of fiscal year 2021-22 witnessed positive growth of 6.7 percent as compared to the output of the corresponding months of last year. LSMI Quantum Index Number (QIM) was recorded at 160.1 points during July-April 2021-22 against 150.0 points during July-April 2020-21, showing growth of 6.7 percent.

Oil and Gas Development Company Ltd (OGDCL) said on Wednesday that new gas and oil reserves discovered in District Tando Allahyar area of Sindh.

GSP+ status

EU monitoring mission lands in Pakistan

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: The European Union's (EU) monitoring mission to verify Pakistan's eligibility for the renewal of the country's GSP+ status arrived in Pakistan on Wednesday. According to the ministry of trade, the mission would analyze issues such as human rights, child labour, labour rights and others. The mission would verify the 27 conventions fulfilled by Pakistan, and Pakistan will get its GSP+ status renewed, the ministry added.

Officials say that Pakistan did its best to fulfil all requisitions for the GSP+ status, 5 more conventions will have to be fulfilled after the renewal of the GSP+ status. The renewal of the status would result in increased exports to the European Union, the Trade Ministry said. It is to be noted that a panel of 4 EU vice presidents and over 30 members of the parliament had assured former governor Punjab Chaudhry Sarwar of the renewal of the GSP+ status.

Never thought of appointing army chief of my choice: Imran Khan

Says they feared I would appoint Lt Gen Faiz Hameed as army chief

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan on Wednesday while taking a dig at the government said that he had never thought about appointing army chief of his choice. Addressing a seminar here, he said that he had told 11 years ago that the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) will join hands. He said that their only purpose is to protect themselves from accountability. Reacting to the recent statement of federal minister Khurram Dastagir, Imran Khan said that he had never thought about appointing army chief of his choice, adding that he had never compromised on merit throughout his life. Taking a jibe at the rulers, the former PM said that he had started struggle against them 26 years ago, adding that he had told 26 years ago that former PM and PML-N supreme Nawaz Sharif and former president and PPP co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari are plunderers.

The PTI chairman went on to say that they [Nawaz Sharif and Asif Zardari] only level allegations against each other's during the election days, adding that he had no doubt that they would join hands when he [Imran Khan] came to power. "They toppled my government out of the fear that I would appoint Lt Gen Faiz Hameed



as new army chief," he added. Imran Khan maintained that the US doesn't do regime change for the betterment of

PTI chief addresses a seminar on "Regime Change Conspiracy and Pakistan's Destabilization".

the country but for their own benefits. He asked if it was in Pakistan's interest to allow US to have a base in the country.

"Pakistan was devastated in the war on terror with bomb blasts" he said and added the head of our country was threatened over not participating in the war on terror. "I know tribal areas more than anyone else does and there was complete peace in tribal areas before war on terror." The PTI chairman said that media was heavily bribed before regime change, adding that he was called "Taliban Khan" and the whole media bashed him for opposing war.

Imran Khan that the parties in the coalition government were "afraid" he would appoint Lieutenant General Faiz Hameed as the next chief of army staff. "They were afraid that I wanted to appoint Lt Gen Faiz

Tariff rationalization

Islamabad: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Mr. Miftah Ismail presided over the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet at Finance Division on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

Punjab Assembly approves Finance Bill 2022-23

Laghari terms budget as a pro-poor and pro-development budget

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The provincial assembly on Wednesday passed the Punjab Finance Bill 2022-23 with the majority. Punjab Finance Minister Awais Laghari moved the Punjab Finance Bill 2021 which later the government passed amid empty Opposition benches. Chief Minister Hamza Shahbaz was also present in the house.

Punjab Assembly passed budget proposals worth over Rs27 trillion for the upcoming fiscal year's budget. For ensuring law and order in the province in the next fiscal year of 2022-23 over Rs1.49 trillion was approved by the Punjab Assembly. For Education, Rs81.5 billion, for health, Rs1.83 trillion were approved by the provincial assembly.

Allocation of Rs20.4 billion was passed with the majority for the agriculture sector and Rs24.9 billion for the irrigation department. Proposal worth Rs8.9

billion was passed for the communication and Rs1.1 trillion for the construction of roads and bridges in Punjab during FY-2022-23.

Rs.3.1 trillion has been okayed for the provision of pensions to the retired employees in Punjab, while Rs42.6 have been allocated for the provision of subsidies. Rs55.5 billion have been approved for the investment in the province, while Rs.11.4 billion have been allocated for the industries in Punjab. All the budget proposals were passed with a majority in the house.

The Punjab budget was marred by uncertainties and was presented on June 15 after considerable delay and at a different venue than the conventional one as the treasury and Opposition benches failed to reach a consensus over convening a session. Laghari had unveiled the provincial budget for the fiscal year 2022-23, terming it a "pro-poor and pro-development budget".

Details of budget include Rs1,712 billion have been

kept for running expenditures. The total outlay of the development budget is Rs685 billion. Province is expected to receive over Rs2,020 trillion from the federal divisible pool. Over Rs500 billion are expected to be collected under the head of provincial receipts. Under the chief minister's relief package, Rs200 billion will be allocated for providing wheat at a cheaper rate.

Another relief package worth Rs142 billion has been proposed, including the selling of edible items at a lower cost, subsidised transport costs, and other facilities for farmers. For the health sector, Rs470 billion have been allocated. Rs485.26 billion have been allocated to the education sector. Rs428.56 billion have been kept for the non-development budget. For the development budget, Rs56.70 billion has been kept aside. Govt has decided to increase the salaries of government employees by 15% and pensions by 5%

PPP to support PML-N in by-polls

Hassan Murtaza says our candidates will withdraw their nomination papers

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The PPP on Wednesday announced that the party would support PML-N's candidates who will take part in the upcoming by-elections on the 20 vacant seats of the Punjab Assembly. The seats had fallen vacant after the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had de-seated PTI's dissident lawmakers for voting against party policy. The polling will take place on July 17, as per the ECP schedule that was issued on May 26. Meanwhile, the nomination papers for the by-elections can be submitted from June 4 to 7 and this will be followed by the returning officers carrying out scruti-

ny of the nomination papers till June 11. However, the appeals against the returning officers' decisions can be filed till June 15.

"In view of the country's interest, the PPP has decided to support the PML-N's candidate for all the 20 vacant seats," PPP provincial minister Hassan Murtaza said while addressing a joint press conference flanked by PML-N's Attaullah Tarar and Malik Ahmad Khan. Both the parties, however, will remain political rivals during the next general elections, clarified the PPP's leader.

However, the PPP's candidates will withdraw their nomination papers for the upcoming by-elections on the seats.

PTI to challenge NAB law amendments tomorrow: Fawad

Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Former information and broadcasting minister Fawad Chaudhry on Wednesday said Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is going to challenge amendments in the NAB law, tomorrow. PTI has acquired the services of senior lawyer Khawaja Haris, who would file the PTI's petition against the National Accountability (Second Amendment) Bill 2021 under Article 184 (3) of the Constitution. Fawad Chaudhry has confirmed acquiring the services of Khawaja Haris, the same lawyer who once defended his bitter rival Nawaz Sharif in an accountability court.

Earlier, the former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan announced to challenge amendments to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) law in Supreme Court (SC). Addressing a press conference, the former premier strongly criticised the NAB amendments and said that the changes in the law will pave the corruption in Pakistan as the powerful people would not fear punishment now. "These rulers should be put in jail for their shamelessness."

IMF deal

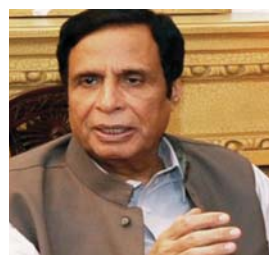
Hammad Azhar warns public of inflation, unemployment

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Hammad Azhar on Wednesday warned public to get ready for further inflation as government of Pakistan locked the loan deal with International Monetary Fund (IMF). Taking to Twitter, the former minister said that the incumbent governments is in talks with the IMF for "inflation package". While he added that the government has yielded in front of IMF. He further said a flood of unemployment will come in the country.

Hammad also said that the "imported government" will be working on every tactic to forge the next general elections by stealing the rights of voters. Pakistan is getting closer to receiving IMF loan tranche as the major development surfaced wherein Pakistan side and IMF reached an understanding. According to sources familiar with the development, the IMF agreed with Pakistan's economic measures and budget targets.

Punjab govt is 'phony': Elahi



Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League - Quaid (PML-Q) leader and Punjab Assembly speaker Pervaiz Elahi on Wednesday while taking a dig at the Punjab government said that a fake government is established in Punjab. During the meeting with the delegation of PML-Q Khushab group, Pervaiz Elahi said a fake government is established in Punjab and these fake rulers do not have the support of the people.

He further said that inflation and increase in petrol prices have made life difficult for the common man, and destroyed the national economy too. Talking about the IMF agreement, he said the incumbent government is making unilateral agreements and accepting all the conditions while they are blaming Imran Khan for their blunders. Imran Khan has nothing to do with current IMF agreement and inflation, he added.

The PA speaker while giving instructions to the party functionaries and workers of all the districts of Punjab regarding the by-elections said that in the by-elections we will give full support to the PTI and run their election campaign together with the PTI candidates and a door-to-door public relations campaign should be launched; corner meetings and meetings should be held.

Govt will hike petrol, power price from July 1: Tarin

Says govt to impose 50pc petroleum levy on people

Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Former Finance Minister Shaukat Tarin on Wednesday claimed that government will increase petrol and electricity price from July 1. Addressing a press conference, the former minister claimed that IMF had refused to release the loan tranche before budget so the Shehbaz Sharif led government presented the finance bill hurriedly. Shaukat Tarin added that right now inflation stands at 28 percent which is likely to increase to 35-40 percent while government is only targeting a growth rate of 5 percent. He further said that incumbent government wanted to come in power just to amend NAB and election laws for their benefit.

Shaukat Tarin claimed that the incumbent govern-



ment will impose 50 percent petroleum levy on the people because the current rulers have promised the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Shaukat said when the PTI government came into power there was a deficit of \$19 billion in 2018 because Ishaq Dar's economic policies damaged the economy of \$33 billion, adding that the current rulers are going towards fixed tax system and they have promised the IMF to impose 50 percent petroleum levy on the people.

He said that the coalition government "should have purchased cheap oil from Russia" as the previ-

ous Imran Khan-led government had already written a letter in this regard. Tarin lamented that the matter with Russia "was not taken forward". "They have taken a step back into purana Pakistan and haven't taken any concrete decisions in the last six weeks," he said, highlighting that amid the "indecision", the rupee lost its value against the US dollar. "Our [PTI government's] approach was progressive while theirs is in line with purana Pakistan," he said. Endorsing former prime minister Imran Khan's stance regarding an alleged "foreign conspiracy", Tarin claimed that soon everybody will know whose hand is behind the economic instability. "The government is taking one step forward and two backwards," Tarin said, criticising them for their "poor management".

Pakistan, IMF reach on deal to revive loan program

IMF to share staff-level agreement with Pakistan tomorrow

Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is getting closer to receiving IMF loan tranche as the major development surfaced wherein Pakistan side and IMF reached an understanding. According to sources familiar with the development, the IMF agreed with Pakistan's economic measures and budget targets. Sources said that the agreement was reached after the government took measures to satisfy the terms and conditions laid forth by the IMF for the resumption of the \$6-billion loan program. Accordingly, the Pakistan side agreed to increase the tax target from Rs7,005 billion to Rs7,450 billion and custom duty from Rs950 billion to Rs1005 billion for the next fiscal.

The sources said the petroleum levy has also been readjusted as the levy of Rs5 per liter will be imposed and 11 percent sales tax will also be collected on the petroleum products. Meanwhile, reports suggested that the Pakistan is also likely to increase tax rates in higher income slabs. IMF Resident Representative in Pakistan, Esther Perez Ruiz also



said, "Discussions between the IMF staff and the authorities on policies to strengthen macroeconomic stability in the coming year continue, and important progress has been made over the FY23 budget."

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) will release a handout tomorrow (Friday), detailing a staff-level agreement reached with Pakistan, following

successful talks over budgetary estimates and other financial policies. The development came in the late-night talks between the IMF and finance ministry officials led by Minister Miftah Ismail. According to IMF officials, talks are underway between the Fund and the Pakistan government and both sides have so far agreed to budgetary estimates for the next fiscal year.

Govt believes in accountability of all: Ahsan

Says NAB law amended to promote transparency, run affairs smoothly

Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday said that the government believes in accountability of all and no one is above the law. He said that the incumbent government believed in transparency that was why amendments were made in the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) law to run state affairs smoothly. Addressing a presser along with former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi in Islamabad on Wednesday, he said no one should be afraid of amend-

ments in National Accountability Bureau law. The Planning Minister assured that the sitting government will not use it against political opponents as it was the practice of Imran Khan Government.

Ahsan Iqbal said the PTI government took record loans during its tenure and the country was pushed into deteriorating economic crisis. Speaking on the occasion, former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said the government should dissolve the NAB and hold its employees accountable for looting money and torturing people for years. Replying to a question

he said proceedings against the PML-N leadership in NAB cases should continue and be telecast live to the public. He said we are not afraid of accountability and claimed that the former chairman NAB was fully under control of the then prime minister Imran Khan.

The minister said that the amendments were the same as proclaimed by the former Prime Minister Imran Khan to be necessary to run businesses and administrative systems in the country. The minister said, the amendments were made keeping in view the decisions of Supreme

Court, High Court and Council of Islamic Ideology adding that these high forums had directed incorporation of amendments to remove NAB law's contradiction with constitution and law. He said that Imran Khan was now trying to deceive people that the incumbent government was making the amendments for its own benefits.

However, the minister said, the amendments were based on those arguments which Imran Khan himself would argue for amending the law. He said that the former prime minister would argue that due to NAB law, the

bureaucracy had left working and the investors were not investing as this black law was hurdle in the way. He said, Imran Khan should listen his own speeches in which he had given extensive arguments in favour of these amendments. Ahsan Iqbal said that nobody should be put behind bars without listening him/her. He said, the NAB law was hurdle in running economy and systems of the country so there was need to correct it for smooth functioning of different affairs of the country.

He lamented that nowadays people of the country

were being lectured by a person (Imran Khan), during whose government Pakistan's ranking in corruption worsened while corruption mafias were promoted to loot and plunder. He said, the negative politics of Imran Khan had been exposed as he failed to prove a single paisa of corruption in development funding of Rs 3200 billion made during PML-N tenure. In addition, the previous government also failed to prove that any personal interest was involved in \$29 billion China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects.

Under ECO framework

Pakistan, Turkmenistan agree to enhance defense coop

Ambassador of Turkmenistan, Atadjan Movlamov appreciates Pakistan's Defence capabilities

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Turkmenistan, Atadjan Movlamov called on Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif here on Wednesday.

Focus of the meeting was to look into ways to enhance and strengthen mutual cooperation in the field of defence between two countries.

"Pakistan continues to maintain and will further enhance cooperation with Turkmenistan within the framework of ECO and other Regional and International organisations", said Defence Minister while expressing his views. He further reiterated that MoU on



Defence cooperation (2015) between the two countries should be implemented in its true letter and spirit. Pakistan and Turkmenistan share

common goal of regional stability, security, peace and thus both countries can closely collaborate in implementation of counter-terrorism measures.

Ambassador of Turkmenistan, Atadjan Movlamov, appreciated Pakistan's Defence capabilities and opined that two countries have good potential for extensive collaboration in the field of defence and for economic cooperation. Both sides showed satisfaction and intended to collaborate in various areas of common interest, including security, counter terrorism and ensuring the connectivity between the two countries through road and rail via Afghanistan to enhance the economic activity in the region.

PANAH President condoles demise of Masood Khawaja

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH) President Maj Gen (ret'd) Masood-ur-Rehman Kayani and General Secretary Sanaullah Ghumman in their joint statement expressed deep sorrow over the demise of renowned drama and stage actor Masood Khawaja and they said that Masood Khawaja is not only a good actor but also a man of humanity. He was a dynamic and sincere member of the PANAH, who helped the PANAH in raising public awareness of health issues.

He not only participated in activity of PANAH, but also brought other artists with him, and played a vital role in conveying the message of PANAH to the people. PANAH prays for the forgiveness of Masood Khawaja and for the patience of his family.

PPL facilitates underprivileged youth for HPE



Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL) has collaborated with University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore (UET-L) for execution of mechanism for direct disbursement of funds under PPL's Higher Professional Education (HPE) Scholarship Scheme to UET-L which will act as a hub for itself and three other universities in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

In order to conclude the process optimization, a meeting between representatives of PPL and the four universities, including UET-L, University of Engineering and Technology, Taxila, University of Engineering and Technology, Peshawar and Khawaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology, Rahim Yar Khan, was held at UET-L campus on June 21. PPL's General Manager Corporate Services Syed Mahmood ul Hassan and Vice Chancellor UET-L, Dr. Syed Mansoor Sarwar along with representatives of the other three universities attended the meeting.

During the meeting matters pertaining to announcement dates, student progress, timely release of funds and documentary evidence were discussed and agreed. The merit-based scholarships are awarded in Engineering, Medicine, Information Technology, Business Administration and Education. At present, 25 PPL scholars are enrolled at these universities under this Scheme which has enabled access to quality higher education particularly for under-privileged youth belonging to the company's producing areas. So far, around 500 students have benefitted from this scheme which commenced in 2005.

Renewable energies indispensable for sustainable economy

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Renewable energies are indispensable for a climate-friendly and sustainable economy. Also, due to their decentralized nature, they distribute economic opportunities equally across all countries - since everyone has access to wind, sun, etc.

To celebrate this great transformation, the first Saturday after the summer solstice was proclaimed as WorldREnewDay by Global100RE and Ruslana in 2019 for the first time. On this day, the dawn of the solar age is to be celebrated and experienced in its social and cultural dimensions.

In view of the war in Ukraine and its direct connection to the fossil and nuclear energy industry, the focus in 2022, on 25 June, will be on the peace-making potential of renewable energies in the world. This also reflects the important role of Ruslana Lyzhichko, Ukrainian ESC winner, Maidan activist and ambassador for 100% renewable energy.

The celebration is to take place as a hybrid event in Bonn, broadcasted internationally. Speeches on various aspects are to be presented on a stage and a cultural program with music is also to be presented. The initiative from the Ahr Valley to the SoLARital should also be presented as a concrete German project and as a direct response to the devastating consequences of climate change.

Protest

KARACHI: Traders of electronics market at Sadar hold a protest against loadshedding in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Special Technology Zones to be launched in Sindh

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: A high-level delegation of the Special Technology Zones Authority (STZA), led by Chairman Amer Hashmi, visited the Sindh Secretariat in Karachi, where they held a working meeting with a delegation of the Sindh Secretariat. The Sindh Secretariat delegation was led by Dr Sohail Rajput the Chief Secretary of Sindh, including Asif Ikram Secretary of Information, Science and Technology and Special Assistant to the CM on IT Tanzeela Umi Habiba.

The Chairman STZA explained how the authority is implementing its National Roll-out plan, under which Special Technology Zones (STZs) are being developed across the country,

where numerous opportunities will be created for Pakistan's burgeoning technology industry to thrive under international benchmarks. He further elaborated that STZA was making efforts to support the technology industry at the grassroots level by offering globally competitive incentives to the small, medium, and large-scale technology organizations as well as enabling the rapidly growing freelancers' market in Pakistan.

Javaid Iqbal, the Chief Commercial Officer of STZA presented the Innovation Clusters Strategy, under which high potential technology clusters across the country would offer incentives and regulatory support. Furthermore, the STZA also briefed about recent technology investment poten-

tial in Sindh province. The Sindh Secretariat leadership lauded the initiatives taken by STZA and expressed their full support and commitment to closely collaborating with STZA to pursue programs and initiatives for the fast-paced growth of the technology sector in Sindh.

The Chairman STZA thanked the Sindh Secretariat for their support for these initiatives and stated that the collaboration of government, academia and industry, will foster innovation, and provide opportunities for the youth in the Sindh technology ecosystem. He also pledged STZA's resolute support for launching Special Technology Zones in Sindh and expressed his desire to work closely with all stakeholders to achieve this objective.

President urges people to get Corona booster dose



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi Wednesday urged the people to get their coronavirus booster doses on time.

During his visit to F-9 Park Mass Vaccination Center, he stressed that the nation would have to face the pandemic collectively as the fight against Covid 19 was still continuing.

The president and Begum Samina Alvi arrived at the vaccination center where they were administered Covid 19 booster doses.

Uplift of underprivileged segments of society Govt's top priority: PM AJK



Abdul Majeed Tahir

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan has said that his government would use all available resources to uplift the weaker and underprivileged segments of the society in Azad Kashmir.

The PM made these remarks while talking to Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Khalid Khurshid, former Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir Sardar Abdul Qayyum Niazi and others who visited him at his residence here on Wednesday. Chaudhry Muhammad Rashid, Chaudhry Azhar Sadiq, Chaudhry Yasir Sultan, Member Legislative Assembly Ms. Intiaz Naseem, Member Kashmir Council Shuja Rathore, PTI Central Leader

Mian Shafiq Jagvi and others were also present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, the prime minister while reiterating his government's commitment to serve the masses said, "PTI's sole mission is to serve people with utmost honesty and for that purpose we will use all the resources to uplift the lower class in Azad Kashmir and solve the problems of the people".

He said that the people of the AJK reposed their trust in the leadership of the PTI. "They trusted us and brought us to power", he said, adding that the PTI government would leave no stone unturned to fulfill promises it had made with the people of Azad Kashmir during its pre-election campaign.

VC UAJK calls for equipping youth with the necessary skills



Staff Reporter

MUZAFFARABAD: Terming the youth as a valuable national resource for the socio-economic development of the country, Vice-Chancellor University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Prof Dr. Muhammad Kaleem Abbasi has called for equipping young people with the necessary skills they need in the future.

This he stated while chairing a meeting of heads of the various directorates of the university including the directorate of Youth Engagement, Directorate of Sports, Directorate of Students Affairs, Business Incubation Center, Directorate of Office of Research, Innovation, and

Commercialization (ORIC). He emphasized the need to prepare young people for adult life and the workforce by focusing on career development services and support. Education, he said, is an important element for not only economic and social advancement but also for the sustainable futures of our young people.

If we want to build sustainable futures, we will have to engage them to achieve all the skills they need to address the future. The meeting was held in follow-up to the Prime Minister of Pakistan's Youth Program Consultation Meeting with Vice-Chancellors held last week at Prime Minister's Office in Islamabad.

SECP notifies draft Asset Backed Securitization Regulations

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has notified draft Asset Backed Securitization Regulations, 2022 (The "Regulations") for public consultation. These regulations provide mechanism for asset backed securitization covering all aspects of the securitization process.

Currently, asset backed securitization is governed by Asset Backed Securitization Rules, 1999 (the "Rules") and the subsequent Regulations are drafted to provide holistic regulatory framework under the Rules.

JS Bank partners with Daraz



Staff Reporter

KARACHI: JS Bank, one of the fastest-growing Banks in Pakistan, recently signed a strategic partnership with Daraz, the country's leading e-commerce platform to enhance support to sellers for their business expansion on the Daraz marketplace through the JS Kamyab Jawan Program.

Under this partnership, JS Bank aims to offer businesses loans of up to Rs 25 million to empower the youth under the initiative of the Kamyab Jawan Program. This facility will cater to the existing base of 63,000 plus sellers on the Daraz marketplace and allow them to expand their business operations and manage smooth cash flows with the support of this financing scheme.

The agreement was signed between Atif Salim Malik, Group Head Retail Banking- JS Bank and Syed Zeeshan Ali, Director Digital Payments, Daraz and the signing ceremony was graced by senior officials from both the institutions.

Speaking at the occasion, Atif Salim Malik, said "From 2012, Daraz has come a long way and we are proud to be aligned with the country's leading e-commerce platform. We look forward to this partnership to help sellers grow their business operations. Through this collaborative effort, we are hopeful to create a long-term positive impact across the e-commerce ecosystem."

Syed Zeeshan Ali, Director Digital Payments, Daraz commented on the partnership "Daraz continues to strengthen its ecosystem to accelerate growth for its sellers. We are excited to partner with JS Bank to provide financing solutions to Daraz sellers. JS Bank partnership will enable Daraz sellers to get access to capital under JS Bank's Kamyab Jawan Programme. As sellers continue to grow their business on Daraz, this partnership will facilitate growth through convenient access to capital enabling sellers to invest for future growth. We look forward to working with JS Bank for providing convenient financing solutions to Daraz sellers."



Islamabad
23° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 3:14 am
Zohr 12:10 pm
Asr 5:10 pm
Maghrib 7:22 pm
Isha 9:06 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

Pakistan committed to enhance bilateral ties with Canada: PM

HC Ms. Wendy Gilmour conveyed her Govt's deep appreciation for Pakistan's continued coop with Canada

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Ms. Wendy Gilmour, High Commissioner for Canada called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif here on another day. During the course of their conversation, the Prime Minister discussed Pakistan-Canada long-standing relationship, which is marked by cordiality and friendship.

The Prime Minister expressed his Government's strong resolve to redouble its efforts to enhance and expand bilateral cooperation with Canada in areas of mutual interest, in particular, trade, investment, energy, health and education.

While briefing the High Commissioner on Government's business friendly policies, the Prime Minister invited the Canadian companies to take advantage of these policies to make investment in Paki-



stan. Speaking of his confidence that the Reko-Diq project would generate jobs and create economic activity especially for the people of Balochistan, the Prime Minister expressed his hope that Barrick Gold would soon commence its work on the site so as to begin reaping dividends from the project.

The High Commissioner stated that the Canadian companies would be encouraged to explore economic and investment opportunities in Pakistan. In the region-

al context, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif underscored the imperative of maintaining peace and stability in Afghanistan, while urging the international community to step up its efforts to avert humanitarian and economic crises in that country.

Ms. Wendy Gilmour conveyed her Government's deep appreciation for Pakistan's continued cooperation with Canada, particularly with regard to the evacuations in the aftermath of developments in

Afghanistan post-15 August 2021. On Ukraine, while reaffirming Pakistan's principled position to uphold international law and the UN Charter, the Prime Minister urged the international community to remain engaged in the search for a peaceful resolution to the grave problem, through diplomacy and dialogue.

Prime Minister Sharif also shared with the High Commissioner that Pakistan had dispatched four consignments of humanitarian aid to the people of Ukraine. Noting that there was an active Pakistani diaspora in Canada, the Prime Minister emphasized the importance of enhancing people-to-people contacts and high-level exchanges. He also stressed that both countries needed to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties in a befitting manner.

Health Corner

New safe-sleep guidelines aim to reduce infant deaths

ISLAMABAD: The American Academy of Pediatrics has updated its safe-sleep guidelines for infants for the first time in more than five years, emphasizing that babies should sleep on their backs on flat, level surfaces to reduce their risk of Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

It's estimated that there are 3,500 sleep-related infant deaths in the United States each year. Many of those deaths are preventable, and the authors of the new guidelines are urging parents to take simple steps to help keep their children safe.

"The best way to protect your baby while they are asleep is to follow these guidelines," said UVA Children's Rachel Moon, MD, the lead author of the new guidelines, which come from the AAP's Task Force on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and the AAP's Committee on Fetus and Newborn. "When you place your baby for sleep, they should be on their back in a crib, portable crib or bassinet that meets Consumer Product Safety Commission standards, and there should be nothing but the baby in the crib."

The United States made great progress in preventing infant deaths during the 1990s, after a public-education campaign urged parents to put their babies to sleep on their backs. But the decline in deaths has been stalled for more than 20 years. Safe-sleep experts say more can be done, and hope the new guidelines spur fresh action.

The recommendations, published online today in the scientific journal Pediatrics, include: Babies should sleep on their back on a firm, flat, non-inclined surface free of soft goods, such as blankets and toys. These items, while appealing to many parents, can pose suffocation hazards. The sleep surface should, at minimum, comply with all federal safety standards. Any inclined surfaces, including car seats, strollers, infant carriers and infant slings, should be avoided for routine sleeping, especially for infants younger than 4 months. Swaddling has not been shown to reduce the risk of SIDS. If babies are swaddled, they should always be placed on their back. Weighted swaddles or weighted objects within swaddles are unsafe. Swaddling should be stopped when a baby starts trying to roll over, usually at 3 or 4 months or earlier, as the swaddle can pose a suffocation hazard.

Parents should avoid devices marketed to reduce the risk of SIDS or other sleep-related deaths. There is no evidence for such claims, and they may lull parents into a false sense of security.

While there is no contraindication to using home cardiorespiratory monitors or wearable monitors, there is no evidence that using them will prevent SIDS. Families who decide to use these monitors should still follow the safe sleep guidelines.

Parents should sleep in the same room as baby, but not in the same bed.

Other recommendations include breastfeeding, when possible; any breast milk, experts say, is better than none. Both breastfeeding and pacifier use are associated with reduced risk of SIDS. Parents should also avoid using drugs and alcohol or exposing babies to drugs and alcohol.

In addition, parents are advised that awake "tummy time" is important to facilitate infant development. Babies should not be left to sleep on their stomachs, however. (Courtesy: Science Daily)



Hina Rabbani to represent Pakistan at CHOGM



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar, would pay an official visit to Kigali, Rwanda to lead Pakistan's delegation to the 26th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) on 24-25 June 2022. She will also attend the Pre-CHOGM Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting (CFAMM) on 23 June 2022. The Minister of State would also hold bilateral meetings with several world leaders on the sidelines of the event.

The leaders of the 54 member countries of the Commonwealth would hold discussions, among others, on issues related to the youth, technology and innovation and various global challenges including climate change, post-covid recovery and economic crises, particularly in the context of present conflict in Europe. Besides the CHOGM Communiqué titled "Delivering a Common Future: Connecting, Innovating, Transforming", various important documents such as Kigali Declaration on Child Care and Protection Reform, Commonwealth Living Lands Charter, and Declaration on Sustainable Urbanization are also expected to be adopted.

Eye-catching

ISLAMABAD: A view of cloudy weather during pleasant weather in morning hours in Federal Capital.

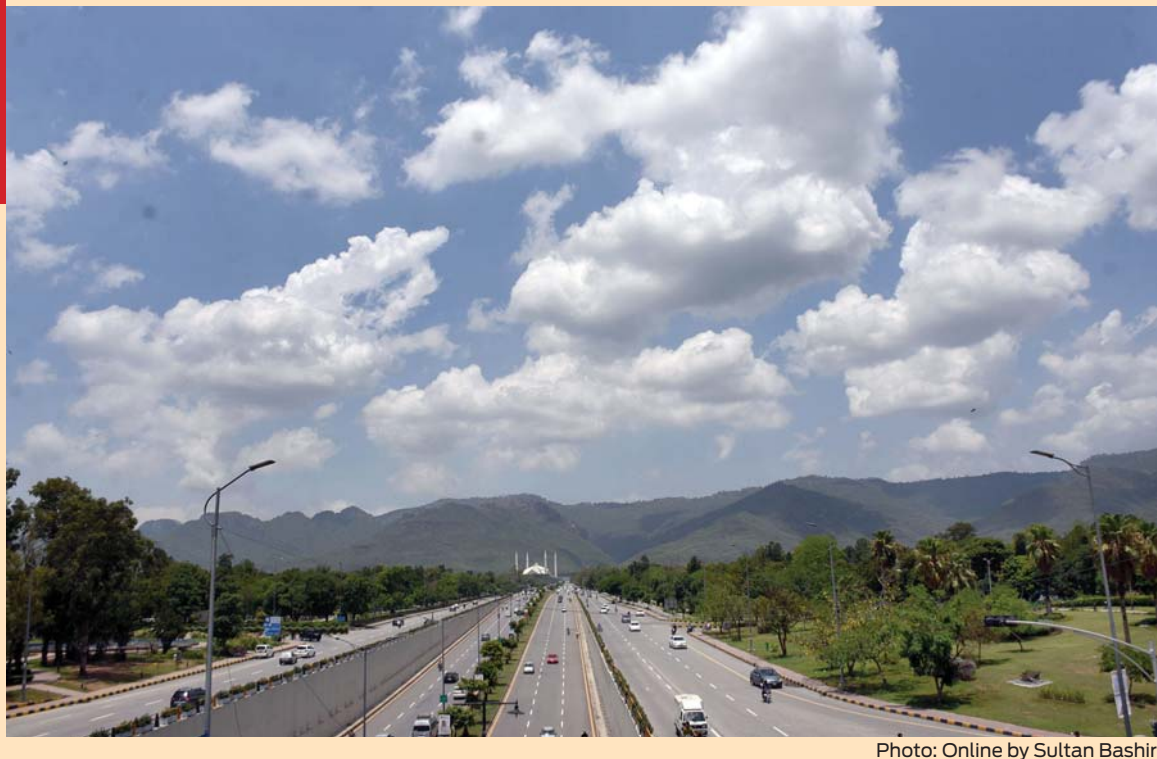


Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Pakistan's dev, security important for whole Muslim world: Saudi envoy

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of Saudi Arabia in Pakistan Nawaf Bin Said Al-Maliki called on Federal Minister of Communications and Postal Services Asad Mahmood at the Ministry of Communications here on Wednesday. Federal Secretary Communications and Chairman National Highway Authority Capt (R) Muhammad Khurram Agha along with senior officials of the Ministry of Communications and National Highway Authority were also present.

On this occasion, the Federal Minister for Communications and Postal Services, Mr. Asad Mahmood said, Mecca and Medina are the center of our faith and this sense of devotion cannot be expressed in words. He said, Saudi Arabia has always played a vital role in



stabilizing Pakistan's economy and the well-being of its people. He added that Saudi Arabia is the largest supplier of petroleum to Pakistan. He also said, that remittances amounting to Rs. 5.8 Billion Dollar from Two Million Pakistani expatriates residing in Saudi Arabia are an important source of foreign exchange for Pakistan.

He said that Saudi Arabia has also provided extensive religious and educational assistance to

Pakistan, under which it has played an important role in the construction of Mosques and Madrassas across Pakistan, including the Faisal Mosque. He also said, under the Pak-Saudi Supreme Coordination Council, Joint Working Group on Infrastructure and Communications was formed in 2019 to further enhance bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

Asad Mahmood said that it is gratifying that high quality

roads and tunnels have been constructed in Pakistan with Saudi funds. Recommendations have also been made for further cooperation in construction sector, which will be presented to Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Ambassador Nawaf Bin Saeed Al-Maliki said that Pakistan is our second home and Pakistan's development and security is important for the whole Muslim world. He said that Saudi Arabia is ready to cooperate with Pakistan in all the fields. The scope of economic cooperation between the two countries will be further expanded. The ambassador also conveyed his special thanks to the Federal Minister for Communications and Postal Services, Asad Mahmood and expressed desire to further strengthen cooperation between the two brotherly countries

For stopping reign of terror

Imposing sanctions on Indian inevitable: Mushaal

Urges legal fraternity to speed up efforts to ensure safe release of Yasin

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Mushaal Hussein Mullick, wife of jailed Kashmiri Hurriyat Leader Yasin Malik urged the world to shun duplicity and imposed sanctions on fascist Narendra Modi-led India for trampling laws and unleashing wave of terrorism and barbarism in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Speaking at a seminar organized by Islamabad High Court Bar Association to condemn India and to discuss the disputed judgment against JKLF chief Yasin Malik here on Wednesday, she thanked the Bar for holding the event to raise voice against unjust and inhuman treatment meted out to the lion of Kashmir.

She said that the world should build pressure on Indian imposed severe sanctions or else it would be next to impossible to stop the reign of terror in the occupied valley.

Mushaal, who is Chairperson Peace and Culture Organisation, said that it was the right time to highlight the issue of Yasin Malik's illegal detention at every forum because he was battling for life.

The chairperson expressed fear that Yasin Malik was kept in death cell in isolation and they were worried about his life because notorious Indian police were known for tortured to death, as dozen of senior hurriyat leaders and young freedom fighters had already tortured to death in jails.

She lauded the Bar for its efforts and appealed them to accelerate their efforts and help her to fight his case at International Court of Justice, UN, EU and OIC forums. Mushaal stated that Yasin believed in peaceful struggle; however, they implicated him in false, fabricated and concocted cases to keep him silence.



HEC, Microsoft organize 'Microsoft Campus Connect Day 2022'

To implement ETF, encourage Collaboration between Educational Institutions

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Microsoft Pakistan organized the Campus Connect Day 2022, an Education Transformation Framework initiative that is taken to attain its goal of seamless knowledge transfer through digitalizing the education system and transforming learning practices of higher institutions across Pakistan. The event was held hybrid and attended by hundreds of academicians, Vice Chancellors of different universities, faculties, and Government officials in both the Public and Private landscape. It's worth mentioning here that for over 12 years, Microsoft has been engaging with the Higher Education Commission and institutions across Pakistan to help transform Education through the power of technology and this year again the engagements are built upon the 4 key pillars of the Microsoft Education Transformation Framework (ETF): Student Success,

Academic Research, Secure and Connected Campus & Teaching and Learning.

The core objective of this hybrid blended event was to share the programs offered and delivered as part of the ETF and showcase the country's top educational institutions that are diligently learning and implementing Microsoft technologies. Also, how Microsoft is supporting the institutions in leveraging Microsoft's customized products and services to digitize their core functions. Microsoft classroom features such as "Microsoft teams" that can help students, faculty, and staff to collaborate digitally. The benefits of other useful tools and platforms such as Microsoft Azure in Education and Academic Research - a power tool to improve services and reduce overheads at the same time. The event successfully also brought under discussion ways to engage students in a hybrid model environment, access to appropriate devices and learning platforms, technology integration and student



well-being, and the impact of continuous professional learning on educators.

The event was attended by Vice Chancellors and leaders of education across Pakistan including Chairperson, Higher Education Commission Dr. Shaista Sohail, Microsoft Country Education Lead Mr. Jibrán Jamshad and DG IT Mr. Nazeer Hussain.

Dr. Shaista Sohail graced the event by joining as a Chief Guest. While expressing her thoughts she said that "Education

sector is the backbone of any economy and since we know Microsoft is genuinely striving here in Pakistan for a great cause, we assure our absolute support in unleashing the true potential of technology in Pakistan"

Mr. Jibrán Jamshad, Country Education Lead for Microsoft in Pakistan said that "The last couple of years made us realize the massive impact of technology in our lives and the Education industry is no exception. The use of technolo-

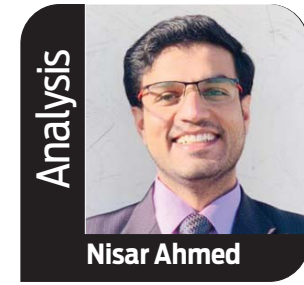
gy is equally needed for the public and private institutions and at the federal or provincial level. By driving customers through a cloud-first journey and modernizing their data centers/operations, gearing up students for future-ready skills through Microsoft certifications, modernizing classroom practices via hybrid learning, automating the back office through Dynamics 365 ERP and campus management system, we are trying not only to transform the system

according to the need of the hour but also increasing efficiency and productivity"

Mr. Nazeer Hussain, DG IT, Higher Education Commission also shared his thoughts and said that "We, at HEC are happy to extend our partnership to Microsoft, both to enhance the technological capacity of educational institutes and to address the challenges posed during pandemic as well as the emerging post pandemic situation. Microsoft has been a key partner in the transformation of Pakistan Education System through provision of cutting-edge IT solutions. During these challenging times, Microsoft has beehed up its support for remote learning platforms like Teams among others. We count on Microsoft's continued support and innovative solutions to benefit students, faculty members and educational administrators and enable Pakistan to compete with stakeholders in the international academic community."

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A Delphic Love Tale: Money Changers and Dollars



Analysis
Nisar Ahmed

210 against an open market rate of PKR 199 and that too without any receipt! I am sad to tell you that the man promising to provide us dollars in black market was no one, but an underground licensed money agent! For me, this raised dubiety about the entire system.

Do we have any law to regulate money dealings? Is there anyone who is closing in against this mafia? If yes then why the fragility of law was so obvious to us? Does this mean that our regulators are equally impuissant to this mafia as us? The economics of the undying love for dollars better explains the leveraging role of money changers in jacking up the price per dollar. Repeated balance of payment problem is one sufficient reason for this fall but a lack of concern of State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) towards the speculations by the "key players" is equally alarming and greatly supports why the rupee has witnessed a record high rate of PKR 211 against USD in June 2022, it has approximately depreciated by 100% in a period of less than four years!

SBP was miserably unsuccessful in cushioning this

massive plummet despite its frequent practices of pumping billions of dollars into the so-called "free" inter-bank

Simply put, money agents, having ample knowledge about the meager size of reserves coupled with limited privileges of a weak administration, started amassing USD and established a black market with their own dictatorial terms. This did no good except for depletion of reserves and proved to be a precursor in frequent invisibility of USD from the market.

market. Nothing went unexpected; you can never expect otherwise considering the

unannounced injection of dollars into a technologically unsophisticated market. Simply put, money agents, having ample knowledge about the meager size of reserves coupled with limited privileges of a weak administration, started amassing USD and established a black market with their own dictatorial terms. This did no good except for depletion of reserves and proved to be a precursor in frequent invisibility of USD from the market.

Is there any antidote that can offer solace to this anxiety? I always quote a famous saying and would repeat here, "where there is a will, there is a way"; in developed economies with limited to virtually zero underground economic transactions, brokers have their accounts linked with the central databases connected to that country's monetary authority and that information is also made publically available hence leaving no room for any misquotation by the dealers. Then why can't we enforce the same in Pakistan; certainly, it would not occupy much of the display area of the brokers' quote screens if they also make some efforts to

display the quantity along with the quote for each currency!

If a common citizen can view this problem under the lens of his eye then why those with vigilant lenses are blind to take any action against this mafia, who are successful in escaping the fate of a formidable punishment. The audacity of these dealers in creating this artificial shortage from the market along with widespread public malaise is increasing at the same pace as the dollar rate. Recent Sri Lankan default on its debt repayments is a "huge red flag" for a country like Pakistan; before the outbreak of this news, the Sri Lankan rupee fell massively by 150 rupee from 200 to 350 in the last 3 months. Are we following the footprints of our island neighbor? Does the recent free fall of PKR signal a similar fate? I am hesitant to answer these questions in denial.

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A feather in Pak cap

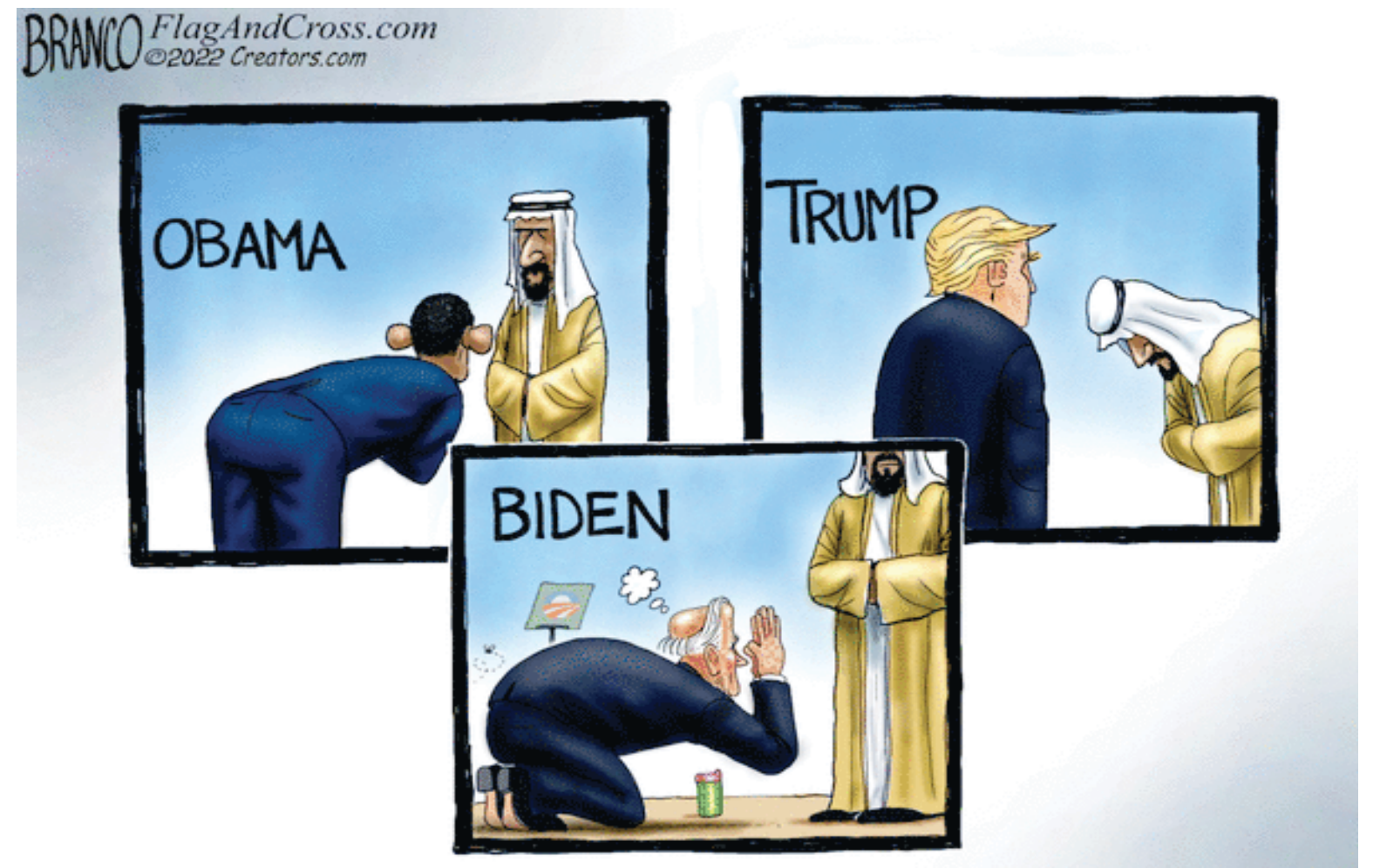
Known as the oldest living city in South Asia with a documented history of 2,500 years old, Peshawar carries a unique distinction of being a custodian of eight to ten ancient civilizations including Gandhara, making it a centre of attraction for foreign and domestic tourists due to its unique archaeological sites and glorious history. Famous for ancient Balahisar Fort and Qissa Khwani Bazaar, Peshawar was officially declared by the Archaeology Department as the 'Oldest Living City' in South Asia with its history goes back to 539BC. Recent Gor Kathri's scientific excavation has disclosed that Peshawar was the oldest living city in South Asia inhabited by the humans with diversified culture, language and architecture.

Gor Kathri excavation, architectural designs, food and languages have revealed that eight to ten ancient civilizations existed in Peshawar. The excavation at Gor Kathri, which continued for several years and published in British Journal 'Current World Archaeology' titled 'The deepest and biggest excavation in the world' has revealed 20 layers that provide a complete profile of the Peshawar city ranging from British down to pre-Indo-Greek era. The excavation discovered that Peshawar was a province of Persian Alchamenian Empire in four to six century BC and later came under the influence of Mauryans, Greeks, Scythians, Kushans, Sasanians, White Huns, Ghaznavis, Slave Dynasty, Ghoris, Suri Afghans, Mughals, Durrani, Sikhs and the British before the creation of Pakistan. Conquered by Greeks and ruled by Buddhists, Peshawar had witnessed rebuilding by Brahmins, invaded by Ghaznavis, captured by Mughals, over run by Sikhs and annexed by British in succession. Despite witnessing the onslaught of worriers, kings and invaders that marched from Afghanistan, Central Asian Republics to the Subcontinent through historic Khyber Pass, Peshawar's remained intact and a centre of attractions for tourists and traders since its establishment.

Qissa Khwani Bazaar remained centre of attractions for international traders and merchants, who often stayed here to enjoy its famous Chappli Kabab and others delicious cuisine with traditional Qehwa and exchanged stories about each others' culture, food, art and music before departing to Central Asian Republics (CARs) and Subcontinent for trade.

During stay at Qissa Khwani, the international traders had got a unique opportunity to explore almost all the historical sites and buildings of Peshawar like Sethi House, Balahisar Fort, Ghanta Ghar, Chowk-e-Yadgar, Mohabat Khan Mosque and Peshawar Museum. Terming Peshawar Museum is one the world's largest museums of Gandhara art and conservation of its British era's building was almost completed with an estimated cost of Rs. 20 million which would soon be opened for the general public. The museum currently houses 4,0,000 rare antiquities and artifacts besides complete life story of Lord Bhudda, attracting Bhudists and monks from across the world. The conservation work of the historical building of Mohabat Khan Mosque has been completed and efforts are underway to renovate it in original shape, adding that 40 percent work on its ceiling and minarets besides adjoining portions were also completed. Rs 87 million were approved for conservation of Mohabat Khan Mosque and the KP Chief Minister had already passed directives to allocate more funds for completion of the mega project.

Last week, I was accompanying a friend who was looking to exchange some rupees into dollars. I never thought that it would take more than a few minutes of our time, but the reality was entirely different; surprisingly, all the money changers along the avenue were short of dollars! With no alternative options, it was indeed an implausible situation to believe, even then we had to. After this unsuccessful quest, a man whispered in our ears right outside a dealer's shop, "How many dollars do you need?" At first, he seemed nothing less than an angel, but this feeling went away as quickly as it appeared.. He was willing to deliver us USD at a rate of PKR



Future in danger

Climate Change & its impacts in Pakistan

Aqsa Ehsan

Climate change is the most important issue of our age; we are the first to see its early warning signals and the last to have a chance to prevent it from occurring. Living in a bubble of ignorance can only get us so far; our globe is indeed a scene of melting glaciers, rising floods, animal extinction and the list continues. Spreading climate change awareness using every way possible, including seemingly insignificant forms such as writing a school essay, cannot be overstated.

Climate change has put a lot of countries in hazard, and the risk is significantly larger for developing countries. Because of this serious problem, which is having a severe impact on South Asia, the area has grown more disaster-prone. In general, climate change is accelerating and having severe consequences for Pakistan. Pakistan is geologically located in a region where the effects of climate change are being felt fairly strongly. This climate disaster has had enormous economic, social, and environmental consequences. Statistics from the 2010 floods demonstrate the devastating effects on the 20 million individuals who lost their homes, were injured, or went missing. Similarly, another flood in Pakistan in 2012 wreaked havoc. Climate change puts Pakistan's income, housing, food, and security at danger. Considering the tough facts, the Pakistani government must take urgent measures to combat the detrimental effects of climate change.

Pakistan faces "significantly higher

average temperatures than the global average, with a potential rise of 1.3°C-4.9°C by the 2090s over the 1986-2005 baseline," according to the study, which also noted that Pakistan had "some of the highest disaster risk levels in the world, ranked 18 out of 191 countries by the 2020 Inform Risk Index". Furthermore, changes in Pakistan's hydrologic regimens, and hence its water supplies, are largely unknown, although dry situations are projected to become more common. Extreme climatic events are expected to become more common and intense, increasing catastrophe risk, particularly for the poor and minority populations. In Pakistan, the current median yearly likelihood of a heat wave happening in any specific region is roughly 3%. As seen by estimates that over 65,000 individuals were hospitalized with heat-stroke during Pakistan's 2015 heat-wave, a huge section of the population is at danger. Many parts of Pakistan endure yearly temperatures of 38°C or more, and when weather patterns combine to produce protracted periods of heatwave, major human health consequences can occur. Between 1997 and 2015, Pakistan witnessed 126 heatwaves, an average of seven each year, with an upward trend.

Pakistan is a low-middle-income country with a primarily agrarian economy; however, it is gradually industrializing and more than a third of the population currently lives in cities. For food and nutrition security, the country significantly relies on its climate-sensitive land, water, and forest resources. Glacier melt has accelerated due to climate change, increasing the likelihood of Glacier Lake outpouring floods (GLOF)

and mudslides downstream. Faster glacier melt, rising temperatures, shifting seasons, and irregular rainfall patterns are all affecting the flow of the River Indus, which will have a growing impact on agriculture, food production, and lives. Already, 39% of the population lives in poverty, and the loss of livelihoods indicated in this research will have a significant impact on people's health and capacity to access healthcare. Heat fatigue, starvation, the introduction of vector-borne diseases like Dengue Fever, and an increase in the burden of aquatic infections will all have an impact on people's capacity to work and make a living.

Migrants, internally displaced individuals, and religious and ethnic minorities will be particularly susceptible, since they are frequently confined to hazard-prone land and face challenges to treatment, including financial constraints resulting from informal work. Child marriages, early births, and domestic violence may become more common as a result of climate change. Due to decreasing food production, women and children will be more prone to malnourishment and malnutrition. Smog is another major issue in Pakistan's industrialized eastern Punjab region, where the provincial capital, Lahore, is clogged with smoke throughout the winter months. Authorities said they are working to solve the problem, which involves thousands of brick kilns. Millions of impoverished people will confront significant problems as the climate changes, including severe events, health consequences, social protection, economic stability, mobility, water security, cultural heritage, and

other dangers.

Climate change is inextricably linked to global inequality patterns. Climate change harms the most vulnerable individuals the most, although they contribute the least to the catastrophe. Millions of vulnerable people are facing disproportionate problems as the effects of climate change worsen in terms of severe events, health effects, food security, economic assurance, water security, and cultural identity. Female-headed families, children, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples and ethnic minorities, landless tenants, migrant workers, displaced persons, sexual and gender minorities, older people, and other socially excluded groups are all highly prone to disasters. Their vulnerability stems from a variety of factors, including their geographic location, financial, socio-economic, cultural, and gender status, as well as their access to medical care, decision-making, and justice.

Poor and oppressed people are demanding for more aggressive climate action. Climate change is more than an environmental disaster; it is also a social crisis that requires us to confront issues of inequality on many levels: between rich and poor nations; between men and women; and between generations. For more effective development outcomes, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has underlined the need for climate solutions that adhere to climate justice principles (i.e., recognition, procedural, and distributive justice).

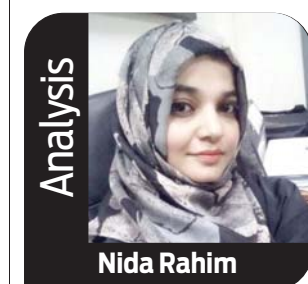
Climate change adaptation measures can impose a greater financial burden on poor households in the absence of well-designed and

supportive policies; for example, policies to expand public transportation or carbon pricing may result in higher public transportation fares, which will disproportionately affect poorer households. Similarly, restricting forestry activities to particular periods of the year might have an impact on indigenous populations that rely on woods for their livelihoods all year. In addition to addressing the distributional effects of decarbonizing economies, there is a need to understand and address social inclusion, cultural, and political economy issues, such as deciding on the types of transitions required (economic, social, etc.) and identifying opportunities to address social inequality during these processes.

Furthermore, communities offer to the problem of improving resilience and tackling climate change unique views, skills, and a wealth of information. Rather than being seen as recipients, they should be treated as participants in developing resilience. Community leaders may define goals, influence ownership, and create and administer investment programs that are responsive to their community's needs, according to research and experience. In creating climate resilience, the IPCC's latest report highlights the relevance of many types of knowledge such as scientific, Indigenous, and local knowledge. Communities and marginalized people may be connected to higher-level policy, technical, and financial support for locally relevant and successful development outcomes through innovations in climate finance architecture.

The writer belongs to Department of Sociology Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad

Gander Sensitization at work place and in public life



Analysis
Nida Rahim

similarly widened to incorporate their non workplace identities. As women enter paid work their enhanced status as workers, as well as their economic contribution to the household, might raise their aspiration for more equitable

The structure of the family and the definition of individuals' roles within it are changing. There is an increasing proportion of female headed household at least de facto-in some cases related to family life cycles and optimal labor use and so many women have had to take on traditionally male roles. Renegotiation of roles and responsibilities is then necessary if the absent spouse returns.

With economic and hence work uncertainties, the opportunities for conjugal conflict and negotiation over income and house hold decision making have increased. Women's identities now encompass their workplace status as well as more traditional spheres whereas it seems that men's identities have not

able negotiation over distribution of decision making power in the home.

However, the reality of lower wage and work status vis-a-vis her husband or male peers, as well as her vulnerable breakdown position, reduces women's hopes and aspirations. This overlap between private and public lives must be recognized if the intention is to achieve real equity and empowerment. It is clearly inadequate to treat gender as purely a women's issue if we hope to achieve real Change.

A way needs to be found to enable both women and men to work together towards a more equitable future. This will include making men an issue in gender work and incorporation of this approach into development practice.

The writer is senior analyst

Afghanistan quake kills 1,000 people, deadliest in decades

Houses reduced to rubble, rescue operations complicated by difficult conditions

KABUL: A powerful earthquake struck a rural, mountainous region of eastern Afghanistan early Wednesday, killing 1,000 people and injuring 1,500 more in one of the country's deadliest quakes in decades, the state-run news agency reported. Officials warned that the already grim toll may still rise.



Information from the remote area near the Pakistani border remained scarce, but early footage from villages tucked among the rough mountains showed residents picking through rubble of collapsed stone and mudbrick houses.

The disaster posed a major test for Afghanistan's Taliban government, which seized power nearly 10 months ago as the U.S. and its NATO allies prepared to pull out of the country and has been largely shunned by the world community since.

Rescuers rushed to the area by helicopter, but the response is likely to be complicated since many international aid agencies left Afghanistan after the Taliban takeover. Moreover, most governments are wary of dealing directly with the Taliban, a reluctance that could slow the deployment of emergency aid and teams typically sent after such natural disasters.

In a rare move, the Taliban's reclusive supreme leader, Haibatullah Akhundzadah,

who almost never appears in public, called for "the international community and all humanitarian organizations to help the Afghan people affected by this great tragedy and to spare no effort to help the affected people."

The disaster hits at a time when Afghanistan is already deep in one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, with millions facing increasing hunger and poverty after the cutoff of international financing to the Taliban. That has prompted a massive aid program, but to avoid putting money in the Taliban's hands, the world has funneled funding through the U.N. and other humanitarian agencies — a system that may be too slow for an emergency response to the quake.

What's more, reaching rural

areas even in the best circumstances remains difficult in Afghanistan, a landlocked nation just smaller than Texas with rutted mountain roadways that may now have sustained significant damage.

The 6.1 magnitude quake had its epicenter in Paktika province, some 50 kilometers (31 miles) southwest of the city of Khost, according to neighboring Pakistan's Meteorological Department.

Quakes of that strength can cause serious damage in an area where homes and other buildings are poorly constructed and landslides are common. Experts put the depth at just 10 kilometers (6 miles) — another factor that could lead to severe destruction.

Footage from Paktika showed men carrying people in blankets to waiting helicop-

ters. Others were treated on the ground. One resident could be seen receiving IV fluids while sitting in a plastic chair outside the rubble of his home and still more were sprawled on gurneys. Some images showed residents picking through clay bricks and other rubble from destroyed stone houses, some of whose roofs or walls had caved in.

The death toll given by the Bakhtar News Agency was equal to that of a quake in 2002 in northern Afghanistan. Those are the deadliest since 1998, when an earthquake also 6.1 in magnitude and subsequent tremors in the remote northeast killed at least 4,500 people.

In most places in the world, an earthquake of that strength wouldn't inflict such extensive devastation, said Robert Sanders, a seismologist with the U.S. Geological Survey. But a quake's death toll more often comes down to geography, building quality and population density.

"Because of the mountainous area, there are rockslides and landslides that we won't know about until later reporting. Older buildings are likely to crumble and fail," he said. "Due to how condensed the area is in that part of the world, we've seen in the past similar earthquakes deal significant damage."

The Taliban are still trying to reconstitute government minis-

tries abandoned by staff loyal to its previous Western-backed government, and it was not clear how officials arrived at the casualty tolls reported by Bakhtar.

In Kabul, Prime Minister Mohammad Hassan Akhund convened an emergency meeting at the presidential palace to coordinate the relief effort, and Bilal Karimi, a deputy spokesman for the Taliban government, wrote on Twitter to urge aid agencies to send teams to the area.

Meanwhile, the Government and people of Pakistan extended deepest condolences and sympathies over the loss of precious lives and damage to property caused by the tragic earthquake in Paktika province of Afghanistan and its adjoining areas, and torrential floods in various provinces across the country.

"The people of Pakistan stand in strong solidarity with their Afghan brethren in this difficult time. We have no doubt that the brotherly Afghan people will overcome the effects of this natural calamity with their characteristic resilience," said Foreign Office Spokesperson.

"Our authorities and institutions are working to extend required assistance to Afghanistan in coordination with their relevant institutions."

Presidents of Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan visit Khiva city

Spokesman Report

TASHKENT/BAKU: President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev and President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev visited the city of Khiva.

Following the talks held on 21 June 2022, the President of Uzbekistan noted that the glorious history of relations between the Uzbek and Azerbaijani peoples has created a solid foundation for the development of multifaceted cooperation in our days.

Indeed, our fraternal peoples have always been in close cultural ties. An important role in this was played by Khiva, whose history spans more than 2500 years.

In this regard, the visit of the Presidents of Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan to this ancient city is of great importance.

The Ichan-Kala complex is known as a unique city muse-

um. There are more than 120 architectural monuments here. Therefore, on 12 December 1990, Khiva was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

The heads of state entered the complex through the main Ata-Darvaza gate, visited Kalta Minor, Kunya Ark Palace, Shergazi Khan Madrasah, Juma Mosque, Toshvli Palace, Museum of Scientists. A concert program was organized for the guests, which included Khorezm songs and dances.

The Presidents also visited the Nurullabay Palace near Ichan-Kala.

This complex was built in 1884 by the Khiva Khan Muhammad Rakhimkhan Feruz. Later, additional buildings were erected. The palace expanded to five courtyards. The architecture of the palace harmoniously combines Eastern and European styles. The palace is also notable for the



fact that at the beginning of the 20th century many important political processes took place here.

The role of Khiva in the development of statehood and science, the ancient monuments and the art of the city made a great impression on the Azerbaijani guests.

"The most important role in expanding multifaceted cooperation is given to direct inter-

regional ties. We have agreed that our capitals and major cities would establish partnerships in the very near future. The fundamental agreement will be signed today. In addition, we propose to hold the first forum of regions and an exhibition of their industrial potential in Tashkent this year," said President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, as he had a meeting with President

Ilham Aliyev in an expanded format.

"In the humanitarian dimension, it is necessary to regularly hold mutual Days of Culture and Cinema, increase exchanges and contacts between universities, scientific institutions, sports and youth organizations. The strengthening of business and humanitarian relations will help us to expand cooperation in the field of tourism.

I am grateful to the President of Azerbaijan for the special attention and support, and for the adoption of a separate tourism program. We propose to jointly hold an Uzbek-Azerbaijani tourism fair this year. We are also ready to develop close and mutually beneficial cooperation in the field of restoration and preservation of monuments of our abundant cultural heritage," the President of Uzbekistan noted.

Poetry book by Faiz Ahmad Faiz launched in Moscow

Spokesman Report

MOSCOW: A book of poetry by Faiz Ahmad Faiz — one of the best known, the most venerated poet to have come from the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent over the last 70 years — has been launched at the Eastern Culture Centre at the Institute of Oriental Studies under the Russian Academy of Sciences.

The publication of the book coincides with the Diamond Jubilee of Pakistan's Independence.

The book has been published at Khudozhestvennaya Literatura publishing house by the Embassy of Pakistan in Moscow in collaboration with the Institute of Oriental Studies.

This book is unique because it comprises all the translations of Faiz Ahmed Faiz's poems which have ever been published in Russian language. Dr. Lyudmila Vasiliyeva, one of the world-renowned specialists on Urdu poetry, compiled the volume.

In his opening remarks, Ambassador of Pakistan to Russia, Mr. Shafiqat Ali Khan said that Faiz's poetry made a significant contribution to the emergence of mutual understanding between the peoples of Pakistan and Russia, and that the poet's work found a special place in the hearts of Russian readers. He further added that the motivation for publishing this new volume was to highlight the literary connection between Pakistan and Russia.

The Ambassador further noted that he himself has some connections with Faiz Ahmad Faiz. The first one is a family connection: the father of



his wife, Dr. Aftab Ahmad, was part of Faiz's circle of close friends. It was on Faiz's advice that Dr. Aftab Ahmad gave his daughter the middle name "Madiha". The second connection is the love for Moscow. Faiz and his time in Moscow are a whole era in the history of Urdu poetry. Faiz wrote many poems in this city, which are considered his masterpieces. According to Mr. Shafiqat Ali Khan, the friendships and empathy that surrounded Faiz in Moscow contributed to his poetic inspiration. The same generosity of spirit and warmth the Pakistani Ambassador experiences in his daily interactions Russians everywhere.

Academician Vitaly Naumkin, Scientific Director and President of the Institute of Oriental Studies recalled his own meetings with Faiz, including within the framework of the Association of the

Writes of Asia and Africa, where Faiz played an important role. He further noted that this book is step towards bringing Pakistan and Russia closer.

Director of the Institute, Dr. Alikber Alikberov, noting that Urdu poetry has many layers of meaning, recited a Faiz's poem devoted to Russian poet Aleksandr Pushkin.

Dr. Lyudmila Vasiliyeva said that this book launch ceremony is important in three dimensions: as an event in literature, oriental studies and international relations. She added that this book is unique, as it comprises different translations of the same poems, enabling the reader to deeply understand the depth of Urdu poetry.

The book launch ceremony was attended by Pakistani diplomats, Russian scholars, journalists and friends of Pakistan.

20 killed as Russia rains rockets on Kharkiv

KYIV/KHARKIV: Russian forces pounded Ukraine's second largest city Kharkiv and surrounding countryside with rockets, killing at least 20 people in what Kyiv called a bid to force it to pull resources from the main battlefield to protect civilians from attack.

Inside Russia, a fire tore through an oil refinery just 8 km (5 miles) from the Ukrainian border, after what the refinery described as a cross border attack by two drones.

In the main battlefield city of Sievierodonetsk, where Russia has claimed to have Ukrainian forces surrounded since last week, scenes filmed by a freelance journalist made clear the battle was not over, with Ukrainian troops able to resupply their garrison by crossing a river in inflatable rafts.

The Russian strikes on Kharkiv, throughout Tuesday and continuing on Wednesday morning, were the worst for weeks in the area where normal life had been returning since Ukraine pushed Russian forces back in a major counter-offensive last month.

"It was shelling by Russian troops. It was probably multiple rocket launchers. And it's the missile impact, it's all the missile impact," Kharkiv prosecutor Mikhailo Martosh told Reuters amid the ruins of cottages struck on Tuesday in a rural area on the city's outskirts.

Medical workers carried the body of an elderly woman out of the rubble of a burnt-out garage and into a nearby van.

Pakistan's IT delegation visits Toronto



Spokesman Report

TORONTO: The Consulate General of Pakistan, Toronto, arranged a networking event for the visiting delegation of ITC executives from Pakistan.

The event was attended by more than 50 executives/entrepreneurs from different ITC companies in Toronto, including representatives from Organization of Pakistani Entrepreneurs (OPEN), and FAST-NU Alumni Association, North America (FAA-NA).

The Pakistani delegation comprising 15 executives from leading ITC companies is visiting Toronto on the invitation of the Consulate General to attend Collision Toronto Conference 2022, one of the biggest Tech events across the globe, especially in North America.

In his welcome remarks, Consul General Abdul Hameed urged the Pakistani ITC entrepreneurs to enhance their focus on Canadian market, as the ITC sector in Canada had been posting stronger annual growth than the total economy. He said that the ITC sector was well positioned to benefit from the economy-wide recovery. He noted that demand was expected to reflect accelerating adoption of many technology solutions and private and public investments in digital infrastructure.

The ITC executives appreciated the efforts made by the Consulate General for making the visit of the delegation from Pakistan possible and arranging the networking event. The speakers from Pakistan, inter alia, highlighted the role and efforts made by Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB) and Pakistan Software Houses Association (P@SHA) towards improving the overall policy environment and ITC infrastructure in Pakistan. They noted that Pakistani ITC industry had a lot to offer to the Canadian companies, such as a large and skilled young population, ease of communicating in English, and an enabling policy and IT infrastructure.

The leading ITC officials from Canada presented their vision and activities for promotion of Pakistani startups. They emphasized the need for the companies to monitor the latest trends in the industry and develop a mechanism to adapt to the changing environment quickly. The Canadian companies also expressed deep interest in collaborating with the Pakistani companies working in healthcare, startups, FinTech, Games & Animations, etc.

Zaheer A. Janjua meets Canadian MPs



Spokesman Report

OTTAWA: Pakistan's High Commissioner to Canada Zaheer A. Janjua today held back-to-back meetings with Canadian Parliamentarians to explore new avenues for further broadening the bilateral ties between Pakistan and Canada.

The meetings were held in the Canadian capital with Chair of Senate Human Rights Committee Senator Salma Ataullahjan and Member of Parliament Iqra Khalid and MP Mr. Shafiqat Ali.

During the meetings, High Commissioner Zaheer A. Janjua underlined the role of the Pakistani diaspora in further enhancing what he called "multifaceted" ties between Pakistan and Canada.

Various matters pertaining to Student Direct Stream (SDS) as well as student and worker visa issues also came under discussion.

Sri Lanka PM says economy 'has collapsed'

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's debt-laden economy has "collapsed" after months of shortages of food, fuel and electricity, its prime minister told lawmakers Wednesday, in comments underscoring the country's dire situation as it seeks help from international lenders.

Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe told Parliament the South Asian country is "facing a far more serious situation beyond the mere shortages of fuel, gas, electricity and food. Our economy has completely collapsed."

While Sri Lanka's crisis is considered its worst in recent memory, Wickremesinghe's assertion that the economy has collapsed did not cite any specific new developments. It appeared intended to emphasize to his critics and opposition lawmakers that he has inherited a difficult task that can't be fixed quickly, as the economy founders under the weight of heavy debts, lost tourism revenue and other impacts from the pandemic, as well as surging costs for commodities.

"Currently, the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation is \$700 million in debt," he told lawmakers. "As a result, no country or organization in the world is willing to provide fuel to us. They are even reluctant to provide fuel for cash."

Petition filed in Indian SC against Agnipath scheme

NEW DELHI: A Public Interest Litigation (PIL) petition was filed in the Indian Supreme Court challenging "Agnipath", the recently announced recruitment scheme for Indian armed forces.

The petition filed by advocate M.L. Sharma urged the Supreme Court to declare the scheme notification issued by the Ministry of Defence on 14 June as "illegal, unconstitutional and ultra vires" the Constitution. The petition said, "On 14 June, contra to the constitutional provisions, without having approval in Parliament and without any gazette notification, government quashed century-old Army selection process and imposed the Agnipath Scheme for recruitment in all three armed forces divisions and declared to start it from 24 June 2022".

The petition said, "After four years, of the total candidates selected for permanent commission in the Army, only 25% will be continue and the rest 75% will be forced to retire. During the four years, they will be paid salary and perks. But after four years, these 75% candidates will get no pension, etc." The petition said permanent commission meant service till retirement. The petitioner said the armed forces could not discriminate with a policy that dropped 75% of those inducted after four years' service without even pension.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
42,458.14	42,525.95	
Day's High	Day's Low:	
42,880.17	42,408.17	
Index Value	Change	
5,948,554,971	-67.81	
Percentage	Time	
-0.16%	21 Jun, 2022 5:00 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
7,089.22	-62.83	
Percentage	Time	
-0.88%	22 Jun, 4:35 pm GMT+1	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
30,609.66	+79.41	
Percentage	Time	
+0.26%	22 Jun, 11:43 am GMT-4	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
26,149.55	-96.76	
Percentage	Time	
-0.37%	22 Jun, 3:15 pm GMT+9	
Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	147.93	149.18
Bahrain Dinar	548.72	553.22
Canadian Dollar	164.09	165.44
China Yuan	31.71	31.96
Danish Krone	30.08	30.43
Euro	222	225
Hong Kong Dollar	27.02	27.37
Indian Rupee	2.72	2.8
Japanese Yen	1.54	1.59
Kuwaiti Dinar	683.66	688.6
Malaysian Ringgit	48.24	48.69
New Zealand \$	134.1	135.3
Norwegians Krone	21.58	21.88
Omani Riyal	548.72	553.22
Qatari Riyal	58.28	58.78
Saudi Riyal	56	56.8
Singapore Dollar	151.97	153.27
Swedish Korona	20.28	20.58
Swiss Franc	217.59	219.34
Thai Bhat	6	6.1
U.A.E Dirham	57.5	58.3
UK Pound Sterling	258.5	261.5
US Dollar	213	215

SMEDA to work with ITC for enterprise development in Pakistan

International Trade Centre and SMEDA signs MoU

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: International Trade Centre and SMEDA have signed a MoU at a ceremony held at the Ministry of Commerce and Industries here on Wednesday. Witnessed by Federal Minister of Industries-Makhdoom Syed Murtaza Mehmood, the signing cements the organizations partnership under ITC's project Growth for Rural Advancement and Sustainable Progress (GRASP) funded by the European Union.

The objective of the project is poverty reduction and sustainable, inclusive growth through development of rural small and medium-sized enterprises in 22 districts of Sindh and Balochistan provinces of Pakistan. The project's outcome aims to enhance the productivity and profitability of SMEs involved in primary production, service provision, and value addition in and around selected clusters of production.

The MoU with SMEDA is focused on enterprise development in Sindh and Balochistan, fulfilling the mandate of both parties. The cooperation will include the capacity building of rural SMEs on agri-entrepreneurship and agri-business management and marketing as well as facilitating rural businesses to register and meet compliance procedures related to engaging



Hashim Raza CEO SMEDA and Azhar Javed, ITC rep exchanging MOU documents in the presence of Minister MOIP Syed Murtaza Mehmood.

in domestic commerce. Further SMEDA and GRASP will contribute to the development of SME competitiveness and sustainability strategies in Sindh and Balochistan, aiding the Ministry of Commerce to implement complementary domestic commerce policy initiatives and raising awareness among provincial Departments of Commerce and Industries and other rule-setting

departments/agencies on domestic commerce and related reforms. The capacity building of institutions also plays a role include that of business associations and SMEDA itself.

GRASP, to be implemented from 2019-2024, is working to create gender-inclusive employment and income opportunities in rural areas through targeted support to both the public and

private sectors. The project is part of the focal sector "Rural Development" of the European Union Strategy called Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP) for Pakistan: 2014-2020. The project will directly contribute to the attainment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), specifically SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 13 (Climate Action).

Stephen Langrell highlighted the importance of the partnership in improving policy, planning and research functions, stating the efforts planned to facilitate investments in climate resilient infrastructures are a timely response to climate change experienced by the SMEs.

GRASP Coordinator Azher Ali Choudhry and SMEDA CEO Hashim Raza commended the efforts of their teams in solidifying the partnership and improving the atmosphere for SMEs who play an important role in value addition and exports.

Makhdoom Syed Murtaza Mehmood reiterated that this project will provide SMEDA the support in carrying out their mandate, appreciated European Union's support to the SME sector in Pakistan, and the technical capabilities International Trade Centre is building in the country.

Pak-Azerbaijan ties

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov called on Secretary Aviation & Chairman CAA Board Shoukat Ali. They discussed bilateral ties and further strengthening of cooperation between Pakistan and Azerbaijan in the field of civil aviation including the importance of direct flights.



Photo: Spokesman

CPEC to help address food security challenge of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will help address the looming food security challenge of Pakistan by introducing modern farming to enhance the country's yield through agricultural cooperation, a government official has said.

Pakistan has realized that food security is an important component of national security, and agribusiness is being promoted through more investments in the agriculture sector, which will be further enhanced under the CPEC framework, Syed Zafar Ali Shah, a top official of Pakistan's ministry of planning, development and special initiative, told Xinhua in a recent interview.

"As a part of improving food security, this year we are investing more in the water sector

and the agriculture sector to increase our yield... all these sectors are strengths of China, which has shown great performance and productivity," he added.

Talking about the potential of his country's agriculture sector, the Pakistani official said that it is a big producer of milk, vegetables and fruits, but a huge chunk of it goes wasted due to the unavailability of processing units and the supply chain.

Chinese investors can tap the potential of the sector as they invested in other sectors, he said. The secretary said that his country is committed to CPEC, and no matter which political party is in power, there is a joint consensus that the project is important for the economic development of Pakistan.

QNET commits to delivering a world class e-commerce platform

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: As e-commerce sees accelerated growth for retail industries (Shopify reported that global commerce sales are expected to reach US\$5 trillion in 2022!), companies like Hong Kong-based direct selling company QNET, are ready to reap the rewards.

QNET, an e-commerce direct selling company, is no stranger to the online scene. Established over two decades ago, the multinational company was one of the first in the direct selling industry to embrace digitisation - adopting an e-commerce platform as part of its strategy - charting rapid growth across borders.

Today, QNET is an industry leader with customers in nearly 100 countries, bearing numerous awards for its digital excellence, online communications campaigns, and mobile app. And the company's light-speed success is no coincidence: QNET is a company that believes in giving its employees, distributors, and customers the best online experience imaginable - and that starts by establishing a world-class e-commerce platform.

In partnership with Microsoft, QNET switched to an end-to-end strategy built on Microsoft Security products and services, such as utilising cloud security through Microsoft Azure. QNET's Chief Information Security Officer, Egal Egal, says, "With the amount of data accessed, utilised, and shared across our global offices, it makes perfect sense to team up with a reliable partner, such as Microsoft, to ensure our customers' experience is seamless, intuitive, and secure. For example, we integrated a function in the QNET Virtual Office that makes changing credentials more effortless and secure than ever. The entire process even takes less than a minute.

"When traffic ramped up as the pandemic started, we knew we had to take proactive steps to ensure the digital experience is not affected by the high number of transactions," Egal adds. The most recent World Federation of Direct Selling (WFDSDA) report saw direct sales going strong throughout the past two years, charting a global growth of 2.3% in 2021.

Dollar devastation has outweighed natural disasters

Political, economic instability is destroying economy, says Mian Zahid Hussain

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Wednesday said the government is constantly swallowing the bitter bullets of difficult decisions despite political difficulties while negotiating some conditions of IMF that include an increase in revenue target, implementation of petroleum levy and privatization of sick government units.

Delay in the agreement with the IMF have caused market instability and panic, and the

rising value of the dollar has outweighed the natural disasters, while all efforts to overcome the erosion of the rupee have failed, he said.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the rupee is sliding on a daily basis, people and the business community are worried and there is great unrest in the market.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that political and economic instability was on the rise while foreign exchange reserves were dwindling which is reducing the value of the rupee leading to a sharp rise in

inflation and poverty.

He said that delay in the decision of IMF, Arab countries and China to lend to Pakistan was aggravating the situation.

The banks have run out and the dollars and they are using foreign exchange deposited by the account holders. Unnecessary imports are not being stopped which is increasing the revenue but collapsing the economy, he observed.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the rupee has depreciated by more than 32% in a short span as the central bank has not been able to intervene in the market due to foreign

exchange reserves falling below the level of nine billion dollars. The SBP has also stopped selling dollars for a month which has increased its demand, he said, adding that the rupee is depreciating sharply on a daily basis and without an agreement with the IMF.

It has become impossible to stop the rupee's depreciation which is making everything more expensive and affecting exports. In these circumstances, remittances worth 57 million dollars from Pakistanis living abroad in a single day are a record and a welcome development. An agreement with the IMF is possible in the next few days which will help the government and the will begin to stabilize, he said.

PTCL, Huawei successfully deploys AirPON Solution

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: PTCL, the country's premier Telecom and ICT services provider has successfully deployed AirPON Solution from Huawei Technologies, in its Fiber Access Network. AirPON is a unique and innovative Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) solution that leverages existing cellular mobile network infrastructure to extend Fiber footprint, with improved Total Cost of Ownership and better Time to Market.

AirPON employs a purpose built pre-connectorized Optical Distribution Network (ODN) components, which offers a unique, efficient and agile deployment, that minimizes fieldwork through plug-n-play approach, while also greatly improving the quality of installation. The infrastructure available at cellular mobile sites is exploited for field deployment of Optical Line Terminal (OLT) Equipment, to serve



its housing, power and transport needs. This solution is yet another step forward on PTCL's roadmap for meeting rapidly growing consumer data traffic demands, by expanding its Fiber Access Network in areas otherwise difficult to reach for deployment. Jafar Khalid, Group Chief Technology Officer, PTCL Group, said, "We are committed to uplifting our customer experience through adoption of state-of-the-art products & solutions. PTCL and Huawei achieved another milestone by successfully introducing AirPON solution in our

Network. We continue to invest in new technologies and products to modernize our network, with a major emphasis on expediting the reach of high-speed fiber access network to maximum customers, and AirPON solution will be a key enabler in meeting this ambition."

Ahmed Bilal Masud, Huawei Pakistan Deputy CEO, stated that "Huawei is always committed to work closely with PTCL Group to explore the right solutions for meeting the evolving business requirements.

PTA conducts QoS Survey countrywide

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has carried out an independent Quality of Service (QoS) Survey in 15 Cities and 8 Motorways/Highways/Inter City Roads of Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan and Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJ&K) in order to measure the performance and quality of Cellular Mobile Operators' (CMOs) services being provided to their customers.

During the survey, the licensed KPIs of voice, network coverage, SMS and mobile broadband/data were checked using state of the art

automated QoS Monitoring & Benchmarking Tool. The drive test teams selected survey routes in such a manner to cover main roads, service roads and majority of sectors/colonies in areas being surveyed. Based upon the compliance level of each KPI against threshold defined in the respective licenses and QoS Regulations, CMOs have been ranked between 1st to 5th position in Mobile Network Coverage and Voice Services as per compliance level in surveyed cities and motorways/highways. Similarly, in Mobile Broadband Speed segment, the ranking is with respect to the highest data download speed.

Budget 2022-23 is anomalies-ridden: Shabbir Mansha

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Shabbir Mansha, Acting President FPCCI, has expressed his profound concerns on the glaring anomalies in the federal budget 2022-23. We have noticed anomalies in custom duties, regularity duties, income tax and sales tax, he added.

Mr. Shabbir Mansha noted that turnover tax of 1.25 percent for traders, distributors and dealers is unbearable as profit margins are barely 2 percent in market sales and the turnover tax will continue to discourage SMEs to be registered in sales tax.

Acting FPCCI Chief pointed out that 4.5 percent withholding tax on local sale; but, normally trade margins are between 2-3 percent and

there is no way a business can absorb 4.5 percent withholding tax and continue to operate viably. Therefore, sellers find it more viable to buy goods at 20 percent taxes; when accounted for additional duty of 3 percent on commercial importers on top of 17 percent sales tax and delist from the sales tax.

Mr. Shabbir Mansha demanded that disparities in the rates of sales tax on raw materials at import stage between commercial and industrial importers. He maintained that under section 8 (b) of sales tax act 1990, input tax adjustment in excess of 90 percent of the output tax is not allowed. This condition should be withdrawn; as the same has been already extended to companies operating in various sectors.

Yasir Shah returns for Sri Lanka Tests

Uncapped all-rounder Salman Ali Agha also earns a call-up

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Leg-spinner Yasir Shah marks his return to the national men's side as chief selector Muhammad Wasim on Wednesday announced an 18-member squad for next month's two-match Test series against Sri Lanka.

Yasir was instrumental in Pakistan's 2-1 victory over Sri Lanka on their last tour of the island in 2015, snaring 24 wickets at 19.33. He comes back into the side after regaining full fitness. Yasir played his 46th and last Test, to date, against the West Indies in August 2021. Salman Ali Agha, who has scored 4,224 runs and taken 88 wickets in first-class, is another addition to the squad. Mohammad Nawaz is the third player to be recalled.

He was named in the squad for Australia Tests but was withdrawn due to injury. The squad named for the latest ICC World Test Championship fixtures include three openers, four middle-order batters, three all-rounders, two wicket-keepers, two spinners and four fast bowlers.

Pakistan squad for Sri Lanka Tests: Babar Azam (captain), Mohammad Rizwan (vice-captain), wicketkeeper,



Abdullah Shafique, Azhar Ali, Faheem Ashraf, Fawad Alam, Haris Rauf, Hasan Ali, Imam-ul-Haq, Mohammad Nawaz, Naseem Shah, Nauman Ali, Salman Ali Agha, Sarfaraz Ahmed (wicketkeeper), Saud Shakeel, Shaheen Afridi, Shan Masood and Yasir Shah.

Chief selector Muhammad Wasim: "We have selected this squad considering the conditions in Sri Lanka and have equipped the team with the best possible resources. "Our spin department is boosted with the return of Yasir Shah, who proved himself as a match-winner in Sri Lanka on our last tour and Sajid

Khan has made the way for him. The spin department also includes two spin all-rounders in Mohammad Nawaz and Salman Ali Agha and left-arm orthodox Nauman Ali. "Salman Ali Agha has shown consistent performances with the bat in the past three seasons and he is a handy off-spin option.

"Our team has recently put strong performances in Bangladesh and although results against Australia were not ideal we displayed solid cricket and for that reason we have retained the core to instil consistency and continuity and have trimmed the squad size following

the relaxation in Covid-19-induced travel restrictions.

"These two matches are extremely crucial for our side as we have World Test Championship points at stake. I wish our boys all the best and I am sure they will make us proud."

Babar Azam's side will converge in Islamabad on 25 June to finalise their preparations for the Test series at the Pindi Cricket Stadium with a seven-day camp that stretches from 26 June to 2 July before departing for Sri Lanka on 6 July.

Pakistan will play a three-day warm-up match between 11-13 July. The first Test will be played at Galle from 16 July, while the second Test will be staged at Colombo from 24 July.

For Pakistan, who are on the fifth spot, this series is their final away commitment of the current ICC World Test Championship cycle, which stretches from July 2021 to June 2023, and they will be eager to improve their position on the table by repeating the same result as last time with a series win.

Pakistan have played three series in the current cycle and with wins in three Tests and two draws are ranked fifth in the nine-team table.

Central Punjab, Northern CCA squads announced

Our Correspondent

LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board on Wednesday announced 19 and 11 teams of the Central Punjab and Northern cricket associations for the City Cricket Association Tournament 2022-23.

The squads are available here. After today's announcement, the PCB has unveiled all 93 City Cricket Association sides (Balochistan 13, Central Punjab 19, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 19, Northern 11, Sindh 17 and Southern Punjab 14). The tournament has already commenced in

Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh. Central Punjab, Northern and Southern Punjab will host matches from Friday, 24 June. The tournament will conclude on 21 July.

This tournament is a pathway for selection in the Cricket Association sides, who play four-day first-class, non first-class three-day, one-day and T20 competitions in the senior PCB domestic men's season. The CCA squads have been selected through a robust process.

The performers of last year's CCA tournament,

players who have featured in last year's CA U19 events and those who are not eligible to feature in future U19 tournaments have been selected. The remaining players were selected through open trials with preference given to performers of clubs' winter league.

The winners from Central Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh CCAs will be declared after group leaders progress to the semi-final with the top two teams playing the final.

In contrast, Balochistan, Northern and Southern

Punjab CCAs will be divided into three groups each with group leaders to progress to the triangular series stage and the side with most points to be adjudged as winner.

According to the event format, each match will be of two days with 100 overs to be bowled each day in six hours and 40 minutes with a one-hour break from 1200-1300. To encourage positive and result-oriented cricket, first innings will be limited to 75 overs per side and no bowler shall bowl more than 15 overs in an innings.

Inzaghi extends Inter contract until 2024



MILAN: Simone Inzaghi has signed an extension to his contract with Inter Milan which will keep him at the San Siro until 2024, the Serie A club announced on Tuesday.

In a video released by Inter on social media, chairman Steven Zhang said that Inzaghi would stay for "two more years" after extending his current deal with the club by a year.

Italian media report that the 46-year-old has also received a one million euro salary increase to five million euros. Inter are showing faith in Inzaghi despite the former Lazio and Italy forward failing to retain their Serie A crown, won by local rivals AC Milan after a thrilling title race which went down to the final day of the season. He joined Inter last summer from Lazio when Antonio Conte jumped ship shortly after winning the Milan giants' first league title since 2010.

Inter were about to go into full-blown crisis mode and with Inzaghi just weeks into his new job the club sold Romelu Lukaku and Achraf Hakimi, key figures in that Scudetto triumph, as well as Christian Eriksen. No one expected Inter to hold on to the title but Inzaghi did so well folding in cheap replacements for departing stars that they were favourites for long stretches of the campaign. He created a new style of play which got the best out of the whole team rather than just a few key players and won the Italian Cup and Super Cup, both in dramatic style against arch rivals Juventus.

He also secured Inter qualification for the knockout stages of the Champions League for the first time since 2011/12, narrowly losing in the last 16 to eventual finalists Liverpool. Inter are hotly tipped to sign back Lukaku on loan from Chelsea and free agent Paulo Dybala, significantly bolstering an attack which topped the Serie A scoring charts last season.

Women's PGA Championship doubles prize money

WASHINGTON: Defending champion Nelly Korda and her rivals will chase a record \$9 million purse at this week's KPMG Women's PGA Championship after organisers announced a doubling of prize money for the event.

The third women's major of the year tees off at Congressional Country Club in Bethesda, Maryland on Thursday with Korda attempting to repeat her 2021 Women's PGA victory. A successful title defence could see Korda earn a winner's cheque of \$1.35 million after the hefty boost in prize money announced by organisers on the eve of the tournament. PGA of America President Jim Richerson said the decision to double the purse - from \$4.5 million to \$9 million - was a result of support from sponsors KPMG and a desire to elevate women's golf.

"We really wanted to make sure we utilized this event to showcase the best women's players in the game and do that with one of the biggest purses," Richerson said. "We've seen that commitment play out in this announcement today."

The bumper purse is part of a broad trend throughout women's golf, where prize money across the five major championships has risen steadily over the past decade. With the Women's PGA increase, prize money



for the five majors now stands at \$37.3 million, compared to \$13.75 million for the same events in 2012. News of the increased purse rippled around Congressional on Tuesday after players were informed of the move.

"You heard a murmur kind of going around the clubhouse," US professional Mariah Stackhouse said. "Hey, 'Did you see that email, 9 mil', and everybody is super, super excited." This week's major meanwhile is another opportunity for Korda to leave her recent health scare further in the rear-view mirror.

The 23-year-old only returned recently from a four-month layoff after discovering a blood clot in her left arm. She narrowly missed out on a victory at last weekend's Meijer LPGA Classic, losing a three-way playoff against compatriot Jennifer Kupcho and Ireland's Leona Maguire. "I gave myself a chance last week," Korda said

Tuesday.

"If you told me that when I was laying in the ER, I would have definitely been very happy with that," Korda says she has followed an intensive training regime since returning to fitness after hardly touching a club during her long layoff.

"That was the longest time I think I've ever gone without hitting a golf ball," Korda said. "Since I started hitting, it's just been kind of full throttle, and I have been practicing pretty much. "I have not taken more than two or three days off since then. I'm just happy to be out here playing competitive golf."

Korda will play in a group alongside Canada's Brooke Henderson, a winner of the Women's PGA in 2016 when it was held at Sahalee Country Club, east of Seattle. Henderson has an excellent record in the Women's PGA, posting five top-10 finishes in her seven appearances in the major. "Just the excitement of being back and playing in this amazing championship on incredible golf courses and having the bar raised for women's golf by this championship is really cool for me," Henderson said on Tuesday. "I think I've just fed off a lot of great memories and hopefully I can do the same this week."

Djokovic, Nadal lead title chase at all-change Wimbledon

LONDON: Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal headline the title chase at Wimbledon where eight-time champion Roger Federer, the world's top two players and cherished ranking points will all be missing.

Djokovic is bidding for a seventh title at the All England Club to move level with US great Pete Sampras. Nadal, fresh from a 14th French Open victory and a record-extending 22nd major, is halfway to the first men's calendar Grand Slam in more than half a century. The season's third Slam tournament has already made political waves even before the first ball is served on Monday.

The decision to ban Russian and Belarusian players in the aftermath of the invasion of

Ukraine means there is no place for world number one Daniil Medvedev or eighth-ranked Andrey Rublev. Both the ATP and WTA, who control the men's and women's tours, retaliated by stripping ranking points from the tournament. For the first time since his debut in 1999 - notwithstanding the Covid-cancelled 2020 edition - Federer will be a no-show as the 40-year-old recovers from knee surgery.

Also missing is Germany's world number two Alexander Zverev, who suffered serious ankle ligament damage in an horrific injury in his French Open semi-final against Nadal. However, Medvedev and Zverev have never shone at Wimbledon with neither man making it past the fourth round. Djokovic and

Nadal, ranked three and four, are the top seeds meaning if they are to face each other for the 60th time, it can only be in the final.

Djokovic, the champion in 2011, 2014, 2015, 2018, 2019 and 2021, could be playing in his final Slam of the year. His refusal to be vaccinated is likely to rule him out of the US Open later this year. A bruising quarter-final loss to Nadal at the French Open which saw him deposed as champion in Paris will also likely provide extra motivation. Nadal won the last of his two Wimbledon titles in 2010 having captured his first with an epic triumph over Federer two years earlier. The 36-year-old Spaniard arrives at Wimbledon with the Australian and French Opens secured.

He is halfway to becoming only the third man - and first since Rod Laver in 1969 - to complete a calendar Grand Slam. Nadal has endured a bittersweet relationship with Wimbledon. Two titles have been accompanied by three lost finals as well as injury-enforced absences in 2004, 2009, 2016 and 2021. There remains a question mark over his durability for the two weeks at Wimbledon having played the entire French Open with his troublesome left foot anaesthetised. Nadal has since undergone a course of radiofrequency stimulation, a treatment aimed at reducing nerve pain in his foot. "I love Wimbledon," said Nadal. "I had a lot of success there.

A player like me, I am always



ready to play Wimbledon." Should Djokovic or Nadal fall, then Italy's Matteo Berrettini, runner-up to Djokovic in last year's final, would be the most likely beneficiary. World number

Newly-appointed DG Sports Punjab assumes charge



Our Correspondent

LAHORE: Newly-appointed Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi has assumed charge of his office at National Hockey Stadium on Wednesday.

Muhammad Tariq Qureshi has vast experience of administration in different capacities. He had also served on key posts like Director Anti-Corruption Department, Deputy Commissioner Gujranwala, Additional Commissioner Lahore, Deputy Secretary School Education Department, Judicial Magistrate and Assistant Commissioner Layyah in the past.

Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi vowed to find fresh sports talent from all parts of the province. "Best facilities will be provided to players so that they can excel in national and international sports competitions appropriately in future," he added.

POA celebrating Olympic Day in collaboration with DHA

Our Correspondent

LAHORE: Olympic Day is celebrated worldwide on June 23rd of each year to commemorate the birth of the Modern Olympics Games that were held in Paris back in June, 1894.

This day is one of the key events of our annual calendar where we engage with partners for promotion of Olympism in our community. Thousands of people of all ages participate in sporting and cultural activities, such as fun runs, exhibitions, music, tree plantation, beach cleaning and educational seminars. Pakistan Olympic Association (POA) also regularly celebrates the Olympic Day every year.

POA is celebrating Olympic Day 2022 in collaboration with DHA, Lahore by organizing a walk from DHA Head Office to Sports Complex, exhibitional Match of Hockey between Olympians and Youngsters will also be held. National medalists of various sports as well as civil society and children of all ages are also requested to participate. The message of Thomas Bach, IOC President will be presented followed by "Digital Olympic Quiz".

Ch. Muhammad Yaqub, Vice President Pakistan Olympic Association / NOC Pakistan will grace the occasion as Chief Guest. Presidents / Secretaries General of Affiliated Units of POA, dignitaries and residents of DHA are also invited.

M/s Dr. Tariq Aziz, Col (R) Mudassar Asghar, Manzoor Ul Hasan, Touqeer Dar, other Olympians and World Champion Mr. Muhammad Inam will also participate in this event to share their success stories with children and students.

Men's tennis tour to trial 'off-court' coaching

MILAN: Simone Inzaghi has signed an extension to his contract with Inter Milan which will keep him at the San Siro until 2024, the Serie A club announced on Tuesday.

In a video released by Inter on social media, chairman Steven Zhang said that Inzaghi would stay for "two more years" after extending his current deal with the club by a year. Italian media report that the 46-year-old has also received a one million euro salary increase to five million euros. Inter are showing faith in Inzaghi despite the former Lazio and Italy forward failing to retain their Serie A crown, won by local rivals AC Milan after a thrilling title race which went down to the final day of the season.

He joined Inter last summer from Lazio when Antonio Conte jumped ship shortly after winning the Milan giants' first league title since 2010. Inter were about to go into full-blown crisis mode and with Inzaghi just weeks into his new job the club sold Romelu Lukaku and Achraf Hakimi, key figures in that Scudetto triumph, as well as Christian Eriksen. No one expected Inter to hold on to the title but Inzaghi did so well folding in cheap replacements for departing stars that they were favourites for long stretches of the campaign.

England name XI for final NZ Test

LONDON: England made one change to the XI for the third and final Test against New Zealand, starting on 23 June in Leeds.

In a big blow, England will miss their all-time highest Test wicket-taker, with the veteran Jimmy Anderson sustaining an ankle injury.

However, that has presented an opportunity for Jamie Overton, who is set to make his Test debut.

"Unfortunately Jimmy (Anderson) has not pulled up as well as we would have liked. So Jamie Overton is going to make his debut this week. "It's unfortunate for Jimmy but we've obviously got a massive Test match against India next week to look to as well. He didn't pull up as well, so it's great Jamie gets the opportunity to represent England.

and no-one expected him to win in Australia," said 26-year-old Berrettini of his Wimbledon chances. "I don't feel like I'm the favourite but I know I can do it, I can't pull the wool over people's eyes."

Of the remaining top 10, French Open runner-up Casper Ruud has lost in the first round on his two previous trips to Wimbledon. Stefanos Tsitsipas has fallen at the first hurdle three times out of four while Spanish teen star Carlos Alcaraz only made his main draw debut in 2021, reaching the second round. Felix Auger-Aliassime made the last-eight last year while 10th-ranked Hubert Hurkacz, the champion on grass in Halle last weekend, was a semi-finalist in 2021.