



# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ  
عائز رضی اللہ عنہما نے بیان کیا کہ رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا کہ لو کہ اس کے ساتھ قائم ہو گی جو قیمت دے اور احسان کرے (آزاد کرے)۔  
(صحیح بخاری، حدیث نمبر 6760)

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## PTI govt left Pakistan isolated internationally: Maryam

PML-N vice president Maryam Nawaz says the previous government led by Imran Khan left Pakistan internationally isolated. It will take time for the country to get back on its feet, adding that the previous government led by Imran Khan left Pakistan internationally isolated. We are aware of the plight of the people, while inflation and other issues have to be addressed by all national political parties.



## Imported govt destroys economy: Farrukh Habib

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Farrukh Habib says the imported government has destroyed the economy of Pakistan while the inflation rate in the increased 30 percent in the country. The current government is repeatedly making changes in the budget while they lie to the masses daily. During former Prime Minister Imran Khan's tenure, the government had given subsidy on items of utility stores in a large amount.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Ziq'ad 24, Friday, June 24, 2022

www.dailyspokesman.net

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Daily Spokesman Vol: 15, Issue: 88 Price Rs. 25.00 Pages 8

## Gems & stones

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chairing meeting with a delegation of All Pakistan Mines & Minerals Association, led by Housing Minister Maulana Abdul Wasay in Islamabad on Thursday.



Photo: PID

## CPEC to take economy forward: Miftah



Says Pakistan has been saved from bankruptcy

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Miftah Ismail said here on Thursday that China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would play an important role in taking Pakistan's economy forward as well as cementing the bilateral relationship between China and Pakistan.

He was talking to the Charge de Affaires of the Embassy of People's Republic of China, Ms. Pangchunxue, who called on the federal minister here, according to press statement issued by the finance ministry. Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Dr. Aisha Ghaus Pasha was also present in the meeting, the statement added.

Miftah Ismail on the occasion highlighted deep-rooted friendship and brotherly relations between Pakistan and China. The minister affirmed full support and cooperation to Chinese investors and businessmen. The Chinese Charge de Affaires assured full support and cooperation of Chinese government and said that China was committed to develop the CPEC projects under the vision of shared prosperity and it would further strengthen and expand economic cooperation between both the countries. Both the dignitaries expressed their will for further enhancing the bilateral cooperation in various fields. APP

## Ahsan shares plan for tea production in Pakistan

Staff Report

MANSEHRA: Federal Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal on Thursday visited National Tea and High-Value Crops Research Institute (NTHRI) in Shinkari here. The minister was briefed about the master plan for the production of tea and other crops. Talking to newsmen, Ahsan Iqbal said, a master plan has been chalked out for the production of tea on 150,000 acres of land. Pakistan was self-sufficient in the agriculture sector in 2018, but now items are being imported from other countries. Ahsan Iqbal regretted, that even today, Pakistan is importing edible oil and added an emergency meeting has been summoned next week to discuss the possible ways to increase the production of edible oil in Pakistan.

# Govt committed to overcome economic crisis: PM

Seeks proposals for development of mining sector

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said the government was committed to bringing the country out of its difficult situation and vowed to prioritize the steps aimed at the nation's prosperity and development. Addressing the Senators of the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz), the prime minister said though the country could still face the difficult times ahead due to the inherited inefficiency of the previous government, however, the coalition government would brave every challenge effectively.

PM Sharif said the coalition government was unanimous that the 14 months would be used for reformation and improvement of the country by keeping the country ahead of political interests.

He pointed out that the government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf had struck a deal with International Monetary Fund (IMF) to pass on the change in fuel prices and had accepted to raise Rs 30 petrol levy and sales tax of 17 percent. However, he said, the deal was quashed and the previous government had suddenly

reduced the prices this March at a time when the petrol prices skyrocketed globally. This abnormal imbalance left the country in a difficult economic situation, he said. He said his government would keep the nation onboard regarding difficult economic decisions and would not deceive them, unlike the PTI government. Shehbaz Sharif said the government's deal on conditions with IMF had been finalized, however, said the positive results in the shape of development would take some time. He stressed the need for strengthening the national economy by taking effective steps. The prime minister said the PTI government had no empathy for the common man as it ended several projects of Pakistan Muslim League-N tenure that were aimed at public welfare.

He said the forefathers of the sub-continent had rendered immense sacrifices to establish a separate homeland to lead a comfortable life. However, he said during 73 years, all governments including civil and military, could not help this dream get materialized. PM Sharif said China, Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Qatar always supported Pakistan in difficult

times besides siding at the diplomatic level. He mentioned that the recent \$2.3 billion loan from China was a respite in the current trying times.

For the first time in history, he said a genuine tax was imposed on the net income of affluent persons to provide relief to poor who were the real builders of Pakistan. Also, to reduce the burden on poor, Rs 2,000 stipend was announced to provide them relief, he added. He termed it a political and religious obligation of the rich to accommodate the deserving people and contribute to the prosperity of nation. He said in next few days, he would address the nation to take them onboard regarding the steps taken by the government to improve the economic situation. The prime minister regretted that several welfare projects launched by PM Nawaz Sharif were stopped by the PTI government.

PM orders to expedite work on various development projects in Murree

## Stop fooling people: Tarin batters Miftah

Says IMF asks govt to impose more taxes

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Former Finance Minister Shaukat Tarin has said that Miftah Ismail should 'stop fooling people' by badmouthing out economic performance. Responding to Finance Minister Miftah Ismail's press conference on Thursday, PTI leader Shaukat Tarin said that the impression that Pakistan was near collapse when PTI left is false. 'Who is Miftah trying to fool by passing such statements?' he questioned. The PTI leader added that Miftah himself signed the economic survey and the Rs486 billion subsidy formulas that we devised is being used by you. The incumbent government has had to take tough decisions due to their incompetence, he added.

Shaukat Tarin said that the PTI government set a price of Rs55 per kg of flour which has gone up to Rs80 in only two months. The sugar price on utility stores in our ear was under Rs70, he claimed. Shaukat said that the government is imposing



more taxes on people who already pay taxes. Over 43 million people are still out of the tax net in Pakistan, he added. The PTI government did not impose any taxes on fuel, but this government will soon impose a 17 sales tax and Rs50 Levi on fuel, he added.

During the Senate session, Shaukat Tarin said

the economic survey was presented a few days ago in which there was a record economic growth and the government signed it a few weeks ago but now why they are blaming PTI government for bankruptcy. 'The IMF has asked the government to impose more taxes and another budget is coming,' Shaukat said.

19 members

Punjab cabinet extension on cards

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab has decided to add 19 more ministers to his cabinet, the news members would take oath on June 17, sources. According to details, Hamza Shehbaz has decided to extend his cabinet by adding 19 more ministers and advisors to his cabinet. A total of five advisors, five special assistants to the Chief Minister and 10 ministers are expected to be included in the cabinet.

Punjab Government sources say that Khalil Tahir, Nadeem Kamran, Imran Nazir, and Rana Mashud will be included in the provincial cabinet. Usman Mehmood, Aijaz Chahana, Malik Ahmed Ali, Jugnu Mohsin and others will take oath on June 27. Governor Punjab Baleegh-ur-Rehman will take oath from the new cabinet members. The second oath session has been anticipated for some while now. The session was postponed some days back as PPP leadership showed reservations over the proposed names.

## TTP negotiations spark furore in Senate

PPP Senator demands parliament's joint session over the issue

Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Senators on Thursday sparred over the state's negotiations with the outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and demanded clarity from the government over the matter. The institutions that overlook the country's national security briefed an important meeting a day earlier at the Prime Minister's Office, with high-level political leadership in presence. Following the meeting, the PM's Office said all negotiations with the TTP will be held as per the Constitution and Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah assured that an in-camera session of the Parliament will be called to take lawmakers into confidence regarding the decisions related to national security.

In today's session of the Upper House of the Parliament, Senator Mushtaq Ahmed said a session on negotiation with the TTP took place at the PM's Office yesterday in which representatives of some political parties were present but not everyone was invited. 'This session took decisions related to the talks with TTP. Therefore, there should be clarity and the house should be informed that which committee's session was it?' Senator Ahmed questioned. The senator said that if the session was of the Parliamentary Committee on



National Security (PCNS) then he is a member of it and he was not invited to the meeting.

'Was this a session of a parliamentary committee? If not, then where does the Parliament stand on this matter?' the JI senator wondered. Senator Ahmed added that the government has said that it will brief the Parliament on the negotiations. 'What will be the use of it once the [state] finalises itself?' The senator slammed the government and asked it whether the Parliament was a mere 'rubber stamp'. For his part, PPP Senator Raza Rabbani, whose party is a major stakeholder in the coalition government, said the Parliament is 'always used as a rubber stamp'.

'There will be no use of present-

ing the TTP agreement before the Parliament if the government finalises it as the agreement cannot be amended later,' the former Senate chairman said. Rabbani said an in-camera session of the Parliament should be called to inform lawmakers about the terms and conditions of the negotiations with the TTP. 'I am surprised that we can speak to the TTP, but production orders for Ali Wazir, a member of the Parliament, could not be issued so far despite several requests,' Rabbani added.

Expressing his views in the Senate session, Raza Rabbani raised questions over talks with the TTP and added that the one hand our own people are in jails and we are having talks with the TTP on the other hand.



## Cooperation

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information & Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb along with Turkish Ambassador H.E. Mustafa Yurdakul cutting ribbon to inaugurate upgradation project of APP Urdu News Service.



Photo: PID

## Countering menace

## Pakistan calls disinformation 'global pandemic'

FM Bilawal stresses need for effective strategy to fight disinformation

NEW YORK: Warning that disinformation has become a "global pandemic", Pakistan Thursday called for international cooperation to confront, counter, and defeat this scourge which fuels hate speech. "We can succeed in doing so only through comprehensive international cooperation," Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said at the launch meeting of "Group of Friends for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms". Established by Pakistan, the Group, which has representation from all regions of the world, seeks the implementation of the landmark General Assembly resolution 76/227 on Countering Disinformation for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which was adopted by consensus last year.

In his recorded keynote address, FM Bilawal thanked all the countries who joined the Group and urged others to also be part of it. "Utilizing this platform, we should agree on an International Plan of Action to counter disinformation, on-line and off-line, in the public and private domain," he said.

"The exponential proliferation of disinformation, especially through on-line platforms and social media, has spread social discord; fostered hate speech, racism, discrimination, xenophobia, Islamophobia; and exacerbated competing nationalisms and inter-State tensions and conflict," the foreign minister warned. "Disinformation has often justified and intensified the violations of human rights."

FM Bilawal urged member states and the United Nations to enhance public awareness about disinformation through information campaigns. "We should enhance the capacity of governments and their relevant institutions to detect, analyze and expose disinformation and disinformation campaigns and networks," he said. "We should make a concerted effort, through cooperation, to minimize the negative impact of disinformation on human rights and relations between communities and States, by building firewalls against false information, ensuring transparency, adhering to human rights principles, such as respect for personal privacy and reputation, preventing the propagation

of racism, discrimination and hate speech."

Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN, who moderated the virtual event, thanked the participants, saying the "Group of Friends" provides a platform for deliberations to member states to discuss means to counter disinformation and raise awareness.

"Countering the scourge of disinformation is a shared responsibility which requires international cooperation and solidarity," he said. A distinguished panel of speakers, comprising key representative and experts of UN entities, deliberated on approaches to countering disinformation.

Among them were Melissa Fleming, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications; Ms. Nada Al-Nashif, the UN Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights; Ambassador Cristian Espinosa of Ecuador and Chairperson of the Committee on Information, and Irene Khan, the UN Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Opinion and Expression. Agencies

## Punjab by-polls

## Lota election symbol be allotted to ruling parties: PTI

Fawad pens a letter to ECP

ISLAMABAD: The PTI has asked the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to allot "lota" as a symbol to the PML-N and PPP candidates as they have formed an electoral alliance for the upcoming by-elections on the 20 vacant seats in Punjab. PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry, in a letter to the ECP, informed the body that Pakistan is going through a "multi-dimensional crisis due to a foreign conspiracy". The former information minister told the commission that the parties that have formed the coalition government at the Centre fought the 2018 polls as rivals and are ideologically different.

"This alliance started with the no-confidence motion presented against the PTI government on March 8, 2022, when history's worst

horse-trading took place at the Sindh House," said Fawad.

He added that his party back then had asked the ECP to take notice of the matter. The PTI leader further said that "selling of conscience, horse-trading and floor crossing" that began at the National Assembly eventually reached Punjab, adding that in the Punjab Assembly, 20 lawmakers came forward who had gone against the law and Constitution and surrendered their conscience to wealth.

"As a result, the ECP declared their seats vacant and ordered by-polls in the constituencies," said Fawad, adding that the PPP, PML-N and other parties that promoted horse-trading announced forming an electoral alliance for the by-polls via a press conference on June 22.

## Plea filed

## SCBA seeks review of SC's interpretation on Article 63(A)

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court Bar has filed petition in the apex court seeking review of the court's opinion in the Presidential Reference seeking interpretation of Article 63-A. The Supreme Court Bar has pleaded to the court to review its opinion given over interpretation of the Article 63-A on May 17.

The Bar has requested to the court to review the paragraph of its opinion in the presidential reference, with regard to not counting the vote of the dissenting members and take back that opinion. "Not counting the defecting members vote is against the spirit of the constitution," the SC Bar petitioned. "The Supreme Court's opinion has been equal to an intervention in the constitution," according to the petition. "According to the Article 63-A, defecting members can only be de-seated," SC Bar said in its petition. The federal government and the election commission has been made parties in the case. The SCBA filed a plea moving the apex court to take back its opinion on the verdict's paragraph about not counting the votes of dissidents by reviewing the interpretation made on May 17, 2022. Agencies

## By-polls

## Punjab govt should refrain from rigging: Elahi

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League - Quaid (PML-Q) leader and Punjab Assembly speaker Chaudry Pervaiz Elahi on Thursday warned the Punjab government of strict action in case of any attempt to rig the upcoming by-elections in Punjab. In a meeting with PML-Q Rawalpindi delegation, Pervaiz Elahi said that we will fully support PTI and run its elections campaign, adding that the incumbent government has been exposed. The current rulers have no plan to revive the country from economic crisis, he added.

The Punjab Assembly speaker further said that the Punjab government should refrain from rigging and use of police force during the upcoming Punjab by-polls otherwise we will take strict action against them. A delegation led by President Pakistan Muslim League Rawalpindi Zubair Khan called on Speaker Punjab Assembly Chaudhry Parvez Elahi. The political situation and by-elections were discussed in detail in the meeting. Pakistan Muslim League announced to support PTI candidates in by-elections. Agencies

## PTI govt agrees IMF terms: Aisha Pasha

Says public should see what past government has left us with

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Finance Aisha Ghaus Pasha on Thursday said that the new coalition government has not agreed to any terms with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that the previous government had not already okayed. "We haven't agreed upon anything that was not in the deal the previous government (PTI) finalised," she said while talking to a news channel here.

"The IMF is asking for the same things our predecessors came to an understanding with them on," the minister said. She added that the agreement with the IMF was not struck any government, it was struck by the nation. Pasha added the talks with the IMF had "advanced". Speaking on the rupee's steep depreciation over the past few months, she said the country's high imports were "putting pressure" on the currency. She was hopeful that once an agreement is finalised with the IMF, the pressure on the rupee would ease.



She also mentioned the recent \$2.3-billion-agreement with a Chinese banks consortium that was announced by Finance Minister Miftah Ismail yesterday. Pasha believed that the agreement would soon manifest in the (stock) market. "Some of the previous

government's decisions are weighing heavy on us," the minister said, adding that the public should see the decisions "that they have left us with". With regard to graft, she was of the view that given evidence of corruption against anyone, cases should be pursued.

## Austerity or crisis???

## No free electricity for power sector employees: PAC directs

Committee examines audit reports of Ministry of Communications, Power Division

ISLAMABAD: The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) on Thursday directed not to provide free electricity to the officers and employees of the power sector. A meeting of the PAC was held with chairman Noor Alam Khan in chair. During the meeting, the PAC expressed resentment over situation of unannounced load shedding. Speaking on the occasion, the committee chairman asked why schedule for load shedding is not issued. He said that Secretary Power Division told the committee that power outages are high in areas where there is power pilferage and the power sector is stuck quagmire and it is unable to even meet the cost of generating electricity.

The secretary said that subsidy was being given to around 8 million

power consumers, adding that how would it [power sector] meet its cost if subsidy would be given to two-third consumers. The committee accepted the proposal to give allowances to the officers and employees of the power sector instead of providing them free electricity. Sheikh Rohail Asghar said that the Discos should have their security force to stop power theft, while Afzal Dhandla said that the big thieves are in alliance with Wapda while the families with single-fan bore the brunt of power theft.

Noor Alam Khan also expressed anger over absence of K-Electric CEO. During the meeting, the PAC chairman while proposing giving documents to the media said that the masses must be aware about what question their

representatives are raising. PTI Senator Shibli Faraz said that any unauthentic or unverified this shouldn't be handed over to media. As nation faces rising fuel cost and inflation, the power tariff is also likely to increase by whopping Rs11.34 for K-Electric consumers. According to sources, power tariff is likely to increase under the head of fuel price adjustment for month of May. Consumers will be burdened by additional Rs22.65 billion.

Public Accounts Committee (PAC) on Thursday examined audit reports of Ministry of Communications and Power Division for the years 2019-20. The meeting was held here at Parliament House in Chair of MNA Noor Alam Khan, chairman of the committee. Agencies

## NA budget debate

## PTI govt responsible for prevailing economic crisis, inflation: MNAs

ISLAMABAD: Members of the National Assembly on Thursday held the previous government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) responsible for the current economic crisis, high inflation, increased prices of petroleum products, gas and electricity. Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) MNA Rasheed Ahmed Khan while resuming the budget 2022-23 debate said policies of the 'selected government' of PTI were the main reason behind the deteriorated economic condition and sky-rocketing inflation in the country. He said due to the PTI policies, the value of dollar had gone up from Rs 115 to Rs 190 during its tenure, whereas the prices of petroleum products, electricity and daily used items reached unaffordable levels.

The lawmaker said despite 'all favors', the PTI government during the last three and half years miserably failed to deliver and devise prudent economic policies to provide any relief to the common people. The MNA expressed the hope that the coalition government would not only steer the country out from the current economic crisis but also provide relief to people. He asked the government to conduct an inquiry into the

alleged corruption committed by the PTI leadership and friends. Pakistan People Party Parliamentarians MNA Syed Agha Rafiullah, said despite all the economic and other challenges, the coalition government had decided to take charge of the government to avoid bankruptcy.

He said the coalition government was using all its energies to provide relief to common man and avert the negative impacts of the PTI's bad economic policies. Rafiullah said that PTI had inked unrealistic and unfavorable agreements with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) by putting behind the interest of Pakistan. He also appreciated Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah for introducing the "Mazdoor Card" in the province for the poor people and requested him to include fishermen in the program. PML-N lawmaker Dr Darshan while criticizing the PTI deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said policies of Imran Khan's government had made the life of common man miserable.

He said the PTI government had taken record loans and allowed an increase in the prices of all items being used by the masses. He said the

PTI government had politically victimized all leadership of PML-N and PPP by framing fake cases against them. He also highlighted the issue of water shortage for irrigation purposes in the Sindh province. Dr Darshan requested the Sindh and federal governments for establishing technical schools and colleges in the areas of Ghotki. PML-N MNA Dr Malik Mukhtar Ahmad stressed the need for signing the Charter of Economy for sustainable economic growth and put the country in the right direction. He asked the finance minister to focus on the industrial sector that was helping in the enhancement of the country's exports.

Dr. Fehmida Mirza strongly condemned the blasphemous remarks of BJP leaders against Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) and said that Muslim world should register their strong protest so that no one can dare to commit such shameful act again. She said that parliamentarians should be given in-camera briefing about the government talks with Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). She asked the government to take effective steps to combat coronavirus as its cases are increasing again.

There is inflation throughout the world and it is impossible for Pakistan to ensure sustain progress and combat the current economic situation without help of international financial institutions.

She said that economic challenges confronting the country should be handled with collective wisdom and all political parties should sit together to devise an economic roadmap. She said that parliament should be strengthened and lawmakers should give their inputs to bring improvement in the economic situation. She said that the political polarization should be avoided at this critical juncture because the country required a new Charter of Democracy (CoD). She hoped that reforms in the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) would continue and the tax net to be widened through technological means. MNA Shahida Akhtar Ali termed the budget 'overall good', however, she demanded more vivid policies which may uplift the down-trodden segment of the society.

She said that import of agricultural products of the country is around \$7 billion and there was a need to increase per acre production through

use of modern technologies. She said that agricultural machinery should be exempted from taxes and research should be made for better production through using quality seeds. She also stressed to promote tourism and IT sectors as the country was lagging behind in these areas. She demanded to privatize the non-profitable organizations so that the national exchequer might be saved. The various areas of Balochistan were full of natural resources and proper attention should be made for their exploration, she maintained.

Ahmed Raza Maneka of PML-N expressed confidence that the incumbent government would soon be able to revive the national economy as it took drastic measures in the Federal Budget 2022-23 to put the country on a sustainable path of progress and development.

He called for a 'Charter of Economy' by taking along all stakeholders to move the economic wheel at a fast pace. He highlighted the issues being faced by people of his constituency (Pakpattan-I) related to education, road infrastructure and other development projects. Agencies



# Punjab cabinet decides to scrap 11 toll plazas

The meeting approved the Provincial Assembly of the Punjab Privilege Bill, 2022

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shahbaz Sharif on Thursday chaired fourth meeting of the provincial cabinet at his office which decided to scrap 11 toll plazas for providing relief to the people.

The CM directed that prisoners' vans should be ventilated for the convenience of detainees. The cabinet decided

to extend the wheat release policy and approved a two-month extension along with the approval of the constitution of the cabinet committee on wheat with the provincial food minister as its head.

The meeting approved the Provincial Assembly of the Punjab Privilege Bill, 2022 and the Provincial Assembly of the Punjab Secretariat Service Bill, 2022.

It approved to extend the contract of DG Punjab Forensic Science Agency, Dr. Muhammad Ashraf Tahir, based on his performance.

The meeting endorsed the decision to purchase operational vehicles for the police while CM Hamza Shahbaz directed that a training program be started for improving the capacity of the forensic experts.

The meeting ratified the decisions of the second meeting of the cabinet and congratulated the political and administrative team members on the approval of the budget 2022-23 from the assembly.

The chief secretary and other officials concerned attended the meeting. APP

# Progress on Safe City project is in full swing: Ghulam Nabi

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon has said that work on the Safe City project in Karachi is in full swing. To curb criminal elements, the police have stepped up patrolling, blockade, and snap-checking which is yielding positive results and restoring law and order in the city. Attacks on police have increased in the last few months, many dutiful officers have been martyred but this will not dampen the morale of the police. He expressed these views during a meeting with the President of Korangi Association of Trade and Industry (KATI) Salman Aslam at the Police Head Office. He said that there are many difficulties and problems which the police, the people, and the business community have to face



KATI President Salman Aslam presenting a bouquet to Inspector General of Police Ghulam Nabi Memon.

together. Ghulam Nabi Memon has said that CCTV has facilitated our investigation. The police are performing their duties diligently. In such cases, the full cooperation of the people is required. Steps are also being taken to bridge the gap between the police and the people, which has restored public confidence

in the police. On the occasion, President KATI Salman Aslam paid tributes to IG Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon for his services. He said that crime was reduced in Karachi, especially in Korangi which was credited to IG Sindh and police officers who risked their lives to perform their duties. Police personnel intensified operations against criminal elements. Patrolling and snap-checking in the city have increased the sense of security among the people. He thanked IG Sindh for taking immediate steps to address the issues facing the business community.

President KATI saluted the police personnel who were martyred in the line of duty and said that the people were living in peace only because of the sacrifices of the brave officers of our nation. The sacrifices of the police will never be forgotten because they are our heroes and benefactors.

Salman Aslam said that community policing is an important need of the hour, the concept of community policing has successfully maintained law and order all over the world. President KATI also assured IG Sindh of his full support.

# Lifebuoy launches free doctor Consultation Service



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Lifebuoy soap joined hands with Sehat Kahani; a leading telehealth provider to provide free doctor consultation across Pakistan at an exclusive signing ceremony held at Unilever Pakistan Head Office on 21st June 2022. This initiative stems from Lifebuoy's lifelong purpose of saving lives by enabling and educating people on the importance of hygiene.

The vision of providing free health care access to every Pakistani is powered by insights that indicate that less than 50% of the country has access to health care. Recognizing the value that can be unlocked by addressing this challenge, Lifebuoy soap is working towards building a long-term infrastructure that enables free access to health care in collaboration with Sehat Kahani.

Sehat Kahani is a telemedicine platform that leverages technology to connect patients in need of affordable and convenient health care options, to an online network of doctors across various specializations.

# UAE CG meets with Dy Speaker Sindh Assembly



Staff Reporter

KARACHI: UAE Consul General Bakheet Ateeq Al Romaiti met with Mrs Rehana Laghari Deputy Speaker Sindh Assembly at Sindh Assembly house Karachi.

Excellency Bakheet explained about UAE visa office performance and exchange his views about Pakistan and UAE friendship.

# Governor Punjab lauds efforts of IUB for soybean related intercropping tech



Our Correspondent

BAHAWALPUR: Governor Punjab Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rehman in a meeting with Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob, Vice Chancellor, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur and Director National Research Center for Intercropping IUB and Postdoctoral Officer of Sichuan Agricultural University Muhammad Ali Raza emphasized to reduce the rising import cost and encourage local soybean production to reduce import cost.

Governor Punjab appreciated the efforts of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur in promoting soybean related intercropping technology in Pakistan and in view of excessive reliance on Pakistani imports for soybean supply. He expressed readiness to invest more in this sector. Maize soybean strip intercropping technology was introduced in Pakistan in 2018 from Sichuan Agricultural University. This advanced Chinese technology makes the best use of available space to grow crops on the same area of land that is equivalent to soybean production. An additional 'bonus', which has been helping Pakistan reduce soybean shortages and reduce soybean imports for the past four years. This season, the total display area of corn and soybean strip intercropping technology in Pakistan has exceeded 400 acres, which is about 2.67 times more than last fall.

In addition, more crop varieties are being added to the intercropping system including wheat, soybean and sugarcane, soybean intercropping. Demonstration plots are now being harvested, which is expected to yield promising results soon.

Dr. Muhammad Ali Raza said that last season more than 200 farmers used our technology and this number is still increasing day by day. Farmers are quite satisfied with the results. They are contacting us and want to adopt more ground technology.

# Rs11.33/kWh likely be FCA for Karachi for May 2022

Staff Reporter

KARACHI, JUNE 23: K-Electric requested the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) to increase the power tariff by Rs 11.33 per unit on account of fuel charges adjustment (FCA) for the month of May. Per applicable tariff across the country, fuel adjustment is reviewed every month and is applicable on consumer bills for only one particular month.

The major impact on the monthly Fuel cost adjustment of May 2022 is due to an increase in the fuel price increase of Furnace Oil and power purchased from CPPA-G. The price of Furnace Oil in May 2022 has increased by 38% from March 2022 while the price of RLNG between March to May 2022 has increased by 50%.

The price of electricity from CPPA-G in May 2022 has increased by 53%. The price of CPPA-G as of May 2022 is Rs 13.897/KWh as compared to the price of Rs 9.387/ KWh in March 2022.

Fuel Charge Adjustment (FCA) is incurred by utilities due to global variation in fuel prices used to generate electricity and change in the generation mix. These costs are passed through to the consumers following NEPRA's scrutiny and approval and are one-time charges. Consumers also receive a benefit when the cost of fuel decreases.

# PEMRA issues a license to Quetta Traffic police

ISLAMABAD: Road safety education has played a key role in protecting Roads from accidents. Traffic Police Quetta FM-88.6 radio station will be a great importance to keep the passengers travelling on roads informed about the latest situation regarding weather, traffic, alternative routes as well as traffic rules.

In this regard, the Pakistan Electronic Media Regularity Authority (PEMRA) issued a license to the Quetta Traffic police. The purpose of the FM Radio will be to educate public about the traffic rules, traffic jam on roads, and about how to acquire driving license.

It will be the first FM Radio of its kind in Quetta, Balochistan.

DSP/PRO Mehmood Ali Khokhar briefed the Chairman Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority

(PEMRA) Muhammad Saleem Baig and highlighted the importance of radio in terms of accident prevention, weather advisory, traffic situation on carriageways and awareness with traffic rules. The Chairman (PEMRA) appreciated and acknowledged the ongoing steps taken by Balochistan Police in saving precious human lives.

The Chairman (PEMRA) also apprised that we all have a role to play to prevent from traffic accidents. A Non-commercial Radio Licenses have been awarded to Quetta Traffic Police for establishment of radio station.

A ceremony was held at PEMRA Headquarters Islamabad. During the ceremony, Chairman PEMRA Muhammad Saleem Baig handedover FM Radio licence to DSP / PRO to IGP

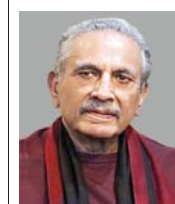
Balochistan, Mehmood Ali Khokhar for Quetta Traffic police. Mehmood Ali Khokhar holds a unique position in the world of broadcasting. In the past, Radio Pakistan's network program "Apna Pakistan" became very popular not only in Pakistan but also abroad. Mehmood Ali Khokhar used to present this program in his unique style due to which the program "Apna Pakistan" became very popular.

The popularity of the program can be gauged from the fact that during the live program, more than 5000 recorded SMS were received in one hour program at that time. PRO to IGP, Balochistan said that keeping in view the convenience of the people, Quetta Traffic Police is also planning to broadcast the program in regional languages.

# Leadership losing credibility due to economic decline

Pakistan is in the clutches of IMF and FATF, says Dr. Shahid

Staff Reporter



ISLAMABAD: Former President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt on

Thursday said the political leadership is losing its credibility in the people due to the economic downturn.

Policies of promoting the nobility at the cost of commoners which is in practice for decades have pushed the country to the brink of default but it has not forced politicians to mend ways, he said.

Shahid Rasheed Butt said that IMF and the FATF have trapped the country while the government has no plans to get out of this predicament.

In a statement issued here today, he said that the life of a common man has become a living hell while the elites are flourishing due to the policies framed to please them which has brought the country to the brink of civil war.

The exchange rate erosion is destroying the economy and now the threat of coronavirus is also increasing as the economic woes were not enough, he observed. The business leader said that the approval of the budget is pending and the economic crisis is getting worse which has eroded the purchasing power of the people.

He noted that taxes are being levied on the poor instead of the rich who have made a mockery of tax reform claims. Presently attempts are being made to get out of the clutches of IMF but the people are not being told who were the ones who got the country in this predicament and what action has been taken against them. Despite fulfilling all the conditions of FATF, Pakistan is still on the grey list which proves that FATF is a tool in the hands of global powers.

# Conference on Reporting on Conflict starts tomorrow

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: The Centre of Excellence in Journalism at the Institute of Business Administration will be hosting a two-day conference on 'Extreme Reporting: Conflict and Peace in the Digital Age' on June 25th and 26th. There will be seven panels spread over two days where industry experts will talk about media laws and regulations, reporting from conflict zones and the need for journalism among other topics.

This conference is a part of the Peace Journalism program, held by the CEJ in collaboration with US Consulate

Karachi, that began in May 2021 and will conclude this month. The program included online workshops on peace and conflict reporting, mobile journalism, data journalism, social media & photojournalism. The program also offered a mentorship with senior journalists.

Talking about the program, CEJ-IBA Director Amber Rahim Shamsi said: "Conflict has traditionally fueled journalism, but social media has turbocharged political polarization, and disinformation and misinformation. The CEJ-IBA is honored to host leading journalists, political figures, crea-

tors from film and music, budding satirists and commentators on the pressing issues plaguing the media industry in the digital age, and to celebrate the young journalists from across Pakistan who participated in the CEJ-IBA's peace journalism workshops."

IBA's Executive Director, Professor Dr. S. Akbar Zaidi said that he was delighted to be part of this conference which brings together Pakistan's best and bravest journalists talking peace and about the challenges they face in an age of growing conflict, from those related to control and regulations, to outright intimidation and threats.

# FPCCI welcomes IMF deal with cautious optimism, says Shabbir Mansha

KARACHI: Shabbir Mansha, Acting President FPCCI, has welcomed the near-certain resumption of International Monetary Fund (IMF)'s Extended Fund Facility (EFF) program for Pakistan with cautious optimism as it may unlock the stabilization of exchange rate and pave the way for major external funding programs for the fiscal year 2022-23 from world bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB) - provided the government utilizes this breather to bring down inflation and interest rate through

prudent fiscal and monetary management. Acting FPCCI Chief explained that real effective exchange rate (REER) shows that the rupee is underpriced by up to 5-7 percent on the back of rumors and foreign exchange crunch for transactional purposes; and, the rupee can be strengthened to its true value in a couple of months; however, this process should be incremental and sustainable through market mechanism. Volatility is the last thing that we need and we need to quell the rumors

that drive the volatility in the foreign market, he added. Shabbir Mansha emphasized that the interest rate of 13.75 percent will not let the economy grow at any meaningful rate; and, prices of electricity & gas have already made us uncompetitive as far as the exports are concerned. Additionally, there are rumors that interest rate may be further raised. He added that the government should also consult with the stakeholders in business, industry and trade on how and when interest rate can be brought down;

so that, businesses can plan their year ahead accordingly. Shabbir Mansha noted with a sigh of relief that international oil prices have declined by a considerable 7-8 percent approximately from its peak of \$123 per barrel to under \$110 per barrel; which must be passed on to the end consumers in a phased manner. Shabbir Mansha has also pinned his optimism that \$2.3 billion loans from Chinese commercial banks on favorable terms will put a halt to the depleting foreign exchange reserves.

# SECP to implement Business Process Re-Engineering model for LLPs



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD, JUNE 23: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), under its Leading Efficiency through Automation Prowess [LEAP] program, has initiated Business Process Re-Engineering (BPR) activity.

BPR is a business management strategy that involves the radical redesign of the core business processes to achieve dramatic improvements in productivity, turn-around time (TAT) and quality.

In this regard, a detailed business model for Limited Liability Partner-

ships (LLP), along with proposed improvements and changes was presented to the senior management of SECP for acceptance today by Ernst & Young Ford Rhodes (EYFR), at SECP head office.

It is expected that once these processes are formally implemented, it shall greatly reduce complexities in business processes, enhance user experience and promote transparency and internal efficiency of SECP business processes.

Earlier, an extensive Design Thinking workshop was also conducted in Lahore on LLPs processes by SECP in collaboration with EYFR.





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 & 4451122
Motorway Police	9266044
Motorway Police	9270601-20

## Women Police Stations

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Rawalpindi	9270601-20

## ENQUIRY

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PIA Flight Info	114
PIA Cargo	9280979
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Railway Exchange	9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi	5555489
CAA	9281092

## HOSPITALS

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

## DEPARTMENTS

CDA	9221334-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886
Cantonment Board	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224
Rawal Town	5773343

## Construction work of Golra Morr underpass to start soon

ISLAMABAD: National Highway Authority (NHA) would soon start construction work on vehicular underpass on Golra Morr Chowk to resolve long-standing issue of a direct access to sectors I-14, I-15 and I-16.

The procurement of the project has been concluded and it has recently been awarded to the lowest evaluated bidder at the cost of Rs. 717.644 million, an official of NHA told APP on Thursday. The underpass on Golra Morr Chowk was planned to facilitate the road users and to ensure smooth flow of traffic without any hindrance.

The official said that physical work of the project would start soon and it would be completed in 12 months time period.

He said about 125,000 vehicles entered the underpass everyday and it has become a black spot due to continued accidents on the busy route.

The underpass would also connect the underdeveloped sector of I series with the main city via Srinagar Highway. APP

# President advises students to develop analytical thinking skills

Says Quaid-e-Azam used to hold students in great esteem

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi Thursday advised the students to develop critical and analytical thinking skills to overcome biases inherent in human nature to achieve the ability of judicious decision-making.

The president, talking to the students of Cadet College, Murree here at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, said the youth needed to be trained to sift through the mass of information and discern misinformation and fake news from accurate information for making intelligent and informed judgments.

He also urged the students to draw inspiration from the life and conduct of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) as well as learn lessons from the lives of successful persons. This, he said, would enrich them intellectually and socially besides making them a better and more useful person for the benefit of society and the country.

President Alvi said that Quaid-e-Azam used to hold students in great esteem and encouraged them to actively participate in Pakistan's Freedom Movement to carve a separate homeland for the Muslims of India.

Replying to a question, Arif Alvi said that as the President of Pakistan, he had been working for safeguarding women's property rights, the welfare and education of differently-abled persons, and promoting the use of Information Technology in all sectors of national importance.

He said that Pakistan needed to increase the number of skilled IT human resources

to fill the ever-widening gap between demand and supply of IT professionals in the country and around the world.

He said that human resources in addition to natural resources were the essential ingredients for nations to make sustained and fast-track development.

He said that in the absence of skilled human resources, the natural resources remained untapped and unexploited, thus, hampering a country's progress.

President Alvi emphasized that the educational institutions should be fully geared to multiply their capacity to produce highly skilled human resources by adopting online and hybrid methods of imparting knowledge and skills to their students. This would ensure a steady supply of skilled professionals capable of effectively utilizing our unexploited natural resources.

## Mesmerizing

ISLAMABAD: A family enjoying boat at dry Rawal Lake, in Federal Capital.

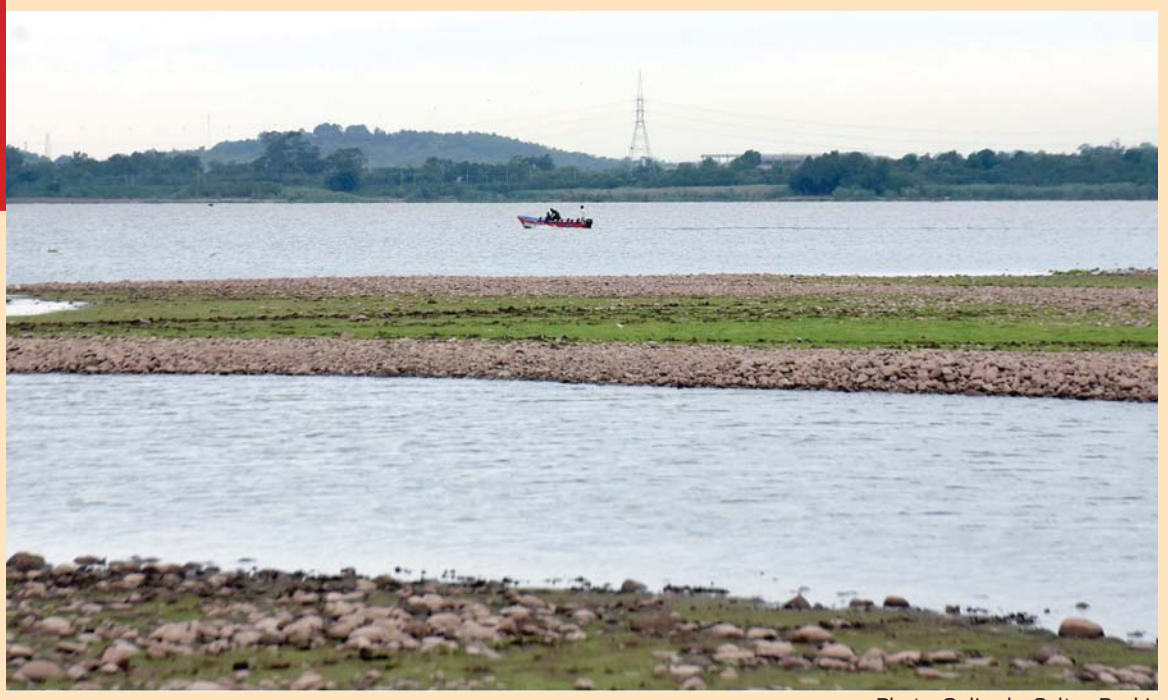


Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## ICCI calls for withdrawal of decision to close markets at 9pm

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry has said that our economy is already in dire straits and the government has decided to close markets in Islamabad by 9 pm that would badly affect the business activities and thwart all efforts to improve the economic situation of the country.

He called upon the government to withdraw its decision immediately and allow businesses to remain open till 11 pm in order to save the business community from further troubles. He said this while addressing a dinner reception hosted by Muhammad Naveed Malik, Secretary General, Traders Welfare Association, G-7/1 Market, Islamabad.

Jamshed Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President, Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI, Muhammad Ijaz Abbasi & Basir Daud former Presidents, Muhammad Naveed Malik, Ashfaq Hussain Chatha, Najeeb Malik, Ch. Tahir, Engr. Faheem, Imran Minhas, Umer Sadiq,

Shazia Rizwan, Nageena Khaleeq, Safeneer Shah and others were present on the occasion.

Muhammad Shakeel Munir said that Eid ul Azha was round the corner, which is a peak season for business activities as people have to do Eid shopping along with families. However, the closure of markets by 9:00 pm would create great problems for people doing Eid shopping. He further said that in the summer season, people normally go to the markets and bazaars for shopping in the evening hours due to which business activities reach peak level from 7:00 pm to 11:00 pm.

He said that closing the businesses during peak hours will not only cause problems for the customers, it will also cause losses to the business community. He suggested that instead of shutting down business at 9 pm, the government should keep power outages in markets from 9 am to 10 pm but allow business activities to run till 11:00 pm. He said that the business community is ready to cooperate with the government in steering the country out of its current predicament and

make joint efforts to strengthen Pakistan's economy. However, they needed government support to run the business activities smoothly.

Speaking at the occasion, Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President and Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI said that in the current turbulent economic situation, closing down businesses early is not good for the economy.

They said that Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves have already shrunk to alarming levels while the rupee has depreciated to Rs.210 per dollar and our exports are far below the actual potential. These difficult circumstances demand that the government should focus on promoting ease of doing business so that business activities could flourish and the economy could come out of difficulties.

However, instead of creating a conducive environment for businesses, the government is taking steps that will further affect business activities. They stressed that the decision should be reviewed and the businesses should be allowed to remain open till 11 pm.

## FPCCI, Kazakhstan agree to promote trade

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Yerzhan Kistafin visited the Capital Office Islamabad of Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry to meet the Vice President Umar Masood Ur Rehman.

During the meeting, establishing banking ties, Railway route, resume direct flights, matters of mutual interest including strengthening of cordial relations, increase in bilateral trade, and promotion of investment and frequent exchange of delegations between the two countries were discussed at length.

Umar Masood Ur Rehman said that Pakistan offers bright prospects of joint ventures and investment in the areas of textiles, marble, mining, energy, agro-based industries, etc. He said that both countries have strong diplomatic, historical, religious and political linkages but we have yet to succeed in exploiting the untapped trade potential to become key trading partners.

The main items of Pakistan's exports to Kazakhstan include rice, oil seeds and fresh fruits etc. whereas the imports from Kazakhstan comprise mostly of chemicals. There is considerable potential for Pakistan to enhance its exports to Kazakhstan in areas of pharmaceuticals, value added textiles, leather items, auto parts, ceramics and furniture etc.

He further said that the businessmen



of the Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are willing to invest somewhere and it is suggested to take them to Kazakhstan to explore the potential avenues. Sikandar Khan, group leader Charsada CCI, Muhammad Saleem Awan, President, Umair Khalid, Vice President, Sajid Khan, Ec member, Haripur CCI, M Zahid Patyala, Vice President, Mandi Bahudin CCI, Sheikh Abdul Waheed, Member Islamabad CCI participated on this occasion.

The participants also gave various suggestions to Excellency regarding promotion of trade between the two countries, solutions to problems faced by the business community, Transportation, direct flight from Kazakhstan to Peshawar, extension of Kazakhstan-Iran Railway to Pakistan and banking system. Axel Change at Taftan Border is the need of hour to increase the trade with low

expenditure. On the occasion Ambassador of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafin said that Pakistan is a regional power and bolstering cooperation between the two countries will be helpful for the entire Central Asian Region besides jacking-up the two-way trade to the new height.

Many Pakistani products such as sports goods, medicines and surgical instruments have good potential for trade in Kazakhstan. He said that Kazakhstan and Pakistan have exemplary diplomatic relations which can be extended to new areas of cooperation. Good relations between both the countries need to be reflected in bilateral trade and commercial ties. Pakistan is a very promising market due to its large population and it is attractive to foreign investors.

The Ambassador said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province is geographically important and the gateway to Central Asia. He also expressed his interest to visit various Chambers of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The direct air connectivity from Peshawar to Nur Sultan is now becoming essential for both countries particularly for the benefit of the business communities.

He also informed that some Kazakhstan banks have approached Pakistan banks to connect each other for the facilitation of traders and exporters. He said that the banking problem will be resolved soon. He also added that train service is being finalized between Kazakhstan and Iran, which will be extended to Pakistan in future. He also said that Kazakhstan is the biggest landlocked country in the world and we understand the importance of regional connectivity. Afghanistan could be the most beneficial country if trade increases between Pakistan and Kazakhstan though it.

There is a need for direct communication between businessmen and people of the two countries. He said that the private sectors of the two countries should step into joint ventures in textiles, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, education and other sectors of the economy. Pakistan can also get access to the other countries through Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan is the largest economy in Central Asia with large oil and natural gas reserves.

## Health Corner

### Researchers repair and regenerate heart muscle cells

ISLAMABAD: Researchers at the University of Houston are reporting a first-of-its-kind technology that not only repairs heart muscle cells in mice but also regenerates them following a heart attack, or myocardial infarction as its medically known.

Published in the Journal of Cardiovascular Aging, the groundbreaking finding has the potential to become a powerful clinical strategy for treating heart disease in humans, according to Robert Schwartz, Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz Cullen Distinguished Professor of biology and biochemistry at the UH College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics.

The new technology developed by the team of researchers uses synthetic messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA) to deliver mutated transcription factors — proteins that control the conversion of DNA into RNA — to mouse hearts.

"No one has been able to do this to this extent and we think it could become a possible treatment for humans," said Schwartz, who led the study with recent Ph.D graduate Siyu Xiao and Dinakar Iyer, a research assistant professor of biology and biochemistry.

The researchers demonstrated that two mutated transcription factors, Stemin and YAP5SA, work in tandem to increase the replication of cardiomyocytes, or heart muscle cells, isolated from mouse hearts. These experiments were conducted in vitro on tissue culture dishes.

"What we are trying to do is dedifferentiate the cardiomyocyte into a more stem cell-like state so that they can regenerate and proliferate," Xiao said.

Stemin turns on stem cell-like properties from cardiomyocytes. Stemin's crucial role in their experiments was discovered by Iyer, who said the transcription factor was a "game changer." Meanwhile, YAP5SA works by promoting organ growth that causes the myocytes to replicate even more.

In a separate finding published in the same journal, the team will report that Stemin and YAP5SA repaired damaged mouse hearts in vivo. Notably, myocyte nuclei replicated at least 15-fold in 24 hours following heart injections that delivered those transcription factors.

Bradley McConnell, professor of pharmacology, and graduate student Emilio Lucero in the UH College of Pharmacy, collaborated on the study by producing the infarcted adult mouse model.

"When both transcription factors were injected into infarcted adult mouse hearts, the results were stunning," Schwartz said. "The lab found cardiac myocytes multiplied quickly within a day, while hearts over the next month were repaired to near normal cardiac pumping function with little scarring."

An added benefit of using synthetic mRNA, according to Xiao, is that it disappears in a few days as opposed to viral delivery. Gene therapies delivered to cells by viral vectors raise several biosafety concerns because they cannot be easily stopped. mRNA-based delivery, on the other hand, turns over quickly and disappears.

Schwartz and Iyer worked on this study for several years, and Xiao focused on this research throughout her doctoral studies at UH. She graduated in fall 2020.

"I feel honored and lucky to have worked on this," Xiao said. "This is a huge study in heart regeneration especially given the smart strategy of using mRNA to deliver Stemin and YAP5SA."

The findings are especially important because less than 1% of adult cardiac muscle cells can regenerate. "Most people die with most of the same cardiomyocytes they had in the first month of life," she said. When there is a heart attack and heart muscle cells die, the contracting ability of the heart can be lost.



## Ashrafi reviews 'Road to Makkah' facility at Islamabad airport

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Special Representative for Interfaith Harmony and Middle East Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi on Thursday paid a visit to Islamabad International Airport and reviewed the 'Road to Makkah' facility being provided to the intending pilgrims.

Accompanying with Ulema and Mashaikh, he toured the 'Road to Makkah' facility section and witnessed the smooth sailing of Hajj operation. Ashrafi, expressing satisfaction after having one on one meeting with Saudi team at the airport, thanked the Saudi government in general and Ambassador Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki in particular for the inclusion of Pakistan in such a state-of-the-art project.

He said this initiative was a great opportunity for the pilgrims as their immigration process would be completed here at the Islamabad airport and they would not have any kind of trouble at the Jeddah airport. Soon after arriving at the Jeddah airport, they would be headed towards their destination along with their luggage, he added.

He expressed the hope that this novel initiative's services would be expanded at other airports of the country in future in a bid to facilitate maximum pilgrims from Pakistan. He also greeted the intending pilgrims proceeding for Saudi Arabia for offering the most sacred religious obligation.

Talking to pilgrims, he urged to obey the rules and regulations of the host country in letter and spirit and avoid participating in any kind of sectarian or political activities there. He also urged them to pray for liberation of the innocent people of Kashmir and Palestine besides peace, progress and prosperity of Pakistan. Agencies

## Ombudsman directs CAA to revive OWFD at Quetta Airport

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Ombudsman Mr. Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi has directed Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to revitalize the functions of One Window Facilitation Desk (OWFD) at Quetta Airport, immediately which was suspended during corona pandemic.

The Director CAA assured that the OWFD would be revived in the shortest possible time. The Federal Ombudsman warned to issue show cause notice to the head of department in case of non-appearance of representative of the department in the hearing proceedings. He passed these remarks while chairing a high-level meeting to review the progress of One Window Facilitation Desks established at all international airports of Pakistan.

The senior officers of all the departments including CAA, Nadra, OPF, ASF, PIA, Customs, Central Health Services, Bureau of Immigration, FIA, MOFA and ANF attended the meeting. He said that more than 09 million Overseas Pakistanis are making great contribution by helping their families back home and also taking part in the socio-economic uplift of the country by remitting around 30 billion dollars annually to the country. He directed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to issue directions to all Pakistan Foreign Missions abroad for giving priority in the resolution of grievances of Overseas Pakistanis and the Ambassadors should fix one day for Open Court hearings in a month.

The Ombudsman further directed all the heads of departments to constitute monitoring teams to randomly check the functioning of OWFDs. He said that although he has the powers of a Judge of Supreme Court and he believes to decide all cases amicably but those who ignore our directions, we may take stern action against them. He said that no slackness will be accepted in the welfare of Overseas Pakistanis. He also said to send regular monthly reports in the matter to the Grievance Commissioner for Overseas Pakistanis of WMS.



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# ‘BRICS Plus & Global Development

**Wang Lei**

**U**nder the current international situation, it's important for BRICS member states to deepen cooperation within the bloc, as well as with other developing countries, so as to help the world economy recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. And the 14th BRICS Summit, themed "Foster High Quality BRICS Partnership, Usher in the New Era for Global Development" and to be held via video link on Thursday, will be an ideal opportunity for the BRICS members to do so. In fact, the pandemic has also prompted some economies to adopt more protectionist policies, given rise to regional conflicts, intensified imbalanced development and worsened climate change, thus increasing the challenges facing the world.

As for the Global Security Initiative put forward by China at the Boao Forum for Asia in April, it is aimed at making up for the peace deficit and addressing the global security dilemma.

In fact, the two initiatives are the pillars of global, common development, and global security, and demonstrate that China, as a responsible power and a key emerging market economy, has been contributing more

and more to the development of BRICS as well as the global economy. The international scenario now is one of disorder, confrontations and conflicts. There is a widening gap between the developed and developing countries. In such a scenario, the Global Development Initiative and Global Security Initiative could, to some extent, help narrow the gap between the developed and developing countries while contributing to overall global development. During the Meeting of the BRICS Foreign Ministers via video link in May, China proposed to further promote "BRICS Plus" mechanism. The BRICS' foreign ministers also held talks with their counterparts in other emerging market and developing economies under the "BRICS Plus" framework, the first of its kind at the foreign ministerial level.

Indeed, it is time new members were admitted to BRICS, and the fact that the existing BRICS members have accumulated enough experience in cooperation will help them deepen cooperation with other developing countries. Since 2013, at every annual BRICS Summit, the country holding the chair has invited some non-BRICS countries to attend the summit as observers or engage in dialogue with the BRICS members. And it was in 2017, during the BRICS

Summit in Xiamen, Fujian province, that China outlined the "BRICS Plus" framework, in order to promote cooperation between the BRICS members and other important emerging market and developing economies. The "BRICS Plus" framework encourages invitee countries to know about the rules and spirit of BRICS cooperation.

China's proposal to expand BRICS is in the interest of all developing countries and aims to help improve global governance, by enhancing South-South cooperation. Despite the difficulties and differences among the BRICS members, I'm sure the five members will reach some kind of a critical consensus to realize and facilitate the new BRICS plus mechanism. The tragedies of the past tell us that hegemony, group politics and bloc confrontation bring no peace or security; they only lead to wars and conflicts. History, therefore, if it is not forgotten, serves as a guide for the future. The inclusiveness and unity displayed at the BRICS Summit, chaired by President Xi Jinping, points the way forward.

In an increasingly volatile world that is prey to the Cold War political climate that the United States is engineering, the 14th BRICS Summit Beijing hosted via video links on Thursday set the stage for developing countries and emerging market economies to strengthen their

cooperation and coordination, and synergize their actions to usher in a new era for global development. While the developed countries led by the US are intent on division and confrontation, and trying to decouple and exclude certain countries from the global system, the developing countries are focusing on inclusiveness and cooperation in recognition that in today's interconnected world all countries have a shared future and deserve their respective right to say.

The BRICS countries contribute more than half of the global growth at present and they are therefore key drivers of the world economy's post-pandemic recovery. Meanwhile, the Global Development Initiative and Global Security Initiative that China has proposed on previous occasions outline how the BRICS countries can translate their cooperation into practical actions to steer global governance in a fairer direction. The two initiatives, which represent China's inheritance and development of the two themes of peace and development, are China's judgment on these trends of the times as well as an important appeal it makes to the world.

Peace does not mean a world free of disputes and differences but effective prevention of conflict and confrontation. Development is a common

right. So one country's success should not have to mean another country's failure. Together, the two initiatives are accelerators to realize the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In other words, while keeping the door open to the US and its allies, China is taking the lead to promote the formation of a new pattern of economic globalization as well as a fairer international order with other developing countries. As such, the BRICS Summit is neither a talk shop nor an effort to build a clique but an endeavor to coordinate the actions of developing countries in support of common development.

Today's world is a community in which all countries have a common stake. The zero-sum mentality, the desire for hegemony, and the bloc politics that prevail among the developed countries need to be substituted with dialogue, consultation and partnerships. History, like an endless river, keeps surging forward and the waters are often turbulent. To safely navigate the dangerous currents of the times, countries must steer a careful course to a new era of sustainable development that can deliver benefits to all.

*The writer is director of the Center for BRICS Cooperation Studies at Beijing Normal University. Courtesy China Daily*

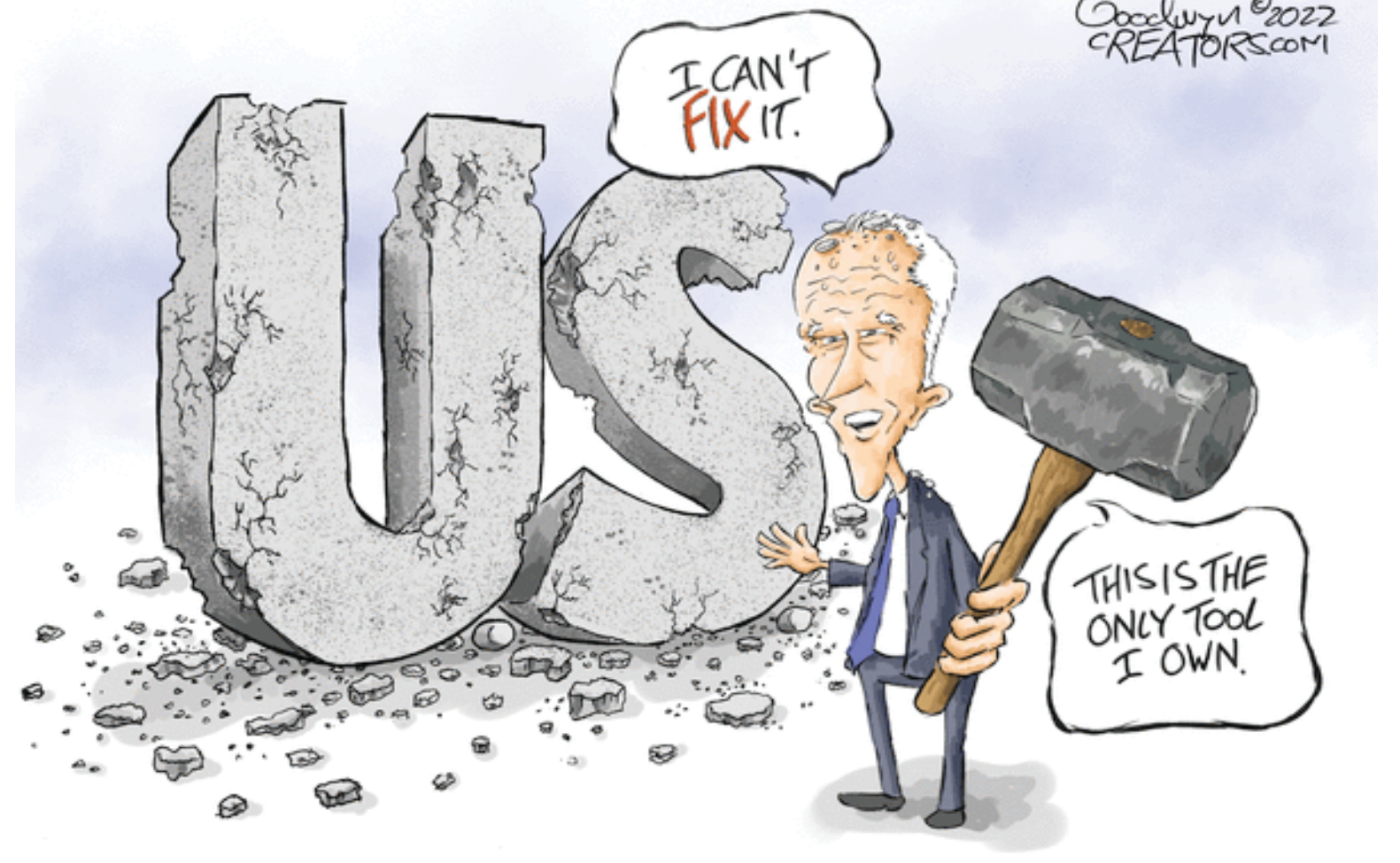
## India Hindutva exposed

**T**he United States and world has started being sensitized about the on the ground plight of minorities in India due to Indian government's promotion of Hindu nationalist agenda. In its annual report to the Congress on international religious freedom, the US State Department says that 2021 was a year of attacks on the minority communities in India, especially Muslims. The report, delivered at the Foggy Bottom headquarters of the State Department, said that the violations in India include killings, assaults, and intimidation.

Attacks included incidents of 'cow vigilantism' against non-Hindus based on allegations of cow slaughter or trade of beef. The report also noted the comments of the chief of the RSS, Mohan Bhagwat. [...] he publicly stated that Hindus and Muslims in India had the same DNA and should not be differentiated by religion. Bhagwat had also said that Hinduism did not allow the killing of non-Hindus. The report mentioned the arrest of non-Hindus for issuing comments that were perceived to be offensive to Hindus and Hinduism. Police arrested non-Hindus for making comments in the media or on social media that were considered offensive to Hindus or Hinduism. International NGO Human Rights Watch also said that the Indian government adopted policies that discriminated against Muslims. It added that police did not take action against BJP supporters who were violent towards Muslims. India Express reported that India had previously rejected the US claims saying that it will not allow a foreign government to establish facts about its citizens' constitutionally protected rights.

Now as a step forward, US Congresswoman Ilhan Omar has submitted a resolution in the House of Representatives where she has condemned the human rights abuses in India and called for the Secretary of State Antony Blinken to designate India as a country of particular concern. The resolution appeared on Thursday on the congress website. It based its arguments on a report published recently by the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF).

The resolution referred to the USCIRF's 2022 annual report stating that "the Indian government escalated its promotion and enforcement of policies — including those promoting a Hindu-nationalist agenda — that negatively affect Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Dalits, and other religious minorities. The resolution quoted the report as saying that the government (of India) continued to systemise its ideological vision of a Hindu state at both the national and state levels through the use of both existing and new laws and structural changes hostile to the country's religious minorities. The report pointed to the cases of the government's repression of religious minority leaders and voices for religious pluralism in India. The resolution also highlighted the severe risks of the Citizenship Amendment Act and the National Registry of Citizens for Indian Muslims, including the possibility of rendering millions stateless or subject to indefinite detention. It quoted the report's mentions of the attacks made on the religious minorities, especially Muslims and Christians. Many of these incidents were violent, unprovoked, and/or encouraged or incited by government officials. Mentioning a press conference during which Blinken had called India the world's largest democracy, the resolution added that he had said: We have seen rising attacks on people and places of worship. We are concerned with targeting of a number of religious communities in India, including Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, Hindu Dalits, and indigenous communities as well, Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom Rashad Hussain had said at the same conference.



## Big Tech czars scarred by billion dollar divorces

**Chidanand Rajghatta**

**M**arriages may be made in heaven, but typically, hell hath no fury like divorce proceedings. Considering the pathology attached to the dissolution of marriages, the rifts that are landing several high-profile, rich-people unions in Splitville — the marriages of Amazon founder-CEO Jeff Bezos, Microsoft's Bill Gates, and now Google's Sergei Brin, among them — seem amicable enough, although the exact terms of "undearment" are yet to become public. Rumors that Bezos merely commanded "Alexa, end my marriage!" to his virtual assistant — resulting in "Alexit" — are vastly exaggerated, or Alexa-ggerated. The 25-year-old union, comfortably outperforming the median 11-year length for a marriage in the US today, was apparently past prime delivery, and the couple called it quits gracefully — at least in the public eye. So did Gates — although there was some sullied reputation there — who had the windows and doors closed on him after a marriage that lasted more than 25 years.

Google co-founder Sergey Brin, the world's 6th richest person, is the latest to join ranks after only three years of marriage to his second wife, illustrating that command over a search engine is not enough to find the right person. Lurking in the mix is the world's wealthiest man Elon Musk, married and divorced thrice, twice to the same partner, demonstrating that you can make an identical mistake twice, and the same mistake thrice. Small wonder he is seeking to establish a colony on Mars. The United States has an outsized reputation as a

"divorce-prone" country. The status is consonant with Groucho Marx's sage observation that "marriage is the chief cause of divorce," in the US, although Spain, Russia, and France record more divorces.

While nearly half of all American marriages end in divorce or separation, more recent surveys indicate that US millennials, marrying at an older age when education, careers, and finances are stabilized, are bucking a trend that reached its peak with baby boomers, who married young, divorced, remarried and generally made a meal of life. Newer marriages in the Microsoft/Amazon/Google/Tesla age come with free shipping. Mutually consenting parties don't always obsess about the lolly; they keep their money and their mouth shut as they ship out.

Some tech tycoons don't even go close to marriage, preferring mergers and IPOs to matrimonial mishaps. Among them, WhatsApp co-founder Jan Koum, Telegram messenger Pavel Durov, Stripe co-founders Patrick and John Collison, and Uber co-founder Garrett Camp — all 30+ billion-aire singles who, at least for now, are testing the description of a bachelor as a "selfish, undeserving guy who has cheated some woman out of a divorce."

Indeed, financial squabbles and money issues often ranked among top reasons for divorces in the past. The aftermath was played out in all its bitterness in courts. "Ah, yes, divorce... from the Latin word meaning to rip out a man's genitals through his wallet," lamented the late Robin Williams, as if in response to a female entertainer who gloated that when she divorced she "went through the various stages of grieving: anger, denial, and dancing around with my settlement check."

This is patently unfair to women, who are often seen as undeserving gold diggers, a view furiously expressed by the writer Norman Mailer who said "you don't know a woman till you've met her in court." A generation prior to this was wedded to marriages for different reasons and was leery of divorces despite differences, a sentiment best expressed by the comedian Jack Benny who revealed that he and his wife "have been married for forty-seven years and not once have we had an argument serious enough to consider divorce."

Murder, yes, but divorce, never." This ran contrary to the feelings of comedienne Roseanne Barr, who, after surveying the wreckage of her marriage, remarked, "I'm not upset about my divorce. I'm only upset that I'm not a widow." With US divorce rates dropping 18 percent from 2008 to 2016 — a trend that briefly took a beating during the pandemic years — there are two kinds of people who are feeling cheated: the paparazzi and the lawyers. Both feast on the misery and moolah that flow from broken vows. There have been half-dozen or so busted marriages with billion-plus payout in the modern era — going back to Adnan Khashoggi's divorce from Soraya Khashoggi in 1980 that cost him an estimated \$874 million, which would be an inflation-adjusted \$2.5 billion today. Even that would seem like chump change compared to the \$60 billion and \$38 billion that Bill Gates and Jeff Bezos had to pony up to untie the knot with their spouses. Evidently, the person who remarked that "marriage is grand, but a divorce is hundred grand," needs to factor inflation into marital deflation. We are firmly in the era of billion-dollar bust-ups among the uber-rich.

*Courtesy Khaleej Times*

## US democracy in crucial test

**Yossi Mekelberg**

**F**or nearly two years, long before the first ballot was cast in the 2020 presidential election, former US President Donald Trump and his supporters were claiming that it would be rigged by the Democrats, only to completely cut loose when he lost to Joe Biden. Hence, it is imperative, for the sake of the survival of democracy in the US, that the electoral integrity of the 2020 presidential election is established beyond doubt, and with that the culpability of those who actively incited the crowd that committed the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection. This means the current investigation by a House of Representatives select committee into the events of that fateful day — and of the narrative spread by Trump and his supporters that he lost to a fraudulent election process — is crucial to the future of the union in what is arguably the most consequential crisis for American democracy since Watergate.

Getting to the truth about the events that led up to the violent and deadly attack on Capitol Hill should never have been a divisive issue, but rather something that all legislators who care for the well-being and survival of the democratic system should have demanded, instinctively and instantly. The very fact that most Republican legislators objected to the investigation suggests either that they have something to conceal regarding the link between Trump's behavior and the worst attack in the country's history on its democratic institutions, or that they and their party are too scared to break free of the spell he has cast over them. However, what was presented last week during the first night of the hearings should worry not only Americans but also those who still see the US as the leader of the free world, or long for it to reestablish itself in this role.

Testimony after testimony from some of Trump's closest political aides and lieutenants portrayed those around the president as divided into two camps: One with the common sense, integrity and courage to advise Trump not to declare victory early on election night for the obvious reason that the result was far from clear at that point and that, if any trend was

emerging, it was indicating a Biden victory. The other group, led by Rudy Giuliani, urged Trump to declare that he had beaten his Democrat rival — despite knowing that the claim was at best premature and at worst deliberately false, and that it was kick-starting the buildup to the fabrication that a "major fraud" had taken place to ensure Biden's victory.

Over the years, a massive gap has emerged between the values held dear by more progressive, liberal-minded Americans on the west and east coasts, and those promoted by the more conservative forces that live mainly in between. The conservatives feel left behind socioeconomically, they feel their way of life is under threat and, equally important, they feel patronized by economic and intellectual elites they perceive as controlling all the centers of power. This has created a massive breeding ground for Trump's style of populism, which, while devoid of any ideological substance, is successfully manipulating the fears and emotions of millions, especially during times of worldwide uncertainty. But because he is still a mighty force within the Republican Party and its supporters, and has a major influence on the selection of nominees for the midterm elections later this year, and because it is highly likely that he intends to run for president in 2024, his true intentions must be revealed by the current investigation into the Jan. 6 insurrection.

The decision taken by the select committee to broadcast the testimonies of those who were close to Trump, to let the public hear them and judge their merits for themselves, was a smart and necessary move. People across the US need to hear how the false claims that questioned the legitimacy of Biden's election came to be made. Breaking the myth of a fraudulent election could close a dark chapter in the country's history. More critically, if the US would like to be revered as the "city upon a hill" it has always aspired to be, it has to put all this behind it and return to a discourse based on reality and not fantasy, and a civilized and constructive national debate with real substance to it.

*The writer is professor of international relations and an associate fellow of the MENA Program at Chatham House. Courtesy Arab News*



# Int'l Islamic Financial Market to develop fresh standards

The board assessed the growing need for developing an additional Islamic liquidity management tool

BAHRAIN: International Islamic Financial Market (IIFM), a Bahrain-based standard-setting body for Islamic finance, yesterday announced its intention to develop new standards for Sharia-compliant syndicated financing and new Islamic liquidity management instruments.

The announcement follows a board meeting of the organisation, which has formed a Syndication Standardisation Core Working Group consisting of leading institutions from key jurisdictions to finalise the consultation paper which will be deliberated upon at the IIFM industry consultation meeting planned to take place during Q3 2022.

Based on the meeting recommendations, IIFM may commence the standardisation initiative.

The board assessed the growing need for developing an additional Islamic liquidity management tool and approved the formation of a global working group and to organise an industry consultation meeting in 2022 so that actual development work may commence based on the recommendations from the market.

Members stressed on the importance of key stakeholders' participation in IIFM standardisation working groups from most of the jurisdictions where Islamic finance is practised and emerging.

The board agreed with IIFM management's suggestion to initiate consultation-based review of certain widely used



IIFM-ISDA Islamic hedging Standards.

IIFM will explore organising a joint market consultation exercise with its partner the International Swaps and Derivatives Association (ISDA) to assess additional requirements as well as possible inclusion of

limited enhancements based on market feedback and regulatory developments.

The board also assessed IIFM's ongoing work in the area of mandatory global climate-change and ESG related requirements.

"IIFM develops standards with a view to meeting the globalisation requirements of Islamic finance and also maintaining the development of the industry on a unified and harmonised basis," said Ijlal Alvi, chief executive of IIFM. Zawya

## Meezan Bank acquires latest PCI DSS Certification through Risk Associates



Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Meezan Bank, Pakistan's leading Islamic bank, attained Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard certification (PCI DSS v3.2.1) by Payment Card Industry Security Council (PCI SSC) through PCI QSA Firm-Risk Associates, a premier global information technology company.

This certification, which is a leading payment card data security standard, is another milestone in Meezan Bank's journey towards implementation of data security and control systems that ensure customer security, sensitive card data protection and fraud risk prevention.

The certification was formally presented by Kashif Hassan - Managing Director of Risk Associates to Faiz Ur Rehman - Group Head, Information Technology and Syed Fahd Azam - Head Information Security from Meezan Bank at a ceremony held at Meezan Bank's head office.

Speaking at the occasion, Kashif Hassan said: "It has been a pleasure working with Meezan Bank throughout the certification process and witnessing Meezan Bank's commitment to data security and the security infrastructure that Meezan Bank has in place."

Faiz Ur Rehman thanked all the teams involved in the certification process. He stressed on the importance of controls and adherence to best information security practices in today's continuously evolving digital landscape. "As a Bank offering one of the largest debit card product suites in the country, Meezan Bank is well aware of the criticality of card data security. The PCI DSS Certification safeguards our data and reputation, consequently strengthening our threat response capability," he said.

## ADIB named 'Islamic Bank of the Year 2022'

ABU DHABI: Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank (ADIB), a leading financial institution, has been recognised as the Best Islamic Bank by Financial Times' monthly publication, The Banker, entrenching the bank's position as an industry leader reshaping the future of Islamic banking. The award recognises leaders in the banking sector who have kept pace with the increasing sophistication and demands of Islamic banking customers around the world.

The global award recognises leading Islamic institutions over the past 12 months, each of which has shown innovation and growth in a maturing market. This recognition comes as ADIB continues to push its digital transformation strategy and is a testament to ADIB's innovative products and Sharia compliant business model which provides the right banking solutions for its customers, with a deep understanding of their needs and ambitions, their lives, and plans. Over 70% of ADIB's customers are using digital channels with 99% of transactions taking place through digital. As an industry leader in digital innovation, ADIB also launched several ground-breaking initiatives that tap into emerging technologies such as blockchain and artificial intelligence. Mr. Nasser Al Awadhi,



ADIB Group CEO, said: "We are honoured that The Banker has chosen to recognize us as Best Islamic bank once again. It is milestones like this that fuel ADIB's pursuit of excellence and our unremitting commitment to our customers. This award is a clear testament to the success of our customer-centric approach, digital transformation, and the hard work and dedication of all our employees. We strive to be the world's most innovative Islamic bank and today, we are proud to say that we

are well on our way towards that goal."

As a leading Islamic bank, ADIB has been relentlessly working on adopting innovative ideas and products to create value for all its stakeholders. ADIB has received many awards, accolades and recognition for its progress and performance in the Islamic banking sector, most recently it was awarded the 'Best Islamic Digital Bank' and 'Innovator in Islamic Finance' awards by Global Finance. Zawya

## OIC to achieve 25% intra-OIC trade by 2025

JEDDAH: The Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Hissein Brahim Taha, has stressed that the Organization has set a target of achieving 25% intra-OIC trade among member states in the next three years by 2025. He added that the amount recorded for trade financing, business insurance operations and support for private sector activities have reached a cumulative amount of US\$ 140 billion since the inception of the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC), the Islamic Corporation for Insurance of Investments and Export Credit (ICIEC), and the Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector (ICD).

This was disclosed in a statement by the Secretary-General, delivered on his behalf by the Assistant Secretary General for Economic Affairs Dr. Ahmad Kawesa Sengendo during the opening cere-

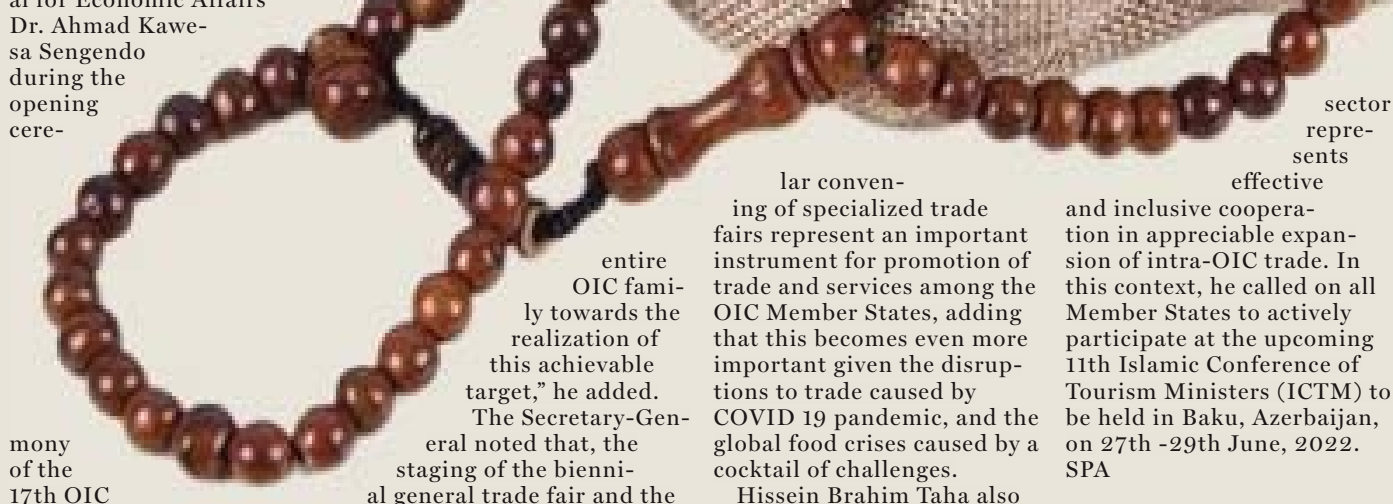
mony of the 17th OIC Trade Fair, held in Dakar, Republic of Senegal on 13th June 2022.

"It is my hope and prayer that this trade fair will contribute effectively towards moving intra-OIC trade from 18% seen in 2021 to 25% by 2025," said the OIC Secretary-General.

"I urge all our trade promotion agencies to continue to collaborate with the

regu-

emphasized that the tourism



mony of the 17th OIC

entire OIC family towards the realization of this achievable target," he added.

The Secretary-General noted that, the staging of the biennial general trade fair and the

lar convening of specialized trade fairs represent an important instrument for promotion of trade and services among the OIC Member States, adding that this becomes even more important given the disruptions to trade caused by COVID 19 pandemic, and the global food crises caused by a cocktail of challenges. Hissein Brahim Taha also

sector represents effective and inclusive cooperation in appreciable expansion of intra-OIC trade. In this context, he called on all Member States to actively participate at the upcoming 11th Islamic Conference of Tourism Ministers (ICTM) to be held in Baku, Azerbaijan, on 27th -29th June, 2022. SPA

## Indonesia raises \$347.3m in Islamic bonds auction



JAKARTA: Indonesia raised 5.1 trillion rupiah (\$347.29 million) in an Islamic bonds auction on Tuesday, the finance ministry said, below an indicative target of 9 trillion rupiah.

Total incoming bids were 15.13 trillion rupiah at Tuesday's auction, less than the 20.21 trillion rupiah of bids in the previous sukuk auction on May 31. The Islamic bonds sold on Tuesday carried higher yields compared to similar notes in the previous auction. Reuters

## Takaful Oman raises its capital by \$15.58m through rights issue

DUBAI: Takaful Oman has announced the successful completion of its OMR6 million (\$15.58 million) rights issue. The rights issue raises the company's capital from OMR10 million to OMR16 million.

Keen to leverage opportunities in the growing Islamic finance industry, Takaful Oman will use the new capital to further strengthen its operations, develop innovative and embedded products, and focus on the evolving needs of its growing customer base of 200,000.

Earlier, the company had offered 150 million additional shares at a price of baizas 41 per share (with a share price of baiza 40 plus issue expenses of baiza 1 per share).

A bell-ringing ceremony was held at the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) to mark the occasion of listing of additional capital on MSX which was attended by senior officials of the CMA, MSX and the company.

Speaking on the occasion, Mohamed Abdulla Al Khonji, Chairman of Takaful Oman said: "This marks an important milestone in the journey of Takaful Oman which is still a relatively young player in the Omani insurance and takaful sector. The rights issue is in



line with Takaful Oman's long-term growth strategy and will meet the company's solvency requirements. Through the proceeds of its rights issue, the company also seeks to positively impact the Islamic insurance industry, aid in wealth creation, and drive sustainable economic growth."

Sulaiman Al Harthi, deputy chairman of Takaful Oman said: "It is not only a time to celebrate but also to commit ourselves to continue to perform and deliver strong results and create value for all our stakeholders including the policyholders and the shareholders."

Neelmani Bhardwaj, acting CEO of Takaful Oman further added: "I would like to specially thank our regulators the CMA for their continued guidance and support throughout this process. I would also like to express our gratitude to all the subscribers and shareholders for their unfaltering support, faith, and confidence in the future of this company and we will do our utmost to live up to their expectations. The team at Takaful Oman is also grateful to all its customers for their continued faith in the company." TradeArabia



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

**Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index**

Current	Prev. Close
42,716.97	42,458.14
Day's High	Day's Low:
42,983.41	42,458.14
Index Value	Change
7,356,146,811	+258.83
Percentage	Time
+0.61%	23 Jun, 2022 5:00 pm

**Europe: FTSE 100 Index**

Index Value	Change
7,020.45	-68.77
Percentage	Time
-0.97%	23 Jun, 4:35 pm GMT+1

**USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average**

Index Value	Change
30,472.50	-10.63
Percentage	Time
-0.035%	23 Jun, 11:48 am GMT-4

**Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average**

Index Value	Change
26,171.25	+21.70
Percentage	Time
+0.083%	23 Jun, 3:15 pm GMT+9

**Open Market Forex Rates**

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	146.69	147.94
Bahrain Dinar	555	559.5
Canadian Dollar	163.59	164.94
China Yuan	31.57	31.82
Danish Krone	30.1	30.45
Euro	217.5	220.5
Hong Kong Dollar	26.95	27.3
Indian Rupee	2.7	2.78
Japanese Yen	1.5	1.54
Kuwaiti Dinar	688.54	693.54
Malaysian Ringgit	48.04	48.49
New Zealand \$	133.12	134.32
Norwegians Krone	21.4	21.7
Omani Riyal	550.26	554.76
Qatari Riyal	58.12	58.62
Saudi Riyal	55	55.9
Singapore Dollar	152.5	153.8
Swedish Korona	21	21.3
Swiss Franc	220.03	221.78
Thai Bhat	5.99	6.09
U.A.E Dirham	56.5	57.4
UK Pound Sterling	254	257
US Dollar	206.5	209.5

# Pak, Saudi Arabia pledge to bolster economic ties

Saudi Pak Business Council lauded CBD Punjab, RUDA and other Potential Projects of Punjab

Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have renewed their commitment to bolster economic ties in diverse fields including construction, agriculture, livestock and the social sector. This commitment to strengthen economic relations was reiterated in an exclusive meeting organized by the Punjab Board of Investment and Trade in honour of a high-profile Saudi Business Delegation visiting the Province of Punjab.

The Saudi Business Delegation was led by Fahad Al Bash followed by the members of the Saudi Business Chamber, while Dr. Javed Ahmed Qazi, Secretary Industries Punjab, Imran Amin, CEO of Lahore Central Business District Development Authority (LCBDDA) & Ravi Urban Development Authority (RUDA), Mr. Ahmer Malik, CEO Punjab Board of Investment and Trade (PBIT), Mr. Amjad Ali Awan, CEO Punjab Public Private Partnership Authority (PPPPA) and other renowned industry leaders of Punjab were also present on the occasion.

The Province of Punjab has always been a center of attraction for international investors, because of its



geographical significance, fertile land, skilled workforce, and state-of-the-art infrastructure, which includes vast web of paved highways and bridges. The present government has always motivated and provided ease of business opportunities to domestic & international investors to participate in bulging the economic arch of Pakistan.

While addressing the session Dr. Ahmed Javed Qazi, Secretary Industries Punjab stated, "The Government

is dwelling to facilitate and create an atmosphere of ease for the business community. The social-economic indicators indicate that the canvas of the economic growth of Punjab is massive, and we would like to promote public-private partnerships, B2B and G2G linkages with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. All the current economic traits of healthy and easy business are feasible for any international investors".

CEO, LCBDDA & RUDA, Imran

Amin briefed the delegation on the most anticipated first-ever business district of Pakistan, Central Business District Punjab (CBD Punjab) and the most unique project of modern urbanization, Ravi City. He highlighted the potential business opportunities for international and domestic investors and stated, "The infrastructural development is a gateway to success, and we are fortunate enough that the current government has a core focus on infrastructure development of the Province of Punjab. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has always been a close ally of Pakistan in terms of business collaborations and the Saudi business community has always welcomed investment opportunities in Punjab. Our authorities are striving to establish a well-equipped business district and a state-of-the-art new & modern city, meeting all international standards to accelerate the pace of economic development of Punjab. These projects have emerged as a game-changer for the development of the province, and I will request the international and especially the Saudi business community to come forward and unlock avenues for new horizons of Pak-Saudi bilateral business relations".

Fahad Al Bash, Chairman Saudi-

Pak Business Council mentioned in his address that "Saudi and Pakistani business communities are not two separate entities, these are two brothers and this meet-up is a family reunion. Punjab is a land of opportunities with immense potential for growth. I am pleased to know that the people of Punjab are extraordinarily talented and skilled. There are two million Pakistanis working in various fields in Saudi Arabia and playing a pivotal role in Saudi economic development. It is clearly visible in the presentations that the province of Punjab is a room full of possibilities especially projects like the Central Business District and Ravi River Front can be materialized for government to people, government to government and people to people business collaborations for mutual growth of both countries".

Saudi delegation has shown their keen interest in CBD Punjab & Ravi City, which has already embarked its name in the real estate sector and is developing as a reliable name in the International & domestic business community. Investment in the areas like commercial, residential, health, tourism and sports are the main catch for economic growth and development of Punjab.

## AAA Associates investment opportunities drew Pakistani Expats in Doha

Spokesman Report

LAHORE/DOHA: AAA Associates was one of the proud participants from Pakistan at the Largest Property Investment Event, the only property exhibition held this year in Doha, Qatar. The Expo showcased a vast array of diverse real estate opportunities aimed at local, regional and international investors. The event was held at Cityscape Doha Exhibition & Convention Center.

Managing Director AAA Associates Lt. Col. Shahzad Ali Kiani (r) led the AAA Associates' delegation at the Expo. A ribbon cutting ceremony was held at the AAA Associates' stall on the occasion, which was officiated by Qatar's Minister of Justice His Highness Sheikh Masoud bin Mohammed Al Ameri.



Speaking on the occasion, Managing Director AAA Associates Lt. Col. Shahzad Ali Kiani (r) stated, "It was an honour to represent Pakistan and AAA Associates at the Largest Property Investment Event in Qatar. The event brought together the industry's top professionals and provided a window to discuss new ideas and learn new insights

from them. Bilateral trade and investment opportunities will not only foster a tangible bond between the two countries but will also broaden their markets, boosting economic growth."

Pakistan and Qatar have warm and cordial relations, as well as strong brotherly ties. They have an exceptionally close liaison and intend

to expand cooperation in the economic, defence, and political sectors to ensure mutual economic growth. Pakistan has vast resources and enormous investment potential. Pakistan's investment in Qatar is mainly in real estate, construction machinery and the technical services industry.

AAA Associates takes pride in presenting their projects at such an auspicious event that will allow investors from all over the world specially the Pakistani expats residing in Qatar to explore Pakistan's economic prospects in the Real Estate. AAA Associates is one of the most trusted and rapidly expanding conglomerates in Real Estate Sector of Pakistan. Recently, they have launched one of their mega projects at Karachi Bahria Town as well.

## Taxes slapped on real estate in budget, disastrous for economy: FRP



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Federation of Retailers of Pakistan (FRP) Musarrat Ijaz Khan has said the taxes slapped on real estate, builders and investors in the budget for fiscal 2022-23 are disastrous for the national economy.

He said this while talking to a delegation of people affiliated with real estate business here Thursday, June 23, 2022

He went on to say when COVID-19 had put the entire global economy on the verge of disaster and it seemed that Pakistan would also fall victim to economic annihilation the previous government

facilitated the business of real estate and builders. This led to recovery of the economy.

Record influx of foreign exchange from abroad to Pakistan was recorded. Those who had kept money in their homes also invested it in real estate. This way the national economy was gaining strength but the present government intended to impose relentless taxes on this sector without making installations of the stakeholders.

We all who are affiliated with the real estate business reject these taxes and demand the government not to approve these taxes from the national assembly budget session.

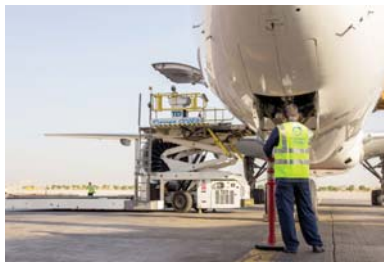
## Gerry's dnata recognised for high safety standards

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Gerry's dnata, Pakistan's leading ground services provider, continues to be recognised for achieving the highest safety standards. The company obtained IATA Safety Audit for Ground Operations (ISAGO) Station Accreditation at Islamabad International Airport (ISB), following the successful completion of a comprehensive audit of its ground handling operations at the airport.

Syed Haris Raza, Vice President of Gerry's dnata, said: "Safety continues to be at the heart of everything we do. The achievement of the ISAGO accreditation demonstrates our team's commitment and ability to consistently deliver excellence in safety. I thank my colleagues for their hard work and dedication."

Gerry's dnata has also successfully renewed its ISAGO Registration in Kara-



chi (KHI). In 2019, Gerry's dnata became the first ground services provider to be awarded the prestigious ISAGO Registration in Pakistan.

ISAGO is an audit program for ground-handling companies serving airlines at airports covering the areas of organization and management, load control, passenger and baggage handling, aircraft handling and loading and aircraft ground movement. It offers benefits to

airlines, ground handlers, regulatory as well as airport authorities. These include safer ground operations, fewer accidents and injuries, elimination of redundant audits, reduced costs, less damage and fewer audits, a uniform audit process and harmonized standards, improved safety oversight, harmonized auditor training and qualifications, improved quality standards, and enhanced understanding of high-risk areas within ground operations.

In recent years, Gerry's dnata has significantly enhanced its operations and services to deliver the highest level of quality and safety and help airline customers safely transport passengers and precious cargo to and from Pakistan. It made significant investments in infrastructure, technology and equipment, including the opening of a new, state-of-the-art cargo facility in Lahore which doubled the company's cargo handling capacity at the airport.

## Karandaaz leads a discourse on Renewable Energy

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Karandaaz held a full-day webinar on the challenges and opportunities of renewable energy and energy efficiency in Pakistan. Leading experts and stakeholders in the renewable energy and climate finance space deliberated on the challenges and opportunities in this emerging space. Pakistan's energy demand in 2021 was 29,435 MWs, whereas the supply after line losses in the same period was 26,083 MWs. This gap existed despite the fact that Pakistan possessed a potential to supply 37,261 MWs with existing infrastructure. Innovative steps need to be taken such as, net metering through which consumers who own renewable energy facilities can supply excess produce to national grid in exchange for incentives, and energy efficient commercial construction and housing models. According to Ministry of Energy, Power Division's 2021 figures, Pakistan's energy mix remained heavily reliant on non-renewable sources with a meager share

of renewable sources such as solar (400 MWs), wind (1235 MWs), and bagas (364 MWs) despite their vast potential.

Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, Chairperson Karandaaz said, "Karandaaz's research tabled for today's deliberation offers perspectives on Pakistan's key initiatives, which if pursued effectively, have potential to be a game changer in decarbonization subject to expeditious resolution of sector issues and challenges by fixing the enabling sector and regulatory policy frameworks, developing public private partnership to leverage private capital with appropriate risk mitigation and management frameworks. Few promising initiatives are noteworthy. 2019 Alternative and Renewable Energy Policy if proactively implemented will promote low carbon pathways as it targets a change in energy mix by lifting the share of renewables to 20% by 2025 and 30% by 2030. Complementing this target is raising the share of hydel capacity to 30%. Advancement in this area will help resolve the energy crisis and reduce the depend-

ence on imported energy fuel such as oil, coal, and LNG that exposes the economy to international price shock. Climate mitigation anchored on renewables and energy efficiency will help ease the BOP and fiscal pressures that have put the entire economy at risk. Pakistan is falling short of its targets already as the share of renewable energy in the total energy mix went down to 2.2% in 2021 so significant catching up is required in the next 3 years."

Waqas ul Hasan, CEO Karandaaz said, "Pakistan remains among the group of countries most vulnerable to climate change. The ND-GAIN Index ranks Pakistan at 152nd, among 181 countries, based on its vulnerability to climate change and readiness to improve its resilience. Countries in developed and emerging economies alike are moving towards innovative solutions and technologies in energy efficiency and renewable energy through creative financing solutions such as bonds, climate adaptation funds, and wholesale financing facilities.

## UN Women, foodpanda collaborate for promotion of workplace safety



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: UN Women and foodpanda Pakistan have announced a partnership on promotion of gender equality in the workplace. Under the partnership various initiatives and training will be undertaken to address and implement strategies pertaining to gender-responsiveness and creating a healthy work environment.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) in this regard was recently signed in foodpanda's office where both organisations pledged to implement capacity-building initiatives to empower women at all positions, leveraging the UN Women Empowerment Principles (WEPs), foodpanda Pakistan being the signatory of these principles has policies in place regarding the promotion of women's rights and well-being at the workplace which highlight it as an equal opportunity employer.

"Given the fast-paced

world that we are living in today, it is imperative that we assimilate in the organisation while acknowledging the rights and needs of our female counterparts and ensure an all-inclusive workplace," said Muntaqa Peracha, Managing Director, foodpanda Pakistan. "No economy can thrive without the contribution of women and here at foodpanda Pakistan, we are committed to advancing the agenda of empowering our female stakeholders at all levels. This includes entrusting them with decision making powers, placing them in key leadership positions, and designing an environment conducive to their professional growth."

"Women's economic empowerment lies at the heart of this partnership" said Sharmeeza Rassool, Country Representative, UN Women Pakistan. She added "foodpanda has caused a positive disruption in society through its dignified approach to the food delivery profession.

## Pakistan's IT company NdcTech showcased at TCF, London

Spokesman Report

KARACHI/LONDON: NdcTech, Pakistan's leading IT and consulting company was invited to showcase its offerings as a Silver Sponsor at the Temenos Community Forum 2022, one of the most prestigious banking technology events held recently at the world's financial city, London, UK. Ammara Masood, CEO and President of NdcTech and Asif Peer, CEO Systems Ltd were present at this international forum, alongside other key management

The event not only brought together banking professionals from across the globe, but also provided a huge opportunity to IT Service providers and Fintechs to showcase their offerings. Various Banks showed interest in the offerings, innovations and product demonstrations of NdcTech, which also proved the capabilities of Pakistan's IT sector.

The event was a hub for connectivity and innovation for Banks, Fintechs, Service Providers where the recent trends and evolving business models in banking were discussed. Banking as a Service (BaaS), Software as a Service, Banking as a platform, embedded finance, and cloud banking were few of the key themes discussed throughout the event.

Temenos also revealed their star of the show "Temenos CEO Navigator", an industry-leading customer advisory service backed by data from over 100 banks, that will provide powerful business insights to clients. Temenos unveiled its new brand logo and identity during the conference. Their new vision is to be a Banking platform for everyone while combining the power of technology with a human touch.

Speaking with Fintech Finance, Ammara Masood, CEO, NdcTech highlighted the evolution of global business models in banking, including digital banks, Fintechs working as Electronic Money Institutions, and traditional banks with digital innovative services. She further mentioned that "All these institutions need a partner like NdcTech who can meet their evolving requirements, bring innovations, and provide platform capabilities relevant to their model"



# Belgian, Spanish paragliders in Pakistan for epic expedition

*Aerial adventurers are set to experience the local paragliding sites*

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Two international paragliders, Thomas de Dorlodot from Belgium and Horacio Llorens from Spain, arrived in Pakistan.

The Belgian Embassy in Islamabad hosted the two athletes and welcomed them. The two aerial adventurers are set to experience the local paragliding sites and interact with the local community during their time here.

The Belgian Red Bull athlete De Dorlodot has been flying for over 20 years, since the age of 14, when the first time his feet were off the ground and he fell in love with the sport. Since then, he has paraglided over mountains across the world and started SEARCH Projects with the goal of searching for new adventures and documenting them. This would be his second visit to Pakistan. He first came to Pakistan in 2013 and flew hundreds of kilometers and walked thousands of kilometers covered in knee-deep snow. What has De Dorlodot planned for this time around?

"It feels like every time I have come to Pakistan, it has been to prepare for this trip," he said. "I've been to Pakistan six times. And every time, we learn something new and I feel everything is in place



now to go for an epic expedition. This will be our biggest expedition ever in Pakistan for sure."

As to what made them return to the country, De Dorlodot feels Pakistan is one of the best countries for paragliding. "We fell in love with the country when we first visited. It's one of the most welcoming countries and is one of the best for paragliding."

Meanwhile, Horacio Llorens is a Red

Bull athlete and five-time world champion in paragliding, having glided over the Mayan ruins in Guatemala to Aurora Borealis. He also set the Guinness World record for hitting 6G in his 568 rotations (called Infinity Tumbling) on the way down to the Mayan ruins at TakalikAbaj in Guatemala. "There are many more things to do," says Llorens, citing Tanzania and Antarctica as some of the places he'd like to go.

This marks Llorens' third visit to Pakistan after one in 2011 and 2016. "I love this place," he says, citing how they flew over Hunza and the Himalayas and many more places the last time. "But this time, we are much more prepared, mentally and physically. Hopefully, if the weather is good, we are here to do something big."

He says they have returned not only because of the mountains and the opportunities but also the traditional culture and the people who have treated them so well during their stay.

The Belgian Ambassador to Pakistan Mr. Philippe Bronchain believes it's important for athletes to come from Belgium and other countries to Pakistan. "It's important to have a better understanding and knowledge of Pakistan. It thanks to this kind of events, it draws attention to the local community and on the region."

Bronchain feels such cultural and sports exchanges also help "understand the local community, how they live and function" and compared it with how people around the mountains, such as the Alps in Europe, live. "It's also soft diplomacy, which is important for all countries. It's important for Belgium and Pakistan. It shows what you have, your culture and what you like. It helps us understand each other."

# Spent four very productive days in Karachi: David Hemp

Our Correspondent

KARACHI: The four-day skill camp for Karachi-based women players concluded on Thursday at the Hanif Mohammad High Performance Centre, National Stadium. National team's head coach David Hemp flew in from Lahore to work with national, emerging and academy players on a one-on-one basis with the help of national team's bowling coach Saleem Jaffer, trainer Saboor Ahmed and Sindh women's coach Azam Khan.

During the camp, the players worked extensively in nets sessions on their batting and bowling skills. Hemp and the rest of the coaches gave individual attention to the players in a bid to sort out technical challenges in various disciplines of the game.

The morning sessions were dedicated for players who are part of the Commonwealth Games and tri-series (Ireland) squad besides the prominent

national Karachi players. The full squad will begin a 10-day long camp in Islamabad from 1 July before flying out to Ireland on 12 July.

In the afternoon sessions, Hemp worked with players enrolled in the regional academy programme at the high performance centre.

The prominent players who took part in the camp included: Aiman Anwar, Fatima Sana, Kainat Intiaz, Muneeba Ali, Omaira Sohail (all part of the Commonwealth squad), Anousha Nasir, Aroob Shah, Javeria Rauf, Najia Alvi, Rameen Shamim and Yusra Amir.

Hemp meanwhile, is pleased with the gains of the short camp and feels that a lot of good work has been done by regional coaches which has helped in development of a solid pool of national, emerging and back-up players in Karachi.

David Hemp: "Very productive four days in Karachi, it was great to come down and spend



quality time in terms of one-on-one sessions with not only the contracted players but also the players who are a part of the emerging and academy pool here. The skill level within the female programme is there, we do need to however ensure that they are being constantly challenged in terms of improving their game, fitness etc.

"The challenge is to ensure that the players keep training and playing outside the national

team setup. The purpose of this visit was also to give reminders to the players on how they can keep themselves fit and ready and how they can constantly train and improve even when they are not part of an event or series.

"The regional programmes that are up and running across the country under the supervision of coaches like Azam Khan, Naveed Anjum, Waqar Orakzai, Mohsin Kamal and

Kamran Hussain are delivering for us now and all of them are doing a fantastic job. What was really encouraging for me was to see the development of emerging players that I saw six to eight months ago, they have made improvement in their game and deserve a lot of credit for that alongside the efforts of the coaches.

"The Commonwealth Games and the lead-up to that is very important for us, we will be starting a preparatory camp in Islamabad in a week's time. During the camp we will be playing practice games to ensure we are well prepared for the big event and the tri-series in Ireland that precedes the Commonwealth Games.

"The tri-series in Ireland will provide us an excellent preparation opportunity as in Ireland and Australia we will be playing two teams that will be strong and will play the game differently in conditions that are foreign for us."

# Teenagers grab world swimming golds

BUDAPEST: After Caeleb Dressel, one of the veterans expected to dominate the World Swimming Championships quit the competition on Wednesday, two teenagers, 17-year-old David Popovici and Summer McIntosh, 15, leapt to the top step of the podium.

Dressel, a seven-time Olympic gold medalist, had "withdrewn for medical reasons. For his long-term health," Lindsay Mintenko, the Swimming Managing Director for the USA team, told media at the start of the evening session. "He's just not fit to compete right now." Popovici then claimed victory in one of Dressel's events, the men's 100m freestyle, and McIntosh won the women's 200m butterfly.

In the other individual finals, 20-year-old Frenchman Leon Marchand completed the men's medley double in the 200m and Kylie Masse won a second Canadian gold when she took the



50m women's backstroke. The evening ended with another of the US team's veteran stars, Katie Ledecky, carving a place in the record books with the winning women's 200m relay team. It was Ledecky's 21st world championship medal, more than any other woman. Australia took silver while Canada, with McIntosh collecting a second medal of the day, held on for bronze. Dressel

had already won two golds in Budapest before his last race on Tuesday morning. It was a heat of the 100m freestyle and the Olympic champion qualified only second fastest behind Popovici.

The teenager was asked after the final if he had scared off Dressel. "I don't think so, I think he is too big of a boy to be running away from someone like myself

or frankly anyone but I hope he's OK and I hope he'll come back stronger." Popovici, who had become the first Romanian man to win a world title when he took the 200m free, became the first man to do the 100-200 freestyle double at the world championships since American Jim Montgomery in 1973. Dutchman Pieter van den Hoogenband repeated the rare feat at the Sydney Olympics in 2000. "I'm glad we got to write a small page in swimming history," said the smiling Popovici.

"Some would say a huge page, but we like to keep it low key." "I'm glad to have got two golds now, I think it will be pretty heavy carrying them." Popovici edged Frenchman Maxime Grousset by 0.6sec and Canadian Joshua Liendo by 0.13.

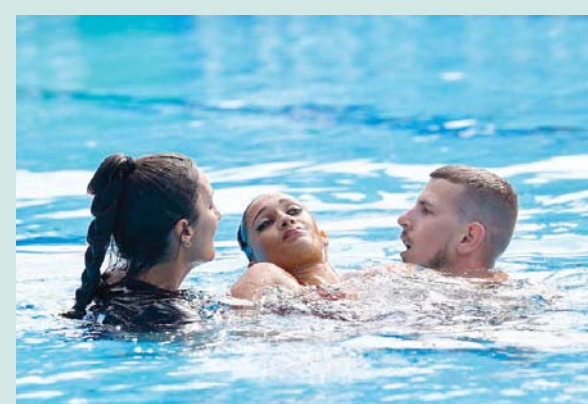
"In the 200 I was surprised by how much I won by. This time I was surprised by how little we won by," he said, adding he preferred the 200m event. "I

consider 200m more of a smart race," he said. In the two-lap 100, he said, "we have to go out as fast as we can and come back as fast as possible. It's an animal instinct race."

Popovici prepared for a career as a sports star by attending a bilingual school in Romania and speaks fluent English. "I haven't finished high school yet I don't even drive yet," he pointed out. At 15, McIntosh is even younger. The Canadian broke the world junior record as she added the 200m butterfly to the silver she had won in the 400m freestyle on the opening day.

McIntosh beat Hali Flickinger of the United States by 0.88sec with Zhang Yufei of China third. "I just literally gave it my all and did everything I could, and put in all my energy and all my focus, and just stretched for the wall and put my hand on the wall as fast as I possibly could," McIntosh said.

## US swimmer saved from drowning by coach



BUDAPEST: Artistic swimmer Anita Alvarez was dramatically rescued from the bottom of the pool by her coach after fainting at the World Aquatics Championships in Budapest.

Andrea Fuentes leapt in to rescue Team USA's Alvarez, who had sunk to the bottom of the pool and was not breathing after completing her routine during Wednesday night's solo free final. "It was a big scare. I had to jump in because the lifeguards weren't doing it," Fuentes was reported as saying by Spanish newspaper Marca.

Fuentes, dressed in shorts and a T-shirt, dived to the bottom of the pool and dragged Alvarez to the surface before being assisted to get the stricken swimmer to the edge of the pool. "I was scared because I saw she wasn't breathing, but now she is doing very well," said Fuentes.

Alvarez was taken on a stretcher to the pool's medical centre, with teammates and fans appearing to be in shock poolside. The US swim team later released a statement saying that Alvarez was doing well. Fuentes, a four-time Olympic medallist, told Spanish radio that Alvarez had fainted due to the effort expended during the routine.

"She only had water in her lungs, once she started breathing again everything was OK," said Fuentes. "It felt like a whole hour. I said things weren't right, I was shouting at the lifeguards to get into the water, but they didn't catch what I said or they didn't understand. "She wasn't breathing... I went as quickly as I could, as if it were an Olympic final." Fuentes said Alvarez planned to rest Thursday and was still hoping to compete in Friday's team event after further medical checks. The 25-year-old Alvarez was in her third World Championships. She also reportedly fainted during an Olympic qualifier in Barcelona last year.

## Swiatek seeks to dominate Wimbledon

LONDON: A key element in the appeal of any sport is the presence of a dominant figure — a benchmark for the rest to aspire to — and in that respect women's tennis has been blessed to have Serena Williams as its figurehead. But with the American in her 41st year and back at Wimbledon for a potential farewell after a year out, the worry has been whether any player can fill her shoes.

As the All England Club prepares to open its gates, Poland's Iga Swiatek looks as though she might just be the one to lead the women's game into the a new era. Domination can only really be measured over a sustained period and it is doubtful anyone will get close to the kind of statistics compiled by Williams.

Between 2010 and 2019, according to the WTA, she won 89.3% of her matches, won 37 titles and spent 196 weeks as world number one — more than the next two combined — won 12 of her 23 Grand Slam titles and reached the finals of 19 of the 33 major tournaments she entered during that period. Japan's Naomi Osaka, who is skipping Wimbledon, threatened to seize control with four Grand Slam titles in a little over three years, but has since slipped back into the pack as she wrestles with the pressure of stardom.

So those predicting that Swiatek is indeed the real deal might want to reflect on the pitfalls that await her in a sport in which the depth of talent has perhaps never been greater. But her numbers heading into Wimbledon are mind-boggling.

When the 21-year-old beat American teenager Coco Gauff to win her second French Open title earlier this month it took her winning streak to 35 matches, equalling the 21st Century record of Venus Williams, although still far from Martina Navratilova's astonishing 74-match streak in 1984.

Swiatek took over as world number one in April after Ash Barty, the reigning Wimbledon champion, surprisingly retired from the sport and on the evidence so far, the Pole appears comfortable in the role. Her multifaceted game style and ability to outwit opponents with versatile tactics means she excels on all surfaces, although grass could present one of her biggest challenges.

## Australia add all-rounder to Test squad for Sri Lanka series

SYDNEY: Australia have added Glenn Maxwell to their Test squad as an additional option after Travis Head suffered a minor hamstring injury.

Maxwell last played a Test match in September 2017, against Bangladesh in Chattogram. His inclusion comes in lieu of the injury suffered by Travis Head, who will miss the final ODI against Sri Lanka after suffering a minor hamstring injury while fielding.

Maxwell's inclusion comes after his impactful performances in the ODI series alongside his abilities to bat well against spin. The all-rounder can also chip in with some handy overs of off-spin, a skillset which will certainly come in a handful on the turning track in Galle. Overall, Maxwell has played 7 Tests, scoring 339 runs with 1 century to his name.

Maxwell hasn't played a Test for almost five years, but newly-appointed Australia coach Andrew McDonald recently indicated that the talented 33-year-old could make a return to five-day cricket.

# 'Right moment' to leave Liverpool: Mane

BERLIN: Sadio Mane said it was the "right moment" to join Bayern Munich from Liverpool after he completed his move to the Bundesliga champions.

Bayern have reportedly paid a fee which could rise to 41 million euros (\$43 million) for Mane, who scored 120 goals in his trophy-laden six years with Liverpool. The Senegal star has signed a three-year deal and his arrival is seen as a coup for Julian Nagelsmann's men and the Bundesliga. "I chose Bayern Munich because although I had other offers, it is the right moment to move on and come here," he told a press conference.

"I met the coach (Nagels-

mann) and for me it was really important to know the project. I could see myself playing in the team straight away and I didn't think twice." His signing will ease the pain for Bayern if wantaway striker Robert Lewandowski leaves the club, while Germany winger Serge Gnabry is also stalling over a contract extension. Mane played anywhere across a front three during his time at Liverpool.

"I can play in three or four different positions and am happy playing anywhere, he said. "I am here to help my team — that is the most important thing." The 30-year-old won the Champions League, Premier League,

FA Cup, League Cup and Club World Cup titles on Merseyside.

"One of Liverpool's greatest ever players is leaving and we must acknowledge how significant this is," said Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp. "The goals he scored, the trophies he won... a legend, for sure, but also a modern-day Liverpool icon." Bayern CEO Oliver Kahn hinted that he hopes Mane's arrival can convince Lewandowski, who has a year left on his contract, to stay.

"The players look closely at who the club brings in," said Kahn. "That also radiates inwards. "Not much has changed with Robert. He has a contract until 2023 and we

will be happy when he shows up on the first day of training with us." Mane, Senegal's record goalscorer, was part of the team which won the Africa Cup of Nations in February, converting the winning penalty in the final shoot-out against Egypt. He has previous form at the Allianz Arena, where he scored a fantastic double as Liverpool beat Bayern in the Champions League last 16 three years ago before going on to win the trophy. "Sadio Mane is a global star, who underlines the appeal of Bayern and will increase the attractiveness of the Bundesliga as a whole," said Bayern president Herbert Hainer, adding



that he hopes Mane's signing boosts shirt sales.

"Fans come to the stadiums to see unique players like this." Mane left Senegal at the age

of 19 to join Metz and spent a season in France before joining RB Salzburg, where he learned German. "I will need still three months to speak good German

again," Mane said in English. He switched to the Premier League when he joined Southampton in 2014 and moved to Liverpool two years later.

Mane played leading roles as Liverpool won the Champions League and ended their 30-year wait for the English league title in 2020. "It is really strange to no longer be a Liverpool player but I had an unbelievable time," he told Liverpool's website. "I am going to be Liverpool's number one fan forever."

Liverpool have already signed Uruguayan forward Darwin Nunez from Benfica to fill the vacant spot left in their front three.