



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



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RAWALPINDI

Parliament is representative of people of country: NA speaker

Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf has said Parliament is representative of people of country and it is Parliament which offers resolution of challenges faced by country. Engaging public for Parliament business is vital for strengthening democracy in the country.



Universities should compete in Higher education: Marriyum

Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb says the government sector universities should compete with the world evolving in Higher education. Futuristic planning of curriculum should be given due priority keeping in view the market demands of modern age. The students must promote positive image of Pakistan, culture and heritage through performing arts in this age of digital media.

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Power shortfall exceeds 7,000MW

Karachi's electricity deficit reaches 800mw

LAHORE: The electricity crisis in Pakistan has worsened as the power shortfall reached 7,000 megawatts (MW). As per details, the country is facing unannounced load-shedding of 10-15 hours as the electricity shortfall has reached 7000MW. According to sources in the power division, the demand for electricity peaked at 29,000 MW against the available supply of 22,000 MW. They said that some of the urban centres and rural areas are experiencing load shedding between 12 to 14 hours. The prolonged load-shedding has increased the miseries of the public, causing difficulties to perform daily chores.

Meanwhile, prolonged power load shedding in Karachi has started creating a law and order situation in the port city as citizens irked with unannounced power cuts came out on streets and staged protests in different areas of the metropolis. Several areas facing the worst power outages including Lyari, Hijrat Colony, Sultanabad, Nazimabad, Gulistan-e-Johar and other localities. Traders of Sadder staged a protest demonstration against K-Electric for carrying out prolonged power cuts. The enraged protesters burnt their electricity bills. Speaking on the occasion, Karachi traders said despite paying heavy electricity bills, they are facing prolonged power outages, which has badly disturbed their business.

The KE spokesperson in the statement has said the power shortfall of K Electric has reached 800 MW and the power shortage is being met by increasing the loadshedding duration.

Pandemic alert

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting to review situation of COVID in the country. Islamabad, on Wednesday.



Photo: PID

New visa policy to attract business from CARs: PM

Assures Fazl to withdraw appeal against court's verdict on interest

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said the easy visa regime for Afghan nationals would bring the two countries closer and attract business from Central Asia. "This facilitation in the visa regime is aimed at bringing both countries closer, helping Afghan people, and attracting business and investment from wider Central Asian region," he said in a tweet. The prime minister mentioned that he had directed the Interior Ministry to work on a more liberal visa policy.

He said the federal cabinet had approved changes in the visa regime for Afghan nationals.

"Now our embassies will process their visa applications on the basis

of their current nationality," he said. PM Sharif said the Afghan drivers and transporters would get multiple visas within 48 hours for

PM appeals nation to follow SOPs amid COVID-19 surge

a period of up to one year.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has assured Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman to withdraw the National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) appeal against the Federal Shariat Court's verdict on interest. The JUI-F chief called on PM Shehbaz

and during the meeting Fazlur Rehman apprised him about his concerns on NBP's appeal. On this PM Shehbaz directed the task force to take immediate steps to withdraw NBP's appeal.

It is pertinent to mention that the Federal Shariat Court (FSC) on April 28 announced a verdict in a long-pending case on Riba (interest), declaring the prevailing interest-based banking system as against the Sharia and directed the government to facilitate all loans under an interest-free system. After that several banks including NBP appealed against the verdict.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has appealed the nation to follow the anti-COVID SOPs as a surge was being recorded in the corona-

virus cases in the country.

The prime minister, who chaired a meeting to discuss the COVID situation, said that the frontline health workers and doctors had rendered numerous sacrifices to keep the countrymen safe from the disease, and also paid tribute to them.

Therefore, he urged the people not to squander the success achieved against the coronavirus. The prime minister directed the chief secretaries of the provinces to ensure implementation of the SOPs at crowded places, besides enforcing full vaccination, booster doses, use of masks and sanitizers. He also called for use of masks and sanitizers at the cattle markets set up ahead of Eidul Azha, weddings and other private gatherings.

Pakistan values China's global, regional role: COAS

Says we look forward to enhance our strategic partnership



Staff report

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Genral Qamar Javed Bajwa said on Wednesday that Pakistan values China's role in global and regional affairs and we look forward to enhance our strategic partnership.

According to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the COAS said this in his meeting with Member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of

China (CPC) and Director of the Central Commission on Foreign Affairs of the CPC His Excellency Mr. Yang Jiechi who called on him at GHQ.

During the meeting, matters pertaining to mutual interests, defence collaboration, progress on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and regional security came under discussion. The army chief reiterated that Pakistan remains committed to cooperate with its international partners for peace and stability in the region.

MQM-P threatens to quit coalition govt

Warns it won't take time for us to sit on opposition benches

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P), an ally of the Shehbaz Sharif-led coalition government, has threatened to sit on the opposition benches. According to details, MQM-P raised reservations about the attitude of the coalition ministers of the government in the National Assembly and threatened to sit on the opposition benches. MNA Sheikh Salahuddin while addressing the National Assembly said that MQM-P has paid a heavy political price for this government, if they are to be given such answers in the assembly by ministers then we will not

hesitate to sit on this side.

Another lawmaker, Sabir Qaimkhani staged a walk-out from the assembly over no resolution to the problems of Hyderabad. Qaimkhani said that if the problems are not solved, then there is no need to remain in ministries, it's useless. The MQM-P lawmaker said that no priority was given to the projects of their areas in the budget, without taking anyone's name, he said one person is not allowing our projects to be included in the budget. Federal Minister Murtaza Javed Abbasi held talks with MQM members after they staged walk-out from the National Assembly (NA).

Pakistan mulls oil import from Russia

Govt seeks proposals from refineries over the issue

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Energy (Power Division) has asked the oil refineries to submit recommendation for importing crude oil from Russia. In its letter, the ministry asked the refineries about the technical suitability of the refineries to process the crude oil grades to be imported from Russia. The government also inquired the refineries about the quantity and the grade of the crude each refinery would need.

It also asked for the cost and benefit analysis of the freight expenses to be incurred on importing oil from Russia compared to the cost of imports from Middle East. The refineries were also asked to provide methodology for such imports. The refineries have also been asked about existing commitment of upliftment from Arab Gulf region with respect to term contracts.

The Ministry of Energy has asked industrial experts to provide analysis for importing oil from Russia, as the country seeks to procure



the commodity at a cheaper rate amid a financial crunch. Pakistan's monthly fuel oil imports are set to hit a four-year high in June, Refinitiv data showed.

The country's fuel oil imports could climb to about 700,000 tonnes this month, after hitting 630,000 tonnes in May, according to Refinitiv estimates. Imports last peaked at 680,000 tonnes in May 2018 and 741,000 tonnes in June 2017.

In a letter written to the managing directors of Pak-Arab Refinery, National Refinery, Pakistan Refinery, and Byco Petroleum,

the ministry directed them to submit the following analysis: Technical sustainability of crude grades in view of each refinery configuration and yield (Vol%).

Quantity and grade of the subject crude to be required by the refinery. Transportation/freight analysis for imports from Russia in comparison with normal imports from the Middle East based on cost and benefit analysis. Payment methodology Existing commitment to upliftment from the Arab Gulf region with respect to term contracts.

Rs 10 per litre

Petrol price to go up from July 1

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Bowing down to the pressure of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the government is likely to increase prices of petroleum products by Rs 10 from tomorrow (Friday).

Pakistan received Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policy (MEFP) from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) which would combine the seventh and eighth tranches.

According to IMF's MEFP, economic discipline is necessary in Pakistan after which more tough decisions will have to be taken from July 1. Sources said that talks are underway between Pakistan and the IMF on MEFP and from July 1, sales tax of 5% on petrol and a levy of Rs 10 could be imposed. Sources further said that from July 1, electricity may also become more expensive and a tough target has to be met to reduce energy losses, while government agencies will also have to meet a strict target to reduce losses.

NA passes Finance Bill 2022-23 along with Super Tax

Amendment in Petroleum Products Ordinance also approved

Senior Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly (NA) on Wednesday passed Finance Bill 2022-23, giving legal effect to the budgetary proposals for the next fiscal year. All amendments moved by the Minister of State for Finance and treasury lawmakers were adopted by the House while the amendments of opposition members including Javaria Zafar Aheer (PTI), Wajjha Qamar (PTI), Ramesh Kumar (PTI), Saira Bano (GDA), Maulana Abul Akbar Chitrali (MMAP) and an Independent MNA Mohsin Dawar were rejected by the House after voting.

According to the Rule 187 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in National Assembly 2007, not less than four days shall be allotted for the general discussion on the budget. However, the National Assembly smoothly continued debate on the Finance Bill, 2022 for 10 days. The formal debate started on June 13, 2022 that continued till June 24, 2022. The House also discussed recommendations of the Senate and three MNAs expressed their views on it. Minister for Finance Miftah Ismail had concluded debate on Finance Bill on June 24, 2022. The House held discussion on the Charged Expenditure included in Demands for Grants and Appropriations for the financial year ending on June 30, 2023. The House approved



131 demands for grants related to various departments and ministries.

The total volume of the federal budget for fiscal year 2022-23 is Rs9.5 trillion with allocation of Rs 2,158 billion under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) which is one per cent up from Rs 2,135 billion last year. The Ministry of Finance has termed the budget 2022-23 as growth budget and it is based on a well-thought-out strategy to boost the economic growth outlined in the medium-term budgetary strategy paper for FY23 to FY25. It gives a clear roadmap of the strategic priorities, revenue and spending policies of the government.

Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Aisha Ghaus Pasha moved the motion for consideration of the Finance Bill, 2022 to give effect to the financial

proposals of the federal government for the year beginning on July 1, 2022. The motion was passed with majority vote which led to the passage of Finance Bill-2022 after clause by clause reading and adopting amendments after due process of voting.

During the debate on the Finance Bill, Aisha Ghaus Pasha said there had been no pressure from International Monetary Fund (IMF) to integrate amendments in the federal budget 2022-23 saying that the changes had been made in larger interest of the country. The amendments were made in such a way that the common man should not be affected, she said adding that the government had reduced taxes on the people having small incomes while increased tax on the higher income people.

Shared approach

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and member of the Politburo of the CPC Central Committee and Director of Foreign Affairs Commission of the CPC Yang Jiechi are leading respective sides in held delegation level talks here on Wednesday.



Photo: APP

Rupee gains against US dollar

Bureau Report

KARACHI: The rupee on Wednesday strengthened against the US dollar after Pakistan received a rollover of Chinese bank loans and MEFP from the IMF for the 7th and 8th reviews. According to details, the US dollar lost its value by Rs1.67 against the rupee and traded at Rs205.20 in the interbank. In the open market, the US dollar traded between Rs206 to Rs208. The Pakistani rupee also extended gains against the US dollar in the interbank market on Tuesday.

According to State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), the local currency closed at 206.87 after appreciating Rs1.07 against the greenback in inter-bank. In the open market, however, the greenback is sold between Rs207 to Rs209. Pakistan on Tuesday received the Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies (MEFP) from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the seventh and eighth reviews.

Pak-China discuss bilateral ties, regional issues

Bilawal, CPC member Yang review global scenario

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari held delegation level talks with Yang Jiechi, Member of the Politburo of the CPC Central Committee and Director of Foreign Affairs Commission of the CPC. The two sides discussed entire spectrum of bilateral relations and exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest.

Director Yang Jiechi was accompanied by Vice Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Commerce, Vice Chairman of China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), and Deputy Secretary General of the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC).

Earlier in the day Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said his party was struggling to strengthen the democratic norms in the country for the last three generations as its leadership always stood firmly against non-democratic forces. On a point of order he said "PPP is struggling for strengthening democracy, free, fair and transparent elections, besides economic rights of the people for the last three generations". He said the PPP had always fought against dictators and cruelty. He said workers and leaders of the PPP had rendered matchless sacrifices for the cause of the democracy and supremacy of the

parliament.

Bilawal said despite rigging in all elections by opponents, the PPP were always given a chance by the people to govern the country. "To stop the party of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto, a system of rigging had been developed," he added. Despite all odds, he said the PPP launched a vibrant movement to hold free, fair and transparent elections in the country.

PPP's struggle spans over generations: Bilawal

"PPP always stood against rigging" he added. Local government elections recently held in Sindh Province were being discussed in the National Assembly, he said adding "it is an obligation for me to make the record correct and answer the questions raised by the members." He said it was appropriate for the members to raise the issue of local bodies in the Sindh assembly.

He said the PPP was a popular party in the Sindh province and swept the recent-

ly held local body elections. The minister said the political parties that made hue and cry were approached by the Sindh High Court just a day before the election to flee from the election process. He said opposition parties were well aware of the fact that during the next phase of the local body election, to be held after one month in Sindh, the PPP would again make a clean sweep. After the electoral reforms, he said, level playing field would be given to all the political parties in the next general elections. "Whenever there is a level playing field, PPP always performs well in the elections," he added.

He said it was unfortunate that the PPP was blamed for rigging the local government election held in Larkana. "I will identify myself if someone is found involved in rigging, but allegations of rigging against PPP is unfortunate," he added. The minister congratulated Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf for conducting the proceedings of the House efficiently and giving maximum time to opposition members to speak on budget. He reminded that during the past regime of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, the then opposition parties were not given fair chance to speak in the House on various issues.

Pak-US trade grows over 51% in 11 months: SBP

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's goods and services trade with the United State of America (USA) witnessed surplus of 51.22 percent during eleven months of fiscal year (2021-22) as compared to the corresponding period of last year. The overall exports to the USA were recorded at \$ 6158.171 million during July-May (2021-22) against exports of \$4475.232 million during July-May (2020-21), showing growth of 37.60 percent, SBP data revealed. Meanwhile, on a year-on-year basis, exports to USA during May 2022 also surged by 19.17 percent, from US \$ 454.332 million to US \$ 541.433 million.

Similarly, month-on-month exports to the USA however decreased by 1.41 percent during May 2022 as compare with exports of US \$ 618.214 million in April 2022, the SBP data said. Overall Pakistan's exports to all countries also witnessed an increase of

26.73 percent in eleven months, from \$23.146 billion to \$29.333 billion, the SBP data said. On the other hand, imports from the US during the period under review were recorded at \$2717.185 million against \$2199.857 million of last year, showing an increase of 23.51 percent in July-May (2021-22).

Meanwhile, year-on-year imports from the US during May 2022 also increased by 13.28 percent from US \$209.294 million last year to US \$237.092 million. On month-on-month basis, the imports from the US however dipped by 6.16 percent during May 2022 as compared to the import of US \$252.676 million in April 2022, SBP data said. The overall imports increased by 34.46 percent, from US \$47.970 billion to US \$65.461 billion. The trade surplus during the period under review was recorded at \$3440.986 million against \$2275.375 million during same period of last year, showing 51.22 percent growth.

Punjab by-polls

Maryam to lead PML-N campaign

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N) vice president Maryam Nawaz will lead the party's elections campaign ahead of the July 17 by-elections in Punjab's 20 constituencies. In this regard, Maryam Nawaz will start visiting the constituencies from Saturday.

While on Saturday, Sunday and Monday, Maryam Nawaz will visit Lahore constituencies. It is pertinent to mention that the seats fell vacant after the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) de-seated 25 members of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for voting for Hamza Shahbaz in an election for Punjab Chief Minister.

IMF demands anti graft legislation: Asad

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: PTI Secretary General Asad Umar on Wednesday said that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is demanding the government legislate on strengthening the system aimed at nabbing corrupt practices in the government departments. Taking to Twitter, Asad Umar said that even the international lender is worried that the money released to the country as a loan could end up filling the coffers of the rulers.

"Following changes in NAB laws, the IMF is demanding the government to strengthen the system that could nab corrupt practices in the country," he said. It is pertinent to mention here that Pakistan on Tuesday received the Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies (MEFP) from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the seventh and eighth reviews.

No pressure

Commitments with IMF being met: Pasha

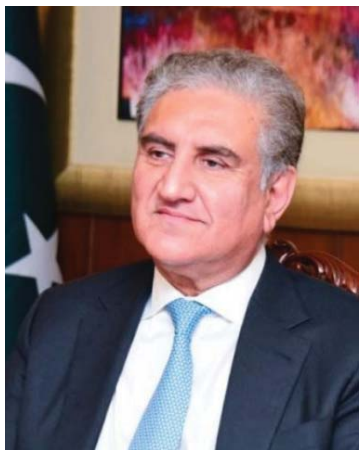
ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Ayesha Ghous Pasha Wednesday dispelled the impression that the incumbent government had taken extra pressure of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to integrate amendments in the federal budget 2022-23 saying that the changes had been made in larger interest of the country. Responding to the criticism by the opposition members over the amendments in the Federal Budget 2022-23 in National Assembly, Ayesha Ghous said the amendments were made in such a way that the common man should not be affected. She said the government had reduced taxes on the people having small incomes while increased tax on the higher income people.

PTI behind my defeat in 2018 election: Qureshi

Bureau Report

MULTAN: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Vice Chairman and former Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi on Wednesday while lashing out at PTI said he was defeated in the 2018 election because his party hatched a conspiracy against him. Addressing the by-poll campaign meeting in PP-217 Multan, Qureshi said that he categorically told PTI chairman Imran Khan that the reason behind his defeat in the 2018 election was his party.

"If I had won the 2018 election then the situation in Punjab would not be the same as it is today," the former FM



said. On the other hand, Zain Qureshi son of Shah Mehmood Qureshi clarified that his father said this in the context of Jahangir Khan Tareen and Aleem Khan.

It is pertinent to mention that in 2018, the former foreign minister had contested the provincial assembly seat PP-217, but he was defeated by independent candidate Sheikh Salman Naeem while these rumours have been circulating since then that Jahangir Tareen had a hand in defeating Shah Mehmood Qureshi in the provincial elections. After winning the election, Salman Naeem joined the PTI and was part of the Jahangir Tareen group.

PTI to hold biggest public gathering on July 2: Imran Khan

Govt delaying permission for power show at Parade Ground

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan on Wednesday stated that PTI will hold the biggest public gathering in the history of Islamabad on July 2. Addressing a workers convention in Islamabad, the PTI Chairman said that the traitors ousted his government through foreign conspiracy. Corrupt people have been imposed on us. The imposed government has been stealing from public for 30 years, he said.

Further criticizing the PML-N leadership he added that there are cases of 24 billion against Shehbaz Sharif and his sons. The PTI Chairman while

talking about the NAB amendments said that with the NAB amendment, they have eliminated corruption cases worth Rs 1,100 billion. Imran Khan mentioned that petrol, electricity, gas, everything has been made expensive. The prices of flour, ghee and rice have also been doubled.

Those who held inflation march against PTI government have induced historic inflation as they step into power, he said. Furthermore he said the incumbent leaders would have begged IMF for money. PTI government was also told by the IMF to increase prices but they kept inflation in check.

According to the PTI Chairperson, the Inflation will rise further.

The federal administration appears to be reluctant to allow the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to hold a 'protest rally' at the Parade Ground on July 2. In a statement, PTI Central Secretary General said that the 'imported' coalition government was afraid of former prime minister Imran Khan's popularity among the people of Pakistan. "The incumbent government is showing reluctance in allowing the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf to hold jalsa at Parade Ground, Islamabad, on June 2," the former planning minister said.

Punjab CM election

Uncertainty on Hamza election persists

LHC adjourns hearing on pleas till today

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Lahore High Court (LHC) on Wednesday adjourned the hearing on pleas against election of Hamza Shahbaz as Chief Minister of Punjab. A five member larger bench headed by Justice Sadaqat Ali Khan will resume the hearing on Thursday. During the hearing, the bench sought arguments from Hamza's lawyer that whether the Supreme Court's verdict on the presidential reference related to defecting lawmakers applies to past events. Hamza's counsel maintained that the ruling doesn't apply to past events unless the apex court itself says so. In a previous hearing the high court had hinted at holding fresh election for the post of Punjab's chief minister under April 16 circumstances, when incumbent

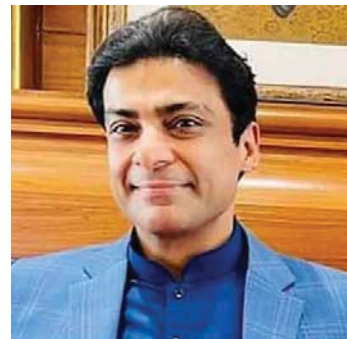
Hamza Shahbaz was elected in a poll on a court order.

The uncertainty on Hamza Shahbaz's election as the Punjab chief minister continued as the Lahore High Court (LHC) once again adjourned the hearing of the case till June 30. However, the hearing was adjourned once again, leaving Hamza's fate hanging in the balance. At the outset of the hearing, Justice Shahid Jameel remarked that it will hear arguments from the counsel representing Hamza Shahbaz first. The judge remarked that Hamza's lawyer will give arguments if the Supreme Court's verdict on the presidential reference — seeking the interpretation of Article 63(A) of the Constitution related to defecting lawmakers — applies to past events.

The apex court, on May 17, ruled

that the votes of dissident members of Parliament (MPs), cast against their parliamentary party's directives, cannot be counted. Following Justice Jameel's directive, Hamza's counsel started his arguments, maintaining that the ruling doesn't apply to past events unless the apex court itself says so. "The truth is that Hamza's election as Punjab CM hasn't been challenged but different events had been challenged," the counsel said. At the completion of arguments from Hamza's lawyer, PTI counsel Barrister Ali Zafar came to the rostrum.

In his arguments, Barrister Ali Zafar pleaded with the court that the SC's verdict should be implemented instead of going after the point of past or future. Justice Shahid asked the lawyer if the court can nullify the notification of Hamza Shahbaz's election as CM. "Can



this court play the role of the presiding officer?" asked Justice Sadaqat Ali Khan. "If the defecting lawmakers' votes are not counted, then the presiding officer will have to be directed to hold re-election for the slot," said Ali Zafar. In the case of re-election, the

notification regarding the appointment of Hamza Shahbaz would be nullified, said the PTI's lawyer.

The court could only tell the presiding officer that he did wrong by counting the votes of defiant MPs, he added. Earlier, the court called President Arif Alvi's lawyer Advocate Ahmad Awais to the rostrum and sought his views on the remarks made by the single bench about the president.

While giving his arguments, the advocate pleaded with the court to nullify the single bench remarks about the president.

At this, Justice Sajid Mehmood Sethi asked if he meant to say that the remarks were given without hearing the president. A new political crisis is likely to emerge if the LHC declares the election of Punjab chief minister null and

void and orders re-election.

In the case the LHC announces its verdict against the incumbent CM, the same candidates, Hamza Shehbaz and Pervez Elahi, will once again vie for the slot. For the vote of confidence, the new CM will require to attain the magical figure of 186, half of the strength of the House. If the court restores the Punjab Assembly to the April 16 situation, the deputy speaker will supervise the proceedings of the CM's election. However, if a no-confidence motion is tabled against him, the panel of chairmen will conduct the proceedings.

In the light of the Supreme Court's verdict, the Election Commission of Pakistan has de-seated 25 defectors of the PTI. By-elections on the 20 vacant seats will be held on July 17 and the election campaign is in full swing.

PMSA, KU to collaborate on policy research in maritime affairs

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) and the University of Karachi (KU) have agreed to undertake integrated policy initiatives on various challenges along the 1046 km coastline of the Sindh and Balochistan provinces.

It was decided in a meeting of the DG PMSA, Rear Admiral Mirza Foad Amin Baig HI(M), and the Vice Chancellor University of Karachi, Prof Dr. Nasira Khatoon held on 29 June 22 at the office of the Vice Chancellor, a statement said.

The meeting further discussed collaborative efforts to identify and develop policy proposals and briefs for various stakeholders in maritime-related affairs.

It was decided that both the institutions would facilitate each other in research, focusing mainly on maritime law, maritime security, blue economy,



social uplift of coastal communities, challenges to the national coastline and local communities, conservation, and protection of marine flora and fauna, oceanography and maritime tourism.

Emphasis was laid on initiating

dialogues on diverse issues related to maritime affairs among scholars, experts, and policymakers with an aim to generate discussions on maritime awareness as well as socio-economic challenges faced by coastal communi-

ties for the benefit of policy circles and masses in general.

To achieve these objectives both parties would jointly organize trainings, workshops, seminars, and similar events on maritime issues for capacity building of the students and researchers. Admiral Mirza Foad Amin Baig HI(M) also offered internship opportunities for the students of KU at the PMSA.

Earlier the focal person of KU-PM-SA, Ms. Samina Qureshi briefed the members about the aims and objectives of the MoU while Cdr M Faisal Sadiq COMOSRON23 from PMSA shared the progress already achieved since the MoU signing in April last year.

DG PMSA and VC UoK also exchanged souvenirs and organizational crests at the occasion. The PMSA delegation included Cdr Muhammad Farooq, Director of Training, and Lt Taimur, Deputy Director of Coordination.

Preparations

KARACHI: Vendors displaying sacrificial animals to attract the customers in a cattle market for upcoming Eidul Azha, in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Pakistan Business Group discusses budget, expresses reservations

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Industrialists and economists have said that the federal budget policy has been given by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The power is from the agricultural industry. Unfortunately, the previous government used to import everything. Pakistan and its people need to adopt a policy of self-sufficiency. If gas and electricity prices rise in the country, industries will be shut down. In the previous government, the impression was given that the real estate lottery has been opened, but this is not the case.

He expressed these views in a budget discussion held at a local hotel with the support of Pakistan Business Group. Leading industrialist and Chairman Baig Group Dr. Mirza Ikhtiar Baig, Senior Vice Chairman Yarn Merchant Association Hanif Lakhani and Junaid were present on the occasion. Rehman, IT expert Ashfaq Ahmed, Asif Sim Sim, Nasir Lakhani from the real estate



sector spoke on the occasion while Abdul Haseeb Khan was also present on the occasion.

He said that stock market crashed due to imposition of super tax. He said that industrialists imported machines worth Rs. 500 billion. If energy and gas prices go up, industrialists will be forced to close factories.

Founder President of Pakistan Business Group Faraz-ur-Rehman In his address, he said that Pakistan Busi-

ness Group wants to play the role of a bridge between the government and the business community, adding that similar programs would be held in the future as well.

Many issues, including expenses, are not clear, he said Governments should increase their resources and revenue to provide inflation and financial support. He demanded the government to withdraw the property tax imposed in the federal budget.

Infinix sets up five minutes charge challenge



Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Infinix, Pakistan's highest selling smartphone brand has set up the 5 minutes charge challenge at Hafeez center so that everyone can witness the power of 120 W Hyper Charge. Participants will be able to witness the power of 120W hyper charge that comes with new Infinix NOTE 12 VIP. They can also take part in interesting challenges & lucky-draws through which they can win Infinix NOTE 12 VIP and other exciting gifts. The exhibition of this new era of technology will take place from 27th-30th June at Hafeez Centre, Lahore.

Amid offering the fastest charge, Infinix has still announced the 5-minute charge challenge against Infinix NOTE 12 VIP's 120W hyper charge. People will be able to witness the capability of Infinix technology, by comparing the charging speed of their personal mobiles with the NOTE 12 VIP in a 5-minutes span only. And by doing so, they can simply get a chance to win Infinix NOTE 12 VIP.

In no time, Infinix has emerged as the new trendsetter of style, technology, and engaging activities in Pakistan. The challenge has already astonished the people, also buzzing the mobile market. Buyers, sellers, users, and fans are eager to witness the claim of Infinix NOTE 12 VIP charging from 0 to 100% in 17 minutes.

Other than the 120W hyper charge, Infinix NOTE 12 VIP has a top-notch processor of MediaTek Helio G96 combined with an extended RAM of up to 13 GB, does not make it any less surprise that NOTE 12 VIP is synonymous with efficiency.

CM express annoyance over non-provision of dengue data

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shahbaz Sharif has expressed annoyance over the non-provision of accurate data about anti-dengue and stressed that the anti-dengue steps and the data should be compatible for achieving desired results.

Chairing a meeting to review steps for countering dengue and corona, the CM directed to set up a dashboard for authentic dengue data. He also sought the performance report of every district within three days from the chief secretary about their anti-dengue measures. The anti-dengue arrangements should be reviewed through field visits and daily meetings, he said and made it clear that best-performing districts would be commended while bad performers would be held accountable. Similarly, the CM ordered that assistance be sought from public representatives at the level of wards and union councils for dengue control. Diseases like coronavirus, dengue and congo virus were challenges and must be addressed in a coordinated manner, he noted and vowed to meet the challenge of saving people from these diseases. The meeting was also briefed about the coronavirus, dengue and congo virus. Different experts presented their suggestions and it was decided to set up dengue counters in government hospitals. Agencies

Planning Commission approves two major mega projects for GB

GILGIT: The Planning Commission of Pakistan has approved two major mega projects for Gilgit-Baltistan.

According to the office of chief secretary GB, Planning Commission of Pakistan approved a three hundred bed hospital in the district Diamer Chelas and the Life Skill Development and Rehabilitation Centers in Gilgit, Skardu and Diamer with an amount of Rs. 6.689 billions.

A week after taking the oath, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced a 300-bed hospital in Chilas city during his site visit to the Diamer-Bhasha Dam project. APP

12 more tested COVID-19 positive in Faisalabad

FAISALABAD: As many as 12 people were tested positive for COVID-19 in the district during the last 24 hours.

According to the Health department spokesperson, 155 coronavirus tests were conducted in public and private sector labs during the same period.

He said that total active cases in Faisalabad were 65 while 28,441 patients had so far recovered from the disease. He said that 119 beds were allocated at the Allied Hospital, 52 at the DHQ Hospital and 150 at Government General Hospital Ghulam Muhammad Abad for COVID-19 patients.

At present, 3 patients were under treatment at the Allied Hospital. He further said that 62 confirmed patients were isolated at their homes in the district. APP

Capital police to shift offices on solar energy

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory Police (ICTP) has decided to shift all its offices on solar energy in line with the prime minister's 'Turnaround' initiative.

All police stations, lines, safe city project, offices and other buildings and equipments of Islamabad police would be shifted to efficient energy.

It was decided in a meeting between Inspector General Police (IGP) Islamabad Dr Akbar Nasir Khan and National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (NEECA) Managing Director, Dr Sardar Moazzam here on Wednesday.

The capital police was taking revolutionary steps following Minister for interior Rana Sanaullah Khan's directions to introduce an environment friendly major energy saving projects.

A survey on this project has been commenced headed by Director General Planning Policy Innovation Program, Munir Ahmad and the teams started visiting various places.

EBM wins RoSPA Silver Award

For excellent on-site health and safety standards

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: English Biscuit Manufacturers, a leading FMCG company, has recently won the international and prestigious RoSPA Silver Award for maintaining the highest standards of health and safety at its premises.

The RoSPA Silver Health and Safety Award was given to EBM in recognition of its efforts to keep its employees safe. This recognition is a win for EBM's commitment towards meticulous implementation of safety standards.

The RoSPA ((The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) Award, which is the longest-running health and safety award in the United Kingdom, honors organizations that set standards for health and safety practices around the world. It is estimated that more than 2,000 organizations contest the award annually. Managing Director & CEO at EBM, Dr. Zeelaf Munir stated: "We

are delighted that EBM has been acknowledged by RoSPA for its health and safety performance. This international award is a testament to our staff and their commitment to the highest levels of wellbeing and safety for decades, especially during the pandemic." Julia Small, RoSPA's Achievements Director, said: "This is a fantastic and well-deserved accomplishment. All our award entrants demonstrate their unwavering commitment and passion for keeping people safe at work. By receiving this recognition, EBM joins like-minded businesses and organizations worldwide, who represent the very best in their approach to Health and Safety. I would like to add my personal thanks for all the work that it has taken to secure this well-deserved award. Congratulations to all those involved, who champion and drive up Health and Safety standards every day. You are setting a fantastic example for others in your sector."

Careem launches carpooling service

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Given the massive hike in global fuel prices, the everyday office-goer is the most affected by the current economic conditions. Careem, the Super App of the greater Middle East and Pakistan, has added a carpooling feature in its corporate portfolio 'Careem for Business (C4B)', dedicatedly catering to its corporate clientele.

The carpooling service includes a pool of cars, with 1 pool comprising of three (3) people in one (1) car, in which colleagues in one organization living in proximity will get an optimized route in their daily commute from their homes to and from offices daily. This will enable the working segment of society to minimize travel and fuel costs all while reaping the benefits like door-to-door pickup/drop-off, auto-



mated processing, dedicated focal person and enjoy a safe, secure and hassle-free ride from the corporate fleet. This service is currently being utilized by multiple reputed organizations, including Nestle, Sapphire, Packages Limited, BASF, Sadatech, Acascus, Repair Desk, etc.

Similarly, Careem has also introduced a full and half day model, which gives you access to a dedicated Captain and vehicle for 12 hours and 6 hours, respectively. In this model, customers can travel to non-active areas and take intercity rides to non-operational

cities. Additionally, Careem has introduced a feature where companies can avail all benefits of corporate services and bill directly to the colleagues instead of the BTC (bill to company). This option is already being utilized by multiple reputed companies, including Power Cement, PICG, Hapag Lloyd, Salesflo, Maple Leaf and Daraz.

Commenting on this initiative, Feroz Jaleel, Country Head, Careem Pakistan said, "In the current economic conditions, everyone is enduring challenging times, and it is our responsibility to eliminate some woes. The newly introduced carpooling service can cause greater productivity at work, as this will help ease the burden. As the name suggests, Careem will always be generous in providing relief to the masses by taking a lead in offering innovative services in the ride-hailing sector."

PACRA maintains Entity, Additional Tier 1 TFC, TFC-II Ratings of Soneri Bank

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Soneri Bank has maintained its market position in the industry while strengthening its overall risk profile with stable outlook. Pakistan Credit Rating Agency Limited "PACRA" has re-rated Soneri Bank with "AA-" (double A minus) for its long-term rating and "A1+" (single A one plus) for Bank's short-term rating.

Soneri Bank has also maintained the rating of Unsecured, Sub-ordinated

and Listed Term Finance Certificates (2nd issue) of PKR 3,000 million at A+ (single A Plus) along with the rating of its Unsecured, Sub-ordinated, Listed, Perpetual and Non-Cumulative Term Finance Certificates as Additional Tier 1 (ADIT1) Capital of PKR 4,000 million at A (Single A), all accredited by PACRA. Soneri Bank with its network of over 360 plus Branches and ATMs continues to work towards the financial betterment and will continue to value the patronage given by its customers.



Islamabad
23° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 3:17 am
Zohr 12:11 pm
Asr 5:11 pm
Maghrib 7:22 pm
Isha 9:06 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance 115
PIA Flight Info 114
PIA Cargo 9280979
Railway Inquiry 117
Railway Exchange 9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi 5555489
CAA 9281092

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

COMPLAINTS

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

SECP to allow licensed investment advisors to offer EPF

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has allowed Investment Advisors licensed by the SECP to offer Employer Pension Funds.

This will be done as part of the new "Employer Pension Funds and allowing Asset Management Companies (AMCs) to offer annuity payments of pension under the Voluntary Pension System" concept, for which SECP has also begun a 14-day public consultation period.

The newly introduced concept of Employer Pension Funds will address the reluctance of employers to offer VPS as well as provide greater portability and flexibility to participants. Retaining the primary structure of pension funds, the Employer Pension Funds will have flexible seed capital requirements as well as bilaterally agreed expense ratios with no sales load chargeable to participants.

Similarly, there shall be no requirement of disclosing the expense ratios and management fee on MUFAP and Asset Management Companies' websites, along with removal of requirement to publish rankings on MUFAP web site.

Asif expresses appreciation for cordial ties with Iran

Pakistan is grateful for Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei's support for just struggle of the people of Jammu & Kashmir, says Defence Minister

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Seyyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini called on Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif here at his office in Islamabad on Wednesday.

The Defence Minister expressed his appreciation for cordial and fraternal ties nourished by centuries old religious and cultural affinities. He stated the Pakistan is grateful for Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei's strong and unwavering support for the just struggle of the people of Jammu & Kashmir.

While expressing the importance of Joint Border commission (JBC) the Federal Minister said that Pakistan has taken all necessary measures in domain of border management and joint efforts in this regard.

Moreover, the Minister for Defence highlighted the importance of regional cooperation in achieving allusive peace in Afghanistan after Taliban takeover of Kabul.

Thus, it's the need of hour to stand by



Afghan people in full support and solidarity. After all these years Afghans need and deserve peace, progress and prosperity, and international community must help them walk firmly on that path.

Ambassador of Iran, Seyyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini, appreciated Pakistan's defence capabilities and opined that two countries have potential for extensive collaboration in the field of defence and for energy cooperation.

Both sides showed satisfaction and intended for collaboration in various areas of common interest, enhancing security, counter terrorism and ensuring regional economic connectivity.

Water Crises

ISLAMABAD: People walks on a dry area of Rawal Dam in Federal Capital, As The water crisis in twin cities has exacerbated as the level of groundwater is fast tumbling amidst high demand for the commodity by a mushrooming population. According to officials, water shortage in Rawal Dam and Khanpur Dam has also led to the crisis as both the dams have almost touched the dead level, causing a severe water shortage in the garrison city.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Senator Sherry congratulates UAE on selection to host 28th session of COP28

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman, in a meeting with the UAE Ambassador Hamad Obaid Ibrahim AlZaabi, discussed bilateral relations between both countries and areas of cooperation.

She also congratulated UAE on its selection to host the 28th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28).

She underscored that "UAE is an important partner of Pakistan and we highly value our brotherly relations." Pakistan has signed a climate MoU with UAE on climate cooperation. Stressing the need for the operationalization of the climate MoU, Minister Rehman said, "This MoU is a step in the right direction and we look forward to further cooperation on tackling climate change in the country. UAE has helped us in



trying times and we are confident it will assist Pakistan in dealing with the climate catastrophe."

Federal Minister extended her support to Hamad Obaid Ibrahim AlZaabi for COP28 being hosted by UAE.

PANAH to organize walk in Murree to raise awareness about diseases

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Like every year a walk will be organized in Murree on Sunday, July 3 under the auspices of Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH). This is the 30th walk in Murree, which is organized regularly every year. The purpose of the walk is to raise awareness about other deadly diseases and to warn the public about the factors that are a major cause of many diseases, heart disease, cancer, obesity, and diabetes including NCDs. The walk will start from GPO Chowk Murree, which will pass through Mall Road and end at GPO Chowk.

Health Corner

Increasing heat waves affect up to half a billion people



ISLAMABAD: Climate change is a reality and extremely high temperatures have been reported by India and Pakistan in the spring. In a new scientific journal article, researchers from the University of Gothenburg, amongst others, paint a gloomy picture for the rest of the century. Heat waves are expected to increase, affecting up to half a billion people every year. In turn, they can lead to food shortages, deaths and refugee flows when the heat reaches levels that exceed what humans can tolerate. But this does not have to happen if measures are put in place to reach the Paris Agreement targets, the researchers say.

In India and Pakistan, heat waves with temperatures above 40 degrees in the shade are a directly life-threatening form of extreme weather. In a new article in the journal Earth's Future, researchers have outlined different scenarios for the consequences of heat waves in South Asia to the year 2100.

"We established a link between extreme heat and population. In the best scenario, we succeeded in meeting the targets in the Paris Agreement, which added roughly two heat waves per year, exposing about 200 million people to the heat waves. But if countries continue to contribute to the greenhouse effect as they are still doing now, clearing and building on land that is actually helping to lower global temperatures, we believe that there could be as many as five more heat waves per year, with more than half a billion people being exposed to them, by the end of the century," says Deliang Chen, Professor of Physical Meteorology at the University of Gothenburg and one of the authors of the article.

The study identifies the Indo-Gigantic Plains beside the Indus and Ganges rivers as particularly vulnerable. This is a region of high temperatures, and it is densely populated. Deliang Chen points out that the link between heat waves and population works in both directions. The size of the population affects the number of future heat waves. A larger population drives emissions up as consumption and transport increase. Urban planning is also important. If new towns and villages are built in places that are less subject to heat waves, the number of people affected can be reduced.

"We hope that the leaders in the region such as India and Pakistan read our report and think about it. In our calculation model, the range for the number of people who will be exposed to heat waves is large. The actual numbers will depend on the path that these countries choose to take in their urban planning. It is future greenhouse gas and particulate emissions that will determine how many people are actually exposed. We can more than halve the population exposed to intense heat waves if we reduce emissions so that we reach the targets in the Paris Agreement. Both mitigation and adaptation measures can make a huge difference," says Deliang Chen.

Heat waves are already causing major problems in India and Pakistan. Farmers have been hit hard when drought and heat has caused their wheat crops to fail, and their crops have moved to higher altitudes to escape the extreme heat. But this move has resulted in large areas of trees being cleared; trees that have contributed to lowering temperatures.

"With a larger population, land use increases, which in itself can drive up temperatures further. Each heat wave will result in increased mortality and decreased productivity, since few people can work in 45-degree heat. I fear that if nothing is done, it can ultimately lead to a huge wave of migrations." (Courtesy: Science Daily)



ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Boys Scouts Association (IBSA) participated in flood mock exercise organize by Punjab Rescue-1122 at Rawal Lake here on Wednesday.

KORT is an exemplary welfare institution, says AJK President

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: President Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry has said that there are great people who do service to the people. Kashmir Orphan Relief Trust (KORT) has done a good deed by arranging education and training for poor and helpless children.

The KORT is an exemplary welfare institution from which the graduates are rendering invaluable services in all walks of life.

Addressing the gathering, President A.J.K Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry said that



today's ceremony: was Emergency Relief for the Earthquake Victims President A.J.K Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry said that

quake in Afghanistan has caused a lot of damage.

We have witnessed the devastation of the 2005 earthquake in AJK. The

services of KORT for the victims of Afghanistan are unforgettable. The KORT is now functioning in other districts of Azad Kashmir and all over Pakistan which is commendable. He said that he had returned from a visit abroad a few days ago, and had informed the outside world about the HR violations and Indian atrocities in IIOJ&K especially fake cases against Yasin Malik.

India is fulfilling its nefarious aims by settling Hindus there in the style of Israel. So far 4 million Hindus have been issued domiciles in Kashmir. He again paid Tribute to the services of Chairman KORT Chaudhry Akhtar (TI).

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گیس بل بروقت ادا کریں

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US Midterm – Inflation & Democrats

Kerry Boyd Anderson

Washington has had a big week. The Supreme Court issued two major rulings that expanded gun rights and overturned the right to abortion, while hearings into the Jan. 6 invasion of the US Capitol continued, with some major revelations. Despite such high-profile, political developments inflation is likely to play a much bigger role in shaping this year's elections. The US will hold midterm elections in November, with all seats in the House of Representatives and 35 seats in the Senate to be contested, as well as multiple gubernatorial and other state and local elections. At the same time, Americans are struggling with inflation. The consumer price index rose 8.6 percent over the previous year in May the highest since 1981. Annual core inflation rose by 6 percent. Many Americans are not accustomed to significant inflation and polls suggest that a majority perceive inflation as more historically high than it

actually is. Multiple factors are driving inflation around the world. The pandemic created massive global supply chain snarls and fast-changing consumption trends, which continue to drive inflation. Recent lockdowns in China due to COVID-19 have undermined supply chain recovery. Russia's invasion of Ukraine contributed to spikes in energy and food prices. The US is hardly alone; for example, inflation in the EU is similar to America, though price rises began earlier in the US. Some factors are more specific to the US. Stimulus measures designed to support the economy during the pandemic — primarily from more than \$3 trillion in pandemic emergency spending under the Trump administration and the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan under the Biden administration — likely helped fuel inflation, though economists disagree on the extent of the impact. The pandemic drove changes in the US workforce that have now prompted a labor shortage.

The US president plays a small role in shaping inflation. The US Federal Reserve is independent and controls monetary policy. Any US president that

respects that independence has limited tools to address inflation and can only take action at the margins. President Joe Biden has insisted that the Fed remain independent. However, few Americans have a strong understanding of monetary policy and perceptions matter more than reality in politics.

At the same time, partisanship contributes to perceptions of inflation: Quinnipiac found that 76 percent of Republicans view inflation as a crisis, compared to 59 percent of independents and 39 percent of Democrats. Inflation clearly is contributing to Biden's poor approval ratings, which rank around 39 percent. In context, however, Biden's ratings are no worse than Trump's generally were at the same point in his presidency. Biden is aware of the particular pain that inflation causes. Compared to other economic metrics, inflation is obvious on a daily basis, as Americans fuel their cars and buy groceries.

Rising prices create hardships for middle-class Americans and especially for poorer Americans. Biden knows that appearing indifferent to these difficulties is political suicide, so he has expressed personal sympathy for the pain of inflation and said

that inflation is his top economic priority. His recent efforts to persuade Congress to temporarily lift the federal gas tax is unlikely to have much practical effect on inflation, but it demonstrates the president's awareness that Americans need to perceive him as trying to do something. Meanwhile, Republicans are working hard to use inflation as a weapon against Biden and other Democrats. Republican lawmakers and media figures say that the American Rescue Plan drove inflation, as well as blaming Democratic spending more generally.

They also say that Biden is failing to act on inflation, though many Republican lawmakers are well aware that a president has limited tools to address the problem. Even without inflation, Republicans hold significant advantages in the midterm elections. Historically, the president's party tends to lose seats in midterm elections, especially when the president's approval ratings are low. Furthermore, more House swing seats are currently held by Democrats than Republicans and Democrats are defending more Senate seats compared to Republicans. Inflation is an additional drag on Democrats' likely performance

in November, especially since rising prices particularly hurt the types of swing voters that Democrats need to win.

Democrats are trying to address inflation within their limited means to do so, while also working to keep the political spotlight on other issues, such as low unemployment and the Jan. 6 hearings. Republicans are working hard to maintain a focus specifically on inflation, including using it to deflect attention away from the Capitol riot hearings. Republicans have a communication advantage, as it is easier to consistently address one issue that deeply worries Americans. Fundamentally, people want simple answers to complex problems such as inflation and Republicans offer a simple answer by pointing the finger at Democrats. Whatever the realities of who or what has caused inflation, the issue will hurt Democrats in the midterm elections. Given Republican advantages and the already small Democratic margins in the House and the Senate, Democrats will likely lose control of Congress in November.

The writer is a writer and political risk consultant. Courtesy Arab News

Risks to growth prospects

Pakistan's growth prospects were expected to remain satisfactory, but the number of potential risks may diverge it from optimal path. The economic growth in Pakistan was facing challenging situation due to wider macroeconomic imbalances. The current account deficit which remained high during the first three quarters of current fiscal year may decelerate by end of this fiscal year and onwards. The delayed pass-through of international oil prices into domestic energy products may increase inflation.

According to Monthly Economic Update and Outlook for June 2022, inflationary pressure may ease once international commodity prices start decline and stabilize, it adds. The cyclical position of Pakistan's main trading partners was somewhat deteriorating. Their central banks are raising interest rates to counter inflation thus leading to possible recession in those countries.

Secondly, SBP may further raise domestic interest rates, adding the demand management policy of SBP may not be very effective as the current waves of inflation are largely caused by supply constraints and increasing international prices, especially commodity prices. The exchange rate depreciation was also a source of concern as it makes the imported raw material more expensive, it adds.

Third, the persistent rise in domestic consumer prices is eroding real incomes, limiting the spending power of consumers and investors. These risk factors may challenge the macroeconomic environment and growth prospects, especially by negatively affecting the temporary cyclical output gap. The economy would tend back to potential output in the long runs and sound policy responses may lay the basis for a sustainable long run growth trajectory.

This should be accompanied by measures that aim to strengthen the growth of Pakistan's potential output. These measures need to include the creation of a beneficial investment climate, confidence promotion and stimulus for promising economic initiatives with high growth potential. The current account balance may profit from sound demand management policies. In the longer run, elevating the growth rate of potential output reinforces the supply side of the economy, accompanied by neutral demand management will bring the CAB onto a long run sustainable path.

Despite achieving a real GDP growth of 5.97 percent in FY2022, the underlying macroeconomic imbalances and mounting international risks are depicting challenging outlook especially pertaining to external sector. International commodity prices, especially oil and food prices are the main external drivers of inflation whereas domestic supply chain and market expectations also played an important role to determine inflation. It is mentionable that YoY inflation has been rising since September 2021. This acceleration is expected to continue in June 2022.

The input situation for Kharif 2022 is satisfactory and it is expected that the agriculture sector will continue to augur well on account of continued government support. On industrial sector, as expected, Large Scale Manufacturing (LSM) output contracted in April as compared to March. In fact, LSM activity remained strong both in terms of underlying trend growth as in its cyclical position.



A Nuclear War Cannot Be Won

Alexander Schallenberg & Phil Twyford

Austria and New Zealand may be far apart geographically, but we are connected by shared values and principles. Particularly relevant today is our longstanding opposition to nuclear weapons and our shared concern about the lack of progress on nuclear disarmament. While the threat of nuclear weapons never went away after the end of the Cold War, steep cuts to nuclear stockpiles in the early 1990s represented progress. But the trend toward disarmament stalled. Three decades on, nine nuclear-armed states possess some 13,000 nuclear warheads, and, far from phasing out their arsenals, these states are modernizing and expanding them. The risks of nuclear escalation, miscalculation, and accident are mounting, even though we have a better understanding than ever of the catastrophic consequences that would follow from the use of nuclear weapons.

We recently received a fresh wake-up call. In early January, the five nuclear powers on the United Nations Security Council reaffirmed the 1985 statement by US President Ronald Reagan and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought." Yet, the following month, Russian President Vladimir Putin's regime threatened to unleash those same vastly destructive and indiscriminate weapons in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. This threat — which we unequivocally condemn — has sparked a new global debate on the value of nuclear deterrence, highlighting a bleak dissonance between the avowed collective goal of achieving a world without nuclear weapons, and nuclear-armed states' ongoing reliance on

them. This dissonance is also evident in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which entered into force more than 50 years ago following a "grand bargain" between nuclear-armed China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and non-nuclear-armed states, including Austria and New Zealand. The NPT's signatories acknowledged that nuclear disarmament is ultimately the most effective way to discourage proliferation. But while proliferation risks have increased in recent decades, concrete progress has stalled. Sixty years after the Cuban Missile Crisis brought the world to the brink of catastrophe, we find ourselves again faced with the threat of nuclear escalation.

Countries the size of New Zealand and Austria cannot coerce others to heed our wishes. But we are far from powerless when it comes to encouraging constructive change, especially when we work together with like-minded partners. In July 2017, we were among more than 120 states to adopt the new Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The TPNW crystallizes our total opposition to nuclear weapons. Consistent with the NPT, it is a practical manifestation of our commitment to nuclear disarmament. And it is based on evidence, both of the catastrophic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons, and of the risks associated with nuclear deterrence.

The new treaty asks tough questions of those with nuclear decision-making authority. It is they who must consider the sustainability of an approach to national security that imposes existential risks on their populations, as well as all other states and, indeed, the rest of humanity. The treaty also gives voice to the majority of states that do not accept nuclear deterrence as a valid basis for security. We are convinced that it is a fundamental error to believe that these weapons provide security. In reality, they pose a profound threat to us

all, as well as to future generations. The TPNW is also a means of focusing public debate and channeling resources toward those affected by the use of nuclear weapons, not least the Pacific communities that have been exposed to nuclear testing. The TPNW's evidence-based focus on the humanitarian consequences and existential risks of nuclear weapons gives it immense transformational potential. From June 21-23 in Vienna, Austria will host the First Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW. Even as we acknowledge that there is much work to be done, we should understand that this meeting is a major achievement in itself. It shows what can be accomplished by a strong alliance between like-minded states and civil society. Similar alliances were instrumental in banning anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions.

Moreover, several nuclear-allied states and other non-state parties have indicated that they will attend the meeting as observers. We welcome them. Even if our views differ on the validity of nuclear weapons for security, we value the perspectives they will bring to an international conversation about the consequences, risks, and challenges of nuclear weapons. This conversation is essential, especially now that nuclear risks are higher than they have been in decades. The TPNW is not a quick fix. But it can build international pressure and help to put the world back on track toward nuclear disarmament. Given the fundamental threat to humanity, we cannot be content with the status quo on nuclear disarmament. Austria and New Zealand will continue to spearhead these efforts. In the interests of humanity, we will continue to work with all willing state and civil-society partners to remove the nuclear sword of Damocles that is hanging over all our heads.

The writers are ministers of Austria and New Zealand respectively. Courtesy Khaleej Times

Tolerate the intolerance

It is commonly accepted in our time that to have a just society that accepts diversity as well as freedom of speech and opinion that come with this diversity, we must practice tolerance. And tolerance is understood as allowing or accepting the actions, ideas or the people that we disagree with. But immediately, a very complex and difficult problem appears to us. If we are to accept all diversity in opinion that we don't agree with, what about the people that don't want to accept others they disagree with? Should we tolerate them?

I am an advocate for radically tolerating political or social disagreements, even if that disagreement strikes us as unmoored from facts or common sense. One reason is that dissent makes democracy more intelligent and society livable. Intolerance worries because it carries violence in its wake. It concerns identity and targets those who seem different, just like animals. In his seminal work *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny* (WW Norton 2006), Amartya Sen says tolerance of an identity different from your own, is possible if you cultivate many identities within yourself.

Today in Pakistan, people are seen divided politically, socially and religiously in an extreme harsh way. Currently, Pakistani society is in the phase of paradigm shift. It is encountering changes in political views, religious perspectives and social fabric. Further it is viewed that the manifest acts of intolerance, revenge, racism, social injustice, and frustration in the society are common. Violent, aggressive and intolerant behavior is frequently observed and experience on the streets, roads, markets, offices and other common places.

Everyone has its own interpretation of democracy, religion and suggestions to progress and run Pakistan. From youngster to aged everyone is stubborn

to its views. Neither elders give space to youngsters to have their neither perspective nor youngsters consider elder to have their right in Pakistan's democracy anymore. I reckon it is good to have a political awareness in public but it harmful if it goes without literacy. In earlier days there was a literacy but no awareness in between "Good and bad". Today youngsters have awareness but without literacy. It is important to know that awareness and literacy both go parallel to each other.

Due to lack of core values of authenticity and tolerance, distorting the facts and breaking wrong information over media platforms is so rampant now. There is absolutely no doubt that subjugated class of Pakistan that is poor is going through an extreme tough phase but that does not mean it provides a license of violence, abuses and mutiny to public. Civilized nations never ever leave the ways of peaceful protest and tolerant behaviors neither they compromise their ethical values. To eradicate the seed of intolerance, work on root causes is needed. It must start from home where every parent nurture the nature of each individual of a nation. Then the responsibility goes to educational institutes.

A massive revamped educational structure is severely required in Pakistan to reverse the attitude of violence and intolerance. Although diversity in opinion is everywhere and but the idea of tolerance is more powerful than ever, it is time important to discuss the limits of free speech and at the same time, the limits of censorship. It is bad to be intolerant, but it is also bad to hold back freedom of speech and call spade a spade. We need to have a middle ground where one can express and listen to the ideas of others without harming one another.



Analysis
Mariam Rauf
 Civilized nations never ever leave the ways of peaceful protest and tolerant behaviors neither they compromise their ethical values.

NATO calls Russia its 'most significant and direct threat'

Annual summit held in Madrid

MADRID: NATO declared Russia the "most significant and direct threat" to its members' peace and security on Wednesday and vowed to strengthen support for Ukraine, even as that country's leader chided the alliance for not doing more to help it defeat Moscow.



va? Or the Baltics? Or Poland? The answer is: all of them," he said. "We are deterring Russia to prevent it from destroying us and from destroying you."

The alliance's condemnation was not wholly surprising: Its chief earlier said Russia's war in Ukraine had created Europe's biggest security crisis since World War II. But it was a sobering about-face for an organization that once called Moscow a strategic partner. NATO held its annual summit in Madrid in a world transformed by Russia's invasion. The war pushed the alliance to pour troops and weapons into eastern Europe on a scale not seen since the Cold War and has driven what Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg called "the biggest overhaul of our collective defense since the end of the Cold War."

But Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy urged even more. He asked for more modern artillery systems and other weapons and warned the leaders that they either had to provide Kyiv with the help it needed to defeat Russia or "face a delayed war between Russia and yourself."

"The question is who's next? Moldo-

Zelenskyy also lamented that NATO's open-door policy to new members did not appear to apply to his country.

"The open-door policy of NATO shouldn't resemble the old turnstiles on Kyiv's subway, which stay open but close when you approach them until you pay," Zelenskyy said by video link to the leaders of the 30 NATO nations meeting in Madrid. "Hasn't Ukraine paid enough?"

Zelenskyy has acknowledged that NATO membership is a distant prospect. Under NATO treaties, an attack on any member would trigger a military response by the entire alliance, so it is trying to strike a delicate balance, letting its member nations arm Ukraine without sparking a direct confrontation with nuclear-armed Russia.

NATO has moved quickly to ensure that its members are protected, dramatically scaling up military force along its eastern flank.

It agreed to increase almost eightfold the size of the alliance's rapid reaction force, from 40,000 to 300,000 troops, by next year. The troops will be based in their home nations but dedicated to specific countries on NATO's eastern flank, where the alliance plans to build up stocks of equipment and ammunition.

The defense organization is also on track to gain two new members in Sweden and Finland, both of whom were formally invited on Wednesday to join the alliance. The two Nordic nations abandoned their long-held nonaligned status earlier this year and applied to join NATO as protection against an increasingly aggressive and unpredictable Russia.

U.S. President Joe Biden, whose country provides the bulk of NATO's military power, vowed the summit would send "an unmistakable message ... that NATO is strong and united."

"We're stepping up. We're proving that NATO is more needed now than it ever has been," said Biden. He announced a hefty boost in America's military presence in Europe, including

a permanent U.S. base in Poland, two more Navy destroyers based in Rota, Spain, and two more F35 squadrons to the U.K.

Still, strains among NATO allies have also emerged as the cost of energy and other essential goods has skyrocketed, partly because of the war and tough Western sanctions on Russia. There also are tensions over how the war will end and what, if any, concessions Ukraine should make to stop the fighting.

Money remains a sensitive issue — just nine of NATO's 30 members currently meet the organization's target of spending 2% of gross domestic product on defense. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, whose country does hit the target, urged NATO allies "to dig deep to restore deterrence and ensure defense in the decade ahead."

The leaders also published NATO's new Strategic Concept, its once-a-decade set of priorities and goals. The last such document, in 2010, called Russia a "strategic partner." At the time, the idea of Russia waging a land war on NATO's borders would have sounded far-fetched. Now, NATO accused Russia of using "coercion, subversion, aggression and annexation" to extend its reach.

Pak Embassy in Moscow holds Khuli Kachehri



Spokesman Report

MOSCOW: The Embassy of Pakistan in Moscow has held a Khuli Kachehri on Wednesday in an online format. The meeting was conducted by Deputy Head of Mission Rana Summar Javed.

The members of the Pakistani community in Russia had an opportunity to receive the first-hand information from the Embassy's officials regarding a wide range of issues, including passport deliveries, which have been interrupted due to suspension of courier services in the Russian Federation.

Rana Summar Javed informed the participants that the Embassy is working with the immigration authorities of Pakistan to speed up the process. He further added that in order to resolve the situation as soon as possible, some alternative solutions are being discussed.

The Deputy Head of Mission also highlighted the importance of utilisation of legal channels for sending remittances to Pakistan, which will significantly contribute to the development of the country.

In his closing remarks, Rana Summar Javed reiterated the resolve of the Embassy's staff to provide maximum facilitation to the Pakistani citizens in Russia and reminded about the need to abide by the laws and rules of the host country.

Indian troops martyr two youth in IIOJK

SRINAGAR: In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, Indian troops in their fresh act of state terrorism martyred two youth in Kulgam district on Wednesday.

The youth were martyred by the troops during a cordon and search in Nawapora area of the district. The operation was underway till last reports came in.

Indian police arrested a youth in north Kashmir's Bandipora district. The police arrested the youth, Mehboob ul Inam, at a checkpoint in Papechan area of the district. The police dubbed the youth as member of a mujahid organization to justify his illegal detention.

On the other hand, parents along with the students staged a protest in Batamalo area of Srinagar against the sudden closure of a school by the authorities without any reason.

The school namely 'Islamia Model High School' has been shut down by the management on the directions of the Modi government without informing the parents. The decision infuriated the parents who said that they were kept in dark regarding the closure of the school.

"We have already deposited this month's fee. Today we were surprised to see the school closed," a group of protesting parents told the media.

Pertinently, Education Department has directed several Falah-e-Aam Trust schools to stop schooling students after the decision by the Modi government to close down all those schools run by trust in the territory.

IRGC chief stresses Iran-Pakistan integrated security

TEHRAN: Chief Commander of IRGC Brigadier General Hossein Salami in a meeting with Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee of Pakistan General Nadeem Raza emphasized the integrated security of Iran and Pakistan.

Major General Salami met and held talks with General Raza in Tehran.

Emphasizing the integrated security of Iran and Pakistan, Major General Salami stressed the need for closer cooperation between Tehran and Islamabad in all fields, especially in protecting the security of the common border and fighting against terrorism.

He slammed the Zionist regime as the enemy of the Islamic world and humanity.

The IRGC commander warned regional rulers of the bitter consequences of normalization of ties with the "child-killing Zionists", saying the US, the main supporter of the Israeli regime, is basically the foe of Islam.

The question is that while the Zionist regime cannot even defend itself and is a regime completely without any policy, how would certain Islamic countries rely on it to provide their security or safeguard their economy? There is no logic behind it, Major General Salami underscored.

He further noted that the awful consequences of the presence of US forces in the Islamic world, including the great seditions, long civil wars, destruction of houses, displacement of people, insecurity, poverty, and underdevelopment.

When "we look" at Afghanistan, "we notice" the harmful and irreparable effects of the US interference, the general added, noting that the neighboring states, including Pakistan, suffer from the effects of destructive US interference in Afghanistan.

General Nadeem Raza, for his part, referred to the commonalities between the Pakistani and Iranian nations, described divisions within the Muslim world as a result of the US and Western plots, and noted that the US withdrew from Afghanistan after twenty years without managing to establish security in that country.

He emphasized the necessity of intelligence and operational cooperation with Iran in protecting the security of the joint border.

Russians fight to encircle Ukraine's last eastern stronghold

KREMENCHUK: Russian forces battled Wednesday to surround the Ukrainian military's last stronghold in a long-contested eastern province, as shock reverberated from a Russian airstrike on a shopping mall that killed at least 18 in the center of the country two days earlier.

Moscow's battle to wrest the entire Donbas region from Ukraine saw Russian forces pushing toward two Luhansk province villages south of the city of Lysychansk while Ukrainian troops fought to prevent their encirclement.

Britain's defense ministry said Russian forces were making "incremental advances" in their offensive to capture the city. Lysychansk is the last major area of the province under Ukrainian control following the retreat of Ukraine's forces from the neighboring city of Sievierodonetsk.

Russian troops and their separatist allies control 95%

of Luhansk and about half of the Donetsk region, the other province that makes up the mostly Russian-speaking Donbas.

The latest assessment by the Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank, said the Ukrainians were likely in a fighting withdrawal to seek more defensible positions while draining the Russian military forces of manpower and resources.

Meanwhile, crews continued to search through the rubble of the shopping mall in Kremenchuk where Ukrainian authorities say 20 people remain missing. Authorities in the city declared three days of mourning.

Ukrainian State Emergency Services press officer Svitlana Rybalko told The Associated Press that along with the 18 people killed, investigators found fragments of eight more bodies. It was not immediately clear whether

that meant there were more victims. A number of survivors suffered severed limbs.

"The police cannot say for sure how many (victims) there are. So we are finding not the bodies but the fragments of bodies," Rybalko said. "Now we are clearing at the very epicenter of the blast. Here, we practically cannot find bodies as such."

Several families stood by what was left of the Amstor shopping center Wednesday morning in hope of finding missing loved ones.

"This is pure genocide," local resident Tatiana Chernyshova said while going to lay flowers at the site. "Such things cannot happen in the 21st century."

"We need to engage everyone to help stop the war, help us fight these scum — these Russian aggressors," Chernyshova said.

Psychologists working at the site with families said they were trying to help people come to terms with

their loss. "We are trying to help them release their emotions now, as later it becomes harder and much more painful," said one psychologist, who did not give his name as he was not authorized to speak to the press.

After the attack on the mall, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy accused Russia of becoming "a terrorist" state. On Wednesday, he reproached NATO for not embracing or equipping his embattled country more fully.

"The open-door policy of NATO shouldn't resemble old turnstiles on Kyiv's subway, which stay open but close when you approach them until you pay," Zelenskyy told NATO leaders meeting in Madrid, speaking by video link. "Hasn't Ukraine paid enough? Hasn't our contribution to defending Europe and the entire civilization been sufficient?"

Iran-Turkmenistan ties rapidly expanding: Raisi

TEHRAN: Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi in a meeting with his Turkmen counterpart Serdar Berdimuhamedow on Wednesday said that the Islamic Republic is ready to further direct Turkmen gas swaps to Azerbaijan via Iran.

President Raisi, who arrived in the Turkmen capital Ashgabat on Wednesday to attend the 6th Caspian Summit, met and held talks with Berdimuhamedow on Wednesday.

Referring to the 30-year-old friendly and fraternal relations between Tehran and Ashgabat, President Raisi noted that the 13th government in Iran has a special priority for expanding relations and cooperation with neighbors.

Stating that Iran-Turkmenistan relations are rapidly expanding based on the development of neighborly ties and mutual trust, as well as broad cooperation, the President added that the implementation of the memoranda of understanding (MoUs) and docu-



ments of cooperation inked by the two states during Berdimuhamedow's visit to Tehran will accelerate the expansion of mutual cooperation.

Facilitating the issuance of business visas and increasing the travel of traders of the two states will pave the way for the expansion and increase of the volume of bilateral trade ties, he noted.

According to the recent request of Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of

Iran is ready to increase the capacity of Turkmen gas swaps to Azerbaijan through the country, he further noted.

Expressing hope that all neighboring countries could use the decisions and understandings made at the 6th Caspian Summit more and better, President Raisi underscored that undoubtedly, the consultations that take place at the summit can lead to better use of the capacities of the Caspian Sea for peace-

ful purposes, while observing environmental considerations and emphasizing the prevention of the foreigners' presence.

Berdimuhamedow, for his part, thanked President Raisi's efforts to strengthen Tehran-Ashgabat relations and stressed Turkmenistan's will to implement the memoranda of understanding (MoUs) and agreements signed between the two countries.

Describing the Caspian Sea as a common asset for the five coastal states, he went on to say that all sides must protect it with collective efforts and cooperation.

While reviewing and evaluating the progress of the implementation of the agreements and memoranda of understanding (MoUs) signed between the two states, the two sides stressed that the full implementation of the documents of cooperation will open a new chapter in the interactions between the two countries.

FAO, OECD warn of challenges to global agri-food sector

PARIS: The United Nations (UN) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on Wednesday warned of the challenges faced by the global agri-food sector in the coming decade.

The sector needs to "feed an ever-increasing population in a sustainable manner," the UN agencies said in a joint report titled "Agricultural Outlook for 2022-2031".

It also has to cope with the impact of the climate crisis and the economic consequences and disruption to food supply caused by the Russia-Ukraine conflict,

said the report.

The report focuses on "assessing the medium-term prospects for agricultural commodity markets." The two organizations underlined the "crucial role of additional public spending and private investment in production, information technology and infrastructure as well as human capital to raise agricultural productivity."

The prices of agricultural products have increased with the recovery in demand after the COVID-19 outbreak. Production and transportation costs have increased also because Russia and Ukraine are both "key suppliers of cereals."

"These rising prices of food, fertilizer, feed and fuel, as well as tightening financial conditions are spreading human suffering across the world," FAO Director General Qu Dongyu said in a press release.

"An estimated 19 million more people could face chronic undernourishment globally in 2023 if the reduction of global food production and food supply from major exporting countries, including Russia and Ukraine, results in lower food availability worldwide," he said.

The report noted that global food consumption "is projected to increase by 1.4 percent annu-

ally over the next decade, and to be mainly driven by population growth."

In low and middle-income countries, demand for food will continue to increase compared to high-income countries, where demand will be "limited by slow population growth and a saturation in the per capita consumption of several food commodity groups."

The FAO and OECD expect global agricultural production to increase by 1.1 percent per year over the next decade.

According to the report, the contribution of agriculture to climate change with direct green-



house gas emissions is projected to increase by 6 percent in the next decade, with livestock accounting for 90 percent of this increase.

In order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal on Zero Hunger, the organizations noted that average agricultural productivity must increase by 28 percent in the next decade.

"The Paris Agreement, the UN 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals must also be achieved," they stressed.

The FAO and OECD mentioned the importance of a transparent, predictable and rules-based multilateral trading system to ensure "well-functioning global trade and markets" as there will be an increase in "interdependency between trading partners."

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index

Current	Prev. Close
41,297.73	41,765.62
Day's High	Day's Low:
41,813.62	41,119.19
Index Value	Change
4,404,293,754	-467.89
Percentage	Time
-1.12%	29 Jun, 2022 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index

Index Value	Change
7,312.32	-11.09
Percentage	Time
+0.15%	29 Jun, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average

Index Value	Change
31,021.76	+74.77
Percentage	Time
+0.24%	29 Jun, 12:04 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average

Index Value	Change
26,804.60	-244.87
Percentage	Time
-0.91%	29 Jun, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	144.04	145.29
Bahrain Dinar	552.02	556.52
Canadian Dollar	161.22	162.57
China Yuan	31.02	31.27
Danish Krone	29.58	29.93
Euro	214.5	216.5
Hong Kong Dollar	26.46	26.81
Indian Rupee	2.65	2.73
Japanese Yen	1.44	1.48
Kuwaiti Dinar	676.98	681.98
Malaysian Ringgit	47.15	47.6
New Zealand \$	131.07	132.27
Norwegians Krone	21.22	21.52
Omani Riyal	539.82	544.32
Qatari Riyal	57.02	57.52
Saudi Riyal	54	54.9
Singapore Dollar	149.95	151.25
Swedish Korona	20.63	20.93
Swiss Franc	217.3	219.05
Thai Bhat	5.94	6.04
U.A.E Dirham	55.5	56.5
UK Pound Sterling	247	251
US Dollar	204	206.5

Pakistan facing a serious food security threat

War, climate change, expensive inputs damaging crops, says Mian Zahid Hussain

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Wednesday said the whole world including Pakistan is facing a serious food security threat.

Urgent steps are needed to avoid food insecurity in Pakistan otherwise the situation will be out of control, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the Russia-Ukraine war, climate change, untimely rains, water shortages, and skyrocketing prices of seeds, pesticides and fertilizers are pushing the whole world and Pakistan towards

food security threats.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that unseasonal snowfall, rains and floods have also worsened the situation in many agriculture exporting countries while crops are being affected all over the world including Pakistan due to rising fuel prices.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the current state of agriculture in the world has never been seen in the past and even if the whole world works together to tackle it, it could take many years to restore it. Maize production around the world has also been severely affected, which will also push



up the prices of meat and poultry as it is widely used as animal feed, he said.

Ukraine's share in global wheat exports is 11 percent and maize exports 17 percent and even if the war ends today which is unlikely, it will take many years to restore its agriculture as its infrastructure is destroyed, he observed. The business leader further said that despite the food crisis, the process of making fuel from agricultural commodities is also going on which is unfortunate.

China is also importing food products heavily which is also stoking shortages, he said, adding that Pakistan has imported \$17 billion worth of agricultural products in the current financial year, including ten billion dollars worth of food items, \$ two billion worth of cotton, \$4 billion worth of edible oil and one billion dollar worth of tea.

This amounts if converted into Pakistani currency becomes Rs4300 billion which can be used for boosting agri production, introducing a corporate agriculture system and supporting farmers. He said that farmers should be lured to plant wheat, pulses, canola, tea, rice olives etc. to ensure an industrial and agricultural revolution otherwise famine will engulf the country soon.

ICCI delegation visits HITEC University Taxila

To promote academia-industry linkages

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) leading a delegation visited HITEC University Taxila Cantt as a part of efforts to promote academia-industry linkages. Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI, Ch. Muhammad Ali, Hamayun Kabir, Engr. Azhar ur Islam, Akhtar Hussain, Sheikh Muhammad Ijaz, Muhammad Saeed Khan, Rana Qaisar Shehzad, Muhammad Naveed Malik, Adnan Mukhtar, Ashfaq Chatha, Rashid Minhas, Umer Ismail and Khalid Chaudhry were in the delegation. The delegation visited various departments and the display centre of the university. The delegation discussed areas of collaboration with HITEC University to achieve beneficial results for the industry and academia.

Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry appreciated the efforts of HITEC University, Taxila for providing quality education and excellent learning environment to its students. He also shared the key issues of industry and hoped that the students of HITEC University Taxila would try to find out their innovative solutions. He said that the developed countries have achieved better economic growth by developing strong academia-industry linkages and we should follow the same approach to make Pakistan a progressive and prosperous country. He said that universi-



ties are doing a lot of good research work and emphasized that they should focus on applied research & commercialization of research projects that would be more beneficial to the industry and economy.

ICCI President stressed that at least 50% content of the research works should be based on local content as currently majority of content in research works is based on foreign content. He said that ICCI has already signed MoUs with various universities to promote academia-industry linkages, which are very important to produce demand-driven students and meet the needs of industry. He said that ICCI would like to develop strong liaison with HITEC University to further strengthen linkages between industry and academia that would produce win-win

outcomes for them.

Prof. Dr. S. Kamran Afaq, Acting Vice Chancellor, HITEC University, Taxila Cantt gave a presentation to the ICCI delegation about his university. He said that advanced labs, innovative & interactive teaching methodologies, foreign qualified & experienced faculty, conducive research opportunities, and academia-industry linkages have all been merged to place HITEC University among top emerging universities of Pakistan. He said that HITEC university gives a lot of emphasis on industry-academia linkages and would work closely with ICCI to take these initiatives forward. Both sides discussed a future roadmap for joint collaboration that would produce beneficial outcomes for academia and industry.

Paymob, NIFT sign agreement to securely enable Digital Payments



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Paymob, the leading omni-channel financial services platform in the MENAP region, signed an agreement with National Institutional Facilitation Technologies (NIFT) to facilitate digital payments in Pakistan and to secure payment transfers. Under the agreement, Paymob will enable digital payments for their merchants using the NIFT ePay payment platform which supports account, wallet, and card-based payments.

Paymob's payment infrastructure enables SMEs to accept digital payments online and in-store whilst providing them better access to financial services. As an API integrator, Paymob's gateway sits on merchants' websites to facilitate payment capture. In addition to conventional bank cards, Paymob merchants will have access to mobile

wallets, QR payments, bank card installment plans, and Buy-Now Pay-Later (BNPL) options all of which serve to drive an increased volume of transactions and revenue.

Paymob plans to extend its Tap-on-Phone payment acceptance service to the Pakistan market. The company will also launch cards to enable B2B transactions for its merchants and build tools for merchants to better manage and grow their business.

NIFT was established in 1995 as a joint venture between six major Pakistani banks and entrepreneurs from the private sector. It is the leading Payment System Operator (PSO) in Pakistan for cheque clearing and is the country's foremost Digital Payment Gateway, providing an electronic platform for clearing, processing, and switching electronic transactions in Pakistan under the brand name NIFT ePay.

Befiler becomes ACCA approved Employer



Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Befiler (Pvt.) Ltd is pleased to announce its inclusion to the panel of ACCA's Approved Employer Network under the Trainee Development - Gold Category. The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) is one of the world's leading professional accountancy body, and Befiler's inclusion to the panel reflects its commitment to providing the right combination of technical, professional, and ethical skills to the students, affiliates, and members of ACCA.

The ACCA Approved Employer Program recognizes and rewards employers' quality staff training and development, and ensures the highest professional standards for both the employers and the students/employees. Befiler is proud to have a substantial representation of ACCA students, affiliates, and members working with it under various departments including leadership positions.

Befiler hosted a ceremony at its Head Office in Karachi to commemorate the milestone, which was attended by the leadership of Befiler and ACCA. Speaking at the occasion, Syed Asad Ali Shah, Chairman - Befiler, said "The success of Befiler was dependent on the quality of technical and professional resources and recognized the contribution of ACCA in providing business-relevant qualification, which enabled them in building the ability and ambition in them that eventually lead to their success."

Akbar Tejani, CEO - Befiler, said "The partnership with ACCA would help Befiler in attracting and retaining the best available talent in the field of Accounting, Finance, and Taxation. At Befiler, we have a strategic mindset for developing our accounting and business capabilities which benefits our customers, team members, and other related communities."



ISLAMABAD: Group photo of President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President IEAA Sardar Tahir, SVP of RCCI Ahsan Malik, Pir Nageeb ur Rehman, Secretary General IEAA Zahid Rafique, Najeeb Malik, Ch. Sarfaraz and others on the occasion of the pre-launching ceremony of Galaxy Mall and Residencia in Bahria Enclave.

RCCI lauds abolition of 17% sales tax on pharmaceuticals

Staff Reporter

RAWALPINDI: The abolition of the 17% sales tax on pharmaceuticals will not only make medicines cheaper but will also alleviate the shortage of capital for pharmaceutical companies to manufacture medicines.

Nadeem Rauf, president of the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI), said in a statement that due to the imposition of 17pc sales tax on pharmaceuticals the production of medicines decreased and

shortage of life-saving drugs was feared.

RCCI president maintained that RCCI had also presented his recommendations to the government on the removal of 17% sales tax from the chamber's platform at the All Pakistan Chambers Conference held in January earlier this year.

He said that the sales tax imposed on raw materials had multiplied the prices of medicines. He hoped that the reduction in sales tax would make medicines cheaper and more available.

Pakistani teams emerge victorious in Huawei ICT Competition Global Final

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Huawei ICT Competition 2021-2022 Global Final in Shenzhen drew to a close on June 25. This year marks the sixth Huawei ICT Competition, which included three competitions - Practice, Innovation and Industry - attracted 150,000 students from more than 2000 universities in 85 countries and regions around the world. After making it through the national and regional competitions, 130 teams from 43 countries and regions faced off in the global final, making this year's finals the largest yet. This year's participants were also the first to compete for a new series of Women in Tech Awards which have been designed to honor the outstanding talent displayed by the young women contestants in the Competition. A TECH4ALL Digital Inclusion Award was also presented during the awards ceremony, as part of Huawei's TECH4ALL Digital Inclusion Initiative.



2021-2022 Regional finals winners, Pakistan's team one; Sateesh Kumar, Iqra Fatima, and Bhagchand Meghwar along with their instructor Dr. Faheem Khuhavar and team two; Hafiz Rizwan, Adnan Ali, and Mukhtar Memon along with their instructor participated in the practice competition. These students hail from Mehran University of Engineering & Technology, Islamiya University Bahawalpur and UET Lahore. In the Innovation Competition, two further teams from Pakistan were nominated this year. Osman Ahsan Sheikh, Muhammad Abdullah Ahsan Sheikh,

Aqsa Amir and their instructor Merai Syed represented team 'Homevism', comprised of students from NUST. The second team, 'Boltay Haroor', from LUMS consisted of Umer Farooq, Tabish Rafiq, Areej Ahmed and their instructor Muhammad Saeed. After a hotly contested competition, in the Network category of the Practice competition, Pakistan Team One clinched the 1st prize, while Pakistan Team Two grabbed the 3rd prize. In the Innovation competition, Team Boltay Haroor won the 2nd prize, while Team Homevism were awarded the 3rd prize. Huawei Enterprise's Presi-



dent of Global Partner Development and Sales Xiao Haijun spoke at the event about how indispensable ICT has become to our work and lives. As one of Huawei's key initiatives in talent cultivation, the Huawei ICT Competition is designed to help build an ecosystem that students around the world can use to bridge digital divides and accelerate global digital transformation by improving their ICT knowledge, skills, and innovation capabilities.

CEO Huawei Pakistan, Mr. Mark Meng stated, "Despite the lingering pandemic, this Huawei ICT Competition attracted more participants than before. The achievements and milestones Pakistani students and teachers have achieved reflects on the great vision and determination of Pakistan government towards ICT talent nurturing, innovation and technology adaptation."

resolve issues that ICT academy instructors and students face from all over Pakistan are extremely noteworthy."

Bhagchand Meghwar, who was born in Tharparkar, Sindh, exclaimed, "I come from a village where there aren't a lot of resources on hand, being able to represent and win for Pakistan on such a prestigious platform has been nothing short of a dream come true."

In the future, Huawei plans to continue building education, industry, and public talent ecosystems by establishing talent alliances, integrating talent standards, improving talent capabilities, and demonstrating talent value. Huawei has also announced plans to nurture 1 million certified ICT professionals by 2024 to improve the digital skills of society as a whole. This is intended to promote scientific and technological progress, industry development, and sustainable social and economic development.

Afridi, Miandad, Sammy and Shoaib confirmed PJJL mentors

Pakistan Junior League will be played on single-league basis

Our Correspondent

KARACHI: Pakistan Cricket Board on Wednesday confirmed Daren Sammy, Javed Miandad, Shahid Afridi and Shoaib Malik as mentors of the inaugural Pakistan Junior League, which will be held in Lahore in October this year. Miandad, who played in six World Cups from 1975-1996, will be the league mentor, while Afridi, Sammy and Shoaib will be the team mentors.

The four stalwarts share six major world titles, 1,559 international matches, 43,057 runs and 992 wickets between them. Sammy and Shahid were team-mates in the Peshawar Zalmi team in 2017 when the team in yellow won the HBL Pakistan Super League at the Gaddafi Stadium.

Javed Miandad will be involved as an overall mentor, assisting the mentors of the six sides and the players during the tournament.

Afridi, Sammy and Shoaib will be part of the team dug-outs in the build up to and during the Pakistan Junior League, which will be played at the backend of Pakistan versus England T20I that is scheduled to conclude on 2 October.

In addition to the team mentor roles, the four household names will also serve as event ambassadors and will use their knowledge, influence and attraction to promote and publicise the first of its kind event.

Three more team mentors will be announced in due course.

PCB Chairman Ramiz Raja: "I am delighted that we have been able to attract Javed Miandad, Daren Sammy, Shahid Afridi and Shoaib Malik as mentors for



the Pakistan Junior League. Their involvement in the Pakistan Junior League will help us achieve one of our event objectives that revolves around helping future generation of cricketers to achieve the championships and match-winning approach and mindset.

"The involvement of the four icons also confirms that we are on track for delivering a successful event that will go on to help Pakistan cricket in more than one way. Besides creating a winning environment and developing skills and temperament of the teens, we are committed to developing new properties and Pakistan Junior League is an event in that direction."

Javed Miandad: "I have always enjoyed being part of the coaching set-up and this opportunity provides me with a chance to return to the field, work with players with bigger objectives and help them achieve

excellence. Pakistan Junior League is an exciting and unique product, and I not only look forward to making a meaningful contribution but also project this league as a game-changer."

Daren Sammy: "I am pleased to have been awarded with the opportunity to be involved in the inaugural Pakistan Junior League. I am fully behind the concept and believe it will assist in identifying and fast-tracking outstanding cricketers."

"I have been part of Pakistan cricket system since 2016 and am a witness to some great local talent that has blown me away. I now look forward to working more closely with the teenagers, pass on my knowledge to them and help them fulfil their dreams of becoming international cricketers."

Shahid Afridi: "I am a big advocate of investing in the future. If T20 cricket is a

vehicle to promote and develop cricket, and identify young talent, then we need to create opportunities and come up with novel ideas to unearth hidden talent, and ensure their skills and performances are duly noticed and subsequently rewarded.

"Working as mentor of a side comprising teenagers will be a new experience for me. I am thoroughly excited and looking forward to playing my part in helping these energetic and skillful cricketers achieve the zenith of glory. I believe that flashing actually only happens at under 13 to 19, after that it's amiably man management."

"I have no doubts with the abundance of talent we have, this tournament will be able to identify, at least, half a dozen cricketers who can be nurtured and developed into star cricketers, who can then go on to shoulder the expectations and hopes of millions of cricket fans and followers."

Shoaib Malik: "I feel privileged and honoured to have been awarded with the opportunity to work as a mentor with one of the Pakistan Junior League sides. As someone who is actually a product of age-group cricket when I first played in the 1998 U19 World Cup, I can vouch for the importance and significance of this tournament."

"I think the Pakistan Junior League fits very nicely in the PCB domestic cricket calendar as have 50-over and three-day cricket for the teenage cricketers. T20 cricket, which is nowadays the most popular and attractive format, will not only complete the calendar but will potentially produce three-dimensional players who can demonstrate their potential and talent to accept and adopt to the shortest format."

Babar usurps Kohli in latest T20I rankings boost

DUBAI: Pakistan captain Babar Azam can lay claim to being the top ranked T20I batter in the world for the longest period of time after he maintained his spot at the head of proceedings on the latest ICC T20 batting rankings.

India star Virat Kohli was the No.1 ranked T20I batter for a total of 1,013 days during his reign last decade, but Babar has now surpassed this number following his long-standing stay at the top.

The Pakistan skipper is currently rated as the No.1 batter in T20Is and ODIs and recently suggested he was keen to try and claim top billing in all three formats of the game.

There was little change within the latest T20I rankings that were released by the ICC on Wednesday, with India left-hander Ishan Kishan dropping one place inside the top 10 to seventh on the



list for batters.

Ireland young gun Harry Tector moves up a massive 55 places to 66th following his impressive series with the bat against India, while Deepak Hooda jumps a whopping 414 spots to equal 104th overall.

While Joe Root hangs on to his narrow lead as the top-ranked Test batter, there is some big movement behind him following the completion of England's home series against New

Zealand.

Player of the Series Daryl Mitchell rises four places to 12th on the latest batting rankings, while fellow Kiwi Tom Blundell jumps 11 spots to 20th.

Root's England team-mate Jonny Bairstow also catches the eye with a 20-place improvement seeing the 32-year-old move to 21st on the Test batter list.

New Zealand workhorse Neil Wagner drops a spot to 10th on the latest rankings for bowlers, with England duo Stuart Broad (up one spot to 13th) and Jack Leach (up 13 places to 25th) among the notable movers.

Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan drops a spot to third on the all-rounder rankings following a disappointing second Test against West Indies, with India veteran Ravi Ashwin taking his place in second.

Serena loses on Wimbledon return



LONDON: Serena Williams was defeated in her first singles match for a year on Tuesday, going down 7-5, 1-6, 7/6 (10/7) to unseeded Harmony Tan in the first round of Wimbledon.

"For my first Wimbledon it's wow — just wow," said Tan. Seven-time champion Williams was cheered as she walked onto Centre Court for the evening match, but she looked rusty and was broken in her first service game. Williams, far below her imperious best and apparently lacking fitness, bounced back, breaking in the fourth game to level at 2-2, buoyed by a supportive crowd at the All England Club. The pair swapped further breaks but Tan, ranked 115th, broke again in the 11th game and held her nerve to close out the set 7-5.

Williams, a 23-time Grand Slam singles champion, broke after a mammoth second game of the second set and went on to level the match 6-1. The American was first to break in the decider but Tan levelled at 3-3. Williams broke again in the ninth game, throwing her arms into the air in jubilation but faltered as she served for the match. She faced a match point on her own serve in the 12th game but saved it with a forehand volley, taking the contest into a third-set tie-break. Williams stepped up a gear, winning the first four points as the match, under the Wimbledon roof, ticked past three hours.

But still her French opponent was not down and out, winning the next five points to edge ahead. Williams, looking out of breath, could not find inspiration netting when facing a second match point. "I'm so emotional now," said Tan. "She's a superstar."

When I was young, I was watching her so many times on the TV. "When I saw the draw, I was really scared. She's such a legend. I thought if I can win one game, two games, that would be really good for me." Twelve months ago, Williams quit her Wimbledon first-round match in tears after suffering an injury and she had not played singles tennis since until Tuesday.

Australia bowl Sri Lanka out on day one

GALLE: Thirteen wickets fell on day one as Australia, led by Nathan Lyon's five-for, bowled Sri Lanka out for 212 before cutting away at 98 runs from the deficit.

Sri Lanka captain Dimuth Karunaratne won the toss and unsurprisingly, chose to bat in the first Test. Jeffrey Vandersay was rewarded for his great performances in the ODI series and was handed his maiden Test cap.

For Australia, Travis Head passed the fitness Test and made the XI, meaning Glenn Maxwell will have to wait a little longer to play his first Test since 2017.

Pathum Nissanka and Karunaratne got Sri Lanka off to a decent start. Both Cummins and Starc were

guilty of bowling a few lose deliveries, which the Sri Lanka openers gladly punished. Nathan Lyon was introduced early but did really bother the pair too much.

Cummins though was persistent in his line outside off stumps and it finally reaped rewards when Nissanka edged one to the keeper, breaking the 38-run opening stand. Kusal Mendis' stay at the crease didn't last long as he played a rash shot and was out caught at slips.

Veterans Karunaratne and Angelo Mathews steadied the ship after the two quick wickets and were happy rotating the strike and accumulating the occasional boundary. Together, they took Sri Lanka to lunch at 68/2.

Nathan Lyon broke through immediately after lunch for Australia, dismissing the dangerous Karunaratne with David Warner taking a brilliant diving catch.

His fellow spinner Mitchell Swepson was on a hat-trick a little later, snaring Dhananjaya de Silva and Dinesh Chandimal off consecutive balls. Niroshan Dickwella came out all guns blazing, smashing Lyon for three fours in an over.

However, Cummins persisted with the off-spinner and the decision paid off as he scalped the big wicket of Mathews for 39.

Sri Lanka were in big spot of bother at 139/6, with the tail exposed. Niroshan Dickwella was the last recognised

batter and needed to bat with the lower order to bail the hosts out of trouble.

He got an able partner in Ramesh Mendis, who not only stuck around but also found the ropes to keep the scoreboard ticking. Dickwella, in the meantime, got to his fifty off just 42 balls and the pair took Sri Lanka safely to tea at 191/6.

The break once again came at the perfect time for Australia, who struck in the second over after tea to break the seventh-wicket stand worth 54 runs. Lyon snapped up Dickwella and Lasith Embuldeniya in the next two overs to complete his five-for. Vandersay holed out in the deep as Sri Lanka were all out for 212.

UEFA do not lack ambition for women's Euro, says Kessler

MANCHESTER: UEFA's head of women's football Nadine Kessler has dismissed claims European football's governing body lacked ambition in the selection of venues for Euro 2022, with attendance records for the tournament in England set to be smashed.

Sell-out crowds for the opening game between England and Austria at Old Trafford and the final at Wembley will see the record crowd for a match at a women's European Championship broken twice. However, in between those two landmark events on July 6 and 31, the other 29 games will be played in much smaller stadiums. The selection

of Manchester City's 4,400 capacity Academy Stadium for three group matches was branded "embarrassing" and "disrespectful" by Iceland midfielder Sara Bjork Gunnarsdottir.

The 7,800-capacity Leigh Sports Village will also host four matches, including a quarter-final. Ticket sales are inching towards a combined half a million, more than double the total attendance for the last women's Euro in the Netherlands five years ago. But there are still over 200,000 tickets up for sale and Kessler admitted venue choices had to be based in "reality" to create the best atmosphere possible inside the stadiums. "We

feel like still it's the right decision," Kessler told AFP. "I always say whilst trying to have the greatest ambition we also can't lose the reality and I'm referring to the past. At our last women's Euro we had 5,000 spectators on average, if we don't count the Netherlands matches. "If you increase the tournament capacity from 430,000 to 720,000, then I don't think you can say the tournament organisers have not enough ambition."

The tournament had been due to take place in 2021, but was delayed 12 months due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the football calendar. Covid-19 halted some of the

momentum of the women's game after a record-breaking 2019 World Cup in terms of viewing figures. But the five years since the last Euro have still been transformative for the women's game. Kessler was behind a major change to the women's Champions League with a group stage introduced for the first time last season. Money has flowed in from new sponsors, television rights deals and clubs now prepared to spend big on improving the standards of their women's teams.

"My expectation is really high, I expect a visible difference to 2017," added Kessler on what to expect on the pitch. "I

felt this already when I watch some domestic football but also throughout the Champions League season. "Both showed that in many countries there is a big improvement in what happened with the whole professionalisation and standards around the teams increasing. "It's only logical that you can see the results also on the pitch."

Kessler was part of the Germany side that won the Euro in 2013—one of the eight times Die Nationalelf have won the tournament in 12 editions. However, it is hosts England and Spain that are the pre-tournament favourites as they look to win a women's major tournament for the first time.

Sports League Weightlifting closing ceremony held



Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: On behalf of Prime Minister's Youth Program a closing ceremony of Sports League Weightlifting was held in Punjab University, Lahore.

There were 50 weightlifters took part in the 10 weight categories. In 109 Kg first position was got by Faizan Attari from Faisalabad and took gold medal while Wahaj Tariq Butt from Lahore got silver medal.

On this occasion the Chief Guest of the ceremony was Dr. Shaishta Sohai, Acting Chairperson/Executive Director Higher Education Commission who gave away the medals among the successful weightlifters. Vice Chancellor Punjab University Niaz Ahmed Akhtar, Javed Ali Memon Incharge Sports HEC and Director Sports University of Punjab Tahira Saleem were also present on this occasion.

Governor Punjab appreciates mountaineers



Our Correspondent

LAHORE: Governor Punjab Balighur Rehman, appreciated the achievements of mountaineers from Punjab in a meeting held in the office of Governor's Secretariat, Lahore.

Abu Zafar Sadiq, President Alpine Club of Pakistan, National Climbing Federation briefed about the challenges being faced by mountaineers from Punjab. He requested the Governor for his support to Shehroze Kashif, the young mountaineer who has two world records in mountaineering at his credit. Shehroze has climbed 7 peaks above 8000-M and his goal is to become youngest mountaineer of world by climbing all 14 peaks above 8000-M.

The Governor appreciated the achievements of Mr. Shehroze Kashif and other mountaineers from Punjab. The possibility of launching an awareness campaign about mountaineering, hiking, trekking and other outdoor pursuits for youth of universities in Punjab to save them from drugs, extremism, distraction due to excessive use of gadgets.

The Governor assured moral support for Shehroze Kashif and other mountaineers from Punjab. He also indicated possibility for resource mobilization to achieve the target of Shehroze Kashif. The Governor awarded certificates to Shehroze Kashif and Alaizer Wise as a token of appreciation.

At this occasion, Shehroze Kashif, his father Mr. Salman Kashif, Elaizer Wise, the youngest mountaineer who climbed Gondogro Peak and his father Muahmmad Ashir Ch. and Zubair Zafar Farooqui, Secretary, Punjab Alpine Association, were also present at this occasion.

Last tickets to be sold from July 5

DOHA: The remaining tickets for this year's World Cup in Qatar will be available on a first-come, first-served basis from next week, FIFA said on Wednesday.

About 1.8 million tickets were sold in the first two batches of sales, FIFA said, without saying how many are now available. Qatar will host the first World Cup in the Middle East from November 21 to December 18 at eight stadiums in and around the capital, Doha. The latest tickets will go on sale online from July 5 at 12pm Doha time (0900 GMT) until 12pm on August 16, FIFA said in a press release.

"Huge worldwide interest is anticipated in the new sales period," the world body said. Officials said three million tickets are available in total, including those allocated to sponsors.

