



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فتح مکہ کے دن فرمایا اب ہجرت (مکہ سے مدینہ کے لیے) باقی نہیں رہی البتہ حسن نیت اور جہاد باقی ہے۔ اس لیے جب تمہیں جہاد کے لیے بلایا جائے تو فوراً نکل جاؤ۔
(صحیح بخاری، حدیث نمبر 3077)

Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited

Zardari's political tolerance ends crisis in Punjab: PM

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif says the political tolerance of former president and PPP co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari has ended the crisis in Punjab. Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain has once again revived the democratic tradition of his great father and family. The role played by Chaudhry Shujaat today is a victory of democracy and constitutional values.



Mazari committed treason: Elahi

Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid Ch. Pervaiz Elahi says Punjab Assembly Deputy Speaker Dost Muhammad Mazari's has committed treason. He had a clear majority in the Punjab Assembly. I have won the election, but the deputy speaker ruled against me. The Punjab Assembly deputy speaker has committed treason and Article 6 reference should be filed against him.

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Weekly inflation declines 0.22%

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Sensitive price Indicator (SPI) based weekly inflation for the week ended for the combined consumption group, witnessed a decrease of 0.22 percent as compared to the previous week. SPI for the week under review in the above mentioned group was recorded at 200.10 points against 200.55 points registered in the previous week, according to the latest data of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) released here Friday. As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 32.82 percent.

The weekly SPI with base year 2015-16=100 is covering 17 urban centers and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. However, Sensitive Price Indicator for the lowest consumption group up to Rs 17,732 witnessed 0.33 percent increase and went up from 206.12 points in last week to 206.79 points during the week under review. Meanwhile, the SPI for the consumption groups from Rs 17,732-22,888 and Rs 22,889-29,517 increased by 0.22 percent and 0.13 percent whereas SPI for consumptions from Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs 44,175 decreased by 0.05 percent and 0.48 percent respectively.

During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 31 (60.78%) items increased, 11 (21.57%) items decreased and 09 (17.65%) items remained stable. The items, which recorded decrease in their average prices on WoW basis, included tomatoes (7.04%), bananas (3.34%), vegetable ghee 1 kg (1.14%), onions (0.46%), sugar (0.44%), vegetable ghee 2.5 kg (0.42%), gur (0.32%), rice basmati broken (0.19%), diesel (14.62%) and petrol (7.41%).

National defence

RAWALPINDI: Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS) General Nadeem Raza (centre) chairs a meeting of the military's top brass at the Joint Staff Headquarters (JSHQ) here on Friday.



Photo: ISPR

Services Chiefs discuss defence & security environment

Top military brass confident in armed forces' resolve to respond to threats

Staff Reporter

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Army leadership has reaffirmed the resolve to respond to the entire spectrum of threats in the most befitting manner in line with a comprehensive security strategy, the military's media wing said on Friday. According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), a meeting of the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS) and all Service Chiefs was held at the Joint Staff Headquarters (JSHQ) to discuss defence and security environment.

General Nadeem Raza, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, presided over the meeting, which was attended

by COAS General Qamar Javed Ahmed Baber Sidhu. The military's media wing added that the forum was given a detailed briefing on a review of national security situation specific to western border, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, and Balochistan.

The forum also discussed

fast-paced developments in the realm of strategic and conventional policies, the importance of peace in Afghanistan for sustain-

able development in the region and the operational preparedness of the armed forces. The participants also reaffirmed the resolve of the armed forces to respond to the entire spectrum of threats in the most befitting manner in line with a comprehensive security strategy. They also lauded the

sacrifices of security agencies in the fight against terrorism.

Apart from that, the forum also discussed fast-paced developments in the realm of strategic and conventional policies. They also exchanged views on the importance of peace in Afghanistan for sustainable development in the region and the operational preparedness of the armed forces.

The forum also discussed fast-paced developments in the realm of strategic and conventional policies, the importance of peace in Afghanistan for sustainable development in the region and the operational preparedness of the armed forces. The forum expressed complete satisfaction and full confidence in the readiness of the defence forces.

Pak Army reaffirms resolve to thwart 'entire spectrum of threats'

\$95b external debt of is very low: SBP

Observes concerns about Pakistan's economy unfairly overblown

Bureau Report

KARACHI: State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) acting Governor Murtaza Syed on Friday said that Pakistan's external debt of \$95 billion is very low. Murtaza Syed said in an interview with a foreign broadcasting organization said that "Pakistan is being unfairly branded with other countries that are much more vulnerable." "This is because there is little discrimination between countries in the current times of panic across markets, which are responding in a broad-brush way to the global commodity super cycle, unprecedented Fed tightening, and geopolitical tensions."

"Pakistan will be able to meet its financial needs comfortably," he added. "Pakistan's external debt of \$95 billion is also low, predominantly held by the public sector and mainly sourced from concessional multilateral and bilateral sources", Syed said. Despite panic over a plummeting



currency and stock markets that continues to be topsy turvy, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Acting Governor Dr Murtaza Syed said Pakistan remains in a position to meet its elevated funding needs, while the crucial International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout programme "puts a lot of daylight between Pakistan and more vulnerable countries".

"Concerns about Pakistan are being unfairly overblown," Dr Syed was quoted as saying by Bloomberg. "The recently secured staff-level agreement on the

next IMF review is a very important anchor that puts a lot of daylight between Pakistan and more vulnerable countries." His statement comes as the local currency saw one of its worst falls in recent times, shedding nearly 7.5% in one week against the US dollar to close near the 227 level on Thursday, amid renewed concerns over inflation and cost of doing business. This was the fifth successive decline for the rupee, all of which were registered after the IMF announced the staff-level agreement.

Nawaz, Fazl to adopt aggressive political strategy

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Former prime minister and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif and Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) chairman Maulana Fazlur Rehman have agreed to adopt an aggressive political strategy. The understanding was reached in a telephonic conversation between PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman.

Sources privy to the development said that the two leaders had a detailed discussion on the Punjab Chief Minister runoff and the political strategy. "The two leaders agreed to adopt an aggressive political strategy during the discussion," sources added. It was further informed by the sources that the reasons for the failure of meeting between Asif Ali Zardari and Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain were also considered

Pakistan committed to SCO's development coop agenda: FM

Highlights importance of regular exchanges with Iran to advance trade ties

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has assured Pakistan's active support in taking forward the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's development cooperation agenda. Talking to Secretary General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Islamabad on Friday, he reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to the purposes and principles of the SCO Charter and the 'Shanghai Spirit'. Highlighting the enormous potential of the SCO region, the Foreign Minister stressed the need to work together for harnessing its potential effectively for sustained progress and prosperity of the region as a whole.

He underlined Pakistan's interest in key priority areas, including connectivity and transport; food security; innovation and technology exchange, trade and economy, e-commerce and digital literacy.

Sharing his perspective on the situation in Afghanistan, the Foreign Minister underscored the need to maintain constructive engagement and practical cooperation to promote the shared goals of peace, stability, development and regional connectivity.

Meanwhile, Secretary General Shanghai Cooperation Organization Zhang Ming has termed Pakistan's geo-strategic location ideal for connect-



ing Central Asia countries with the sea routes.

Delivering a speech at the Institute of Strategic Studies in Islamabad on Friday, he said the Central Asian countries are landlocked and Pakistan is ideally located to provide shorter sea access to these countries.

Zhang Ming said Pakistan is well placed for facilitating the SCO members in improving regional connectivity, which will facilitate trade among SCO member states and even beyond.

He said the SCO is a multi-dimensional organization in terms of its scope and functioning and Pakistan can also benefit greatly from it.

Foreign Minister Bilawal highlight-

ery considers his members worse than slaves. In her latest Tweet, the PML-N vice president wrote that Imran Khan is campaigning for the one whom he used to call "Punjab's biggest dacoit" and is ready to make him chief executive of the province.

She said the one who claimed of building a great nation does not even have its own candidate for the Chief Ministership, adding that there is a difference between giving the province on contract.

Maryam Nawaz went on to say that the people of Punjab had given the mandate to Nawaz Sharif in 2018, which was taken away from him through fraud.

Rs7.91 per unit

NEPRA okays power tariff hike

OGRA reduces RLNG price by \$4.6 per MMBTU

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The National Electric and Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) has approved the government's request to increase the power tariff by Rs7.91. According to the notification issued by the NEPRA, the decision was issued on the plea filed by the federal government regarding the uniform tariff. The authority approved the request of the federal government, the basic tariff of Rs7.91 per unit will be increased in three phases. According to the announcement, the increase will be effective from July, August, September and October, the increase will not be applicable to lifeline and protected

customers. The decision will be implemented after notification by the federal government, it said.

In the meanwhile, the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) on Friday notified the revised price of Re-gasified Liquefied Natural Gas (RLNG) on networks of the SSGC and SNGPL for the current month of July, with a significant downward adjustment. According to the notification, the authority decreased the price of imported RLNG by \$4.6501 per Metric Million British Thermal Unit (MMBTU) on the distribution network of Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC), showing an almost 20.57 per cent cut.

Rules of game same for everyone: Maryam

Says one who preaches freedom considers his members worse than slaves

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PML-N) Vice President Maryam Nawaz on Friday said ahead of Hamza Shahbaz's possible victory in the Punjab CM election said that now the rules of the game will be the same for everyone. Taking to Twitter, she wrote that PML-N has not forgotten the treatment done to the party, adding that now the rules of the game will be the same for all, otherwise the PMLN will do it in a better way.

Earlier, in another tweet, Maryam Nawaz while launching a tirade against former PM and PTI chairman Imran Khan said that the one who preaches freedom from slav-

ery considers his members worse than slaves. In her latest Tweet, the PML-N vice president wrote that Imran Khan is campaigning for the one whom he used to call "Punjab's biggest dacoit" and is ready to make him chief executive of the province.

She said the one who claimed of building a great nation does not even have its own candidate for the Chief Ministership, adding that there is a difference between giving the province on contract.

Maryam Nawaz went on to say that the people of Punjab had given the mandate to Nawaz Sharif in 2018, which was taken away from him through fraud.

Punjab's rule

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Hamza Shahbaz celebration after winning Chief Minister of Punjab Election, As Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Hamza Shahbaz has been elected as the Chief Minister of the Punjab province by securing majority of votes in the runoff election, in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Dramatic win

Hamza re-elected as Chief Minister Punjab

Deputy Speaker rejects 10 PML-Q votes

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Hamza Shahbaz has been elected as the Chief Minister of the Punjab province by securing majority of votes in the runoff election. Hamza Shahbaz secured 179 votes whereas Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi – the Joint Candidate of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) – bagged 176 votes. Although 186 votes were cast in favor of Pervaiz Elahi. However, the Deputy Speaker refused to count the 10 votes cast by the Muslim League (Q) MPA citing Article 63 (1) (A) of the Constitution of Pakistan. Therefore, the parliamentary strength of the opposition alliance was reduced to 176.

Punjab Assembly Deputy Speaker Dost Muhammad Mazari read out a letter written by PML-Q President Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain requesting the members of his party to vote for Hamza Shahbaz. Therefore, the Deputy Speaker said the lawmakers violated the order of Chaudhry Shujaat and rejected all the votes cast by the members of the Muslim League (Q).

At the beginning of the session, Raja Sagheer who was elected from PP-7 Rawalpindi's constituency took oath in the house, after that PML-N leader Khalil Tahir Sindhu objected to the presence of PTI

PTI, PML-Q to move SC against Mazari's ruling

candidates Zain Qureshi and Shabbir Gujjar in the assembly and said that since Zain had not resigned from the membership of the National Assembly, he was not eligible to vote in the provincial assembly.

Meanwhile, the party added that since there was a case pending against Gujjar with the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), he cannot cast his vote either. However, PTI leader Raja Basharat, in Gujjar's defence, said that the ECP had sent a noti-

fication in this regard and according to that, Gujjar is eligible to cast his vote. While Deputy Speaker also rejected his objections and allowed both candidates to vote in the election

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) has decided to move Supreme Court (SC) against Punjab Assembly Deputy Speaker Dost Muhammad Mazari's ruling in the chief minister (CM) election. Soon after the contentious ruling was announced, a joint parliamentary meeting of PML-Q and PTI was held, wherein it was decided to file a writ petition against the Dost Mazari's decision in the Supreme Court (SC).

Meanwhile, former planning minister and PTI leader Asad Umar tweeted that the party would approach the Supreme Court tonight. The decision came after Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Hamza Shehbaz was re-elected as the chief minister (CM) of Punjab as Punjab Assembly Deputy Speaker Dost Muhammad Mazari rejected the PML-Q's votes in light of Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain's letter.

Foreign funding case

Imran Khan asking for NRO from CEC: Marriyum

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb berated PTI Chairperson Imran Khan for criticising the chief election commissioner (CEC), saying Imran Khan is asking for a National Reconciliation Order (NRO) from the CEC due to the foreign funding case.

"Imran Khan is venting his anger on [the] CEC. However, Sikandar Sultan is not like NAB's [National Accountability Bureau's] ex-chairman Javed Iqbal, who would be threatened and blackmailed," said Marriyum Aurangzeb while reacting to PTI chairman Imran Khan's

statement.

Responding to the allegations of former prime minister Imran Khan about buying votes for the chief minister election in Punjab scheduled for today (Friday), the federal minister said that Imran Khan was a liar, hypocrite and thief who had stolen elections in past. "Imran used the money to steal votes in the election of 2018 and then in the elections of Senate, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit Baltistan, Azad Kashmir and Daska in Punjab," she added. Marriyum Aurangzeb said this was Imran Khan's "political business" – to buy loyalties, adding that "his members in assemblies have also expressed no trust in him."

Rs230 for \$1

Rupee continues downward slide

KARACHI: The rupee's downward slide against US dollar continued on the fourth consecutive day on Friday as political uncertainty and delay in the release of the IMF loan tranche for US\$1.17 billion have affected the country's foreign reserves. According to forex dealers, the greenback saw a hike in value against the rupee by Rs1.56 and traded at Rs228.37. In the open market, the US dollar traded between Rs229 and Rs230. Moreover, the forex dealers further alleged that the banks are buying dollar at Rs229 and selling in the open market at Rs231.

On Thursday, the Pakistani rupee hit another low after the US dollar strengthened against the local currency and gained Rs1.89 and traded at Rs226.81. In the open market, the greenback traded between Rs226 to Rs227. Previously, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) attributed the 11-rupee change in the exchange rate in just two days to the "market-determined exchange rate system" under which the current account position, news stories, and domestic uncertainty contribute to the daily currency fluctuations.

Some PTI MPs oppose Elahi's candidacy: Sh Rashid

ISLAMABAD: Former Interior Minister and AML chief Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed has asserted that some Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) members had opposed PML-Q leader as a candidate for Punjab chief minister. The former federal minister said that the PML-Q's role was discussed during a core committee meeting.

"Some PTI members opposed Pervaiz Elahi as a joint candidate. However, PTI Chairman Imran Khan directed the participants to vote for PML-Q leader," he said, while praising the former premier's decision. Meanwhile, Sheikh Rasheed predicted that Moonis Elahi and Salik Hussain will contest the future election against each other.

He also condemned the media reports that Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain has refused to vote for Pervaiz Elahi, saying that the PML-Q's parliamentary leader is the Punjab Assembly Speaker. The AML chief warned that if Imran Khan makes the call, the situation will change. "The current rulers have to flee and their chartered planes are ready," he added.

Punjab CM election

Ch Shujaat refuses to support Elahi

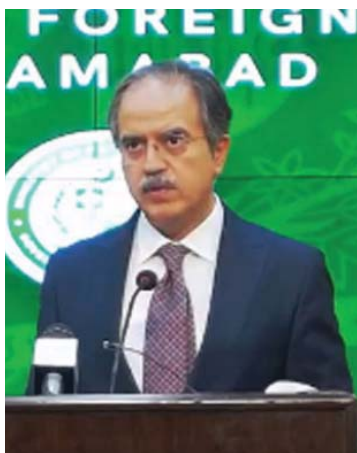
LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid president Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain has refused to support Pervaiz Elahi in the election for the Punjab Chief Ministership. According to sources, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain confirmed writing the letter. In a major development before the voting, PML-Q leader Moonis Elahi said that his uncle, Chaudhry Shujaat, has refused to back Imran Khan's candidate. He said that he had gone to visit Shujaat but he refused to issue a video recording in this regard. "I have lost and Imran Khan has lost as well but Zardari has won," Moonis said.

India a major source of terrorism in region: Pakistan

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Friday said that India had been a major source of terrorism in the region which continued to utilize the scourge as an instrument of state policy. The Foreign Office spokesperson Asim Iftikhar in his weekly press briefing, said the terrorism from the eastern neighborhood was mostly directed against Pakistan.

He said that Pakistan had long been informing the international community that under the guise of their presence in Afghanistan, India had been exploiting that situation, to the detriment of Pakistan's security by financing, aiding and abetting, planning and executing terrorist and subversive activities in Pakistan. He said Pakistan had shared the situation with key members of the



international community, including the P-5, and in the UN system.

He said it was not that whenever

there was a dialogue, Pakistan would raise these issues, specifically and strongly and "it is not that we shy away from this dialogue, because we think and it is the factual situation on ground that it is India, which is responsible for this kind of environment in our neighborhood, and we would very much take it up," he added.

Apprising media about the diplomatic engagements during the week, the spokesperson mentioned the ongoing visit of Secretary General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Ambassador Zhang Ming which provides an opportunity to engage with the SCO Secretariat and highlight Pakistan's perspective and priorities for making the SCO mechanisms more effective in advancing shared regional security and economic goals.

Law and Order

Imran Khan to face strict action on worsening situation: Rana Sana

Hails decision of Ch Shujaat; attributes PML-N win to the wise move

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Minister for Interior Rana Sanaullah on Friday warned former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan of rigorous action if law and order situation worsened. Addressing a press conference at Model Town along with Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb and PML-N Leader Talal Chaudhry, he said that he will ensure the rule of law at all cost.

The minister said that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)

succeeded in getting elected its Chief Minister in Punjab Assembly due to correct decision of Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid President Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain and efforts of allied parties, particularly Pakistan Peoples Party Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari for strengthening democracy.

Sanaullah said that PML-Q Chief Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, being an experienced and patriotic politician, deserved full appreciation as all the PML-N and its allied parties appreciated his decision to get Hamza Shehbaz Sharif elected as Chief Minister. "The success of the PML-N in Punjab Assembly was made possi-

ble due to aspirations of people," he said, adding that PML-N defeated those elements who were trying to create unrest in the country. "Now all such attempts have been foiled". The minister said the PML-N had accepted gracefully its defeat in the by-poll held on July 17 and also identified the weaknesses in candidates selection. On the other hand, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan, even after winning the by-polls, criticized the Election Commission of Pakistan and others, and accused them of rigging. He stressed that politics of hatred should be weeded from the country.

CM Punjab election

These are not politicians, they are mafia: Imran Khan

Issues fresh call for protest following Hamza's surprising victory

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan on Friday issued a call for a fresh protest rally against the government after Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Hamza Shahbaz elected as the Chief Minister of the Punjab province by securing majority of votes in the runoff election. Addressing the nation in Lahore on Friday, he said that former president and Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari has always used plundered money to buy democracy in every election.

The PTI chairman also highlighted how Zardari has been ruling Sindh since 14 years, looting wealth of the nation and using it to

purchase parliamentarians. Imran Khan went on to say that he had prior information that the former president was coming to Lahore to run campaign with money, adding that the people would throw eggs on him if Asif Zardari comes out in public.

He said that he was surprised to see what happened in the Punjab Assembly today, everyone should come out of their homes and register their protest tonight. "Chaudhry Shujaat's letter is not effective because the decision is taken by the parliamentary leader," he said. The PTI chairman further stated that it was written in Article 63A that the parliamentary leader of the party decides who to vote, the letter I wrote was rejected and then the parliamentary leader wrote the letter. He said that the econom-



ic crisis will increase due to what happened, people should protest but do not take the law into their hands and remain peaceful.

The PTI chairman told the public that he was in shock to see the incidents that happened in the Punjab Assembly during the run-off election. The former prime minister also shared that he has always prayed that the country's democracy goes to a place where it is in the west. He added that democracy has "meritocracy and transparency" but its foundation is based on "morality". "Democracy does not have an army. Parliament does not have an army the army is somewhere else. Parliament has one thing which is morality," the PTI chairman said.

Sharing the example of the UK, Khan said that Britain's democracy works as Boris John-

son had to resign for holding a party during the coronavirus. "It wasn't even news here, he had to resign because of that. Democracy is based on morality," said Imran. The PTI chairman reminded the people of the "circus" that was seen in the Sindh House ahead of the vote of no-confidence and now today. "Lawmakers were put up for auction in the Sindh House. Asif Zardari has been looting the country for 30 years. All this horse-trading is happening with Sindh's public money," he added. The former prime minister said that after he was removed from office he went to the people, recalling that his peaceful protest was teargassed and homes were raided. "In the by-elections, people turned out like never before. People came out to reject American slavery," Khan highlighted.

KP Police, Japan govt, UNDP launch first-ever policing plans for Merged Areas

The Plans provide a roadmap for the smooth transition of the post-merger local policing system

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police, Government of Japan, and UNDP launched the first-ever Policing Plans for the Merged Areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa at an event in Islamabad on Friday.

The Policing Plans are for seven districts of Merged Areas: Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Orakzai, North Waziristan, South Waziristan, and Kurram. The Plans provide a roadmap for the smooth transition of the post-merger local policing system to the formal policing and justice system in the Merged Areas.

The plans also present a context-specific framework to deliver people-centred policing services through collaborative partnerships with local communities and other agencies of the criminal justice system. Further-



more, the plans also propose recommendations to federal, provincial, and district-level decision makers in addressing resource and capacity gaps.

The launch event highlighted the importance of joint efforts between KP Police and development partner to foster a people-centred policing system in the Merged Areas. These efforts are crucial to restoring public security services, rule of law, sustainable peace, and development in the region.

Speaking at the event Inspec-

tor General of Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Moazzam Jah Ansari said, "I extend my sincere gratitude to my team in KP Police and UNDP for their exceptional work in developing the very first Policing Plans for the Merged Areas. The Plans present a necessary road map to guide the post-merger transition in policing and better service delivery to the people. On behalf of the KP Police, I extend my sincere thanks to UNDP for its technical advice and assistance, and the Government of Japan for its gener-

ous funding. The next critical phase is the successful implementation of the Policing Plans across Merged Areas, and I look forward to UNDP and the Government of Japan's continued assistance in this regard."

WADA Mitsuhiro, Japanese Ambassador to Pakistan thanked UNDP and KP Police for their pioneering efforts to strengthen policing in the Merged Areas. "Improving the local police service in Merged Areas is a key priority in ensuring a smooth transition to equitable public security and justice delivery in the post-merger districts. Therefore, the development of the Police Plans is a crucial milestone in achieving this essential objective. I congratulate the KP Police and UNDP for their pioneering work and the Government of Japan is honoured to support this important initiative."

NTDC arranges farewell ceremony in honour of Muhammad Sakhawat

Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The National Transmission and Despatch Company Limited (NTDC) arranged a farewell ceremony in the honour of retired Chief Engineer Muhammad Sakhawat here at WAPDA House Lahore, Friday.

The ceremony was chaired by the Managing Director NTDC Engr. Dr. Rana Abdul Jabbar Khan. MD NTDC expressed best wishes for the retired officer and paid tributes for his services rendered for the department. The Managing Director NTDC also presented a shield, gift and cheque of dues. Muhammad Sakhawat also thanked NTDC management for arranging a great farewell ceremony.

The General Managers, Chief Engineers and other senior officers were also present on the occasion of farewell ceremony.

Hakra Civilization great heritage of Bahawalpur region: VC IUB



Our Correspondent

BAHAWALPUR: Vice Chancellor, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob has said that Hakra Civilization is the great heritage of Bahawalpur region. It is an appreciative step of Arts Council Bahawalpur to organize weekly cultured events regarding Hakra Civilization.

The Vice Chancellor expressed these views while talking to Director Arts Council Bahawalpur Sajjad Hussain. He said that the Department of Archeology in the Islamia University of Bahawalpur, is working in Cholistan to excavate the remains of Hakra. The university is also setting up a museum to preserve the relics of Hakra civilization.

On this occasion, Director Art Council Bahawalpur briefed the Vice Chancellor about the cultural programs organized by the Punjab Government in the Arts Councils across the province. He said that the role of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur will be very important in organizing Cholistan Festival.

In this regard, the university's departments of History, Archaeology, Art and Design, Saraiki, Persian, Arabic, English, Media Studies, Tourism Management, IUB DOST and Department of Public Relations have an important role. The Vice Chancellor directed that the university should take full participation in organizing the Cholistan Festival and promoting the culture of the region. Director Press Media and Publications Shahzad Ahmed Khalid, Zakaullah Program Officer Arts Council Bahawalpur and Athar Lashari, Lecturer Department of Saraiki were present on this occasion.

Ateeq ur Rehman SC M-14 heads Sector Commander's operational meeting

ISLAMABAD/DI KHAN: Ateeq ur Rehman SC M-14 heading sector Commander's operational meeting under directions of Zonal Commander DIG Mazhar ul Haq Kakakhel regarding budget, operations, security and camps.

Reko Diq agreement great success of govt: Farah Azeem

QUETTA: The spokesperson of the Balochistan Government Farah Azeem Shah on Friday said that the Reko Diq Agreement was important and a great success of the current provincial government which would formally start working from August 14, 2022.

She expressed these views while describing the decisions taken in the recent provincial cabinet meeting and termed the agreement a milestone in the development of the province.

She said though we had lost the Reko Diq Case in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) yet the CM Balochistan stood up for the rights of the people of the province.

She said that the fixed 10 percent share of the Reko diq project has been increased to 25 percent, while 75 percent share would be ensured for such investment projects in the province.

All matters pertaining to Reko Diq Agreement had been settled according to merit by taking all the parties into confidence, she added.

Regarding the recent monsoon rains in the province, she said, "The provincial government is taking all possible measures to help the rain victims as well as to rehabilitate them and repair the damages, while in the emergency situation, the district administration, PDMA and other institutions provide timely and effective rescue operations and assistance to the affectedes".

The spokesperson said that the situation after the rains had been brought under control and free medical camps were being organized to provide best treatment facilities to the victims. Agencies

KP Minister instructs local bodies to take precautionary steps in monsoon rains

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Local Government and Rural Development (LG&RDD) Faisal Amin Gandapur on Friday strictly instructed the local government department to take precautionary measures in the wake of the forecast of heavy rains in the province to cope with any consequent emergency situation.

He issued the directives during a briefing given by Secretary LG&RDD Syed Zaeheerul Islam Shah on the effective prevention of possible damages that might be caused by monsoon torrential rains and flash floods in different parts of the province including the merged districts.

Rare tiger cubs

KARACHI: Tiger cubs playing in cage of Zoo. As golden tabby tigress gave birth to cubs in Provincial Capital. This is the first time that a golden tiger has been bred in Pakistan. It is a very rare breed in the world. They number only 30 in the wild in the whole world. The rest are in captivity for breeding.



Photo: Online

UNODC holds training on "Basic Investigation Skills" for Levies Force

Spokesman Report

QUETTA: UNODC Criminal Justice and Legal Reforms Programme in collaboration with Balochistan Levies Force has successfully completed the 2nd batch of training on "Basic Investigation Skills" for Investigation Officers of the Balochistan Levies Force.

The training was held from 18-22 July 2022, at the Levies Headquarters in Quetta comprising of 30 Investigation Officers while the training for the first batch was held from 27 June-1 July 2022 for 34 Investigation Officers. Following the last training session on Basic Investigation Skills, UNODC will commence training the same Investigation Officers on "Advanced Investigation Skills" to build on their initial knowledge and skills acquired through the initial training.

This landmark initiative aims to bring professional effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of services



es by building on core competencies such as crime scene management, learning of advanced laws, investigation skills, handling of gender-based violence cases, community policing, and forensics evidence gathering. The training was broken down into modules to enhance the understanding of best

practices and application of skills for effective and efficient investigation, interrogation, and interviewing of victims, witnesses, and suspects. The training programme also focused on stress management, professionalism, and a positive behavioural change while assuming duty.

Meeting reviewed the overall law and order situation

PESHAWAR: A high-level meeting held here on Friday with Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan reviewed the overall law and order situation with special focus on the increasing incidents of target killing of Police personnel in different parts of the province. During the meeting, a strategy to prevent such incidents in future was also taken. Special Assistant to KP CM on Information, Barrister Muhammad Ali Saif, IGP Moazzam Jah Ansari, Principal Secretary to CM Amjad Ali Khan and other senior police officials attended the meeting. The Chief Minister expressed concern over the martyrdom of police personnel at different places of the province and said that peace was indispensable for the development and prosperity of the province. "Maintaining law and order was the first priority of his government," he said and added that the provincial government would not compromise on law and order at any cost.

Sindh govt committed to hold 2nd phase of LG polls: CM Murad

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that his government was opposing the postponement of local bodies elections phase 2 scheduled to be held on July 24, as the provincial government had assured the Election Commission its full support and assistance.

He said this while talking to the media on Friday, just after performing the concluding ceremony of annual Urs of Abdullah Shah Ghazi.

He was accompanied by his Advisor on Religious Affairs Fayaz Butt, Special Assistant on Auqaf Payar Ali Shah and MPA Naem Kharal.

Replying to a question, Syed Murad Ali Shah said that his government was keen to conduct local bodies elections' second phase in Karachi and Hyderabad divisions.

"We had told the election Commis-

sion that the provincial government would work with them even if heavy downpour was received in some parts of Dadu districts," he said and added the court had also dismissed the application filed for postponement but even then, the (local bodies) elections were postponed.

Refuting the impression that some political parties were staging protests against the Sindh government for postponement of elections, the CM said they were protesting against those who had decided to postpone them.

Replying to a question, Syed Murad Ali Shah said that the party which was majority in the Punjab assembly would be able to form the government.

"This is a baseless allegation and propaganda that we have sent money to Punjab for horse trading," he said and added this was a similar allegation

leveled in 2018 that Rs 2 billion being laundered through launch were seized and then another allegation came up that millions of rupees were recovered from the basement of a bungalow.

The CM Sindh pointed out a leaked telephone call of a former Federal minister in which he was heard asking a person to give money to a PML-N MPA. "he admitted what he had said even then the baseless allegation are leveled against PPP leadership," he deplored and added that the Sindh House was being defamed for nothing.

Syed Murad Ali Shah said that the present federal government has taken different and unpopular decisions just to save the country from bankruptcy. "We are committed to this country and its people, otherwise we would have left the country in the lurch," he said.

To a question about illegal immi-

grants of Afghanistan living in the city creating law & order, the chief minister said that the miscreants and troublemakers were deliberately talking about Afghans just to flame the fire on linguistic issues.

"It is a fact that various Afghans are living in Sindh but all of them are not illegal and most of them have work permits," he said and added those who were living here illegally were being sent back.

Syed Murad Ali Shah said that the people responsible for creating linguistic problems at Sohrab Goth and in Hyderabad would face the music soon. "We are conducting an inquiry and would identify them," he said.

Earlier, the chief minister laid a floral wreath on the mazar of Abdullah Shah Ghazi and offered dua to conclude his annual urs. Agencies

PSQCA reveals 26 water brands unsafe for human consumption

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Pakistan designated the task to PCRWR for quarterly monitoring of bottled/mineral water brands and publicize the results for awareness of public health. For the last quarter (April to June, 2022), 174 samples of Mineral/Bottled water brands were collected from 21 cities. Comparison of test results with the bottled water quality standards of Pakistan Standards & Quality Control Authority (PSQCA) has revealed that 26 brands were unsafe for human consumption.

Eighteen brands (Oxford Pure Water, Pure Nest, Purifa, Aab-e-Hayat, Evian's Safe Life, Natural Pure Life, Best Natural, Faris, Fiesta

Pure, Aqua King, Jheel, Aqua Shraw, Jia, Douro, Premium Drinking Water, Urwell, More plus, Ice drop) were found to be unsafe due to presence of higher levels of sodium. One brand (i.e. Nation Pure) was found unsafe due to presence of high level of Arsenic, four brands (Blue Life H2O, Indus, Douro & Urwell) were found unsafe due to presence of high level of Nitrate than the permissible limit, while, six brands (New Buxton, Jel, Evian's Safe Life, Nahla, Top up, Vey) were found microbiologically contaminated and thus were unsafe for drinking purpose. General public is encouraged to look at the detailed report to know about the status of water quality of bottled water brands they consume.

ISLAMABAD
23° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	3:34 am
Zohr	12:14 pm
Asr	5:10 pm
Maghrib	7:15 pm
Isha	8:54 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance	115
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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
DHO	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
Holy Family	9290322-7
PIMS	9261170-79
Polyclinic	9218300-09
Shifa International	4603666

Regional re-connectivity
Uzbek-Afghan-Pak rail project anchor for regional peace, prosperity: Envoy

Ambassador Aybek Arif Usmanov says cooperation between Uzbekistan, Pakistan building further with each passing day

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan's trilateral railway project will soon be materialized, thus making regional re-connectivity possible. Transit Trade Agreement (TTA) between Pakistan and Uzbekistan will allow the regional countries to expand their trade and transit horizons.

These views were expressed by Aybek Arif Usmanov, Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan, during the roundtable on the 30 Years of Pakistan and Uzbekistan Diplomatic relations and chairmanship of Uzbekistan in SCO hosted by the Centre for Central Asia and Eurasian Studies-Institute of Peace and Diplomatic Studies in collaboration with Embassy of Uzbekistan to Pakistan and Riphah Institute of Public Policy, Riphah International University.

The Ambassador further said that over the past 30 years, Pakistan and Uzbekistan have diversified relations and made a substantial contribution toward regional peace and stability. Both countries have developed stronger and deeper ties in trade and economics, health, security, agriculture, and information technology. The cooperation between the two countries is building further with each passing day. There are growing investments from each other's sides where people-to-people ties have been diversified. There is ever deeper and close cooperation in political, economic, and security fields.



In her opening remarks, Farhat Asif, President, Institute of Peace and Diplomatic Studies, highlighted the significance of thirty years of Pakistan-Uzbekistan relations and about chairmanship of Uzbekistan in SCO where the country has made substantial contributions by hosting scores of events of diversified nature. Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro, President of ECO Science Foundation, highlighted the significant cooperation in science and technology and emphasized human development while discussing cooperation to cooperate for youth engagement effectively.

Speaking from Tashkent, Kabuljon Sabirov, Director, SCO Centre for Public Diplomacy in Uzbekistan, highlighted how strong people-to-people ties are building

between Pakistan and Uzbekistan, especially at the level of SCO. Dr. Amna Mehmood, Professor Department of Politics and IR at International Islamic University, said that there is a need for Pakistan and Uzbekistan to work together to promote peace in Afghanistan. Through enhanced security and political cooperation, countries can resolve common challenges.

Mukhlisa Shayakhmetova, Head of the department of Urdu Language, Literature, History, and Culture of Pakistan at Tashkent State University of Oriental Studies, joined from virtually where she spoke in Urdu about the deep-rooted fraternal Pak-Uzbek ties. She has highlighted the intellectual and academic contribution of the legendary scholars for enriching the language and literature from both sides.

Lecture on 'Azadi Ka Safar' held at PAC



Staff Reporter

RAWALPINDI: In connection with the Diamond Jubilee celebrations, a special lecture on the history of Pakistan was organized in the Punjab Arts Council under the name "Azadi Ka Safar".

In the lecture, Tehreek-e-Pakistan activist Dr. Ehsan Akbar highlights the issues faced by the muslim leaders in the creation of Pakistan. Dr. Ehsan Akbar said that there is no greater blessing in the world than freedom. We are breathing in a free atmosphere today due to the eternal sacrifices of our elders.

The rapid development of education in world during the last decades of the nineteenth century is in front of everyone. Due to education, a new consciousness, feeling and passion was highlighted in different nations, through the educational revolution, freedom movements were awakened in the people and the names of many great leaders and personalities came out to subdue the false forces. "Pakistan" is the living proof these revolutions.

Picnickers enjoying

ISLAMABAD: Picnickers are enjoying pleasant weather at Daman-e-Koh in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

ICR organizes session on 'Securing Balochistan amid Hybrid Warfare Through development'

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Institute of Conflict Resolution (ICR) organized a roundtable session titled "Securing Balochistan Amid Hybrid Warfare Through development". The esteemed panelists included Senator Anwaar Ul Haq Kakkar, Dr. Nazir Hussain, Dean Social Sciences University of Wah, Lt. Gen. Naem Khalid Lodhi (r), and Lt. Gen. Dr. Zahid Latif Mirza (r). Dr. Mansoor Ahmed, PRO Vice Chancellor University of Turbat Balochistan, and Dr. Farah



Naz, Assistant Professor Department of Governance and Public Policy NUST. The session was moderated by Ms. Sabah Aslam Executive Director, ICR..

While speaking to the forum Senator Anwaar Ul Haq Kakkar talked about myth surrounding that federation has exploitative policies towards Balochistan. Senator Kakkar further added that Balochistan insurgency is deep rooted in the province and has at times rose again and again with extreme violent attacks. There has been negligence on our end and it has fanned the insurgency, said the senator. Adding further he said that there has been constant advocacy of Baloch insurgency from politicians or leaders which has worsened the situation.

Improving regional connectivity

Pakistan's location ideal to facilitate SCO members, says Zhang Ming

Secretary General SCO delivers speech at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: "Pakistan is well placed for facilitating the SCO members in improving the regional connectivity. The Central Asia countries are landlocked and Pakistan is ideally located to provide shorter sea access to these countries. This will facilitate the trade among SCO member states and even beyond. The transport corridors stand to benefit all the member states, leading to win-win cooperation. SCO is a multi-dimensional organization in terms of its scope and functioning and Pakistan can benefit greatly from it," said Secretary General Zhang Ming while he was delivering a speech at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) during his four-day visit to Pakistan.

The talk was organized by China-Pakistan Study Center at ISSI.

Secretary General SCO, Zhang Ming talked about the structure, functions, and history of the SCO in detail. While



shedding light on the difference among the member states, he mentioned that the organization was established on the guiding principles of the Shanghai Spirit. Although it started as a regional security organization, it expanded its functioning later to the economy, politics, and people-to-people contacts. The SCO is expanding. It started with the inclusion of Pakistan and India as its permanent members. Iran applied for full membership and, after fulfilling the criteria of the membership, it will be

granted permanent member status eventually. He informed the audience that, now, the SCO family comprises twenty-one members.

China is an important member country of SCO. Since its inception, it has been contributing to enhancing cooperation among the member states, particularly in the area of economic development. However, he particularly emphasized that SCO functions upon consensus-based principle, hence equally empowering all the members.

He said that SCO was established twenty years ago when the context and the needs of the time were different. Now, many geopolitical and geo-economic changes are taking place in the international arena. Therefore, SCO should adapt accordingly for its functional efficiency.

Earlier, in his welcome remarks, Dr. Talat Shabbir, Director China-Pakistan Study Center (CPSC) welcome the esteemed guest and gave a brief introduction of ISSI vision, functions, and its five centers of excellence. In his remarks, he highlighted the major features of SCO, its achievements, the challenges that it is facing, and Pakistan's contributions to it. He was optimistic about the prospects of cooperation among the SCO member states. He also informed the audience how CPSC at ISSI has been contributing to research and analyses in the field of SCO studies.

At the end, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BoG ISSI, presented ISSI memento to Zhang Ming,

Health Corner

Vaccine-related fears affect flu shot experience

ISLAMABAD: A novel long-term study of how vaccine-related fears influence flu shot outcomes has found that these fears not only reduce vaccination, but also fuel symptoms of dizziness and lightheadedness at the time of the injection.

These fears can have such a hold on some people that they may get a flu shot one year, but skip it when the next season comes around, the survey results showed.

The pandemic enabled an evaluation of COVID-19 vaccine intention and uptake as well. Responses suggested that the combination of vaccine-related fears and feeling dizzy and lightheaded while getting a flu shot led some people to say they weren't likely to get the COVID vaccine — and then not get it.

While researchers already knew these fears and symptoms exist, this study showing their impact on outcomes points to the need for interventions that address fear and potential dizziness at the time of vaccination — which hasn't been studied very much, said study author Jennifer Kowalsky, assistant professor of psychology at The Ohio State University Newark campus.

"Interventions could be developed that help people face fears — people who want to get vaccinated but have fears holding them back," Kowalsky said. "Beyond targeting fears, we could also improve the experience when the person is getting vaccinated to reduce the risk and severity of symptoms."

The study was published recently in the journal Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being.

There is one technique recommended by the World Health Organization that could help people sustain oxygen flow to the brain — which may help fend off feelings of lightheadedness — when they're getting a vaccine, Kowalsky noted. Called applied muscle tension, it involves crossing your legs and repeatedly tightening core and lower body muscles to briefly raise blood pressure. A 2018 study led by Kowalsky found this practice can reduce feelings of lightheadedness and dizziness (called vasovagal symptoms) with people highly fearful of blood and needles undergoing a simulated blood draw. She plans to further evaluate the technique's effectiveness in vaccine settings.

Results showed that a younger age was linked to greater vaccine-related fears and more symptoms of dizziness and lightheadedness during and after a flu shot. And no matter what it was about vaccination that scared people — needles, pain, feeling faint or possible side effects — a higher level of overall fear was associated with more intense symptoms of dizziness or lightheadedness.

"These symptoms have health and safety implications, because they increase the risk of falling," Kowalsky said. "For clinicians, it's relevant to have this in mind, that fear can predict those reactions. If someone shares they are feeling fearful, keeping a close eye on them is important because they may be at risk for those feelings of dizziness or lightheadedness."

A more detailed analysis of flu shot outcomes showed that having vaccine-related fears lowered intentions to get vaccinated, which in turn led to a decision not to get a shot — in some cases, even those who were vaccinated in the 2019-20 season opted out during the 2020-21 flu season.

"We should not assume that a person who has been vaccinated in the past will automatically get vaccinated again," Kowalsky said.

When it came to coronavirus vaccine decisions, a combination of fear and feelings of dizziness and lightheadedness with a 2019-20 flu shot contributed to lower uptake of the COVID-19 shots when they did become available, the analysis found. (Courtesy: Science Daily)



Remembering Oan Rizvi

ISLAMABAD: The 23rd death anniversary of former controller PTV late Oan Mohammad Rizvi will be held today at Imam Bargah G/6-2. Renowned religious scholars Allama Shenshah Naqvi Ali Raza Rizvi and Waseem Baloch will address the gathering while Qari Najam Mustafa will recite the verses from Holy Quran. PR

Fascist Modi gov't unabated persecutions

Yasin forced to fast unto death despite worsening health condition: Mushaal

Laments world's criminal silence over Kangaroo courts' callous attitude towards JKLF chief

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Lashing out the world powers and UN bodies' criminal silence and callous attitude towards Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) chairman Yasin Malik, Peace and Culture Organisation Chairperson Mushaal Hussein Mullick said that he announced fast unto death from Friday against his judicial murder by kangaroo courts in fraudulent cases.



Mushaal, who is the wife of Yasin Malik, in a statement feared that she was saddened to even think that Yasin, with his fast deteriorating health condition, has decided to go on a hunger strike.

She said that the JKLF chairman was implicated in fictitious and fabricated cases in a clear attempt to politically victimise him, who was even denied the right of personal appearance in the ongoing trial, in complete contravention of legal and democratic norms.

Therefore, Mushaal stated that he was left with no legal recourse, eventually he took the decision of going on a hunger strike unto death in the Tihar jail death cell.

She lamented that the world's powers and so-called human right organizations' criminal silence pertaining to the inhuman and cruel treatments being meted out by the Indian fascist Narendra Modi-led government against Kashmiri people especially Yasin Malik raised many eyebrows.

The hurriedly leader stated that the world treated the Kashmiri people as if the world did not belong to them.

"Why are we living in a world where we will not be heard until we go on strikes or are dead? Do our voices not matter? Are we Children of lesser God?", she questioned.

Mushaal went on to say: "His 10-year-old daughter Raziyah Sultana urged her father not to go on hunger strike, hoping the world listens to the cry of this Kashmiri child."

The Chairperson urged that the world and human right organizations should take notice of this grave human right violations of depriving Yasin Malik of all fundamental and legal rights and pressed India to ensure his early and safe release.

However, she maintained that the Kashmiris' struggle for the right of self-determination would continue and the draconian strong-arm tactics of the Indian government cannot dampen the courage of brave Kashmiri people and they would fight till their last breath to turn the dream of right to self-determination a reality.

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Historical roots of Hindutva

Aslı Nur Düzgün

Closely linked with Narendra Modi, who started his political leap from the presidency of the state of Gujarat to the prime minister of India in the 2014 elections, the increasing hatred of Islam in Indian society has been on the agenda for a long time. According to Human Rights Watch 2022 report, the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (Indian People's Party-BJP) not only embraces acts and policies that discriminate against Muslims and other non-Hindu religious minorities (Christians, Sikhs, Dalits, Adivasis, etc.) but also turns up its pressure on civil society and the media. Academics, journalists, or activists who criticize the government and its policies are suppressed. The ruling party also calls for an economic boycott of Muslims' employment and trade. The Islamophobia and violence against Muslims supported by the ruling party, combined with the pacification of the police, have made Hindu nationalists even more daring.

Antony Blinken, the US secretary of state, drew attention to the rising attacks in India in the meeting of the State Department's International Religious Freedom Report at the beginning of June. At the same meeting Rashad Hussain, the US ambassador-at-large for International Religious Freedom, and voiced concern over the treatment of several religious communities in the country by addressing the Indian government as the supporter of these attacks.

In addition, Ilhan Omar, a US Democrat congresswoman, declared that India should regard as a "Country of Particular Concern" under the US International Religious Freedom Act, in which economic sanctions can be led in extreme cases. At least fifteen countries' and organizations' condemnations were issued, including the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Gulf Cooperation Council, Türkiye, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iran, and Jordan. In some countries, there were even calls for a boycott of Indian products. After all these backlashes, due to trade interdependencies and alliances, the Indian ruling party, accounting that these people were extremists and did not reflect the party view, expelled Naveen Kumar Jindal from the party and suspended Nupur Sharma. This act was actually reflecting the norms of the BJP which is the distortion of the facts for its interests.

Radicals constructed an anti-Islamic Hindu civil religion through religious rituals. In the 20th century, anti-Islam sentiments in India were revived on these roots as well as with the help of the Hindutva manifesto written by Vinayak Savarkar. The resurrection wave has brought forth lobbies protecting Hindu interests against Muslims such as the Hindu Mahasabha or Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). RSS was one of the most dangerous aggressive armed organizations founded on Hindutva ideology. In addition to promulgating their ideology in society, they also provided military training and spread it in India by constantly opening new offices. Things were going well for the organizations like the RSS until the time when Mahatma Gandhi has come to power. He was a leader struggling in well with Pakistan and cooperating with Muslims and was assassinated by an RSS member. Then

and included religious reforms to make Hinduism attractive.

The moderate community, Brahma Samaj, was pro-Western and founded by Rammohun Roy. The other clique was the Arya Samaj community founded by Swami Dayananda Sarasvati and, unlike Brahma Samaj, embraced radical Hinduism. It constructed an anti-Islamic Indian identity and was the founder of ethnic and offensive "Hindutva" nationalism. First the moderates, then the radicals became active at the Indian National Congress.

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there was outrageous violence between Hindus and Muslims, and almost one million people lost their lives.

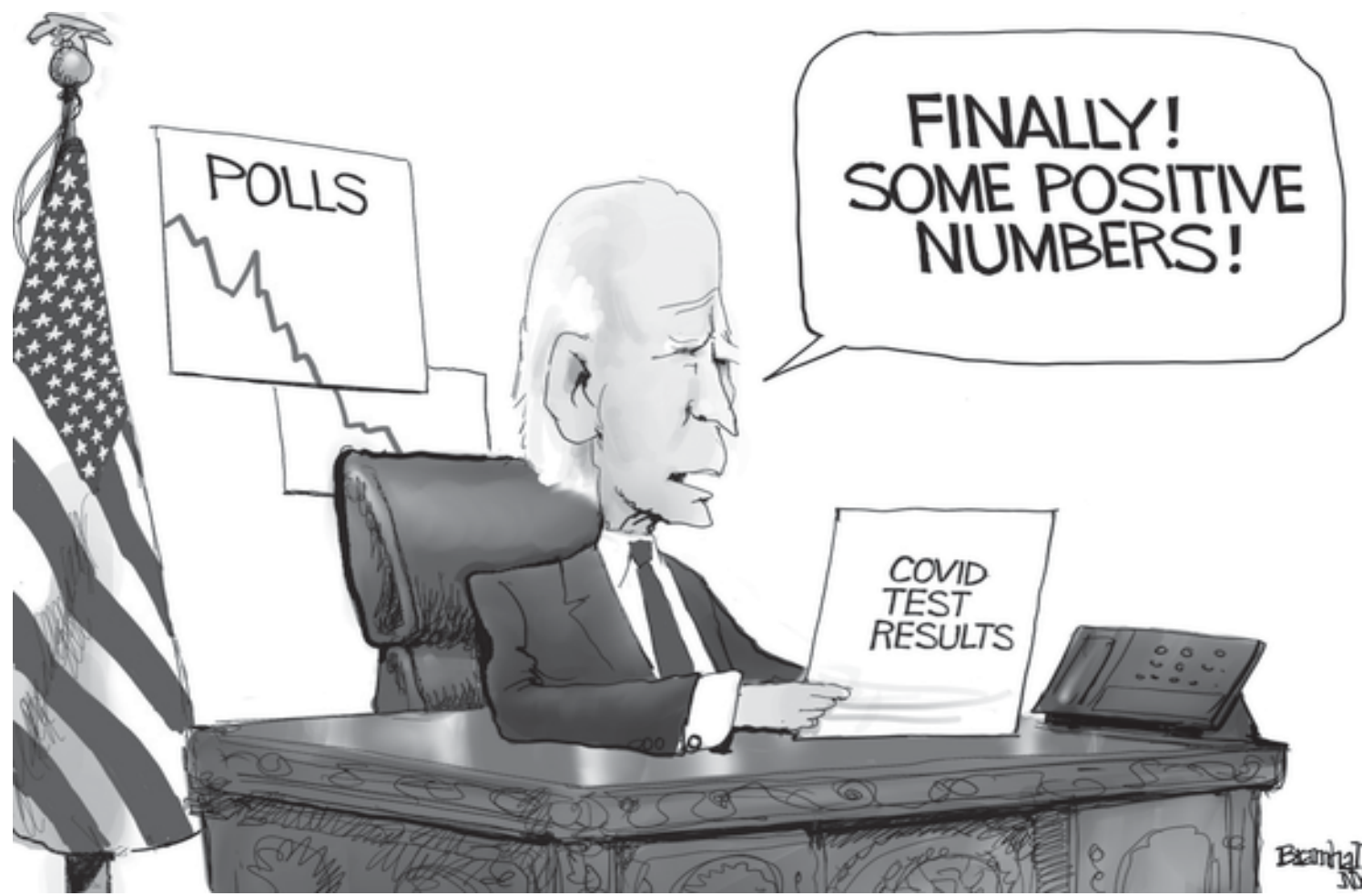
The RSS and its successors, which went underground after the assassination of Gandhi, started to appear again after the 1950s and the number of registered members of the organization was almost half a million at the time. The oppression they faced led them to enter politics and they entered politics in the 50s with the Bharatiya Jana Sangh party. Modi is a life-long member of the RSS, who was assigned by the RSS to the BJP. Therefore the Islamophobic attacks that happen within the Indian society (in Ibn Khaldun's words) also demonstrate the inter-tangled relationship between the societies that follow the religion of their leaders and the leaders who are the mirrors of their societies.

Far-right waves increasing in the atmosphere of globalization along with uncertainty and chaos in the world result in self-glorification by oppressing others as understood in recent events, the diplomatic reactions of the states seem to have worked on the BJP government. Therefore, it is necessary to increase the diplomatic pressure on India in the fight against Islamophobia.

The writer is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of International Relations at Istanbul Medeniyet University and continues dissertation studies at Lund University, Courtesy AA

Tensions escalated once again in India last two months when BJP national spokesperson Nupur Sharma, Head of Media Department of BJP Naveen Kumar Jindal and youth wing leader Harshit Srivastava made libelous statements against the Prophet Muhammad and his wife the noble Aisha. On that,

Indian Muslims also protest-



Heat waves & wildfires

Climate change increases hot and dry conditions that help fires spread faster, burn longer and rage more intensely. In the Mediterranean, that has contributed to the fire season starting earlier and burning more land. Last year more than half a million hectares burned in the European Union, making it the bloc's second-worst forest fire season on record after 2017. Hotter weather also saps moisture from vegetation, turning it into dry fuel that helps fires to spread.

A heat wave that occurred once per decade in the pre-industrial era would happen 4.1 times a decade at 1.5°C of warming, and 5.6 times at 2°C. Letting warming pass 1.5°C means that most years "will be affected by hot extremes in the future. Greenhouse gas emissions from human activities have heated the planet by about 1.2 Celsius since pre-industrial times. That warmer baseline means higher temperatures can be reached during extreme heat events.

Every heat wave that what we are experiencing has been made hotter and more frequent because of climate change. Europe is in the grip of a record-breaking heat wave and wildfires are raging across the Mediterranean. Here's how climate change drives these events. Hotter, more frequent heat waves Climate change makes heat waves hotter and more frequent. This is the case for most land regions.

But other conditions affect heat waves too. In Europe, atmospheric circulation is an important factor.

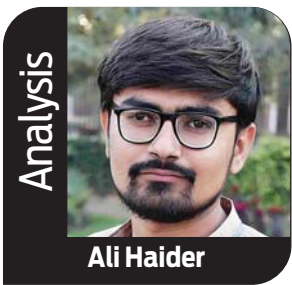
A study in the journal Nature this month found that heat waves in Europe have increased three-to-four times faster than in other northern mid-latitudes such as the United States. The authors linked this to changes in the jet stream a fast west-to-east air current in the northern hemisphere. To find out exactly how much climate change affected a specific heat wave, scientists conduct attribution studies.

Since 2004, more than 400 such studies have been done for extreme weather events, including heat, floods and drought calculating how much of a role climate change played in each. This involves simulating the modern climate hundreds of times and comparing it to simulations of a climate without human-caused greenhouse gas emissions. For example, scientists with World Weather Attribution determined that a record-breaking heat wave in western Europe in June 2019 was 100 times more likely to occur now in France and the Netherlands than if humans had not changed the climate.

The global average temperature is around 1.2C warmer than in pre-industrial times. That is already driving extreme heat events. On average on land, heat extremes that would have happened once every 10 years without human influence on the climate are now three times more frequent. Temperatures will only cease rising if humans stop adding greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. Until then, heat waves are set to worsen. A failure to tackle climate change would see heat extremes escalate even more dangerously.

Countries agreed under the global 2015 Paris Agreement to cut emissions fast enough to limit global warming to 2°C and aim for 1.5°C, to avoid its most dangerous impacts. Current policies would not cut emissions fast enough to meet either goal. Countries such as Portugal and Greece experience fires most summers, and have infrastructure to try to manage them though both have received emergency EU help this summer. But hotter temperatures are also pushing wildfires into regions not used to them, and thus less prepared to cope.

Anemia a common problem in pregnancy



This cross-sectional study was conducted to estimate the prevalence of anemia in pregnancy in Pakistan. Blood samples of 500 random patients from Karachi, 250 from Khan-e-wal, 390 from Lahore, 100 from Faisalabad, 300 from Mardan and 1369 from Hyderabad were collected and analyzed. The overall prevalence rate of anemia in pregnancy including different cities of Pakistan was found to be 69.4%. This cross-sectional study revealed that anemia is a common problem in pregnancy regarding iron, folate and may be vitamin B12 insufficiency and the deficiency of anyone from these lead to the development of physiological defects in the fetus during pregnancy. We were found that the socio-economic and demographic factors like poor dietary habits badly affect the pregnancy status.

oral and IV remedies. During this cross-sectional study we concluded that iron deficiency anemia (IDA) is the most prevalent type of anemia during pregnancy in Pakistan. Introduction: Anemia originates from a Greek word anemia which means "lack of blood". This condition leads to the reduction of red blood cells or the oxygen carrying capacity of RBCs is reduced to cope with the normal physiologic demands of the body. World health organization (WHO) defines anemia in pregnancy when hemoglobin concentration <11.0 g/dl and further categorized into mild anemia (Hb 9-10.9 g/dl) moderate anemia (Hb 7-8.9 g/dl) and severe anemia as (Hb < 7 g/dl) [1,2]. This condition is common in women who have reached the stage of pregnancy.

Anemia is predicted to affect 43% of people in poor countries and 9% of people in rich countries [18,21,23]. Anemia is thought to play a role in more than 115,000 maternal deaths. Annually there are 591,000 maternal fatalities and 591,000 prenatal deaths in all over the world. Anemia can strike at any age, but it is more common in women during pregnancy because of increased iron supply, physiologic demands, and bacterial infections.

The most prevalent type of anemia is nutritional anemia; Iron, folic acid, and vitamin B12 are among the most important

nutritional deficiencies throughout the developing countries. Iron and folate insufficiency is probably the most common cause of anemia in pregnant women. Poor hygiene may also be the contributing factor to infections and infestations. 75% of anemia cases are due to iron deficiency. In Pakistan the prevalence of anemia among the married women aged 15-44 is reported to be 26% in urban areas and 47% in rural areas.

The deficiency of iron in the body is caused by intake of foods which has insufficient supply of iron and less availability of used iron regarding the need during pregnancy. During third trimester of pregnancy the consumption of iron rises about more than seven times than the first trimester of pregnancy. Etiology of Anemia during pregnancy: While mild anemia is normal for some individuals during pregnancy. However if left untreated it may cause significant issues that require further developed clinical treatment. Physiological pallor is a common condition related with pregnancy while the general blood volume changes during pregnancy, the fluid (plasma) volume builds more than expansion in the red cell volume. The outcome is a lower level of red cells in general blood volume, a change that is reflected in a hemoglobin test.

During pregnancy depleting iron stores may also contribute to maternal anemia. Your body

works more earnestly to give the right sustenance to your developing child; causing blood volume to increment by around 45%. That is stage where that physiological illness may become an integral factor. The body additionally gives child the iron expected to make their own hemoglobin. The assessment of the contribution of each etiological factor of anemia is problematic because the maternal physiologic changes swap the parameters which are helpful in the diagnoses of anemia and nutritional deficiencies during pregnancy. For example serum vitamin B12 level is gradually decreases towards the end of pregnancy.

The etiologic pattern during pregnancy is probably complex because of the existence of nutritional deficiencies and infections simultaneously. Parasitic infections may cause anemia like malaria, schistosomiasis and hookworm infection. Sometimes, bone marrow aspirates are used to diagnose nutritional deficiencies. It is observed that the immune compromised pregnant women may develop anemia e.g in case of having HIV disease. Thus from the above discussion it is concluded that, various etiologic factors are responsible for anemia that changes in association with season.

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'No bud is safe here'

About three years ago today, I saw an Indian Majlis Mushaira on the television screen. But the special feature of this mushaira which made it unique from other mushairas was the participation of India's famous poet Latahija in this mushaira, in this mushaira Lata Haya read a long poem titled "No bud is safe here". In this poem, Lata pointed to the increasing incidence of rape against women in Indian society, Lata explained that incidents of adultery, sexual abuse and harassment of adult women were already happening but Among them, the most frightening, dangerous and abominable situation that has come to light is the increasing incidence of sexual abuse among young children.

It has become helpless to prevent such incidents. Every day there are cases of sexual abuse of girls, FIRs are registered against the culprit in the police station, news is broadcasted in the media, and the public has just got a topic to make people angry. It goes. The matter is cooled by simply condemning the minister and government officials and dismissing the matter. The judiciary is also helpless and the judiciary has not yet hanged any criminal and has not set an example for others. In the last stanza of the poem, he was disappointed with the police, the minister, the government and the judiciary, and gave a message to the parents that do not expect anyone to protect you and your little ones, but you yourself should wake up and take care of yourself.

Protect the buds yourself, watch out for those beasts you suspect are eyeing your buds for their sexual desire. Talking about the heartbreaking events that happened. By the way, just as it was mentioned by Latahiana, the same is true of our beloved country Pakistan today. Every day, innocent people are brutally killed. The government is also powerless. On the other hand, the parents are curious as to how they can provide protection to their young girls. There are some suggestions in the poor understanding of the man. It's over, the veil of lust has fallen on our eyes, watching porn movies and making small children and girls the target of brutality. Yes, people are taking initiative from each other to

reach the other world beyond the earth and Hampuran is the number one in watching movies, so keep an eye on every move of your children so that the same accident does not happen to them tomorrow.

What happened to two Afghan girls, believe me, there is a very painful video and the news of the death of these girls, I pray that no one's children should be treated like this and their parents and families should not suffer this pain. I request all the parents to please do not let their children out of their sight. Please drop the children from school and bring them back home because the situation in our country is very bad right now. Beasts in the form of humans are roaming around. I request all my sisters and brothers. Try to understand the situation, these days there are many cases of sexual abuse of small children and girls, that's why you should protect your children. Take care everyone please try to understand the situation of the time. Keep working for the safety of children. Take care all brothers around you.

Keep a close watch on your sons not only on girls, mothers also pay attention to their training. Court marriage is not a fantasy but a responsibility. Why is it so dark that one whose warts are not even wet, he takes someone's daughter away? So much ignorance that Ladda starts playing online games with respect and her parents don't know. In the last few years, most of the boys who killed little girls after raping them were thirteen to eighteen years old. By giving teenagers luxuries like the internet and cell phones, remove the word "kids' privacy" from their vocabulary.

Blame those spoons who empty the cage by putting grains. Then they make a statement from the bird that "I did not leave the house with anything valuable." Who will tell them that? The most valuable thing in the house is the presence of parents. It is a matter of concern for us in the society that how our little souls are being killed mercilessly in the style of Jahiliyyah. It is the end of the indifference of the provincial and central governments that we are going through such incidents day by day but the rulers do not miss it.

The writer is senior analyst.

Ukraine, Russia sign grain export deal with UN, Turkey

Deal expected to ease global food crisis

ANKARA/ISTANBUL: Türkiye, the UN, Russia, and Ukraine on Friday signed a deal in Istanbul to resume Ukraine's Black Sea grain exports. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres attended the Signature Ceremony of Initiative on the Safe Transportation of Grain and Foodstuffs Ukrainian Ports Document at the Dolmabahçe Palace along with the representatives from Russia and Ukraine.



"We are proud of being instrumental in an initiative that will play a major role in the solution of the global food crisis that has occupied the whole world for a long time," Erdogan said. The president added: "We will contribute to preventing the danger of hunger that awaits billions of people in the world." The deal came after a general agreement reached between the parties on a UN-led plan during talks in Istanbul on July 13 to form a

coordination center to carry out joint inspections at the entrance and exit of the harbors, and to ensure the safety of the routes. Internationally praised for its

mediator role, Türkiye has coordinated with Moscow and Kyiv to open a corridor from the Ukrainian port city of Odesa to resume global grain shipments which are stuck due to the

Russia-Ukraine war, now in its fifth month.

Speaking ahead of the ceremony, Guterres thanked Türkiye for its "facilitation and persistence" in signing of the grain deal. This initiative must be fully implemented because the world so desperately needs it, the UN chief stressed, calling the deal a "beacon of hope in the Black Sea." "It will bring relief for developing countries on the edge of bankruptcy and the most vulnerable people on the edge of famine," he said.

Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu and Ukrainian Infrastructure Minister Oleksandr Kubrakov each signed separate but identical agreements with UN and Turkish officials on reopening blocked Black Sea delivery routes, at a ceremony. Ukrainian officials said they did not want to put their name on the same document as the Russians because of the five-month war.

Xi wishes Biden speedy recovery from COVID-19



BEIJING: China's President Xi Jinping sent a message on Friday wishing US President Joe Biden a speedy recovery from COVID-19. "I would like to extend my sincere sympathy to the US president and wish him a speedy recovery," Xi said in the message. On Thursday, White House spokeswoman Karine Jean-Pierre said Biden, 79, was experiencing "very mild symptoms" and had started taking the Paxlovid COVID-19 pill. Biden said he is "doing well" after testing positive for the coronavirus.

He said in a video message: "This morning I tested positive for COVID, but have been double vaccinated, double boosted; symptoms are mild. I really appreciate your concerns, but I'm doing well, getting a lot of work. I'm going to continue to get it done." Biden is currently isolated at the White House and "will continue to carry out all of his duties fully during that time," said Jean-Pierre.

Turkey down 2 drones targeting military base in Iraq:

BAGHDAD: Turkish forces shot down two drones targeting its military base in Iraq's Duhok province on Friday, a local official said. Two drones targeted the Turkish base in the Bamarne area in the semi-autonomous region of Kurdistan at 6:30 a.m. local time (0330 GMT), and were shot down by the Turkish forces, Mayor of the Bamarne area Miran Ismail said. There were no casualties in the attack, Ismail said. No group has yet claimed responsibility for the attack. The drone attack came two days after a suspected Turkish bombardment hit a Duhok resort in the Kurdistan region, leaving nine civilians dead and dozens of others wounded.

The Iraqi government accused the Turkish forces of carrying out the attack, a charge that Ankara has denied. Turkish forces frequently carry out ground operations, airstrikes, and artillery bombardments in Iraq's Kurdistan, especially the Qandil Mountains, the main base of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The PKK, listed as a terrorist organization by Türkiye, the U.S., and the European Union, has been rebelling against the Turkish government for more than three decades.

US main "hurdle" for nuke deal: Iran

TEHRAN: The Iranian Foreign Ministry said Friday that the United States is the main obstacle to reaching an agreement that would save the 2015 nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). "False dichotomy between JCPOA (of which Iran, unlike the U.S., remains a party) and good ties between Iran and its neighbors, including Russia, doesn't hide the fact that indecision of the unfaithful U.S. is the main hurdle for a deal," Spokesman Nasser Kanaani tweeted.

"Our neighborly policy is not contingent on JCPOA or U.S. permission," he said with reference to the recent interview by CNN with Robert Malley, the U.S. special envoy for Iran, who said that Iran has to choose between the revival of the JCPOA and siding with the Russians.

During the Tuesday visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to the capital Tehran, the two sides agreed to develop Iran's gas and oil sectors through the investment of the Russian state-owned Gazprom company. Iran and Russia are under strict sanctions by the West, the former over the issues surrounding its nuclear program and the latter over the Ukrainian conflict.

Israeli air raid kills 3 soldiers in Syria

DAMASCUS: An Israeli strike killed three Syrian soldiers and wounded seven others near Damascus early Friday, the Syrian defence ministry said. "The Israeli enemy carried out an air strike... from the direction of the occupied Syrian Golan... The aggression killed three soldiers and wounded seven others," the ministry said in a statement. Syrian air defence intercepted some of the missiles, the statement said. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights war monitor said that three more people had been killed and that ten people were wounded in total.

The monitor, which relies on a wide network of sources inside Syria, said that the strikes targeted an airforce intelligence facility, and a high-ranking officer's office, also striking a car near the Mezzeh military airport. The missiles also destroyed an "Iranian weapons depot," the monitor said. Since civil war broke out in Syria in 2011, Israel has carried out hundreds of air strikes against its neighbour, targeting government troops as well as allied Iran-backed forces and Hezbollah fighters.

While Israel rarely comments on individual strikes, it has acknowledged carrying out hundreds of them. The Israeli military says the strikes are necessary to prevent its arch-foe Iran from gaining a foothold on its doorstep. Last month Israeli strikes on Damascus International Airport rendered its runways unusable for weeks. Besides the extensive damage caused to civilian and military runways, the monitor said the strikes had targeted nearby warehouses used as weapons depots by Iran and Hezbollah.

The conflict in Syria started with the brutal repression of peaceful protests and escalated to pull in foreign powers and global jihadists. The war has killed nearly half a million people and forced around half of the country's pre-war population from their homes. Israeli strike kills three soldiers near Damascus: Syrian ministry

N. Korea may conduct nuclear test within month: South

SEOUL: South Korean President on Friday claimed that North Korea is ready to conduct a nuclear test at any time, local media reported. According to US authorities, Pyongyang has completed all preparations and is expected to carry out a nuclear test within the month, Yonhap News Agency quoted President Yoon Suk Yeol as saying.

"We believe that not only at the end of this month, but ever since my inauguration, it's fully ready and able to do it whenever it decides," Yoon told reporters. Yoon's statement came after his intelligence chief's recent unannounced visit to Washington. The tension on the peninsula increased in 2020 when North Korea attacked and blew up the inter-Korean liaison office along the border. Seoul warned of a strong response if Pyongyang "further worsens the situation."

However, the tensions have further soared on the Korean Peninsula in 2021, when both Seoul and Pyongyang ramped up drills to show off their military might.

Last month, the US, South Korea and Japan announced plans to bolster security ties and agreed to jointly counter threats from North Korea if Pyongyang carries out another nuclear test.

The US and South Korea have extended several offers of dialogue to North Korea to ease current tensions in the Korean Peninsula but North Korea has not responded to them. On May 27, China and Russia vetoed new UN Security Council sanctions that would have been imposed on North Korea in retaliation for its continued ballistic missile tests, which it conducts in violation of previous council resolutions.

Lavrov to address Arab League today

CAIRO: Russia's top diplomat will address the Arab League at its Cairo headquarters Sunday, the organisation said, days after Russia took part in a summit hosted by Iran, a regional rival of some Arab states. Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov of Russia will meet Arab League head Ahmed Aboul Gheit and representatives of the 22 nations that make up the pan-Arab bloc. The United States has sought to isolate Russia on the global stage over its invasion of Ukraine, with Secretary of State Antony Blinken refusing to meet Lavrov earlier in July at a Group of 20 meeting in Bali.



Asked about Lavrov's trip, State Department spokesman Ned Price said the United States was "less concerned with whom Foreign Minister Lavrov and his colleagues are

communicating and more focused on the messages they're hearing." "We understand that countries around the world have individual unique relations with Russia. But there are basic principles," he said, including "the idea that might in a 21st century can't make right." On Tuesday, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi hosted a summit that was attended by his Russian

and Turkish counterparts, Vladimir Putin and Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

The meeting was nominally about conflict-ridden Syria, where Iran and Russia back the government while Turkey supports anti-regime groups. Turkey later announced that it had reached an agreement to allow grain out of blockaded Ukrainian ports. The war in Ukraine has caused food

insecurity in Arab nations, many of which are heavily dependent on wheat imports from the former Soviet state. The Tehran summit came days after US President Joe Biden toured the Middle East, where he visited Israel, the Palestinian territories and Saudi Arabia.

In Jerusalem, Biden and Israel's caretaker Prime Minister Yair Lapid announced a new security pact which commits Washington to never allow Iran to acquire a nuclear weapon. And in Saudi Arabia, he stressed that the US "will not walk away and leave a vacuum to be filled by China, Russia or Iran". Some Arab countries, namely Sunni-ruled ones, have tense ties with Iran which they accuse of involvement in many regional conflicts, including the wars in Syria.

Sonia Gandhi questioned in money laundering probe

NEW DELHI: Indian investigators have summoned Sonia Gandhi, president of the opposition Congress party, for questioning on money laundering accusations that her allies have blamed on an abuse of power. The 75-year-old has been a driving influence in her once-dominant party since the 1991 assassination of her husband, former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, and heir to a political dynasty that stretches back to the country's independence from Britain. Authorities are probing a decade-old complaint filed by a lawmaker from the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), who accused her family of misusing Congress funds to buy a now-defunct newspaper business and personally acquire its highly



valuable property portfolio. The Gandhi family has denied the allegations and Congress has accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi's party of misusing its power. "Our nation's institutional agencies cannot be pawns in BJP's vendetta politics," Congress tweeted yesterday. "The misuse of (the Enforcement Directorate) to attack opposition needs to stop." Gandhi was initially summoned last month by the Enforcement Directorate, which probes financial crimes in India, but her

questioning was delayed after she was hospitalised with a coronavirus infection.

Her son Rahul, who leads the party in parliament, was questioned for several days in June over the same allegations. Yesterday Sonia was accompanied by Rahul and her daughter Priyanka as she travelled to the Enforcement Directorate's office for questioning, arriving around 1pm local time, according to local media. Leaders of several opposition parties issued a joint statement condemning the investigation. Modi's government had "unleashed a relentless campaign against its opponents and critics through the mischievous misuse of investigative agencies," the letter read. "Prominent leaders of a number of political parties have been deliberate-

ly targeted and subjected to harassment in an unprecedented manner."

"This is a conspiracy to silence us and the intention is to rid the country of any opposition parties," Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera told reporters yesterday, before Sonia Gandhi left for questioning at the finance ministry's Enforcement Directorate. Lawmakers from the Congress party staged a protest inside and outside parliament, holding posters and shouting slogans that accused Modi and his government of pursuing a political vendetta. The BJP lawmaker behind the complaint, Subramanian Swamy, accused the Gandhis of forming a shell company and illegally gaining control of property worth \$300m.

Sri Lanka's new cabinet sworn in

Security forces dismantle main protest camp

COLOMBO: Eighteen ministers including Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena were sworn into Sri Lanka's new cabinet before President Ranil Wickremesinghe here on Friday. The President's Office said that among those who took oaths as cabinet ministers were Ali Sabry as the minister of Foreign Affairs, Harin Fernando as the minister of Tourism and Lands, Nalin Fernando as the minister of Trade, Commerce and Food Security, Kanchana Wijesekera as the minister of Power and Energy.

Dinesh Gunawardena was sworn in as the prime minister earlier in the day, and he also held the position of the minister of Public Administration, Home Affairs, Provincial Councils, and Local Government. The new cabinet of ministers was sworn in after Ranil Wickremesinghe won an election in parliament on July 20 to become the new president of Sri Lanka following the resignation of Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

Sri Lankan security forces raided the main anti-government protest camp in the capital Colombo early Friday, dismantling it and evicting activists gathered outside the president's office. The raid came a day after veteran politician Ranil Wickremesinghe — who vowed tough action against demonstrators — was sworn in as the crisis-hit country's new president, replacing Gotabaya Rajapaksa, whom protesters forced to step down.

Troops and police commandos armed with riot gear swooped in on the protesters blocking the Presidential Secretariat in the capital hours before they were due to vacate the area. Hundreds of soldiers removed barricades set up by protesters blocking the main gate of the Presidential Secretariat, which demonstrators had partly overrun earlier this



month. An armoured personnel carrier was also seen in the area. Activists had announced they planned to hand over the building, a symbol of state authority, on Friday afternoon, after a cabinet was sworn in by Wickremesinghe.

The cabinet, which is expected to feature a cross-section of political parties, faces the difficult task of steering the coun-

try out of its worst economic crisis since gaining independence from Britain. Witnesses saw soldiers surrounding the sea-front presidential office and removing temporary structures set up in the area to provide logistics for thousands of anti-government demonstrators since early April.

Security forces used loud hailers asking a few hundred protesters to pull back and confine themselves to a designated protest site near the secretariat. Several activists were seized by troops who smashed tents set up along the main road leading to the presidential office. Police cordoned off the main roads leading to the area to prevent more people from joining the protesters.

