



**PTI responsible for economic crisis: Saad**

Federal Minister for Railways Khawaja Saad Rafique says the previous Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government was responsible for the present economic crisis and inflation. The coalition government has taken all effective measures to put the country on the way to progress and prosperity. The PTI chief was introduced as a third alternative in politics and investment was made on him from inside and outside the country.



**PTI never oppose full court bench formation: Asad Umar**

Former federal minister Asad Umar says Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has no objection to the formation of a full court Supreme Court bench in cases related to the CM Punjab election. PTI never opposed the formation of a full SC bench in CM election case. PTI never spoken nor issued any statement related to coalition govt.'s full bench demand. Where did it prove that these 25 members were directed to vote for Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi.

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**Integrity**

Army Chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa chairs the Corps Commanders' Conference at the General Headquarters, Rawalpindi, on Monday.



Photo: ISPR

**Military huddle reviews border & internal security**

Armed forces reaffirm full support to civil admin in rescue activities

Staff Reporter

RAWALPINDI: The 249th Corps Commanders' Conference on Monday reaffirmed resolve of the Armed Forces to extend complete support to civil administration in rescue and rehabilitation activities. The Corps Commander Conference held at GHQ was presided over by Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

The Forum took comprehensive review of the security situation with particular focus on Border and Internal Security. The COAS lauded successful ongoing counter terrorism operations and paid rich tribute to the supreme sacrifices of officers and men to ensure security of borders and safety of masses. The COAS also appreciated the efforts of formations in relief operations to mitigate challenges of people affected due to floods and heavy rainfall in the country.

Over phone

Ch Shujaat, Fazl discuss political scenario

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) Chief Chaudhary Shujaat Hussain and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Monday held a consultative conversation on call. In their telephonic contact, the two leaders thoroughly discussed the political situation in the country. It is pertinent to mention here that the political chaos has deepened in Punjab due to the constitutional clash between the opponent parties amid the Punjab Chief Minister election.

Mazari's ruling

**PDM demands, SC rejects full court bench formation**

CJP says one who garnered more votes is out, but other is Punjab CM

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) – a ruling alliance on Monday demanded the formation of a full court bench of the Supreme Court for a hearing petition regarding the election of Chief Minister Punjab, saying this would defeat all conspiracies against democracy and democratic culture. The PDM leaders said they were not objecting to the powers of the apex court, however, they only wanted all judges should hear the petition and their verdict should be acceptable to all. They opined during the past few years it was observed that a bench comprising specific three honourable judges has been listening to cases of political nature. Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Amir and PDM President, Maulana Fazlur

Rehman along with Vice President of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Maryam Nawaz, Chairman Pakistan People's Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, PML-Q's Tariq Bashir Cheema, ANP's Aimal Wali Khan, MQM's Usama Qadri, leader of Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) Khalid Magsi, leader of Balochistan National Party (BNP) Agha Hassan Baloch and independent MNAs Aslam Bhutani and Mohsin Dawar were addressing a joint press conference centered on the current political situation that took a tailspin after Hamza Shahbaz's election as Chief Minister of Punjab.

But the Supreme Court of Pakistan (SC) rejected coalition parties' request to form a full court bench related to the recently held Punjab chief minister's re-election case, saying that the court will have to

hear more arguments before it takes a decision in this regard. Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial said that the court needs more legal clarification regarding the formation of a full bench to issue a verdict on the case. The CJP also said that he was unsure whether the decision on the said ruling will be made today.

Announcing the verdict after the break, the Supreme Court of Pakistan rejected the request of government allies and the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) to form a full court, saying that the existing three-member bench will hear the case. The apex court remarked that "We will hear the case on merit, we have examined the matter, and approve the pleas of Chaudhry Shujaat and PPP to become parties while going forward, we will see

what the full court bench has to do." Federal Law Minister Nazir Tarar contended that "We have these orders in this regard, the matter should be heard in the full court and I requested that the creation of a full court bench would increase judicial respect. If the revision is approved, the matter will go back to the previous situation."

"We have sent the prime minister home with five judges at that time you [coalition parties] were celebrating and now you are standing against this," the chief justice said, adding that if this matter crosses the limit, then a full court will be formed. Justice Ahsan reiterated that the decision to form a full court will be taken on merit; meanwhile, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar asserted that there is enough clarification in this regard.

**Economy can't afford new political crisis: Ahsan**



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal Monday said Pakistan's current economic situation could not afford any new political crisis, therefore the genuine demand for formation of a full bench of the Supreme Court to hear the case of Chief Minister Punjab should be accepted. Addressing a press conference here outside the Supreme Court, the minister said the incumbent federal government was taking the economy out of crisis towards stability but "if more political crisis is created, our efforts would go in vain and the country's economy might be in deep trouble". He said the dual standards of justice should be stopped against them adding, "we were

jailed for months and years on the basis of false cases but the PTI leaders were given free hand". "If any of the PTI leader is jailed, he/she is released within 24 hours, similarly our name has been in the Exit Control List (ECL) for over three years but the names of PTI leaders in the ECL is removed within 48 hours," he added. Ahsan Iqbal said Imran Khan and his party leaders repeatedly gave statements against the institutions and the country's judiciary but nobody takes notice.

For seven months, he said, former Chief Minister Punjab Usman Buzdar did not act upon the Court's order but no one was there to send him any notice. "With due respect we are asking that why the country's laws apply only to us and not to Imran Khan and his party," he said adding, "we do not want judiciary to become a party with the political disputes of the country".

Therefore, he said, the whole nation is demanding that the full court bench should be formed to hear the case to avoid any new dispute.

**Pak-China agree on CPEC's expansion**

Zhao Lijian says both sides well grasp CPEC's direction of development

BELJING: China and Pakistan have agreed on participation of third parties in China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and exchanges among media and think tanks, including promoting cooperation schemes involving third parties in line with the existing consensus and extending CPEC projects to Afghanistan, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian said on Monday.

During the third meeting of Joint Working Group on International Cooperation and Coordination under the CPEC held last week, both sides agreed to well grasp the general direction of development of the CPEC, he said during his regular briefing held here.

He said the two sides agreed to properly cope with risks and challenges to accumulate positive energy for, inject new impetus into, and provide a strong guarantee for the development of CPEC.

The relevant CPEC meeting held via video link and



co-chaired by China's Assistant Foreign Minister Wu Jianghao and Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood exchanged views and reached common understandings on the participation of third parties in CPEC, exchanges among media and think tanks, including promoting cooperation schemes involving third parties in line with existing consensus and extending CPEC projects to Afghanistan.

The spokesperson said that the two sides also agreed to continue to deepen media cooperation and do a good job in telling a CPEC stories, to innovate and expand cooperation among think tanks to provide more public support and insights

for the development of CPEC. China stands ready to work with Pakistan to follow through on the important consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries, and push forward all CPEC projects in a safe, smooth, and high-quality manner to better benefit the two countries and two peoples, he added. Meanwhile, in a tweet, Pakistan Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque said that the third meeting of CPEC JWG on International Cooperation placed emphasis on high-quality development of CPEC. As an open and inclusive platform, both sides welcomed interested third parties to benefit from avenues for mutually beneficial cooperation opened by CPEC, he added.

Rs5.663tr

Exports increase 40 per cent in FY2022

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The exports from the country in rupee term witnessed an increase of 40.11 per cent during the current fiscal year 2021-22 as compared to last year, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. The exports during July-June (2021-2022) were recorded at Rs. 5,663,089 million as against Rs. 4,041,927 million during the corresponding period of last year showing an increase of 40.11 per cent, according to provisional data released by PBS. Meanwhile, on year-on-year basis, the exports during the month of June 2022 increased by 39.98 per cent as compared to the exports of same month of last year.

The exports in June 2020 were recorded at Rs.596,433 million as compared to exports of Rs.426,080 million during June, 2021. On month-on-month basis, the exports increased by 16.16 when compared to the exports of Rs.513,475 million in May 2022.

Full bench plea

**Coalition govt announces to boycott SC proceedings**

Fazl says they raised a demand for the supremacy of law and justice

Senior correspondent

ISLAMABAD: The coalition government has announced to boycott the court proceedings after the Supreme Court (SC) rejected to form a full bench for hearing the Punjab Assembly deputy speaker ruling case. While addressing a press conference at the Prime Minister's House, the head of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that they raised a demand for the supremacy of law and justice in the country.

Fazlur Rehman said that the coalition government demands a full bench to hear the case instead of a three-member bench. "If a full bench is not formed, then we are rejecting the verdict of the court."

He announced that the leaders of the coalition government will not appear before the three-member bench until a full bench is not formed.

Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman along with other leaders in a press conference said that they suggested the full court bench for the supremacy of justice, the full court was suggested. Unfortunately, the

judiciary rejected our demand instead of accepting it.

"If the full court is rejected, we also reject this decision of the judiciary, we will not appear before this bench and we will boycott the case," he added.

"We also want to say that there is a long history in this political system of such decisions by the judges that have created instability and destroyed the continuation of government policies, which has also created the economic crisis. "This government wants no institution to interfere in the work that impacts the administrative functioning. Otherwise, we will advise the prime minister and the parliament to legislate so that the public's trust in courts [could be restored]."

Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Senior Vice-President Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said that if someone points a finger at a judge or bench, then they should be separated from the case. "These decisions are commonly taken by the court wherever the law and constitution are supreme. We demand the full bench due to the sensitivity of the case as it is about the parliament."

Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zard-

ari reiterated the demand of the SC full bench. He said that they have demanded the supremacy of the law and dignity of the judiciary but it was rejected. He announced to boycott the SC proceedings.

The PPP chairman and Federal Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto said that this is a unanimous decision of our alliance, adding that court repeatedly interfering in parliamentary affairs. "This case is about the parliament and when you are giving decisions about an institution, we think your entire institution should sit and decide," he said seemingly addressing the chief justice. "Had a full court listened to us then the entire country would've accepted your decision."

PML-N Vice President Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said it was a "test" for the apex court since it was a requirement of justice that a judge or bench recuse themselves from a case in which fingers were raised on them. "This is done in every court in the world where there is rule of law and the constitution," he said.

## Assertion

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan People's Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, addressing a press conference along with President Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman, vice President of PML-N Maryam Nawaz Sharif, at Prime Minister Secretariat in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

# Bench-fixing a crime like match-fixing: Maryam

Criticises specific judges for hearing PML-N's cases

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Vice President Maryam Nawaz on Monday highlighted the importance of justice dispensation in society without any discrimination for achieving required goals of national development and prosperity. She said that "bench-fixing" is a crime similar to "match-fixing" and suo motu notice should be taken over it as she criticised a "specific" anti-PML-N bench being constituted for one-sided decisions.

Maryam, in a joint press conference alongside the coalition government leaders, including Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari and JUI-F chief Maulana Fazl ur Rehman, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah, said: "Institutions are being insulted from within, not outside. One wrong decision blows up an entire case. Criticism isn't needed where the right decisions are taken". Maryam said that ever since Hamza became the chief minister, PTI leaders have been repeatedly approaching SC — and this time, they jumped over the walls of the top court.

She quoted the famous saying of Winston Church-

ill, who during the World War-II had raised the question "whether the country courts are dispensing justice, if yes, no force of the world can defeat us." She said it was unfortunate that during the past few years, there was a series of "startling decisions by the judiciary", adding there could be a 'wrong

Maryam highlights importance of justice dispensation without discrimination

decision' but it should not have consistency as the court verdicts left deep impact on society for decades.

PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz said that she had been advised by 'sympathizers' not to hold the media talk as it would affect her appeal in the Pana-

ma case that was being heard by the Islamabad High Court and was in its "final stages". "However, I said that the people's representative has to think beyond themselves and think about the people." "I can write an essay praising the judiciary but one wrong decision will dismiss the entire [argument]," she said. On the other hand, a decision based on justice could withstand criticism, she said.

She said Hamza Shehbaz won the slot of Punjab Chief Minister in the run-off election, but the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) approached the Lahore Registry of Supreme Court, over jumping the court walls, that opened late night despite holiday. It was ironic that the Registrar waited for filing of the petition that wasn't even ready by that time, she added. "It never happens in filing of petitions." Maryam Nawaz expressed concern over the existing system of petition filing and constitution of court benches. She recalled that in the Senate chairman's election as many as six votes were rejected; and subsequently Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani was elected as the chairman.

## Three judges can't decide nation's fate: Bilawal

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan People's Party and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Monday said only three judges could not decide the destiny of the nation. "When all judges will hear the case, no one will have any objection to the decision," he said. He pointed out that "all institutions needed to work within their own ambit". "The verdict by a three-member bench will give an impression that the institutions are 'not neutral'," he said.

He called for the formation of a Supreme Court full bench to hear the case related to the Punjab chief minister's election. Speaking at a joint press conference along with leaders of the coalition govern-

ment, he said the full court bench was significant to avoid any "controversial and partial" verdict on the case. The presser came ahead of the resumption of a hearing by the country's top court on the petition of Pakistan Muslim League (Q) leader Chaudhry Parvez Elahi challenging the Punjab Assembly deputy speaker's ruling.

Bilawal mentioned that his party made a persistent struggle for upholding democracy in the country and rendered immense sacrifices. "We want the country to be run in accordance with the Constitution," he said. He criticized the government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf for wreaking havoc with the economy and stability of the country in the last four years

## Power shortfall nears 6,000mw

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The power shortfall in the country has reached about 6,000 megawatts, power demand in the country is 28,500 megawatts while the production lags at 22,500 megawatts. According to power division sources, the power shortfall is increasing despite heavy monsoon rains in the country and currently has neared 6,000MW.

Due to an increase in the demand for power, loadshedding of 4 to 6 hours is being carried out across the country. Earlier, K-Electric, the sole power utility in Karachi submitted a request to the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) seeking another hike of Rs11.39 in tariff under fuel adjustment charges. According to the request, the power utility has requested a massive increase of Rs11.39 for the month of June 2022.

In order to facilitate the customers due to the public holiday announced by the government amid heavy rainfall, K-Electric has extended the deadline for payments of electricity bills. According to a press statement from the power utility, the extension is applicable on bills with due dates falling between 24th July to 25th July, 2022, both days included.

These bills can now be paid latest by the new date of 26th July, 2022, the statement read.

## US Dollar jumps against rupee

KARACHI: The US dollar on Monday continued to jump against rupee in interbank as Pakistan continues to witness political instability amid a tussle between PDM and PTI following election of CM Punjab. According to forex dealers, the US dollar saw an increase in value by Rs1.87 and traded at Rs230.24. They claimed that the commercial banks are selling dollars at Rs232 while in open market, the greenback traded between Rs231 and Rs232.

At the end of week on Friday, the rupee's downward slide against US dollar continued on the fourth consecutive day and 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. 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. In an apparent attempt to downplay the depreciation, the SBP said a "better measure" of the rupee's strength is the real effective exchange rate, which takes into account the currencies in which Pakistan trades in inflation-adjusted terms.

## PPP for Sindh LG polls before Aug 28

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) has demanded the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to hold the second phase of local government (LG) elections in Sindh before August 28. In a statement, Local Government Minister Nasir Hussain Shah asserted that the LG elections were postponed on Pakistan Meteorological Department's (PMD) recommendation, demanding the electoral watchdog to hold polls before August 28.

Talking about the recent torrential rains in Karachi, Nasir Hussain Shah noted that the port city received over 200mm of rain in two days. "Officials of Sindh government and municipal authorities were on road with machinery including pumps to drain out the water," he said, adding that the roads and underpasses are clear and water is being drained from the roads of low-lying areas.

It is pertinent to mention here that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) rescheduled the second phase of the Sindh local government (LG) elections citing "possible rains and bad weather" in the province. According to a statement issued by the electoral watchdog, the second phase of the LG elections in 16 districts of Karachi and Hyderabad will now take place on August 28. The second phase of the local body elections was originally going to be held on July 24 in 16 districts of Karachi and Hyderabad division.

## Cabinet's oath

# PTI files contempt plea against Governor Punjab

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) filed contempt of court plea against Punjab Governor Baligh-ur-Rehman on Monday. The petition for contempt of court was filed by PTI leader Mian Aslam Iqbal in the Supreme Court. It was stated in the petition that the Governor Punjab has insulted the court by swearing in the cabinet of Hamza Shahbaz. Therefore, contempt of court action should be taken against Baligh-ur-Rehman.

The petition further requested to take contempt of court action against Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Hamza Shahbaz and Deputy Speaker Punjab Assembly Dost Muzaffar. It is pertinent to mention here that the political chaos has deepened



in Punjab due to the constitutional clash between the opponent parties amid the Punjab Chief Minister election.

The dispute started over Shujaat Hussain's letter that declared the PML-Q votes in favor of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Hamza Shahbaz. While it served as a setback for Hamza's opponent, who is none other than the PML-Q leader Pervaiz Elahi himself. Where

Shujaat Hussain's letter harmed PML-Q internally, it also raised serious questions regarding Supreme Court's verdict over the interpretation of Article 63 (A). Furthermore, Pervaiz Elahi has filed a petition against Deputy Speaker Dost Muhammad Mazari's ruling over the election of Punjab CM in the SC. The court's decision on the matter is of paramount importance for the future of government in Punjab.

## ECC okays cheaper RLNG for export sector

Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) has approved the provision of cheaper re-gasified liquefied natural gas (RLNG) to the export sector. Finance Minister Miftah Ismail chaired the ECC session today in which different decisions were taken. The ECC approved the provision of RLNG to export-oriented sector at cheaper rate. The government will provide RLNG to the export sector at the price of \$9 MMBtu per unit.

It was approved to provide 9 cent per kilowatt of electricity to the export units from August. It was learnt that the electricity and gas will be given to five export units at the concessional rates.

## SBP for cutting interbank trading to contain dollar

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Amid a severe shortage of US dollars that plunged the rupee to its highest weekly drop since 1998, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has discouraged interbank trading. In order to control the free-fall of rupees against the US dollar, the central bank with its limited power under the International Monetary Fund agreement urged commercial banks to manage import payment requests from their own inflows, such as exporter accruals and remittances. The sources, on the condition of anonymity, further told the publication that the banks were to seek permission from the monetary authority if they still needed to borrow.

It should be noted that the SBP didn't reply to an email seeking comment. The Pakistani rupee fell nearly 8% last week — its biggest drop



in more than two decades — as the country's foreign exchange reserves stand below \$10 billion and are only enough to cover less than two months of imports. However, SBP Acting Governor Murtaza Syed told Bloomberg that Pakistan will comfortably meet its financing needs with an IMF bailout on track.

Citing sources, the publication reported that it was earlier noted that some commercial banks are seeking permission from the SBP

and providing US dollars at a premium, which is raising costs for their clients. Commercial banks provided dollars for energy companies at rates of Rs238 and Rs242 to a dollar on July 20, about 8% higher than the official closing rate for the day.

Moreover, banks that previously released overseas payments in a day are now taking more than a week, said Raheel Ahmed, chief executive officer at VN Lakhani and Co, a Karachi-based steel importer.

## PML-N again preparing to attack SC: Fawad

Says people won't let anyone to violate the constitution.

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Fawad Chaudhry on Monday said that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has once again planned to attack the Supreme Court of Pakistan. Talking to media, Fawad said, "The PML-N is saying to form a full bench. This authority belongs to the Chief Justice, but there is no need to interpret any legal point in this case." Former federal minister said that 22 crore Pakistanis are waiting for their rights. He said that

the people will not let anyone violate the constitution. He said that people have risen to restore democracy in the country.

He said the current government by force deprived the majority vote holders of the provincial government and also in centre. He also attacked the Deputy Speaker Punjab Assembly Sardar Dost Muhammad Mazari that he ran away. PTI leader and former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry has demanded to place names of all government leaders on the ECL. According to details, Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Fawad Chaudhry, while reacting to the press conference of

the leaders of the ruling parties, said that all the characters of the film "London Nahi Jaon Ge" were present in the press conference.

Regarding Maryam Nawaz, the PTI leader said that despite being on bail, the woman continued to hold a press conference against the judiciary. Fawad Chaudhry questioned how Prime Minister House Auditorium was given to Maryam Nawaz to hold a press conference. On Zardari's visit to Dubai, Fawad Chaudhry said that Bilawal's father escaped knowing that his government was only for a few days, these people are guests for a few days and some



have packed their belongings.

He further said that Bilawal's only connection with Zulfikar Bhutto is that he was born in Benazir's house, PPP has invested Sindh's money in Punjab, look at the situation in Sindh, when it rains, Karachi becomes a dam. The PTI leader said that this government has done the work of bringing the Supreme Court under pressure. He further said that these people are bent on blackmailing the Supreme Court, we demand that the names of the leaders of these parties be included in the ECL, all of them will try to escape from the country.

# Govt to weigh all options to make people economically self-sufficient: AJK PM

30,000 people with low-income would be provided interest-free loans worth Rs1b, says Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan

**Abdul Majeed Tahir**

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan has said that the PTI government would consider all available options to make people economically self-sufficient by activating different sectors on modern lines.

In a statement issued on Monday, the PM said "Production sector was the center of focus in the budget and the basic aim was to raise production so that the state revenue increases and our demands/needs are met at local level". He said that it was for the first time in

the history of Azad Kashmir that agricultural and livestock graduates were being provided assistance in obtaining loans from banks for model farming. The markup of these loans, he said, would be borne by the Azad Kashmir government.

Similarly, he said, 30,000 people with low-income would be provided interest-free loans worth 1 billion rupees. These initiatives, he said, would be instrumental in reducing poverty and unemployment in the region. He said that the farmers will be given a subsidy of more than seven crore two lakhs. The subsidy, he said, would enable farmers to buy the highest milk producing cows

and cattle breeds.

He said that free vaccine facilities will be provided in all central district and educational level veterinary hospitals established by the Department of Livestock and Veterinary Development. He said that the government was planning to start poultry production program for widows and disabled people. The Prime Minister said that funds of Rs.1 billion 10 crores have been allocated for the Electricity Department.

"During the next financial year, 1141 HT Poles, 3881 LT Poles will be installed and 26 thousand 500 new connections will be provided to the remain-

ing population of 1 lakh 26 thousand of Azad Kashmir", the PM said. The Prime Minister said that five hundred acres of uncultivated land will be made cultivable in the agricultural sector. He said that Wildlife Breeding Centers/Zoos at Saran Pir Chinasi, Banjosa and Mangala and Patika Wildlife Park would be redeveloped on modern lines. He said that the PTI government would do all that was in the best interests of the people and the state. He said that Technical Education was being promoted to eliminate unemployment. "IT centers and vocational training centers will be established in all districts", he added.

# Establishment of High Court bench in Faisalabad demanded

**Mian Rashid Asghar**

FAISALABAD: Establishing a High Court bench is the right of Faisalabad and the business community and lawyers will fight for this right.

This was said by District Bar Association Faisalabad President Bilal Ashraf Basra while addressing the business

community at Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry today. He said that the ruler is not allowing the High Court bench to be established in Faisalabad for his own interests. He said that this demand is not only for lawyers but it includes every section of this division including the business community.

He said that our effort will be to

provide the facility of "e-court" here until the full bench is established. So that people can get rid of going around Lahore. Regarding the increasing cases of divorce and divorce, he said that the main reason for this is intolerance, lack of training and social media. However, they will soon file a petition to prevent content that harms our social fabric

through social media.

Bilal Ashraf Basra also denied the wrong impression about lawyers and said that there are good and bad people in every department. However, they never sided with the oppressor. He said that for the first time during his tenure, the membership of lawyers who abused the police was cancelled.

# Rains wreak havoc

KARACHI: People waded through a flooded road at a road after a heavy rainfall in Provincial Capital. Several people have died in rain-related incidents across Pakistan.



Photo: Online

# SECP registered 172,206 companies in FY2022

**Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) registered 26,502 new companies in FY 2021-22, which shows an increase of 4% as compared to previous FY. The total number of registered companies with SECP now stands at 172,206.

Real estate development & construction sector led the number of new incorporations with 4,791 new companies registered, followed by information technology with 3,760 new companies and trading with 3,534 new companies.

As a result of end to end digitization of the company incorporation process, about 99.5 percent of companies were

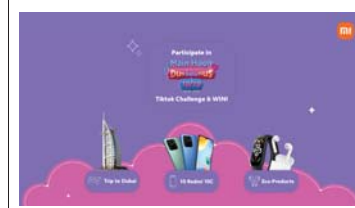
registered online while 1,640 foreign users were registered from overseas. Total capitalization (paid-up-capital) with regard to newly incorporated companies for the current month stood at Rs42.4 billion.

SECP has made significant reforms to facilitate the registration of companies by fully digitizing the registration process, along with company registration certificates. With this automation, companies can now be registered online from any part of the world, without needing to visit SECP offices. SECP's e-services have been integrated with Provincial Revenue Departments to facilitate registration of companies with Provincial Revenue Departments at the time of incorporation. Company tax numbers are also issued online.

In addition, an online portal has also been created for banks to facilitate companies in opening corporate accounts after registration. SECP has launched a WhatsApp helpline as well to provide immediate assistance to the investors. All these measures led to notable improvements in ease of doing business, one result of which can be seen through steady increase in the number of new incorporations.

During fiscal year 2022, nearly 64 percent companies were registered as private limited companies, while 33 percent were registered as single member companies. Three percent were registered as public unlisted companies, not for profit associations, foreign companies and limited liability partnership (LLP).

# Xiaomi brings forth giveaway competition of year



**Staff Reporter**

LAHORE: Xiaomi with their latest Redmi 10C has put forth a new legacy of budget devices which comes packing flagship features. The device has a brilliant battery and the biggest (6.71") screen in the industry, truly a dus bata dus device perfect for everyday use.

Along with the drop of this brilliant dus bata dus device, Xiaomi Pakistan announced its 'Dus Bata Dus tiktok challenge'. The details are simple and to the point, make a tiktok on the jingle shared by the brand and get a chance to win Redmi 10C, some cool eco products and a return ticket to Dubai. Sounds too good to be true right? But it is true, for this challenge has spread like wildfire with everyone sharing their entries to bag some freebies for themselves. Famous tiktokers have taken part in this challenge, creating fun and quirky tiktok videos using the Dus Bata Dus jingle in hopes of winning some free devices or a trip to Dubai. The roster of participants includes Kanwal Aftab, Chaudhary Zulgermain, Hoor Mahaveera, Dr. Madiha etc with growing entries and numbers.

You too can take part in this challenge, with the hashtag, Go to Xiaomi Pakistan's tiktok handle (@xiaomipakistan), use the Dus Bata Dus sound and share your video with the hashtag #MainHoonDusBataDus and get a chance to bag these amazing gifts or a return ticket to dubai absolutely free. So what are you waiting for?

# NDRMF extends grant financing of Rs2899.67m to Agri Dept KP

**Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: Secretary Ministry of Planning Development & Special Initiatives, Syed Zafar Ali Shah on Monday witnessed the signing of a Grant Implementation Agreement signed by Muhammad Israr Khan, Secretary Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperative Department KP, Shah Mahmood Khan, Secretary Planning & Development Department, KP and Muhammad Fawad Hayat, National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF) for the execution of Climate Resilience through Horticulture Interventions in KP with grant financing by NDRMF amounting Rs 2899.67million.

The ceremony was held at the Ministry of Planning Development & Special Initiatives.

Speaking at the occasion, Secretary Planning Commission, Syed Zafar Ali Shah appreciated the initiatives taken by the provincial government of KP termed it's a landmark project, contributing in climate resilience and creating highly valuable crops such as Olives and Saffron, which will help around 10,000 farmers further contributing in income generation and job opportunities.

"Horticulture is an important element and such projects will help our farmers who are the backbone of the county's economy," said Syed Zafar Ali Shah. He said that the country is facing several challenges and flood is one of them which directly affects our agriculture sector and such projects are essential to contain the disaster.

# Junaid Khan to star in drama serial 'Adan'

**Staff Reporter**

KARACHI: After ruling the screens in 2022 with one hit after the other, the talented Junaid Khan will be seen starring in the upcoming Show Case Productions 'Adan' alongside Mansha Pasha and Azfar Rehman.



Directed by the ace director Azeem Sajjad and penned down by Atiqe Inayat, 'Adan' is a plot filled with romance which culminates to a thrilling twist. "I am very excited about my latest project because the day I read the script I felt that this is something out of the ordinary for sure. Working with Shazia and Wahjhat has been an amazing experience and of course Mansha and I have a great on screen chemistry hence I just couldn't have said no to this one and I am glad I didn't", stated Junaid Khan.

# NHA fills crater caused by heavy rains

ISLAMABAD: On the instructions of Chairman National Highway Authority Captain (R) Muhammad Khurram Agha, the crater caused by heavy rains near Soan Bridge on Rawalpindi GT Road has been filled. NHA has completed the repair work, so now the traffic is flowing at the affected place near Soan Bridge. It clarified that the maintenance staff of the National Highway Authority across the country is always ready for repair work on its entire network. Due to heavy rains, NHA has taken measures to ensure immediate repair affected portion of the road. During rainy season to ensure traffic flow is the primary responsibility of NHA. In order to deal with such a situation and repair the affected roads in time, active teams of National Highway Authority are present in different areas to review their entire network.

# EPD, PHA LAHORE, Coca-Cola start tree plantation drive with 30,000 trees

**Staff Reporter**

LAHORE: Punjab Environment Protection Department (EPD) and Parks & Horticulture Authority Lahore (PHA), in partnership with Coca-Cola Export Corporation commenced the Tree Plantation Drive for 2022 at Jilani Park, Lahore.

As part of The Coca-Cola Company's purpose of "Refresh the world. Make a difference", the company will plant 30,000 trees at Jallo Forest & Wildlife Park in Lahore during the ongoing monsoon season. Coca-Cola is committed to the communities where it operates and is working to reduce its carbon footprint and protect the environment. Last year, Coca-Cola paved Pakistan's first plastic road on Ataturk Avenue in Islamabad to demonstrate the collection and re-use of large-scale PET plastic waste.

# SME-financing

# Khushhali Karobar' achieves big milestones



**Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: Khushhali Microfinance Bank Limited is a leading institution in Pakistan. Over the years, it has won four awards for being the 'Best Microfinance Bank'. Besides its vast network of more than 200 branches, it has launched a specialized SME channel - "Khushhali Karobar", with exclusive branches that provide customized Term-Financing and Running-Finance facilities for the Small & Medium Enterprises (SME) sector, with generous lending limits of up to 3 million Rupees. On the 28th of June, 2022, this fast-growing SME-Distribution channel completed its first year of successful operations. A vibrant ceremony was recently held in Gujranwala to celebrate this anniversary.

These specialized branches are already operating in Gujranwala, Gujrat, Sialkot, Faisalabad, Sargodha, and Sheikhupura. This year, Khushhali Microfinance Bank is ready to launch even more 'Khushhali Karobar' branches across Pakistan. At the completion of one year, this resourceful channel has already provided financing facilities to a large number of SME borrowers, including SMEs owned by women. Khushhali Karobar branches are also offering: Deposit, insurance, ATM, Internet banking, and full-service banking facilities to its valued customers. The Chief Executive Officer of Khushhali Microfinance Bank - Ghalib Nishtar gave an inspirational message on this occasion and said: "It is a delightful moment for the microfinance and SMEs sectors of Pakistan, as the diligent efforts of our competitive workforce are adding great momentum, for the growth and sustainability of small businesses across Pakistan. Our prestigious institution is rapidly expanding the financial outreach to the unbanked SME market, to deliver the highest standards of customer service." A dedicated team of sales and operations staff was hired and trained comprehensively for 'Khushhali Karobar'. This highly responsive team is catering to the evolving needs of small businesses and accelerating the socio-economic progress of the country.

# FINCA Microfinance Bank partners with Millat Tractors

**Staff Reporter**

LAHORE: Pakistan's leading microfinance bank, FINCA Microfinance Bank Ltd (FMBL) joins hands with the market leader in agricultural tractors and machinery, Millat Tractors Ltd (MTL). Under this collaboration, farmers who are FMBL's existing or potential customers looking to purchase a tractor for their farming needs will be able to book a tractor which will be delivered on easy terms and conditions through a quick and a hassle-free process. With a network of 80+ distributors pan Paki-



stan, MTL dealers will also assist customers with after-sales services and will provide awareness through educational web series on routine maintenance of tractors. The MOU signing ceremony was attended by key management members of both the organizations.

On this occasion, Mr. Chaudhry Mohammad Ahmad, Chief Commercial Officer at FINCA Microfinance Bank Ltd stated; "The agriculture sector contributes over 20% to the GDP and plays a vital role for the economy of Pakistan and its development. By helping farmers

acquire superior machinery on low mark-up rates, an easy and a quick delivery, our collaboration with Millat Tractors can help address some of the unmet needs of the farmers of Pakistan".

Azhar Noor, General Manager for the Marketing Division at Millat Tractors was also present and said, "FINCA Microfinance Bank is playing a vital role in the economic development of Agriculture sector, particularly in supporting small farmers. This contributes to employment opportunities & sustainability in the rural sector".



Islamabad
23° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings
Fajr 3:37 am
Zohr 12:14 pm
Asr 5:09 pm
Maghrib 7:14 pm
Isha 8:51 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

COMPLAINTS

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

NHA fills crater caused by heavy rains near Soan Bridge

Staff Reporter

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Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani telecom company, Ufone 4G has donated push-carts and food stalls to local community members in Murree to help them earn a decent livelihood for themselves and their families.

Station Commander Murree handed over the pushcarts and food stalls to deserving members of the community during a ceremony held at Murree Hills Cantonment.

No monkeypox case reported in Pakistan so far

The situation is being closely monitored by the health authorities

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination on Monday said that not a single case of monkeypox has been reported so far in Pakistan.

According to the official sources, the situation is being closely monitored by the health authorities and all the national and provincial health authorities have been advised to remain on high alert for any suspected case of monkeypox.

They added timely detection and notification are important for prompt implementation of preventive measures and all public and private hospitals have been directed to ensure readiness for isolation and treatment.

They said that concerned health authorities and professionals at all levels, stakeholders, especially the Central Health Establishment including monitoring points of entry have also been asked to remain vigilant. They said that an effective monitoring mechanism has been developed on a scientific basis at all points of entry.



They added that the screening of all incoming passengers will be ensured particularly passengers coming from African countries. They said that instructions have also been issued for strong coordination among concerned organizations while steps are also being taken for awareness of the public.

Monkeypox is a rare viral zoonotic disease that is caused by infection with

the monkeypox virus. Although the natural reservoir of monkeypox remains unknown, however, African rodents and non-human primates like monkeys may harbor the virus and infect people.

The patient develops a rash within one to three days after the appearance of fever, often beginning on the face and then spreading to other parts of the body. Other symptoms include headache, muscle aches, exhaustion, and lymphadenopathy.

The incubation period is usually seven to 14 days but can range from five to 21 days. The illness typically lasts for two to four weeks. The transmission occurs via contact with an infected animal, human, or materials contaminated with the virus.

The virus enters the body through broken skin, respiratory track, or the mucous membranes like eyes, nose or mouth. Other human-to-human methods of transmission include direct or indirect contact with body fluids, lesion materials or through contaminated clothing or lines. APP

Rains hit the capital

ISLAMABAD: A view of rain water accumulated as showing a water pond at Melody Market during heavy rain in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Pakistan Diamond Jubilee

Musical concert organized at PAC

Staff Reporter

RAWALPINDI: Punjab arts council organized a musical concert titled "Azam Alishan, Shadar Hai Pakistan" regarding the Diamond Jubilee of Pakistan.

Naheed Manzoor said on this occasion that on the occasion of Pakistan's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, we should also remember our ancestors, due to whose sacrifices we are breathing in free air.



health, agriculture, heavy industry, dams, infrastructure and services. Today, Pakistan is among the 40 largest economies in the world. And till Pakistan's platinum jubilee, Pakistan will be included in the 20 largest economies of the world,

she added. She further described that with the hard work of our scientists day and night; today we are a nuclear power. Today, no country in the world can look at Pakistan with a blind eye. I have full confidence that

the future of Pakistan is bright. In the end, he congratulated all the singers for rendering the beautiful song.

Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmed said that Pakistan is a gift from Allah to the Muslims of India. In 75 years of independence, Pakistan has progressed in all spheres of life. Today, Pakistan is valued in the Islamic world. Among the singers of the music concert were the famous singers of Azad Kashmir, Bano Rahmat, Mohsin Pasha, Samina Khalid, Syeda Bushra Wakil, Hamza Ali, Ramiz Ishaq. The dance group stole the show by presenting dances from all four provinces including Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan.

Ufone 4G supports livelihoods of local community in Murree

Staff Reporter



leaders and media personnel.

Sharing his thoughts regarding the initiative, Amir Pasha, Group Head PR and Corporate Communication PTCL & Ufone along with senior executives from the company and Cantonment Executive Officer Murree Hills Cantonment, Arfeen Zubair also attended the ceremony,

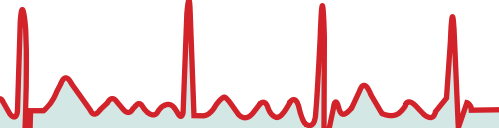
that a little push will go a long way in helping them achieve financial stability and prosperity in their lives. Ufone 4G is a Pakistani company therefore, it is always on the lookout for opportunities to create shared value for our people."

Speaking at the ceremony, Arfeen Zubair, Cantonment Executive Officer Murree Hills Cantonment said: "I

thank Ufone 4G on behalf of the entire local community of Murree for extending a helping hand when it was most needed. It is heartening to witness a leading telecom player stepping up to foster welfare and social wellbeing in the society.

Apart from leveraging its core competencies to create social good, Ufone 4G has an elaborate social responsibility programme in place to give back to the community. The CSR programme is especially focused on providing socio-economic opportunities to marginalized segments of society, so they can also grow and prosper at par with their compatriots.

Health Corner



Strengthening the immune response to cancer

ISLAMABAD: For patients with lymphoma, multiple myeloma, or certain types of leukemia, treatment with chimeric antigen receptor T cells (CAR T cells) is sometimes the last chance of overcoming the cancer.

The engineered immune cells remain in the body permanently and multiply. If the cancer flares up again, they'll go back into action. That's the theory, at least. But in practice, many patients still relapse.

A month earlier, a team led by last authors Dr. Armin Rehm and Dr. Uta Höpken from the Max Delbrück Center for Molecular Medicine in the Helmholtz Association (MDC) showed in the journal JCI Insight that shutting down the EBAG9 gene in mice led to a sustained increase in the immune response to cancer.

As soon as the EBAG9 gene was discovered, researchers recognized that it played an important role in cancer. But it took a long time to identify what that role actually was.

Then in 2015, lead author Dr. Anthea Wirges succeeded in curbing synthesis of the EBAG9 protein using microRNA. For the latest study, she used microRNA to cultivate "EBAG9-silenced" CAR T cells with different human leukemia or lymphoma cells.

"Releasing the EBAG9 brake allows the genetically engineered T cells to release more cytotoxic substances. However, they don't cause the strong cytokine storm that is typically a side effect of CAR therapy," says Wirges.

However, the first-line therapy for blood cancer will remain chemotherapy combined with conventional antibody therapy, as many patients respond very well to this.

It's very expensive because it's an individual cellular product for a single person," says Höpken. And a single treatment with that product can save a life.



ISLAMABAD: The new members after joining Private Schools Network Bhara Kahu zone pose for a group photo with Central President Dr. Muhammad Afzal Babar.

President AJK seeks world community's role in resolving K-dispute

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: President Azad Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry has said that the international community should play its due role to resolve the long running Kashmir dispute to ensure durable peace in South Asia.

"Peace in South Asia, is inescapably linked to the settlement of Kashmir dispute", the President said adding that for a last peace and stability there was dire need to resolve Kashmir dispute in line with the UNSC resolutions.

The AJK president expressed these views during his meeting with ambassadors and diplomats of America, Norway and Bulgaria here in Islamabad on Monday.

Speaking on the occasion, the president said that the world community should influence the Indian government to implement the UN resolutions and let the people of Kashmir decide their future peacefully. Referring to the abysmal situation in the Indian occupied Kashmir (IoK), Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry said that the situation in the IoK demands urgent attention of the international community.

He said that it was high time that the global community should play its role for the establishment of peace in the region and intensify its efforts to resolve the Kashmir issue that has been the cause and consequence of the continued unrest and bloodshed in the region.

On this occasion, Norwegian Ambassador Per Albert Ilsaas, Bulgarian Ambassador Irena Gancheva and American Embassy Political Section Officer Melissa, Jessica Pfleiderer, Eric and others were also present.



ISLAMABAD: The relatives of Kashmiri-origin British citizen, Farooq Ali, who was murdered in Ramada Hotel Islamabad, Dr. Rehiana Ali, Yasmeen Ali along with the lawyer Advocate Sharafat Ali addressing a press conference here on Monday.

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: Almas Ayoub Sabir
Vice Chairman: Asim Nazir Ahmad
Managing Editor: Naveed Ahmad Khan
Head Editorial Advisory Board: Amjad Mehmood
Bureau Chief Karachi: Saleem Zaman Khan.
Bureau Chief Lahore: Syed Afraz Ali Nazish

CPEC Pakistan's future

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has played a vital role in the future economic development of Pakistan, with the Gwadar port as the main component. The CPEC is one of the most important flagship projects of the five corridors launched under Belt and Road Initiative.

Review was made during the 3rd meeting of the CPEC Joint Working Group (JWG) on International Cooperation and Coordination (JWG-ICC) held in the virtual mode. It is the manifesting the historic choice of the countries and peoples, the vitality and dynamism of CPEC reflected the deep-seated mutual goodwill that lay at the heart of the bilateral relationship.

The second component of the CPEC is infrastructure, highways, waterways and bridges which have been built across Pakistan, improving the communication and road infrastructure. The important part of physical infrastructure was laying the fiber optic link from Chinese border to Pakistan to help the communication network.

Under Green Corridor, Pakistan is focusing on the agriculture and food security, and in digital corridor, we are benefiting from China's experience and expertise in the IT sector and industry. The government is developing special economic zones and encouraging relocation of Chinese industries to Pakistan not only to help the domestic market, but also to the region and exporting to other countries.

Not both the countries have agreed that CPEC's development had reached a new point, with increasing emphasis on high-quality development of industry, agriculture, IT, and science and technology, while ensuring tangible socio-economic benefits for the people. It was further noted that as a flagship of the Belt and Road Initiative, CPEC had broken new ground in strengthening international and regional connectivity, especially in the context of its extension to Afghanistan.

As an open and inclusive platform, both sides welcomed interested third parties to benefit from avenues for mutually beneficial cooperation opened up by CPEC. The two sides also agreed to support and encourage the media and think tanks to highlight CPEC's contributions as a high-impact case study of international cooperation for sustainable development.

Middle East politics: From hyper to hybrid

Marwan Bishara

As a new type of Cold War came to dominate American-Russian relations after the latter's invasion of Ukraine, major Middle Eastern players are maintaining a distance, refusing to take sides. It is a sign that the hyper-strategic alliances that polarised the region, and the world, during the old Cold War are turning hybrid, fluid, pragmatic and unpredictable.

During the old Cold War, the Middle East was characterised by greater foreign intervention and relatively more frequent high-intensity conflicts. The post-Cold War was even worse for the ill-fated Middle East - in the past 20 years, it featured most of the world's deadliest conflicts. But as the wars in Syria, Yemen and Libya wind down; as regional conflicts reach dead ends, and regional and global powers show signs of faintness and fatigue, a new geopolitical environment is now taking shape.

During his first trip to the region as president, Biden, who had only recently railed against the "pariah" regimes that rule in the Middle East, swallowed his tongue and pride at the service of the "national interest". Yet, Riyadh and Cairo rejected US dictates and even questioned its strategic competency and staying power, considering its humiliating withdrawal from Iraq and Afghanistan and its erratic behaviour over the past two decades. America's relative decline, amid China's rise and Russia's resurgence, has prompted its allies to pursue hybrid, non-exclusive foreign relations based solely on their national and regime interests. It is as if Israel's schutzpah has finally rubbed off on its neighbours, friends

and foes alike. Like Tel Aviv, important Middle Eastern players want American arms and American aid but not America's advice.

Despite being Washington's closest regional ally and the first stop on President Biden's Middle East trip, Israel has also refused to acquiesce to US wishes on not only Russia but also Iran and Palestine. In fact, Israel, which has taken the tail-wagging-the-dog dynamic to a whole new level, yet again treated America like no more than a dumb puppy. Like Israel, Saudi Arabia and its regional allies, Turkey, which straddles east and west, geographically and geopolitically, has gone hybrid for some time now. In this week's trilateral summit in Tehran, this major NATO member has reached new agreements with Washington's strategic foes, Iran and Russia; even proposing arms sales to the ayatollahs. After NATO allies refused to sell it air defence systems on acceptable terms, Turkey turned to NATO's foe, Russia, to purchase its sophisticated S-400 system, to Washington's utter dismay.

Since then, Saudi Arabia has shown similar defiance, initiating talks with Moscow to purchase the Russian system. And like Turkey, Israel and Saudi Arabia, Iran is also trying to pursue hybrid relationships, relying itself with China and Russia while remaining open to collaboration with Europe and insisting on negotiating a return to the Nuclear Deal with the United States. And since its invasion of Ukraine, Russia has become more dependent on Iran to counterbalance American and Turkish influences in Syria. Meanwhile, these central Middle Eastern players are pursuing hybrid relations within the region as well as beyond it. Iran and Saudi Arabia may be arch enemies, stuck in a Cold War logic of sort, but they are also involved in direct diplomatic talks

aimed at reducing tensions in the Gulf and finding accommodations on regional hotspots, like Yemen, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon, etc.

Similar dynamics emerged between UAE and Iran, as the UAE normalised relations with the Assad regime in Syria and sort of pulled out of the Yemen war, while at the same time establishing diplomatic, security and strategic relations with Iran's arch enemy, Israel.

In short, the new hybrid geopolitical dynamics look nothing like the rigid and hyper bi-polarity that divided and dominated the world for decades. Since the world fights wars as it makes business and as it does politics, using similar tools and methods, this shift will likely prove lasting and global. In other words, and at the risk of oversimplification, expect more governments to pursue hybrid policies in an increasingly hybrid environment characterised by hybrid work, hybrid cars and hybrid warfare.

This will further complicate the global and regional dynamics, producing a dizzyingly changing reality, making it ever harder to predict what might come next; where a new explosion might occur; or whether certain countries might reach accommodation tomorrow.

All of this begs the question: Will the shift from hyper to hybrid relations bring stability; or even peace to the Middle East? It might indeed reduce inter and intra-national instability for some time, but unless and until regional actors use that window to address the urgent questions of justice and human rights, expect more of the same instability and violence.

The writer is former professor of International Relations at the American University of Paris. Courtesy Al Jazeera

Russia Sanctions Regime & Problems

Mohamed A El-Erian

It has been five months since Europe and the United States imposed tough economic and financial sanctions on Russia, a G20 country that was the world's 11th-largest economy on the eve of its invasion of Ukraine. While the sanctions have been gradually strengthened in the intervening months, debate rages about their effectiveness, the war's broader implications for markets and the global economy, and what the West's next steps should be. On the first question, although the sanctions have been less effective than Europe and the US had hoped, they also are proving more onerous than the Kremlin claims. Russia's central bank expects GDP to contract by 8-10% this year, while other forecasters expect a larger fall, together with longer-lasting damage to growth potential. Imports and exports have been severely disrupted, and inflows of foreign investment have essentially stopped. Shortages are multiplying, pushing inflation higher. At this point, the country no longer has a properly functioning foreign-exchange market.

The sanctions would have bitten much harder had the West not opted for a carve-out of Russia's energy sector, and had many more countries joined the US and Europe in the effort. Because that didn't happen, Russia has not felt nearly as much pressure as it would have. Moreover, it has been able to continue trading through various side and back doors that

will likely become increasingly important as long as the sanctions regime, as currently designed, continues. Nonetheless, it is only a matter of time before the Russian economy experiences a harder hit. Inventories of imported goods - including many critical technological and industrial inputs - are dwindling fast, and many sectors are becoming less resilient. The cumulative damage to Russia's economy over time will be significant and long-lasting - a fact that has not yet been fully captured by consensus medium-term forecasts.

The second question concerns global spillovers from the war and the sanctions regime. Most observers agree that Russia's invasion has increased not just energy insecurity but also food insecurity, highlighting the fallout from the war's disruption to Ukrainian agricultural exports. But there is still much debate about the West's use of the economic nuclear sanctions option: the curbs placed on Russia's central bank and on Russia's use of the international payments system. These curbs are far more intrusive than the usual mix of restrictions on sanctioned government and private sector trade and on individuals' financial dealings. Yet, because they are not subject to any internationally agreed standards, guidelines, or checks and balances, they fall outside the purview of relevant global-governance bodies such as the Bank for International Settlements, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organisation.

In a time of war, such oversight might seem like a nicety. But some worry that the sanctions could significantly reduce

the dollar's role as the world's reserve currency and the US financial system's role as the primary global intermediary for other countries' savings and investments. After all, a growing number of countries undoubtedly now feel more vulnerable to the reach of US sanctions. But it is impossible to replace something with nothing, which means that no significant loss of dollar or US financial primacy will occur in the immediate future. Rather, the sanctions will lead further momentum to the gradual process of global economic fragmentation, which was also fuelled a few years ago by the tariffs imposed by the Trump administration. More countries now have even more of a reason to pursue greater financial resilience and inherently inefficient forms of self-insurance.

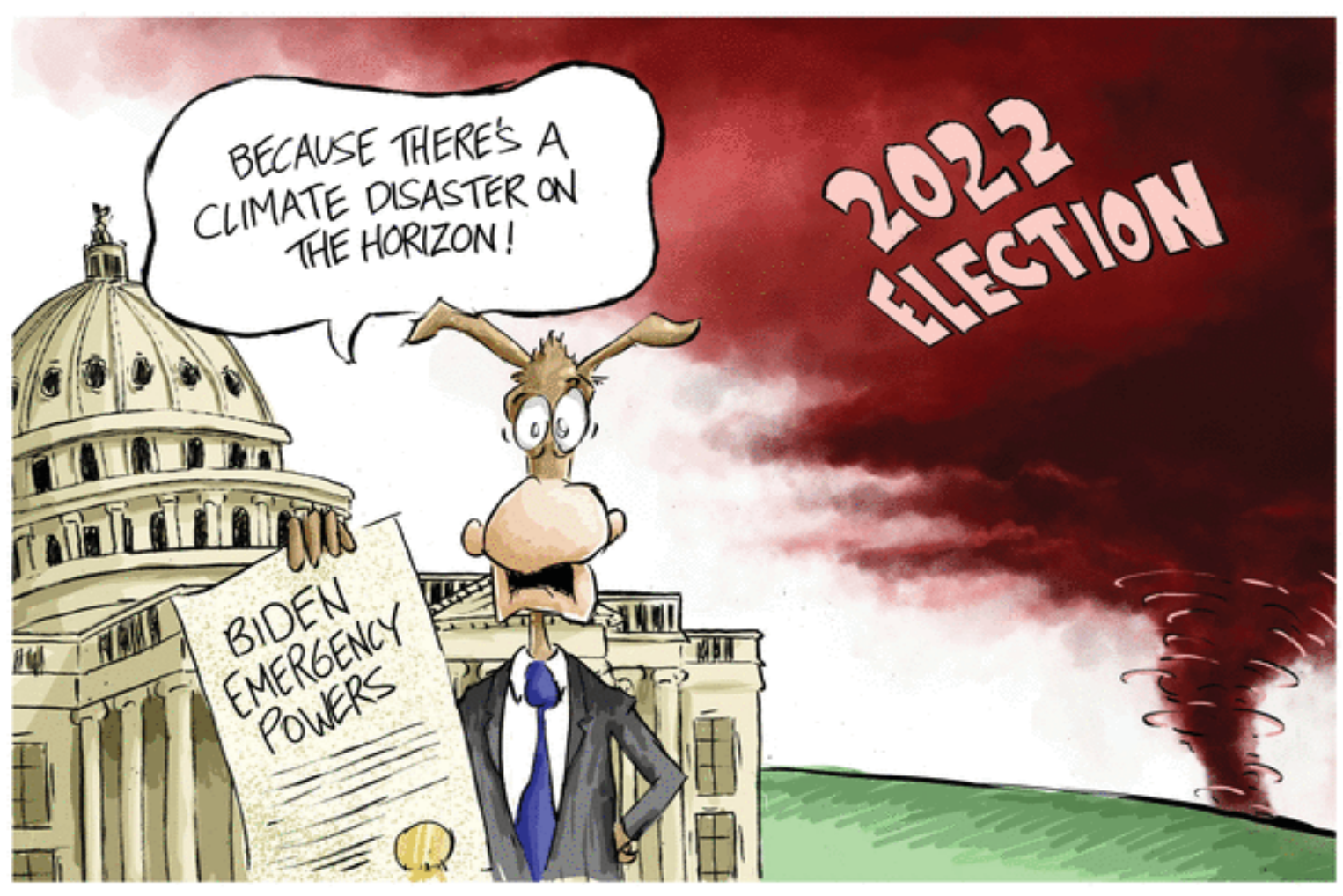
That brings us to the third debate. With no end in sight for the war, what should the West do next? Fearing the implications for energy prices and the supply of gas to Europe, many in the West are tempted to call for a moratorium on any new sanctions - or even for additional carve-outs. Others, however, favour additional measures to hold Russia accountable for its indiscriminate attacks on Ukrainian civilians. In any case, maintaining the current sanctions regime is not problem-free, owing to the twin objectives of pressuring Russia and limiting the economic disruption to Europe. Moreover, as European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen recently said, it feels as if Russia is "blackmailing" Europe by threatening to disrupt gas supplies at any moment. No wonder the Commission is

urging member countries to cut consumption by 15%.

Under the current sanctions regime, the West risks falling between two horses. While easing sanctions could help alleviate concerns about Europe's economic outlook, this option is a non-starter, given the atrocities that Russian forces are committing in Ukraine. But if the West is serious about pressuring Russia through truly crippling economic and financial sanctions, it needs to bite the bullet and eliminate the carve-outs for energy. Doing so would undoubtedly have a severe short-term economic impact on European economies and the rest of the world, amplifying the "little fires everywhere" syndrome that I warned about in May. It is therefore critical that governments use their available fiscal space to provide targeted support to vulnerable segments of the population, as well as to fragile countries; and multilateral agencies must support developing countries through aid and a more operational debt relief framework. If done properly, this option would yield better outcomes in the medium and long term than the current strategy.

Muddling through risks bringing about the worst of all possible worlds. It is insufficient to dissuade Russia from continuing its illegal war; it is fuelling deeper fragmentation of the international monetary system; and it is not even protecting Europe from a winter gas disruption.

The writer is President of Queens' College at the University of Cambridge. Courtesy Gulf Times



Developing countries & the pandemic

Mariana Mazzucato & Jayati Ghosh

At their recent meeting in Bali on July 15-16, G20 finance ministers reaffirmed their commitment to coordinated action to get the Covid-19 pandemic under control and better prepare for the next global health emergency. A central topic was the creation of a new financial intermediary fund (FIF) to address pandemic preparedness and response (PPR), under the trusteeship of the World Bank and with the World Health Organization playing a central technical and coordinating role. The goal is to close some of the annual PPR financing gap of \$10.5 billion and help strengthen capacities that are critical to protecting global health, including genomic sequencing and drug manufacturing.

Over the next month, the G20, World Bank, and the WHO will finalise the FIF design, under heavy external pressure to develop an equitable and inclusive governance structure. The Indonesian G20 Presidency has enabled some preliminary agreements that move in the right direction. For example, there is an emerging consensus that the FIF's governance must include low- and middle-income countries, non-G20 partners, and civil society. Moreover, G20 countries acknowledge that the FIF must build on the existing global health framework for PPR, with a central role for the WHO.

The inclusion of the WHO in the FIF is a central piece of the governance structure. Hardwiring it into the FIF's design should include having the WHO chair the technical advisory group that will assess and weigh the evidence and data required to inform priorities. The WHO is not only the leading hub of scientific expertise and coordination for global health; it also represents 194 countries, providing essential legitimacy. While the FIF is meant to augment existing donor and national PPR investment in public health, there are already signs that its fundraising could cannibalize the resources of well-tested complementary mechanisms like the Global Fund and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness

Innovations. If the FIF ends up undermining resourcing for the rest of the global PPR framework simply to become the shiny new deliverable at this year's G20 summit, it will have done more harm than good for global health security.

The scale of financial need - particularly in low- and middle-income countries confronting a massive debt crisis and soaring inflation - far surpasses what even the most effective FIF will be able to deliver. As part of its commitments to PPR, the G20 should redouble its efforts to bring China and private creditors to the table to renegotiate mounting debt burdens through its Common Framework, or face the risk of many more Sri Lanka-style debt defaults and growing social and political unrest in the coming months and years. To ensure the success of the FIF and global PPR efforts more broadly, the G20 must take all measures within its control to provide debt relief and free up fiscal space in low- and middle-income countries. This includes extending the Common Framework and the Debt Service Suspension Initiative, and developing effective ways to ensure private-sector participation; eliminating austerity conditions from International Monetary Fund loans that encourage countries to cut public spending in areas like health; increasing liquidity through additional allocations of special drawing rights (the IMF's reserve asset); and exploring more creative financing mechanisms like the "debt for health" swaps used by the Global Fund.

The new FIF proposal and broader G20 and World Bank actions on PPR cannot afford to deliver "health for some" - the wealthiest and most privileged. This is a morally bankrupt and woefully ineffective approach. Now is the time to pivot toward a more promising "health for all" approach, starting with an inclusively governed FIF and economic interventions that better enable low- and middle-income countries to invest as required in their own health systems.

Mariana Mazzucato is Chair of the World Health Organization's Council on the Economics of Health for All. Jayati Ghosh is Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Courtesy Khaleej Times

# Lavrov says Russian goal to oust Ukraine's president

Ukraine says it has destroyed 50 Russian ammunition depots

KYIV: Russia appears to have reversed itself after the country's top diplomat said Moscow's overarching goal is to topple the government of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky as Russian artillery barrages and air strikes continue to pummel cities across Ukraine.



The remark from Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov comes amid Ukraine's efforts to resume grain exports from its Black Sea ports, something that would help ease global food shortages, under a new deal tested by a Russian strike on Odesa over the weekend.

is absolutely anti-people and anti-historical," he said.

Speaking to envoys at an Arab League summit in Cairo late Sunday, Lavrov said Moscow is determined to help Ukrainians "liberate themselves from the burden of this absolutely unacceptable regime."

Lavrov's remarks contrasted sharply with the Kremlin's line early in the war, when Russian officials repeatedly emphasized that they weren't seeking to overthrow Zelensky's government.

Lavrov accused Kiev and "its Western allies" of spouting propaganda intended to ensure that Ukraine "becomes the eternal enemy of Russia." "Russian and Ukrainian people would continue to live together, we will certainly help Ukrainian people to get rid of the regime, which

is absolutely anti-people and anti-historical," he said.

It was not yet clear when grain shipments would resume following Russia and Ukraine signing identical agreements with the United Nations and

Turkey on Friday in Istanbul. The deals are aimed at clearing the way for the shipment of millions of tons of desperately needed Ukrainian grain, as well as the export of Russian grain and fertilizer.

The Kremlin insisted Monday that the attack on the port of Odesa over the weekend targeted military assets and would not affect grain shipping.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters that the strike had to do "exclusively with the military infrastructure." "This is in no way related to the infrastructure involved in fulfilling the agreements and exporting grain. So this can't and shouldn't affect the start of the shipment process in any way," Peskov said.

The Kremlin spokesman also said that Moscow has no interest in halting all gas supplies to Europe and that recent restrictions on the flow of Russian gas to European countries "are simply the consequences of restrictions the Europeans have imposed, and the Europeans themselves are suffering from these restrictions."

"Russia is a responsible gas supplier, and no matter what anyone says, the European Commission, in European capitals, in the US, Russia has been and continues to be a country that to a large extent guarantees Europe's energy security," Peskov said.

Meanwhile, Ukraine's presidential office said Monday that at least two civilians were killed and another 10 were wounded in the latest Russian shelling during the last 24 hours. In the eastern Donetsk region, the focus of the Russian offensive, Russian artillery struck Avdiivka, Kramatorsk and Kostiantynivka. An airstrike on Bakhmut damaged at least five houses.

"The Russians are using the scorched earth tactics across the entire Donbas, they fire from the ground and from the air to wipe off entire cities," Donetsk Gov. Pavlo Kyrylenko said in televised remarks. The Russians also struck the Kharkiv region. In the city of Chuhuiv, a Russian strike ruined the building of a local club and rescue workers removed several people from under the debris.

## Egypt warns of Ethiopia's unilateral steps regarding Nile dam



ANKARA: Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi on Monday warned of repercussions of Ethiopia's unilateral steps amid a decades-long dispute regarding a controversial dam project on the Nile River.

Speaking at a joint press conference in Cairo with Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, al-Sisi said he agreed with his Somali counterpart on the gravity of unilateral steps in the file of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD).

"Cooperation between riparian countries is important to avoid harms," he stressed. Al-Sisi said his talks with the Somali president dwelt on regional developments in the Horn of Africa region.

"We agreed to work together to maintain security and stability in this important and strategic region," he added.

The Egyptian leader said he also agreed with his Somali counterpart to intensify coordination between Egypt and Somalia regarding security in the Red Sea. Sheikh Mohamud started an official visit to Egypt on Sunday, his seventh overseas visit since he became president in May.

Egypt views the GERD as an existential threat to its water share from the Nile, the country's only source of freshwater. Egypt and Sudan, two downstream nations, want a legally-binding agreement on the filling and operation of the GERD, a demand resisted by Ethiopia. Years-long negotiations between the three countries have failed to make any breakthrough.

Last year, the UN Security Council called on Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan to resume the African Union-led negotiations to reach an agreement on the filling and operation of the dam "within a reasonable time frame." Ethiopia has started carrying out a third-stage filling of the dam this month despite opposition from Egypt and Sudan.

## Palestine welcomes EU report on Israeli settlements

Spokesman Report

RAMALLAH: The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates has welcomed the report published by The European Union on 20 July 2022 regarding Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem January.

Land theft is an Israeli national project undertaken by every branch of Israel's government and facilitated by Israeli officials. This project aims to cleanse the land of its rightful owners, and to displace the Palestinian people, and replace them with illegal Israeli settlers.

Despite the continuous statements and condemnations from the EU and world countries, the report clearly states the advancement of settlements units in the year 2021 compared to the previous year. The State of Palestine confirms more shocking figures of



land theft and settlement construction plans in 2022. The continuous policies of Israeli governments provide ample evidence of Israel's defiance of international law and its intentional aim to undermine the Two-State solution.

This state of chronic impunity and systemic violence is a direct consequence of the international community's willful failure to hold Israel accountable for its crimes and to enforce international law and relevant resolutions, which has undermined the rules-based international order.

It is indisputable that exceptionalism and double standards will imbue chaos and destruction for all. Accountability for crimes in Palestine is not and cannot be optional, we therefore call on the European Union to immediately suspend its regrettable decision to resume the Association Council meetings with Israel. Ethnic cleansing of Palestinians and violations of international law should not be met with closer ties and thriving relations. The State of Palestine reiterates that there is no such thing as authorized settlements.

All settlements are illegal under international law. Israel, the occupying Power, must dismantle all its settlements and return the lands to its rightful Palestinian owners. Israel's illegal colonial occupation and settlement enterprise continue to threaten regional and international peace and security.

## First grain shipments to leave Ukraine 'this week'

KYIV: Kyiv expects the first grain deliveries under a UN-brokered deal to leave Ukrainian ports "this week," Ukraine's infrastructure minister said Monday, despite Russian strikes on Ukraine's Black Sea port of Odesa.

"We expect the agreement to start working in the coming days," Oleksandr Kubrakov, who led Ukraine's delegation at grain talks in Turkey, told a press conference.

"We are preparing for everything to start this week," he added. Kubrakov also highlighted the importance of security following a strike on the port of Odesa, one of the three export hubs designated in the agreement.

"Our position is very simple. We signed an agreement with the UN and Turkey. If the sides guarantee



security, the agreement will work. If they do not, it will not work," Kubrakov said.

Russia and Ukraine signed agreements on Black Sea grain exports in Istanbul on Friday, with Turkey and the UN as co-guarantors.

Both countries are major exporters of agricultural products, but Moscow's invasion has severely

disrupted Ukrainian wheat exports as the fighting damaged harvests and left ports blocked and mined.

Kubrakov added that de-mining will take place "exclusively" in the shipping lanes required for grain exports, while Ukrainian ships will accompany the departing convoys that will transport not only grain but also fertilizer.

Deputy infrastructure minister Yuri Vaskov told the press conference that the southeastern port of Chornomorsk will be "the first" used for grain deliveries, followed by the port of Odesa in the south and then Pivdennyi in the southeast. "In the next two weeks, we will be technically ready to carry out grain exports from all Ukrainian ports," Vaskov added.

## Philippines' Marcos Jr. vows farm and tax overhauls

MANILA: Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. pledged on Monday to overhaul his country's tax system and make it a destination for investment and tourism, promising also a big agriculture overhaul to boost output and reduce its heavy import reliance.

Speaking before Congress in his first state of the nation address, Marcos, who won a May election in a landslide, said it was vital to implement reforms to bring in tourism and investment and maintain what was currently firm growth momentum.

His administration would implement solid fiscal policy management and was targeting 6.5 to 7.5 percent gross domestic product growth this year, he said, while warning of challenges ahead in keeping prices stable.

Marcos, the son of the late strongman ousted from power in a 1986 uprising, said it was critical that the Philippines, a major importer of rice and other commodities, can boost its farm output and become more resilient to climate change.

Among the measures he would introduce was a moratorium on farmers' debts to allow them to channel resources into improving output.

"It will unburden farmers of their dues and be able to focus on improving farm productivity," he said, while stressing the need for an "infusion of fresh and new blood," and use of scientific farming by a new breed of farmers. Marcos also promised to improve education, health care and working conditions for doctors and nurses and boost infrastructure in the nation of more than 7,000 islands, including modernizing airports.

## EU approves smallpox vaccine

COPENHAGEN: The European Commission has approved a small-pox vaccine for use against monkeypox after the World Health Organization declared monkeypox a global health emergency, the Danish drugmaker that developed the jab said on Monday.

"The European Commission has extended the marketing authorization for the company's smallpox vaccine, Imvanex, to include protection from monkeypox" in line with a recommendation by the EU's medicines watchdog, Bavarian Nordic said in a statement.

"The approval... is valid in all European Union Member States as well as in Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway." On Saturday, the WHO declared the monkeypox outbreak, which has affected nearly 16,000 people in 72 countries, to be a global health emergency — the highest alarm it can sound.

Imvanex has been approved in the EU since 2013 for the prevention of smallpox.

It was also considered a potential vaccine for monkeypox because of the similarity between the monkeypox virus and the smallpox virus.

Monkeypox is less dangerous and contagious than smallpox, which was eradicated in 1980. The first symptoms of monkeypox are fever, headaches, muscle pain and back pain during the course of five days.

Rashes subsequently appear on the face, the palms of hands and soles of feet, followed by lesions, spots and finally scabs. A surge in monkeypox infections has been reported since early May outside the West and Central African countries where the disease has long been endemic.

The EMA carries out a scientific assessment of drugs and gives a recommendation on whether any medicine should be marketed or not.

However, under EU law the EMA has no authority to actually permit marketing in the different EU countries. It is the European Commission which is the authorizing body and takes a legally binding decision based on EMA's recommendation.

## China warns of serious consequence over Pelosi's Taiwan visit

BEIJING: The Chinese side will take firm and strong measures to safeguard sovereignty and territorial integrity if the United States insists on going ahead with its House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi's potential visit to Taiwan, a foreign ministry spokesperson said Monday.

"The Chinese side has repeatedly made clear to the U.S. side our serious concern over Pelosi's potential visit to Taiwan and our firm opposition to the visit," spokesperson Zhao Lijian told a regular news briefing.

"We are fully prepared for any eventuality," he said. The United States must assume full responsibility for any serious consequence arising thereof, Zhao added.

## APHC expresses concern over unrelenting CASOs in IIOJK

SRINAGAR: In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, the All Parties Hurriyat Conference has expressed deep concern over the continued cordon and search operation and arrest of youth by the Indian forces in the territory.

The APHC spokesman in a statement issued in Srinagar said that the rapidly changing realities in the region also indicated the need for an immediate solution to the Kashmir dispute.

The spokesman urged the world powers to focus on finding a peaceful solution to the Kashmir dispute so that the region could get out of the situation of constant tension.

He expressed concern over the imposition of cruel laws in IIOJK aimed at keeping the freedom-loving people under constant pressure. The spokesman appealed to the justice-loving institutions and figures around the world to do their part in restoring the political rights of the oppressed Kashmiris.

Meanwhile, Hurriyat leader, Dr Musaab in a statement said that Kashmiris are struggling for their right to self-determination which was promised by India. Addressing a gathering of Hurriyat activists in Srinagar, he said there should be a plebiscite under United Nations supervision in Jammu and Kashmir to decide the fate of the disputed territory.

## UN appeals for funds to avert crisis in Horn of Africa

NAIROBI: The United Nations humanitarian agency on Monday appealed for urgent funding to help avert a humanitarian disaster that is looming in the Horn of Africa amid a severe drought.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) warned in its latest report issued in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, that lives will be lost if there is no more funding.

UNOCHA said the people in the Horn of Africa, who are suffering the worst drought in over 40 years, face the threat of starvation following four consecutive failed rainy

seasons in parts of Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia.

"Forecasts indicate that the October-December 2022 rainy season could also fail, leading to an unprecedented catastrophe. Immediate action is required to prevent the worst in the months ahead," UNOCHA warned in its latest report on drought.

The UN agency said at least 19.4 million people are affected by the drought that began in October 2020 across the region. It said some 18.6 million people across Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia are living with acute food insecurity and rising malnutrition, warning that the number

could rise to 20 million by September.

According to UNOCHA, food prices are increasing in many drought-affected areas due to the below-average harvests and rising prices on international markets.

Moreover, floods, COVID-19, and the desert locust infestation have affected communities throughout the region, and millions of people in Ethiopia and Somalia are living through conflict.

The report came barely a week after the UN and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), a regional bloc, said that more than 50 million people are expect-

ed to face high levels of acute food insecurity this year across seven east African countries — Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda.

According to the 2022 edition of the IGAD Regional Focus on Food Crises, released on July 22 by the World Food Program (WFP), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations and IGAD, conflict, climate extremes, economic shocks, rising costs and now the impact of the conflict in Ukraine on food and energy prices are pushing millions toward starvation in eastern Africa.

## Iran says won't turn on IAEA cameras until nuclear deal revival

TEHRAN: The Iranian nuclear chief said his country will not turn on the surveillance cameras of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) installed within the framework of a 2015 nuclear deal until parties resume honoring their commitments under the deal.

Mohammad Eslami, president of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), made the remarks in an address to reporters on the sidelines of an exhibition in Tehran on Monday, the official news agency IRNA reported.

He said the Islamic Republic sees no reason for the presence of these

cameras at its nuclear sites as they had been recording data supposed to exonerate Tehran from certain accusations, which are still in place.

Eslami added although in 2015, lengthy negotiations between Iran and the world powers resulted in the signing of a nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the West is still leveling accusations at Iran based on stolen documents and "baseless claims."

"Iran accepted to put curbs on its (nuclear) capacities to build trust, but despite all these, they did not remain committed to

their obligations," he said.

Eslami said the agency itself has removed the cameras and sealed them, adding they will be kept in Iran's nuclear facilities until the other sides return to the JCPOA. Eslami emphasized that the IAEA is currently monitoring Iran's nuclear activities according to the safeguards agreements.

In June, the IAEA's Board of Governors passed an anti-Iran resolution proposed by the United States, Britain, France and Germany following the agency's reports that Tehran had not provided "technically credible explanations" for uranium particles at three unde-

clared sites.

In the wake of the adoption of the IAEA resolution, Iran announced its decision to take a number of measures, including turning off the IAEA's surveillance cameras at its sites.

Iran signed the nuclear deal with world powers in July 2015, agreeing to curb its nuclear program in return for the removal of sanctions on the country. However, former U.S. President Donald Trump pulled Washington out of the agreement in May 2018 and reimposed unilateral sanctions on Tehran, prompting the latter to drop some of its commitments under the pact.



