



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
ہم سے عیدین اسما کیلئے بیان کیا
ابو اسامہ سے، انہوں نے عید اللہ عمری
سے، انہوں نے ہاتھ سے اور ان سے ابن
عمر رضی اللہ عنہما نے کہ رسول اللہ صلی
اللہ علیہ وسلم نے (مال نبوت سے)
گوڑے کے دو حصے لگائے تھے اور اس
کے مالک کا ایک حصہ۔
Barkat Rice Mills
(Pvt) Limited

PTI govt responsible for power outages, inflation: Ahsan

Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal says the previous government of PTI is responsible for current power outages and inflation in the country. The PTI government failed to sign long term contracts for LNG procurement when it was available at cheap rates. The issue of LNG procurement was rather politicized by the previous government. Gas powered electricity plants of 3500 megawatts are closed today due to negligence and incompetence of PTI government.



LHC verdict deepens Punjab political crisis: Fawad

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Fawad Chaudhry says the decision by the Lahore High Court has further complicated the political crisis in the province. Hamza Shahbaz has lost his government and the solution given by the court will not bring an end to the crisis. There are multiple anomalies in the decision and a meeting of legal advisers has been summoned to mull over it. We will raise these anomalies before the Supreme Court.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Zilhaj 1, Friday, July 1, 2022

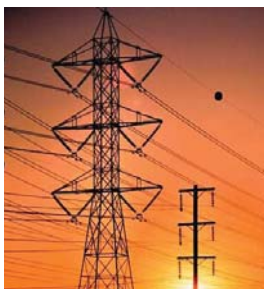
www.dailyspokesman.net

@daily_spokesman

Daily Spokesman Vol: 15, Issue: 95 Price Rs. 25.00 Pages 8

Rs8 per unit

Govt mulls another power tariff hike



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The PMLN-led coalition government is considering another increase in power tariff by Rs 8 per unit. Well-placed sources informed that the federal government has decided to hike electricity tariff by Rs8 per unit in three phases. The electricity prices will go up by Rs3 per unit from July 1 followed by another Rs3 per unit increase from the month of August, say sources, adding that the electricity will become costlier by Rs2 per unit from September 2022.

The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) on June 27 approved hike in power tariff by Rs7.90 per unit. According to a notification issued by the power regulatory authority, the increase was made under fuel adjustment charges (FAC) for the month of May, following demand from CPPAG for a hike of Rs7.96 per unit. The power regulatory authority took the decision after conducting a hearing on the plea of Central Power Purchasing Agency (CCPA).

The amount will be received in the bills of July; it said and added that life consumers and K-Electric are exempted from the tariff hike. It is pertinent to mention here that the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) has already fixed the power tariff at Rs24.82 per unit for the fiscal year of 2022-23 after a massive hike of Rs7.91 per unit.

Evolving unity

President Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians & Former President of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari and Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party and Foreign Minister, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad on Thursday.



Photo: PID

Pak, China to work closely on vision of shared prosperity: PM

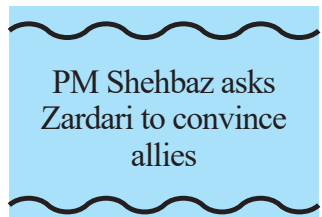
Hails China-based NORINCO's interest to invest in Pakistan's renewable energy sector

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said Pakistan stood ready to work closely with China for realizing the shared vision of connectivity, prosperity and public well-being. "Pakistan will continue to support Chinese investors with competitive incentives, access to high-quality infrastructure and unwavering security arrangements," he said in a meeting with Yang Jiechi, Member of the Politburo of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and Director of its Foreign Affairs Commission.

Extending a warm welcome to Director Yang, the prime minister conveyed the most cordial greetings and best wishes for President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang. The prime minister noted that Director Yang's visit marked the continuation

of high-level exchanges between Pakistan and China, which are the hallmark of the time-tested All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership between the two countries.

Prime Minister Muhammad



Shehbaz Sharif welcomed the Chinese company NORINCO for showing interest to invest in Pakistan's huge potential for renewable energy. He expressed these views while talking to a high-powered delegation of Chinese state-owned Company NORINCO (China North Industries Corporation) led

by its vice-president Wang Xiaobing and CEO (Pakistan) Li Chen.

The NORINCO delegation showed keen interest in investing in the wide spectrum of renewable energy projects in Pakistan, especially in the wind corridor in Thatha whereby a 100 MW wind power project was proposed. The company also highlighted the potential venues for investment in fiber optic along the railway lines, copper and iron ore mining at proven reserves, and infrastructure development in big cities. The prime minister said deepening economic cooperation with China was critical to Pakistan's socio-economic uplift.

He highlighted the significance of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as a transformational project for the mutual benefit and development of both the friendly countries. The

Prime Minister also appreciated the company for its role in the Lahore Orange Line Metro Train project, which, he said, is facilitating hundreds of thousands of commuters in Lahore on a daily basis. He recalled that it was for the first time that open bidding took place in a government-to-government project i.e. Lahore Orange Line.

Federal Ministers Khawaja Saad Rafique, Syed Naveed Qamar, Chaudhary Salik Hussain, Advisor to PM Ahad Cheema, SAPMs Syed Tariq Fatemi, Mohammad Jahanzeb Khan, Zafar-Ud-Din Mahmood and officials from concerned ministries were also present in the meeting. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has asked Pakistan People's Party (PPP) co-chairman and former president Asif Ali Zardari to convince allies.

Pak-Qatar ties turning into partnership: COAS

Gen Bajwa, Qatar Emir discuss mutual interest, security coop

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa called on Qatar Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani, a statement from the military's media wing said on Thursday.

According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa visited Qatar on two days official visit. During the visit, COAS witnessed passing out parade at Ahmed Bin Muhammad Military College.

Later, COAS Bajwa called on Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani - Emir of the State of Qatar. Deputy Prime Minister Doctor Khalid Bin Muhammad Al-Attiya was also present on the occasion.

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, defence & security cooperation and regional geo-political environment were discussed, the



military's media wing said. The current regional situation was also discussed during the meeting.

Both sides stressed the importance of further enhancing cooperation in all fields, the ISPR said. The Army chief reiterated that both countries share brotherly relations of "strategic value". Meanwhile, The Emir of State of Qatar appreciated Pakistan's efforts for peace and stability in the region. Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad agreed to further expand bilateral relations between both the countries, the military's media wing added.

No promise met

ANP mulling over to quit unity govt

ISLAMABAD: Another coalition partner of the unity government in the Centre led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the Awami National Party (ANP), is mulling over to part ways with the coalition government. The decision was made in a meeting of the ANP chaired by Aimal Wali Khan where party leaders suggested quitting to the federal government after none of the promises made to them before the vote of no-confidence is fulfilled. "Aimal Wali Khan has summoned a meeting of central leadership after Eid to make a final decision in this regard," they said, adding the party leaders have given authority to the ANP President to decide on the matter.

The sources within ANP said that neither promises made with them are being fulfilled nor the

government was taking them into confidence over decisions made by them. On June 27, The Awami National Party (ANP), which is part of the ruling coalition, warned the government of taking 'bitter' decisions if it failed to fulfill its responsibilities. In a statement, ANP central senior vice-president Ameer Haider Khan Hoti warned that if the government fails to fulfill its responsibilities, the party will have to take 'bitter' decisions.

"We joined hands with the ruling coalition to save the lives of the citizens from the selected regime," he said, adding that the incumbent government must now take the responsibility. Ameer Haider Khan Hoti further said that the government should take immediate steps to stabilise the economy and provide relief to the people.

Delayed decisions

Commission to probe PTI govt's losses to petro sector: Abbasi

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PMLN) leader and former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on Thursday said that a commission will be formed to investigate wrong decisions taken by the PTI government in the petroleum sector. Talking to the media here flanked by Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said that the country has lost billions

of rupees due to the wrong decisions of Imran Khan and his cabinet and he has also ruined the energy sector.

A commission will be formed to probe Imran Khan and his cabinet decisions in energy sector. Rebuking the PTI government, he said that the federal Minister Ahsan Iqbal said Imran Khan was working day and night to push the country into chaos but the incumbent government will stable the economy in a few

months. "After the report of the commission, strict action will be taken against responsible persons," he added.

The former prime minister also added that the commission's investigation will be open to the public, adding that reasons for the increase in circular debt will be bought forward. "The country lost millions of rupees due to the decisions taken by Imran Khan and his cabinet," he stated. APP

Forex reserves rise above \$16b

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Pakistan's total liquid foreign reserves jacked up to US\$ 16.195 billion as SBP received proceeds of China Development Bank's loan. State Bank of Pakistan, in a statement issued here on Thursday, stated that the total liquid foreign reserves held by the country stood at US\$ 16,195.6 million as of 24 June 2022. "SBP received proceeds of CDB loan amounting to RMB 15 billion and after accounting for external debt repayment, SBP's reserves increased by US\$ 2,071 million to US\$ 10,309.0 million," it said adding that net foreign reserves held by commercial banks stood at US\$ 5,886.6 million.

In the previous week ended on June 17, total liquid foreign reserves held by the country was US\$ 14,210.4 million. Among them foreign reserves held by the State Bank of Pakistan were US\$ 8,237.7 million while net foreign reserves held by commercial banks were US\$ 5,972.7 million.

Imran Khan can face trial under Article 6: Marriyum

Says seeking neutrals' intervention is violation of the Constitution

Senior Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Thursday said Imran Khan could face treason charges for subverting the Constitution to prevent his ouster from the power through the vote on no-confidence motion. "Imran Khan has been saying that he was asking the neutrals to intervene. This is the case of Article 6 for violating the Constitution," she said while addressing a news conference here. She said the people was asking Imran Khan as to why he did not dissolve the national and provincial assemblies and initiate an inquiry by setting up a commission on the so-called foreign conspiracy if he received the cipher on March 8.

The minister said if he knew on March 8 that an international conspiracy had been hatched against his government, he should have formed the commission at once. Imran Khan did not hold inquiry into the matter as he knew that it was a "blatant lie" which he started propagating after foreseeing his imminent defeat in the no-confidence motion tabled by the then opposition in the National Assembly. As regards the PTI's chief announcement for challenging the Lahore High Court decision on the Punjab Chief Minister's election, Marriyum said Imran Khan had ceded high moral ground for filing an



Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb addressing a press conference in Islamabad on Thursday.

appeal before the apex court which had already decided against his constitutional transgression with 5-0.

According to that decision of apex court, she said Imran Khan did violate the Constitution by influencing the NA Speaker, Governor Punjab and other representatives of the government, while the ruling of the then deputy speaker was declared unconstitutional. It was Imran who also did contempt of the apex court by inciting his workers to violate the orders and reach the D-chowk during the long march of May 25, she added. She regretted that the media misreported the LHC decision

on the election of CM Punjab. "This is not a good tradition as it is tantamount to disinformation and the public was misled through misreporting on the matter."

"The media has to take the responsibility," she said, adding CM Punjab Hamza Shahbaz had not been removed from the office, nor was his election declared null and void, and also Usman Buzdar was not restored as CM Punjab. According to the Article 130, Section 4, she said it was continuation of the previous election under which the CM had to get elected by securing majority vote in the assembly.

President assents finance bill 2022-23

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi gave his ceremonial assent to Finance Bill 2022-23 under Articles 73 and 75 of the Constitution. According to details, the President gave his approval to the Finance Bill 2022-23 after it was passed by the National Assembly a day earlier. Dr Alvi has assented to the finance bill under Article 75 of the Constitution. Under the said article, the president is bound to give his assent to a money bill within 10 days.

Sugar reserves

Mills association rejects govt's claims

ISLAMABAD: Rejecting the figures of the Ministry of Trade, Sugar Mills Association on Thursday said currently Pakistan has reserves of two million tonnes of sugar. "The figures released by the ministry are contradictory against the ground realities," the sugar mills association spokesperson said in a statement. The Sugar mills association said

even Brazil and India are also mulling over exporting the surplus stock of their sugar. The decision to export sugar after October will not yield results for the country, he added.

Earlier on April 15, the federal government has announced to ban the export of sugar, saying the ban would drop sugar prices and provide relief to the people.

Illicit trafficking

Islamabad: Visiting Assistant Secretary of State for Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Mr. Todd D. Robinson calling on Minister for Interior Rana Sana Ullah in his office in Islamabad on Thursday.



Photo: PID

IS Crisis worsens

7,674MW power shortfall causes hours-long outages

IS Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: With power shortfall surging to 7,674 megawatts, people are dealing with hours-long loadshedding in the urban and rural areas across the country. According to sources, the total demand for electricity in the country is 29,900MW and the total power generation in the country is 22,226MW while 5,625MW electricity is being generated from water, 1,327MW from government thermal plants and 11,500MW from private sector power plants.

Wind power plants are generating 1,235MW electricity while solar power plants are generating 122MW electricity. Meanwhile, the unannounced electricity loadshedding in urban areas is up to 14 hours while 18 hours-long loadshedding is being carried out in rural parts of the country due to power shortfall. Sources said that some of the urban centres and rural areas were experiencing loadshedding of 12 to 14 hours. With the increase in temperature in Karachi, the duration of power cuts in the metropolis has reached up to 15 hours as electricity shortfall reached 800MW.

The periodic power cuts are causing outrage among the citizens and in several areas protest demonstrations are also being reported. Areas including, North Karachi, Sir Syed Town, Shah Nawaz Bhutto Colony, Yousuf Goth, Gadap, Kothar, Landhi, Malir, Shah Faisal Colony, Hijrat Colony, Liaqatabad, Ranchhor Line, PIB Colony, Jamshed Road, Orangi Town, Shah Faisal Colony, Baldia and Ittehad Town and other areas are facing power cuts.

IS Crisis deepens

LHC orders vote recount to decide Hamza's fate

As per verdict, votes will be recounted and candidate securing a majority will be declared CM.

LAHORE: Political crisis in Punjab has deepened as Lahore High Court (LHC) on Thursday ordered recount of CM Punjab election held on April 16 after excluding votes of 25 de-seated lawmakers of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). A five member bench headed by Justice Sadaqat Ali Khan announced the 4-1 verdict on pleas against Hamza's election as well as his oath taking. The court in its verdict states that the decision by Supreme Court of not counting votes of defecting members of a political party is squarely applicable to the election of Chief Minister held on 14th April 2022.

"It is an undeniable fact that 25 members of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf had voted for Mr. Muhammad Hamza Shahbaz, whereas the party had nominated Mr. Pervaiz Elahi as its candidate." The court also directed the Presiding Officer (Deputy Speaker) of the election held on 16th April 2022 to recount votes after excluding 25 votes of the defecting members. As a consequence, if required majority, under Article 130(4), is not secured by any candidate,

he shall proceed for second and further polls under its provisos for completing the process of election as required under Article 130(4), unless a candidate is elected by majority votes. Though on recounting as directed, the consequential procedure and effect shall be in accordance with the Constitution.

The court further directed that the session, for this purpose, as originally called by the then Governor shall be resumed on 1st July 2022 (Friday) at 4:00 pm without fail and the session so resumed shall not be prorogued till the election process is completed and Presiding officer intimates the result of elected Chief Minister to the Governor under the Rule 21 and the Governor shall perform his duty, under Article 130(5), of administering oath without any hesitation and by ignoring any apprehension regarding conduct election, at any time before 11:00 am very next day.

The court further said that it cannot ignore the disorder in various sessions of the Provincial Assembly and warned that

any attempt of disorder from any quarter shall be taken as contempt of court and shall be proceeded accordingly by this Larger Bench on formal information by any person. In his dissenting note, Justice Sajid Mahmood Sethi said that the votes of the 25 PTI dissidents cast in favour of Hamza were "admitted", therefore, there was no need to repeat the exercise of counting/recounting. The judge noted that in the 371-strong PA, the requisite number needed to become chief minister was 186 votes. He went on to say that from the record, Hamza obtained 197 votes.

"Therefore, the stance of Advocate Amir Rawan that actually 195 votes were cast in favour of respondent does not restrict this bench to order for second poll as per the aforesaid provision of the Constitution so as to implement the judgment of the honourable apex court straightaway, especially when petitions to the extent of challenging election as a whole stand dismissed by this bench." Justice Sethi also said that after excluding the 25 votes, Hamza had 172 votes.

IS Rs14.85 per litre

Govt jacks up petrol price

IS Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The federal government, once again, jacked up the price of petroleum products on Thursday for the next fortnight, putting an additional pressure of nearly Rs15-18 per litre on the masses. The Finance Division, in its notification, said that in view of the fluctuations in petroleum prices in the international market and exchange rate variation, the government has decided to partially apply a petroleum levy, and revise the existing prices of petroleum products "as agreed with the development partners." The new prices will be effective



from today (Friday).

The notification further stated an increase of Rs18.83 in the price of kerosene, while the rate of light-speed diesel has been jacked up by Rs18.68 per litre. The price of High Speed Diesel has been jacked up by Rs13.23

after which it will be sold at Rs276.54. Meanwhile, the prices of kerosene and light-diesel oil (LDO) were increased by Rs18.83 and Rs18.68, respectively. The new price for kerosene will be Rs230.26 and that of LDO will be Rs226.15.

IS Punjab CM election

PTI to challenge LHC verdict in Supreme Court: Imran Khan

Former premier warns of wheat crisis in coming days

IS Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan has announced to challenge Lahore High Court's verdict over Punjab Chief Minister election in the Supreme Court. Addressing an event of the Islamabad High Court Bar Association (IHCB) on Thursday, he accused the Punjab government of interfering in by-elections of 20 constituencies and two of the PTI candidates told him about receiving phone calls to not to contest election on PTI ticket. On the other hand, he said, the allies of the coalition government were raising

fingers on the government over local body elections in Sindh, adding that the police was used in the LG elections.

Imran Khan said that no one trust the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), adding that whoever is imposing this set up, is damaging the institutions and free and fair elections should be held in the country, whereas, Sindh and Punjab like election will only increase chaos. The former PM said that the media was pressurized after regime change, whereas independence was a major reason for which Pakistan came into being and the whole struggle of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was to get freedom.

The PTI chairman went on to say that the nation is destroyed by giving NRO to the powerful, adding that the problem of poor countries is that the powerful do not get punished, whereas, billions of dollars are stolen from poor countries every year and \$7 billion of poor countries are in the offshore companies.

Chairman PTI Imran Khan has warned that the country could witness a wheat crisis in coming days. Speaking during an interview with a news channel here the former premier said that the target of wheat sowing in Punjab has been not met and the country could witness a wheat crisis in the coming days.

PML-N respects LHC's verdict: CM Hamza

Raises workers' minimum wage to Rs25,000

IS Bureau Report

LAHORE: Chief Minister of Punjab Hamza Shahbaz Thursday said that his party respects the Lahore High Court's (LHC) decision of recounting the votes cast in the elections of the Punjab chief minister. In a major development today, the LHC ordered the recounting of the votes of the Punjab chief minister's election, excluding the votes of 25 PTI dissidents, while announcing the verdict on the PTI's pleas challenging Hamza's election as the chief minister.

In a statement issued on Twitter, the Punjab CM said that the PML-N respects the judiciary's decision which will put an end to the three-month-long constitutional crisis in Punjab. "The Opposition has pushed the province into a constitutional crisis to appease its ego which had to be faced by people," he said, adding that he "does not believe in politics for the sake of it but considers it as a service".

CM Hamza further said that he hopes that the effects of this decision will be "good" for the people of Punjab.

"The PML-N has always faced the challenges and has never taken any step against the Constitution and law," he added. On the directions of Chief Minister Punjab Hamza Shahbaz, the Punjab government has increased the minimum wage to Rs25,000 in the province. A notification to this effect was also issued by the Punjab government.

According to a notification, the minimum wage has been raised by Rs5,000 to Rs 25,000 which will come into effect from July 1. Earlier, the Punjab govt announced a 30pc increase in the salaries of government employees. The government announced 15pc disparity allowance along with 15pc additional salary, which will be available to employees of certain government departments. The provincial cabinet also approved a 15pc hike in pensions against the proposed increase of 5pc.

PTI snatches Punjab's right: Maryam

Says Imran Khan has long list of crimes against Punjab

IS Bureau Report

LAHORE: Following the Lahore High Court (LHC) decision of re-counting of votes for the election of Punjab's chief minister, Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz (PMLN) vice president Maryam Nawaz on Thursday while taking a dig at PTI said that they are trying to stop the Punjab CM election to snatch Punjab's mandate once again.

Taking to Twitter, she wrote that the people [PTI] who pushed Punjab into crisis are in trouble because they are trying to stop the Punjab CM election to snatch

Punjab's mandate through rigging once again, despite the fact that many of their own members are prepared to leave them. "Attempts to oust the government have created fear to complete their vote count," she added.

Taking to Twitter, the PML-N vice-president wrote: "From snatching the mandate from people in 2018 to plundering Punjab's money through Usman Buzdar, Farah Gogi and Bushra Bibi, Imran Khan's list of crimes is long against Punjab." Maryam said that Khan had "snatched the rights of people and created problems for them."

We timely saved country from PTI's destruction: Fazl

RAWALAKOT: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Thursday while rebuking the PTI government said that timely decisions taken by the opposition coalition saved the country from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) destruction. Addressing the Kashmir Wahdat Press conference, Fazl said Pakistan was established in the name of Islam but now it is being made secular, adding that Imran Khan also harmed relations with China. "Our timely decisions saved country from PTI's destruction," he added. Rebuking the PTI government, he said the ex government's agenda was only to save their interest and for the first time, the institutions made timely decisions. If the institutions continue to make such decisions, we will support them.

IS LHC verdict

PA Speaker raises objections over immediate election of CM Punjab

Elahi announces to move SC against High Court's judgment

LAHORE: Speaker Punjab Assembly Pervaiz Elahi has raised objections over the organisation of elections for the chief minister on Friday (tomorrow) on immediate notice. While addressing a press conference along with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders today, Pervaiz Elahi said that the same presiding officer (PO) has been deputed for the Punjab CM elections once again which played a controversial role in the previous polls. "There is no example in the history to call the police in the House and the same person was allowed to get the top slot who had called the police."

"On the other hand, five lawmakers are not getting the court order for notifying their election. The election commission is seeking court orders for notifying the five lawmakers. How

can we call it justice?" The PA speaker said that they have left some decisions for tomorrow. "Court always listens to all parties and everyone is also answerable to Allah Almighty. It is the responsibility of the court to dispatch justice and we will also get justice."

Pervaiz Elahi said that elections could not be organised with an incomplete quorum in the Punjab Assembly. He demanded the organisation of CM's elections after the by-polls. He added that seven provincial lawmakers were currently abroad then what will be the solution. Pervaiz Elahi has decided to approach the Supreme Court against the Lahore High Court (LHC) decision of re-counting of votes for the election of Punjab's chief minister held on April 16, instructing that the votes of 25

dissenting PTI lawmakers be excluded from the counting process.

Pervaiz Elahi consulted the legal team in which Ali Zafar Advocate, Monis Elahi, Raja Basharat, Samsam Bukhari, Ghazanfar Abbas Chahina, Hussain Jahanian Gardezi, Hafiz Ammar Yasir and other lawyers participated. It was decided in the meeting that the decision of the Lahore High Court would be appealed to the apex court while the preparation of legal petition for this has been started.

During the meeting, it was briefed that 5 members of PTI have gone for performing Hajj, 6 members are abroad for necessary work and 5 members of PTI have not been notified by the Election Commission despite the decision of the High Court. There are many constitutional



and legal ambiguities in the decision and the legal points will be placed before the apex court. Raja Basharat said that they are going to

challenge the Lahore High Court's (LHC) verdict. He said that transfers could not be made in any constituency where the election schedule is announced. "Less than 24 hours are being given for a new election and intentions are not good behind the verdict. The high court has nullified April 16 CM's elections and how the decision of such person can be accepted after the nullification of his elections." He reiterated the demand of completing the quorum of the house before the Punjab CM's election. He complained that by-elections are ahead on July 17 and the Punjab Assembly has a lack of quorum as six of the lawmakers are currently abroad, whereas, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has not received the notification for its five reserved seats.

INL, UNDP partners of ANF, supporting many critical capacity building

UNDP, INL, ANF hold ground-breaking ceremony, launch event

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: UNDP, U.S. State Department Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) and the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Pakistan held a ground-breaking ceremony and launch event for INL supported projects at the ANF Academy in Islamabad. The key objectives of the projects are to provide new residential facilities and an academic block for women, and to assist ANF Academy in improving its training capacities.

The project amounting to a total of \$1.2 million is expected to be completed in September 2023. The four-story building will include an academic block for the ANF Academy, and a dedicated residential facility for ANF women trainees and those from other counter narcotics law enforcement agencies.

The new women's hostel will accommodate approximately 25 ANF women, which will increase women's participation in ANF training activities.



The academic block will provide classrooms and training halls to accommodate an estimated 60 additional men and women trainees. It will therefore allow ANF to train more men and women officers. Furthermore, the new premises will also avail space for personnel from other counter narcotics law enforcement agencies to undertake research and analysis.

The project 'Countering Production and Trade in Illegal Drugs Through Improved Training Facilities for the ANF & Enhancing the Training Capabilities of the Anti-Narcotics Force' is an important work stream of INL and UNDP's broader efforts to improve training facilities and academic capabilities of the ANF Academy.

Director-General ANF Ghulam Shabbir Narejo highlighted that "INL and UNDP are trusted partners of ANF and have been supporting many critical capacity building and infrastructure development projects in Pakistan. They have contributed significantly to deliver effective counternarcotic law enforcement." He also extended his appreciation to INL and UNDP for its ongoing support and partnership with ANF, to build stronger and highly professional law enforcement in Pakistan.

Speaking at the occasion, UNDP Resident Representative a.i. Ms. Aliona Niculita spoke about UNDP and INL's ongoing strategic support to enhance law enforcement capacities across Pakistan. "UNDP and INL in partnership with ANF and other law enforcement institutions have worked on multiple projects including but not limited to, the Joint Police Training Center in Nowshera, Police Training Center in Quetta, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Prosecution Academy, and the Anti-Narcotics Force Academy. We hope that our initiatives will play a significant role in building efficient law enforcement agencies with skilled professionals to strengthen the rule of law and better serve the public in Pakistan. I am hopeful that the addition of the women's hostel will encourage more women to join the Anti-Narcotics Force

Minister appreciates extraordinary achievements of IUB



Staff Reporter

BAHAWALPUR: Vice Chancellor the Islamia University of Bahawalpur Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob called on Federal Minister for Industries and Production Makhdoom Syed Murtaza Mahmood.

On this occasion, the Vice Chancellor briefed the Federal Minister about the teaching and research achievements of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur. He said that in terms of number of students and teachers, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur is one of the largest universities in the country. Students from Bahawalpur, Rahim Yar Khan and Bahawalnagar districts as well as South Punjab and Sindh Balochistan are also benefiting from the university.

He also apprised the Federal Minister about the expansion of Rahim Yar Khan Campus, establishment of new departments and other facilities. The campus is providing graduate and postgraduate level educational facilities to thousands of students in Rahim Yar Khan District.

The Federal Minister appreciated the extraordinary achievements of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur in various fields. On the occasion, the Vice Chancellor also described to the Federal Minister the steps taken to enhance the academic and industrial ties with the Chamber of Commerce of Bahawalpur, Rahim Yar Khan and other chambers of commerce of the country. This is being done so that industrial activities can benefit from the research activities taking place in the university and internship and placement opportunities can be provided to the students.

9 districts to benefit if Sukkur Airport gets int'l flights: Irfan Iqbal Sheikh

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Irfan Iqbal Sheikh, President FPCCI, has demanded that the federal government should decisively proceed towards enabling Sukkur airport for international flights; which happens to be a long-standing demand of the business community of the Sindh province.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh has apprised that Sukkur has geographical contiguity with eight big or small districts of Sindh with a distance of merely of 30 - 45 minutes; and, Sukkur has all the potential to be an important spot for promoting business, industrial and trade activities. Upgradation of Sukkur airport will result in economic upliftment of the entire province, he added.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that Sukkur is located right after Khairpur and it has Khairpur Special Economic Zone (KSEZ); and, KSEZ would also require Sukkur airport to have direct international flights to attract international investors. He added that when the KSEZ starts its operations and finds itself without an international airport in close proximity, it will badly hamper the prospects and potential of the SEZ.

FPCCI Chief has asked for the attention of Khawaja Saad Rafique, federal minister for aviation, to instruct the officials in civil aviation authority (CAA) to prepare the feasibility and come up with a practical timeframe to transform Sukkur airport into an international airport.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh has appreciated aviation minister's directives to CAA to design a better and efficient flight schedule to facilitate the domestic flights to Sukkur airport to benefit the substantive business community in Sukkur and eight adjacent districts collectively.

CM Sindh sets timeline for completion of Rs53b K-IV augmentation works

KARACHI: Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah on Thursday reviewing the progress of Greater Karachi Bulk Water Supply Scheme K-IV augmentation works Phase-I of 260 MGD set a timeline for starting the project in October 2022 and completing and commissioning of the project by January 2024.

The meeting was held here at CM House on Thursday and it was attended by Minister Local Government Nasir Shah, Advisor law Murtaza Wahab, Chief Secretary Sohail Rajput, Principal Secretary to CM Fayaz Jatoi, Secretary Local Government Najam Shah, PD K-IV Salahuddin and others.

Minister Local Government Nasir Shah with the support of Secretary Local Government and PD K-IV briefing the chief minister said that total cost of the project would come to around RsRs53 billion. Agencies

Water Shortage

KARACHI: People filling water cans from pump station due to shortage drinking water at Lee Market in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

LUMS celebrates commencement of Class of 2022

Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Convocations are an honoured tradition to celebrate graduates' accomplishments in the presence of loved ones, peers, and teachers. On June 30, the LUMS Class of 2022, came together to look back at the precious memories they made on campus, and look forward to new beginnings.

Around 1100 graduate and undergraduate students from all five schools at LUMS were awarded degrees at the convocation. The University's senior leadership including Pro Chancellor, Mr. Abdul Razak Dawood, Rector, Mr. Shahid Hussain, Vice Chancellor, Dr. Arshad Ahmad,



Members of the LUMS Board of Trustees, Deans, faculty and staff members celebrated the momentous occasion with the graduates and their families.

Registrar, Ms. Zara Fateh Qizilbash delivered the welcome address, following which, the Pro Chancellor, Mr. Abdul Razak Dawood formally inaugurated the 34th convocation of LUMS.

Vice Chancellor, Dr. Arshad

Ahmad congratulated the graduating class and wished them well for their future. He recognised the convocation as a defining moment for all students. While referring to the ongoing political uncertainty and economic challenges, he called upon all graduating students to discover their individual roles and serve a greater purpose. He also emphasised strength-

ening a collective hope for a better and stronger Pakistan. Towards the end, he advised all students to embrace their full potential and move forward, following in the footsteps of their predecessors while adhering to the timeless qualities of integrity, punctuality, respect, patience, and empathy.

The keynote address at this year's commencement was delivered by the inspiring, Justice (Retd.) Nasira Iqbal. Recipient of the prestigious, Sitara-i-Imtiaz 2021, Justice Iqbal was one of the first five women to be appointed to the Lahore High Court, where she served as a justice from 1994 to 2002.

KP likely to receive rain, gusty winds in scattered places

PESHAWAR: Regional Meteorological Center Peshawar on Thursday said that moist monsoon winds are entering the north-east parts of the province and rain-thunderstorm with gusty winds is expected at isolated to scattered places during next 24 hours.

Under the influence of this weather system, the rain and gusty winds are expected in Abbottabad, Mansehra, Battagram, Kohistan, Shang-la, Torghar, Swat, Chitral, Upper & Lower Dir, Malakand, Bunner, Swabi, Mardan Nowshera, Charsadda and Peshawar districts during evening and night hours. Dust storm and gusty winds are also expected in Kohat, Karak, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Tank, Dera Ismail Khan, North & South Waziristan districts during afternoon and evening hours. APP

Experts at Shura Hamdard's session discuss Pakistan's economic challenges

Our Correspondent

KARACHI: To understand and provide suggestions on Pakistan's economic challenges, Mrs. Sadia Rashid, President of Hamdard Foundation Pakistan (HFP) called upon Shura Hamdard's session on the theme: "Country's chaotic economic situation, how is improvement possible?" at Hamdard Corporate Head Office.

The meeting was presided over by Speaker Shura, Justice (r) Haziq-ul-Khairi. Mahmood Arshad, an expert on economic affairs, was invited as a guest speaker. He said that Pakistan had been trapped in a vicious circle of external loans due to a consistent trade deficit. "The country has to borrow from international financial institutions in order to meet its financial obligations on imports. Pakistan's imports have gradu-



ally increased over time, whereas our exports remain stagnant, which is a matter of concern. Pakistan needs concrete steps to boost the country's exports," he said.

Prof. Dr. Ikhtlaq Ahmed said that the present government had to make a solid plan for the adequate utilization of natural resources to increase economic activities in the country. "Development of minerals and agricultural resources with the help of modern technology requires

comprehensive planning at the policy level," he said.

Justice (Retd.) Zia Pervez said that Pakistan's economy had not been strengthened due to many factors, including some global conspiracies. The solution to Pakistan's problems lies in political stability.

Zafar Iqbal said that small and medium enterprises were the backbone of any country's economy. In this regard, laws and regulations must also be made business-friendly.

Ibnul Hassan Rizvi stressed the need for practical solutions to explore alternative energy sources to fuel the economy back on track. He added that modern technology for treating wastewater would provide much-needed water to industries and to the landscape.

Senator Abdul Haseeb Khan highlighted the importance of political vision and leadership to drive strong economic progress and development. He lamented the fact that amnesty schemes for dishonest segments of society greatly discourage honest taxpayers.

Naseem Bukhari was of the view that Pakistan's tourism sector could become attractive to foreign investors if the right steps were taken in this regard, such as maintaining law and order.

Prof. Dr. Tanveer Khalid said that the present situation was demanding sacrifices from the

entire nation. "The rulers must lead from the front by giving up their assets to pay off the first IMF tranche," she said.

Amir Taseen urged discouragement of lavish and unnecessary spending culture prevailing in society. He stressed an efficient and honest judicial system, which could give foreign investors a sense of hope for immediate redressal of their grievances.

Prof. Dr. Syed Shabib ul Hassan, Vice-Chancellor of Hamdard University, said: "Pakistan has an abundance of natural resources, which can be utilized for economic development. However, failure in the utilization of resources suggests that the fault lies in our social behavior. We need concrete planning to promote entrepreneurship and leadership in children from the primary school level. Only then will we be able to build our society."

Poor economic model digging deep into economy

Artificial growth attempt always results in a crisis, says Dr. Shahid Rasheed

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Former President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt on Thursday said the current economic model is very flawed and based on elitism which can bankrupt the country but will never allow it to develop.

Unnecessary imports and not used by people but by the elite which wastes foreign exchange while the burden of debt falls on the poor, he said. Shahid Rashid Butt said that no government wants real development but strives for artificial development which continues to damage the economy for decades.

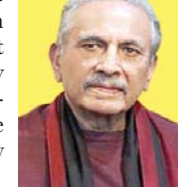
Every attempt made for artificial development for the sake of popularity results in huge deficits and crises, after which the country is saved by borrowing from external sources, he observed. The business leader said that reckless consumption is on the rise in the country, unnecessary imports are being encouraged and investment in savings the productive sectors has been made almost impossible.

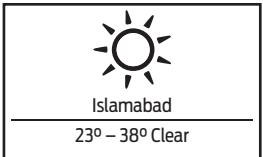
The focus of the entire country is on the property market and trading while few would opt for the industry. Many capitalists get cheap loans

in the name of industrial expansion but they invest part of such loans in the property market for good returns. He warned that as long as imports continued unabated, the demand for dollars in the country will continue to increase and the rupee will stay weak.

Governments ignore the ground realities and try to ensure better growth rate, lower inflation and rupee stability by borrowing but reforms are ignored which results in a crisis every two to three years. Shahid Rashid Butt said that the policy of SBP to keep the rupee stable by selling dollars instead of exports and investments is destructive and has been followed for decades.

He lamented that IMF has called for several more measures, including deregulation of petroleum prices, which could delay the repayment of loan instalments until August, which would have a negative impact on the economy; therefore the lender should reconsider its demands.





SERVICES

Namaz Timings

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

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police) 15
Bomb Disposal 15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad 1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance 4451122
& Rescue Services 9270831-5
Motorway Police 9270601-20

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

CMH 561111
MH 561116
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

Illegal cigarette advertising campaigns on the rise

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Local cigarette manufacturers have launched illegal cigarette promotion campaigns to encourage young people to smoke, committing clear violations of the Ministry of Health's advertising laws on cigarettes. According to the details, the Ministry of Health's Tobacco Advertising Guideline 2009 prohibits the advertising of cigarette packs and no cigarette company can offer free cigarette reward schemes, cash prizes or usage of images of an animal or human element to sell cigarette brands. Recently, local cigarette companies are violating the rules in the market and posters of free items, cash prizes, free cigarettes, discounts, etc. are being hung in the market. But interestingly all anti-tobacco NGOs have reportedly remained silent on these violations. According to a former high official of the Ministry of Health, 4-5 years ago only three or four anti-tobacco NGOs were working on anti-tobacco issues. But surprisingly, in the last few years, dozens of NGOs have been registered that started working on the anti-tobacco agenda. He further said that if we analyze the working of these NGOs, we will see there are many NGOs among them that are registered only in the documents. But these single room NGOs are reportedly receiving millions of rupees funding from some unregistered international organizations as well as from front-men of alleged cigarette manufacturers. Detailed analysis of working of these NGOs clearly depicts that the targeted technical events and regular media statements are protecting only the tax-related interests of tax evading cigarette sector. Surprisingly none of these single room NGOs have highlighted the blatant violations of advertising and marketing laws by local cigarette manufacturers, he added.

Pakistan, Kazakhstan enjoy friendly, cordial ties: Ayaz Sadiq

Ambassador appreciates role of the Government of Pakistan

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Yerzhan Kistafin, the Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan called on Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq to discuss matter of mutual interests.

The Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq warmly welcomed the Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan, Yerzhan Kistafin in his office on Thursday.

The Minister stated that Pakistan and Kazakhstan enjoy a friendly and cordial relationship and a lot of potential exist to enhance the relationship between both nations. Minister further discussed



the potential sectors in which collaboration is needed. He stressed on holding Government-to-Government negotiations for the provision of wheat, oil, gas and coal to fulfil the current need of the

country. He further stated that Kazakhstan is the largest landlocked country in the world and is the biggest economy in Central Asia, hence, the potential for cooperation and devel-

opment between both nations is enormous.

The Ambassador also appreciated the role of the Government of Pakistan in signing and implementing multiple projects that are beneficial for the development of both nations. He further stressed on enhancing bilateral trade and promoting investment in diverse areas.

He further apprised the Minister about the development projects of Kazakhstan in Balochistan which was appreciated by the Minister. Minister assured future collaboration and support and expressed gratitude to Mr. Kistafin for taking out his time and visit the Ministry.

Traffic Jam

ISLAMABAD: A view of traffic jam at zero point in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

TDC, ICCI organize diabetes awareness camp

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD JUNE 30, 2022: The Diabetes Centre (TDC) Islamabad organized a free screening camp to spread awareness about diabetes. The camp was jointly organized by the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ICCI) and TDC.

The President of ICCI Muhammad Shakeel Munir provided special assistance to organize this event. Participants were briefed on diabetes and its complications.

During the camp, Dr. Asjad Hameed, Chairman-The Diabetes Centre, expressed his views highlighting the mission of the hospital. He encouraged people to have a balanced diet and avoid sedentary lifestyle.

ICCI President Muhammad Shakeel Munir and its senior management commended TDC's efforts to treat diabe-



tes and its awareness-raising programs. The TDC management welcomed the cooperation of the ICCI and hoped for further collaboration.

PCMD, Royan Institute organize webinar

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: COMSTECH, Dr. Panjwani Center for Molecular Medicine and Drug Research (PCMD), Royan Institute, Mustafa (PBUH) Science and Technology Foundation and Sindh Innovation, Research, and Education Network jointly organized international webinar on "Genomic Characterization of Neuromuscular Disorders in Pakistan" on Wednesday.

This was the third webinar of the PCMD-Royan Institute webinar series. This webinar series is a joint venture of PCMD and Royan Institute, Iran. It is held physically in Pakistan and Iran and people around the world join these webinars online. COMSTECH, Mustafa (pbuh) Science and Technology Foundation and Sindh Innovation, Research, and Education Network provide support in the organization of these webinars.

Dr. Ishtiaq Ahmad Khan, Associate Professor at the Dr. Panjwani Center conducted this webinar. He talked about the genomic characterization of neuromuscular disorders in Pakistan. He said neurological disorders are heterogeneous group of disorders, they affect the peripheral and central nervous system. Dr. Ishtiaq talked about neuromuscular disorder and presented the current status of the prevalence of this disorder in Pakistan. He said Pakistan lies in the region which



is under high burden of neuromuscular disorder and the basic reason is consanguineous marriages.

Dr. Ishtiaq mentioned that neurological conditions pose a great diagnostic challenge due to complex clinical presentation, phenotypic overlap, and rare disorders. He said that next generation sequencing and bioinformatics are very helpful in diagnosing neurological disorders.

Dr. Ishtiaq said that Jamil-ur-Rahman center for genomics research center at the ICCBS is first genomics facility of Pakistan. He said this center is providing training to researchers from all over Pakistan.

Dr. Ishtiaq Ahmad Khan is Associate Professor at the Dr. Panjwani Center. He is Ph.D. from the H. E. J. Research Institute of Chemistry, ICCBS, University of Karachi, and is post-doctorate from the Beijing Genomics Institute, Shenzhen China, and the Sanger Wellcome Institute, Cambridge.

His research group is working on microbial, viral, and human disease genomics. During the current pandemic, his group carried out genomic surveillance studies on SARS-CoV-2 and contributed to informed decision-making at the national level.

Health Corner

Stress accelerates immune aging

ISLAMABAD: Stress — in the form of traumatic events, job strain, everyday stressors and discrimination — accelerates aging of the immune system, potentially increasing a person's risk of cancer, cardiovascular disease and illness from infections such as COVID-19, according to a new USC study.

The research, published June 13 in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS), could help explain disparities in age-related health, including the unequal toll of the pandemic, and identify possible points for intervention.

"As the world's population of older adults increases, understanding disparities in age-related health is essential. Age-related changes in the immune system play a critical role in declining health," said lead study author Eric Klopack, a postdoctoral scholar in the USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology. "This study helps clarify mechanisms involved in accelerated immune aging."

As people age, the immune system naturally begins a dramatic downgrade, a condition called immunosenescence. With advanced age, a person's immune profile weakens, and includes too many worn-out white blood cells circulating and too few fresh, "naive" white blood cells ready to take on new invaders.

Immune aging is associated not only with cancer, but with cardiovascular disease, increased risk of pneumonia, reduced efficacy of vaccines and organ system aging.

But what accounts for drastic health differences in same-age adults? USC researchers decided to see if they could tease out a connection between lifetime exposure to stress — a known contributor to poor health — and declining vigor in the immune system.

They queried and cross-referenced enormous data sets from University of Michigan's Health and Retirement Study, a national longitudinal study of the economic, health, marital, family status, and public and private support systems of older Americans.

To calculate exposure to various forms of social stress, the researchers analyzed responses from a national sample of 5,744 adults over the age of 50. They answered a questionnaire designed to assess respondents' experiences with social stress, including stressful life events, chronic stress, everyday discrimination and lifetime discrimination.

Blood samples from the participants were then analyzed through flow cytometry, a lab technique that counts and classifies blood cells as they pass one-by-one in a narrow stream in front of a laser.

As expected, people with higher stress scores had older-seeming immune profiles, with lower percentages of fresh disease fighters and higher percentages of worn-out white blood cells. The association between stressful life events and fewer ready to respond, or naive, T cells remained strong even after controlling for education, smoking, drinking, BMI and race or ethnicity.

Some sources of stress may be impossible to control, but the researchers say there may be a workaround.

T-cells — a critical component of immunity — mature in a gland called the thymus, which sits just in front of and above the heart. As people age, the tissue in their thymus shrinks and is replaced by fatty tissue, resulting in reduced production of immune cells. Past research suggests that this process is accelerated by lifestyle factors like poor diet and low exercise, which are both associated with social stress.

"In this study, after statistically controlling for poor diet and low exercise, the connection between stress and accelerated immune aging wasn't as strong," said Klopack. "What this means is people who experience more stress tend to have poorer diet and exercise habits, partly explaining why they have more accelerated immune aging."

Improving diet and exercise behaviors in older adults may help offset the immune aging associated with stress.

Additionally, cytomegalovirus (CMV) may be a target for intervention. CMV is a common, usually asymptomatic virus in humans and is known to have a strong effect accelerating immune aging. Like shingles or cold sores, CMV is dormant most of the time but can flare up, especially when a person is experiencing high stress.

In this study, statistically controlling for CMV positivity also reduced the connection between stress and accelerated immune aging. Therefore, widespread CMV vaccination could be a relatively simple and potentially powerful intervention that could reduce the immune aging effects of stress, the researchers said. (Courtesy Science Daily)

PAC organizes Ghazal festival



Staff Reporter

RAWALPINDI: Ghazal Festival was organized in Punjab Arts Council organized Ghazal festival for the promotion of Ghazal singing. The special guests of the festival were Naheed Manzoor and Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmed.

Imran Rushdie, Ishaq Qureshi, Samina Khan, Sajjad Akmal, Ali Shaukat Khan and Noman Mirza performed ghazals in their beautiful voices at the Ghazal Festival. At the Ghazal Festival, a great tribute was paid to the great ghazal singers who are no longer with us but their art is alive in us. Among them are Mehdi Hassan, Ustad Salam Ali Khan, Ustad Amanat Ali Khan, Who introduced Ghazal art to the whole world and made Pakistan proud. Naheed Mantoor said that ghazal festival will promote the art of ghazal. In our country, if the ghazal singers are perfect, then the taste of the ghazal listeners is also its own example.

Ghazal singing creates a positive vibe of devotion and longing in human emotions, their melodious and sarcastic voice is a cause of beautiful hearing. Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmed said that we are continuously offering cultural programs to the people from all genres of fine arts through which positive and good ideas are transmitted to the society. This is the cause of social well-being. We have life and permanence in ghazal, he added A large number of people participated in the Ghazal Festival.

Islamabad to host Iran-Pakistan joint exhibition

ISLAMABAD: The first specialized exhibition of Iran and Pakistan will be held in Pakistan's capital of Islamabad with the participation of Iranian businessmen and craftsmen, and Iranian knowledge-based companies. This three-day specialized exhibition is scheduled to be held from July 24 to 27 with the presence of various Iranian and Pakistani companies.

Iranian craftsmen and business people active in the sectors of energy, petrochemicals, chemical products, construction materials, road and construction machinery, medicine, medical equipment, food, and sweets will attend the exhibition. After the ninth meeting of the Iran-Pakistan Trade Committee which was held in Tehran in November last year, three exhibitions were held in Karachi and Lahore with the mutual cooperation of two friendly neighboring and brotherly states.

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.**
 (mszk786@gmail.com)
 Bureau Chief Lahore: **Syed Afraz Ali Nazish**
 (afrazalishah@gmail.com)
 Islamabad Office: **Rose Plaza, I-8 Markaz.**
 Karachi office: **Flat No.C.3.A.One Comfort, Block No 11.**
Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Main Rashid Minhas Road.
 Lahore Office: **7-E,Samanberg, Johar Town.**
 Email: **spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com**

Modi's critics' precarious life in India

Somdeep Sen

On June 16, the Supreme Court of India cautioned the Uttar Pradesh (UP) state government against taking punitive actions targeting those who participated in protests over Islamophobic comments made by two Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders. Specifically, the country's highest court was referring to the demolition of the homes of Muslim activists. Local authorities claimed that these homes were built illegally. However, others insist that the state government, led by hardline Hindu nationalist chief minister Yogi Adityanath, is running a retaliatory campaign against its critics.

One of the homes that were demolished belonged to the leader of the Welfare Party of India, Javed Mohammed, who had earlier been arrested and charged with being the "mastermind" behind the protests. Mohammed and his daughter, Afsan Fatima, are prominent activists, known for organising against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) of 2019, which grants fast-track citizenship to non-Muslim undocumented immigrants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. Protests against the Act were met with a brutal crackdown as right-wing mobs,

led by BJP leaders, rampaged through Delhi, targeting protesters, while police arrested anti-CAA activists and charged them under India's stringent "anti-terror" law.

The Indian government has also attempted to prevent its critics from travelling. Earlier this year, the former head of Amnesty International India, Aakar Patel, was stopped from leaving the country after a "look out circular" (LOC) was issued for him. LOCs are usually reserved for "apprehending criminals at the border". Patel, however, was heading to the US to deliver lectures about the crackdown on civil society in India under Modi's leadership. Speaking to the media, Patel described it as sending "a clear signal to activists, journalists, and politicians to shut up".

A week before Patel, journalist Rana Ayyub was also stopped at Mumbai airport, accused of money laundering. The case was based on a first information report (FIR) filed by Vikas Sankrityayan, the founder of the NGO Hindu IT Cell. Ayyub was on her way to London where she had been invited by the International Centre for Journalists to participate in a discussion about "online violence against women journalists". The Enforcement Directorate (ED) is currently investigating the allegation that Ayyub raised funding for charitable purposes through the crowd funding platform Ketto

and used some of the donations for personal expenses. Ayyub has maintained that the "entire donation received through Ketto is accounted for and not a single paisa has been misused".

In a statement supporting Rana Ayyub, the Washington Post said: "Almost every day Rana Ayyub faces threats of violence and death. She has been the target of prejudiced investigations and online harassment. Her bank account was frozen over charitable work. Journalists should not fear prosecution and smear campaigns." But the targeting of journalists began earlier than this. In 2017, the residences and offices of Prannoy and Radhika Roy – the founders of the influential cable news station NDTV – were raided by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in what many deemed to be a "politically motivated witch hunt" because of NDTV's critical editorial stance.

The CBI said it was investigating the allegation that the founders and NDTV had caused "losses to a private bank by defaulting loans". The network responded: "NDTV and its promoters have never defaulted on any loan... We adhere to the highest levels of integrity and independence. It is clearly the independence and fearlessness of NDTV's team that the ruling party's politicians cannot stomach and the CBI raid is merely another attempt at silencing the media".

While this investigation was seemingly stalled due to lack of evidence, the CBI filed another case against NDTV in 2019 for allegedly violating foreign direct investment regulations and routing "tainted money of unknown public servants through shell firms".

And it's not only journalists and activists who have been targeted. In October 2021, when Aryan Khan, the son of Muslim Bollywood superstar Shahrukh Khan, was arrested by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on charges that included "possession of drugs and contact with an international drug racket", it was widely seen as politically motivated. He was not found to be in possession of any narcotics and charges were eventually dropped in May this year. Many believed Aryan had been targeted because of his father's unwillingness, unlike many of his Bollywood colleagues, to unequivocally align with the Hindu nationalist agenda. Journalist Kavita Chowdhury noted that while others have churned out "jingoistic blockbusters pandering to Hindutva sentiments", Khan has remained a symbol of secularism and personifies the "ethos of Hindu-Muslim unity".

All of this is impacting India's standing in the world. It has slipped to 150th out of 180 countries in the Press Freedom index and 46th out of 165 independent countries and two

territories in the 2021 Democracy Index published by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU). While this is an improvement on its position – 53rd – in the 2020 index, it is a significant drop from its ranking of 27th in 2014, when Modi became prime minister. But more concerning than these alarming indicators are the impunity with which Modi has overseen India's swift decline into Freedom House's category of a "partially free country".

Hindu nationalists have been bolstered by significant electoral successes, while Modi has benefitted from a cultural shift – one that he has, in many ways, orchestrated – that has led to a society that, more than ever, celebrates the ideological and political ways of Hindutva. Equally, as we were recently reminded with the arrest of Teesta Setalvad, who campaigned for justice for the victims of the 2002 anti-Muslim riot in Gujarat when Modi was chief minister, the prime minister is willing and able to mobilise public institutions for his political agenda. This leaves little by way of recourse for Modi's detractors in India and indicates that there are few barriers left to prevent the country's slide into authoritarianism.

The writer is Associate Professor of International Development Studies at Roskilde University. Courtesy Al Jazeera

India exposed

The world is getting scarier of Indian covert designs of its diplomatic moves. India falsely tries to depict before the world that there is no freedom fight continuing in the Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Whereas the on the ground realities are quite different because Kashmiris are showing their full resentment towards Indian government's anti human being policies in IIOJK. India has converted IIOJK into world most densely militarized occupied zone and it is not acceptable to any of India's neighbor. By keeping over a million troops stationed in IIOJK, India on one side continuously pose security threats to Pakistan as well as wants to keep China also under pressure.

On one hand Pakistan has often raised this issue on international forums and demand just right to self determination for Kashmiris and on the other hand China has also serious reservations about Indian activities along LAC as well as inside the occupied territory. A few days back India raised another issue on diplomatic fronts by announcing to hold G-20 meeting in IIOJK just to show the world that there is quite normalcy in IIOJK.

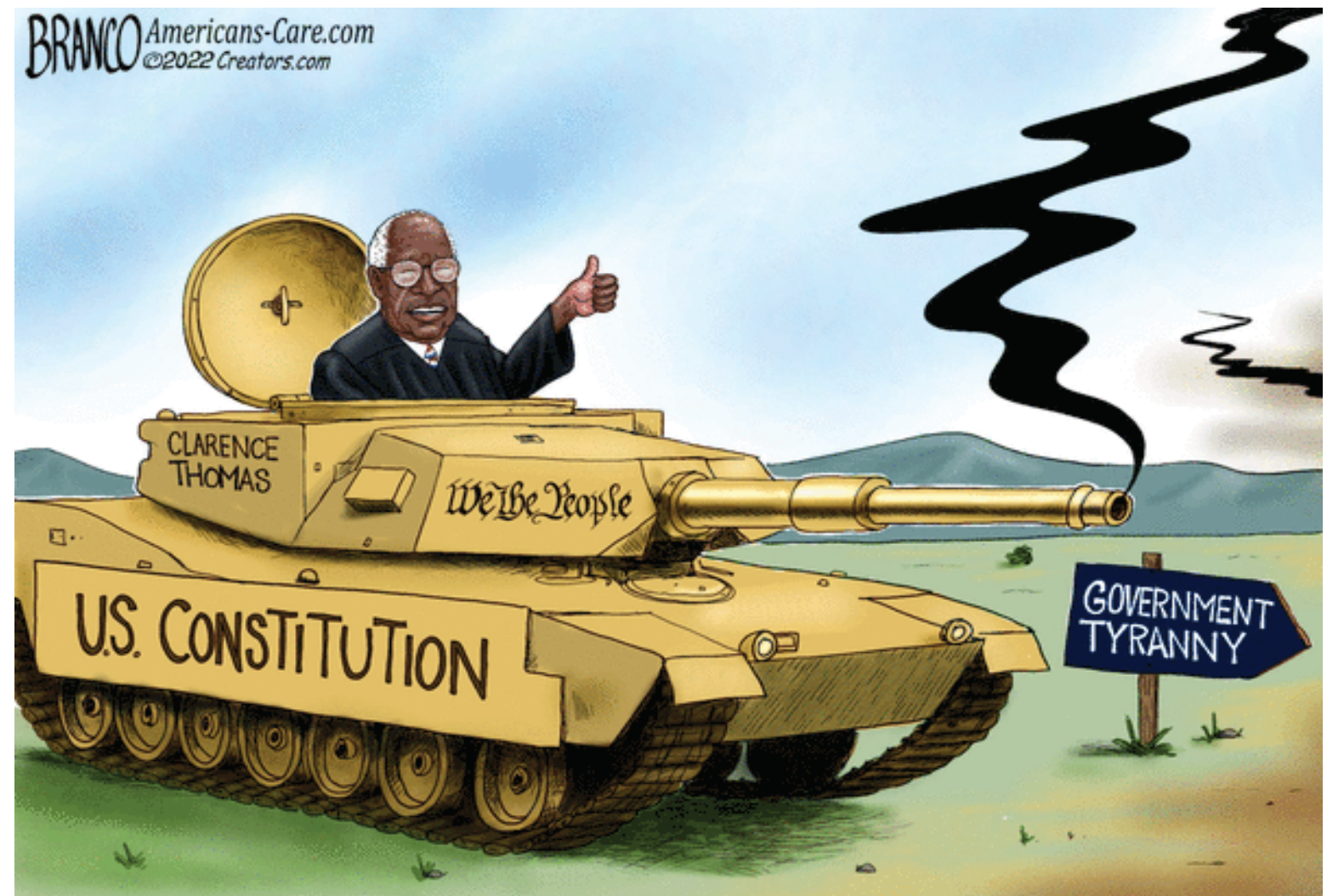
Now China has strongly opposed the Indian plan of holding the G-20 meeting in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and called on the member of the grouping to focus on economic recovery and avoid politicizing the relevant issue. China's position on Kashmir is consistent and clear cut. It is a legacy issue between India and Pakistan. It should be properly resolved in accordance with the relevant United Nations (UN) resolutions and bilateral agreement. Relevant parties should avoid complicating the situation with the unilateral move.

Pakistan has already completely rejected India's attempt to hold the G-20 meeting in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, reiterating that the region is under New Delhi's forcible and illegal occupation. As per media reports, India is planning to host the 2023 meetings of the G-20 and its Ministry of External Affairs has issued directives to the authorities in the occupied territory to ensure necessary arrangements. Noting the relevant information, the Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson stressed to address the disputes through dialogue and consultations and jointly uphold peace and stability.

We need to address the disputes through dialogue and consultation and jointly uphold peace and stability, says Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian. G-20 is a premier forum for international economic cooperation and called on relevant sides to focus on economic recovery and avoid politicizing the relevant issue so as to make positive contribution to improving the global economic governance. China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which is constructed in the region is completely different in nature than holding of G20 meetings in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

China has undertaken projects to help Pakistan to grow its economy and improve livelihood.

The relevant Chinese companies who run the projects do so with the aim of helping the local people to develop the economy and improve their livelihood and that doesn't mean our position on Kashmir is changed. I have already elaborated on our stern position on Kashmir. With regard to whether China will attend the meeting, the Chinese side will look into that.



E-Court System in Pakistan

Hamid Masih, Awais Ali, Shahzada Atta Ur Rehman, Muhammad Haris, Shayhaq Bashir, Irshad Ali & Waqas Ahmed

In a country where civil suit cases can take up to 25 years and on an odd day can reach up to 70 years, e-courts system is a step in the right direction. Supreme Court of Pakistan in a landmark decision launched the e-courts system on 9 May 2019. Being a success story in countries like the US, UK and Singapore e-court can help the judicial system of Pakistan speed up its process of dispensation of justice. To a naive mind, the judicial system currently operational in Pakistan seems to be a rotten machine as it ranked at 130 out of 139 around the world. The world Justice Projects Rule of Law Index 2021 report shows that Pakistan is among the lowest ranked countries in its adherence to the rule of law, ranking 130th out of 139 nations. Areas covered here are; (1) Constraints on Government Powers. (2) Absence of Corruption. (3) Openness of Government. (4) Fundamental Rights. (5) Order and Security. (6) Regulatory Enforcement. (7) Civil Justice. (8) Criminal Justice.

This might be a case why the citizen's lack trusts in one of the most important organs of the state. Those in the system take it like a well-oiled machine but consider the delayed justice and long proceedings aspect the primary reason for the under-performing of the judicial system. Another flaw with this system is the high opportunity cost of the time it entails for those seeking justice. E-courts can help fill the gap left by conventional courts through

the digitalisation of courts and reforming the legal system in a way that is both inclusive and effective.

E-courts using the existing information and communication technology would bring a transformation change in the way justice is dispensed. For a developing country like Pakistan capitalising on the spread of mobile technologies to improve access to justice with the help of information and communication technology will modernise the judicial mechanism.

E-courts with the facility of e-filing can make the legal procedure smoother. Furthermore, it would make the entire process more cost-effective. Paper documents had a high probability of misplacing and in some cases; the whole room containing legal files would turn to ashes before the hearing of cases. So e-filing would make the whole system more transparent.

For speeding up the whole judgment process e-hearing can be introduced in e-courts. E-courts can have video link connectivity from jail to court and witnesses to the court can be presented before the judge via Skype. Lahore and Islamabad High Courts have launched Court Management System (CMS) and mobile applications to get their e-courts at par with the international standards. A judicial norm of our system merits those who spent most of their time in the courtrooms and completely ignore the new blood.

To make the system more inclusive, e-courts can facilitate and protects both litigants as well as legal practitioners. In recent times, the Apex Supreme Court has installed a video link system, where lawyers can argue from any Supreme Court Registry branch across the country at provincial capitals, after filing an application to heat effect. Islamabad High Court (IHC)

also introduced the facility of designated e-courts at both splits of ICT's (Islamabad Capital Territory) subordinate judiciary, i.e. East and West, where courts upon application of the counsels can help recording of evidence through video link, though not all proceeding of trials are covered here yet.

"Justice delayed is justice denied" is a well-known legal maxim. Most of our legal practitioners are making a travesty of this maxim. In our legal system delaying a legal procedure or taking a stay is considered a trademark for a competent lawyer or a successful litigant. E-courts by speeding up the whole judgment process can be a game-changer in this regard. Furthermore, it can break the monopoly of black-sheep groups and make the judiciary an organ that responds to the woes of its citizens. E-courts as said can prove to be a very fruitful way of the dispensation of justice. As technology is growing with each passing day, e-courts will make it easier for every citizen of the state to avail of justice.

It will make the judicial system fast and transparent. Furthermore, it will make it easier for the citizens to trust the judicial process. Precedents will be available to all the citizens and people's trust in courts will increase. Through e-courts, the government can also save a huge sum of amount. Spending on legal proceedings will decrease and the sum spent on infrastructure can be transferred to make the e-courts more speedy and operational. It will also create job opportunities for skilled workers. In short, e-courts in Pakistan will be a game-changer in the dispensation of justice. It will decrease public spending. End the trust of citizens in state's judicial system will boost.

Our project consists of group work, so the rest of the 6 persons are my group members. They help out me in the research.

Revisiting the Electoral Reforms

Nimra Noor

As we are approaching toward upcoming general elections, the political heat is rising among the political parties. PTI is head on with PMLN and PPP for early general election. The political battleground is prepared for general elections, on the other hand need for reforms to ensure the transparency of elections is always under consideration by the government. After the reforms of Election Act 2017, the outcome of 2018 general elections has raised questions on the independence and authority of Election Commission. The failure of result transmission system RTS has also raised concerns on the transparency of the free and fair election.

The controversy on the electronic voting machines and the voting right of overseas Pakistanis continued in both PTI and PDM governments. The PTI government passed the Elections Second Amendment Bill, 2021, granting the right of vote to overseas Pakistanis and providing for use of electronic voting machines in the elections. The Election Commission ECP also showed concern on the implementation of electronic voting machines and overseas Pakistanis to vote at national level in general elections of 2023. After the vote of no confidence, the new government of PDM on May 26 Passed Elections (Amendment) Bill 2022 in National Assembly with two crucial amendments in the election rules. The legislation of 2022 aims to conduct pilot projects in local by-elections before using i-voting and EVMs in the next general elections which reversed the election laws by the previous Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) government.

The debate on the issue of i-voting for overseas Pakistanis and use of EVM in general elections at national level is the converging point between the arguments of PTI and PDM government. The use of technology of EVM and i-voting both comes with its pros and cons. The technology solutions

also come with certain limitations and manipulations. Although according to PTI the use of EVM and i-voting will solve the problem of overseas Pakistanis and transparency in election. But the concerns by the PDM parties can also not be taken lightly. The manipulation of elections by the external forces has been common in Pakistan. We should not blindly follow the herd without working; the implementation of new technology in the election at national level will leave the results at peril. The failure of RTS also question the ability of server capacity in case of EVM and i-voting implementation. The government should work on the substitute options available to solve the issue of technology use and i-voting.

According to the estimates given by Election Commission Pakistan ECP the elections would cost approximately Rs. 47.41 billion – around Rs.15 billion for ensuring security alone. The feeble economy of Pakistan has to spend billions of rupees for the elections under such circumstances of high inflation where people are vulnerable to poverty but we are unable to ensure the honor of vote. The expenditure to spend on the election itself is unable to enable the transparent free and fair elections. The transparent free and fair election has always been compromised in some way or other, and its status remained only to the extent of its slogan. All the political parties remain in the jeopardy about the results of elections. The blame game of election rigging has become the common argument of contestants.

The independent and power autonomous Election Commission will pave a way for the transparent elections and will provide credibility for vote. The representation in National Assembly should be by the vote of people and for the people not for external interests, it can only be realized by the power structural reforms in the institution. At the end of the day, we require efficient reforms in the authority and independent Election Commission ECP to ensure the credibility of vote.

The writer hails from School of Economics @quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad

Friday, July 1, 2022

Gulf Islamic Investments acquires majority stake in UK's OFFA

The investment will further expand OFFA's real estate financing proposition through the development of short-term and longer-term real estate financing products

DUBAI: Gulf Islamic Investments, a leading Shariah compliant global investment company based in the UAE, with assets under management in real estate, private equity and venture capital sectors, has announced a majority investment in OFFA, the UK's first Shariah-compliant bridge financing provider for the real estate market.

The investment will further expand OFFA's real estate financing proposition through the development of short-term and longer-term real estate financing products, a statement said.

Pankaj Gupta, Co-CEO of Gulf Islamic Investments, said: "OFFA is a highly attractive bridge-financing house that benefits from strong net profit margins and operates in a rapidly growing market that is currently worth £5.1 billion.

"The company is based in the Birmingham area of England, which has the largest Muslim population in the UK, and is the only Shariah-compliant bridge financier in the UK. The value of bridge financing in the UK grew 8.5% in the first three months of 2022, and we believe the combination of property prices, demographics and OFFA's unique market position makes this a compelling investment opportunity."

Mohamed Al Hassan, Co-CEO of Gulf Islamic Investments, said: "This key investment in a high potential market reflects our commitment to identifying attractive opportunities across the globe. Further to our recent acquisition of the digital bank, we are in the process of



continuing to seek out attractive opportunities in the same space and in the direct credit sector to grow sustainable investor and stakeholder value."

Bilal Ahmed, CEO of OFFA, said: "This significant investment by Gulf Islamic Investments will provide us with

the capital to expand our asset book and product range. We carefully evaluated potential investors and selected GII for its commitment to genuine partnership, true understanding of Shariah investment, proven international track record and strength of their fundamental experience."

The transaction is the latest in a series of GII investments in alternative assets such as direct credit, which offer distinct risk-reward characteristics and attractive diversification from traditional fixed income and equity asset classes. Agencies

OIC is working towards achieving 25% intra-OIC trade by 2025



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

This was disclosed in a statement by the Secretary-General, delivered on his behalf by the Assistant Secretary General for Economic Affairs Dr. Ahmad Kawesa Sengendo during the opening ceremony of the 17th OIC Trade Fair, held in Dakar, Republic of Senegal on 13th June 2022. "It is my hope and prayer that this trade fair will contribute effectively towards moving intra-OIC trade from 18% seen in 2021 to 25% by 2025," said the OIC Secretary-General.

"I urge all our trade promotion agencies to continue to collaborate with the entire OIC family towards the realization of this achievable target," he added.

The Secretary-General noted that, the staging of the biennial general trade fair and the regular convening of specialized trade fairs represent an important instrument for promotion of trade and services among the OIC Member States, adding that this becomes even more important given the disruptions to trade caused by COVID 19 pandemic, and the global food crises caused by a cocktail of challenges.

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

Meezan Bank expands its ATM Network to 1,000

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Meezan Bank, Pakistan's leading Islamic bank has installed its 1,000th Automated Teller Machine (ATM). This landmark cash dispensing terminal has been installed at Chashma in District Mianwali. Since its inception, the Bank has expanded its ATMs across Pakistan's rural and semi-urban regions, providing round-the-clock access to cash and furthering basic banking and financial inclusion for the masses.

The Bank's ATMs enable access to NFC-enabled and bio-metric transactions, cash deposit into own and other bank accounts and integration with various digital wallets while also operating on solar power and consuming significantly less energy than conventional machines. As the only bank in the country to offer the fastest debit card activation service through its ATM terminals, the Bank is also the first in the industry to allow withdrawals up to PKR 100K in a single transaction.

"Meezan Bank is committed to grow its state-of-the-art ATM network across Pakistan while offering the highest standards of ATM services with the best up-time in the industry," said Mr. Shariq Mubeen, Head Alternate Distribution Channels, Meezan Bank.

ITFC disbursing new financing to Egypt, ready to provide more

Staff Reporter

CAIRO: The Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC) has begun dispersing a \$3 billion credit facility extension with Egypt to finance food and energy imports and stands ready to provide more support in the future, the group's CEO said on Thursday.

With wheat prices driven higher by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the amount of the financing Egypt spends on food security was expected to rise to about the same share as spending on energy, Hani Sonbol said in an interview in Cairo.

The Saudi-based ITFC has provided some \$14 billion to Egypt under five framework agreements since 2008. This month it signed an extension of the latest agreement, doubling its value to \$6 billion.

In recent months rising global commodity prices and the flight of billions in portfolio investments have piled financial pressure on Egypt, one of the world's top wheat importers.

Sonbol said many countries were looking for support.

"We've had really a huge list of demands coming," he said, speaking on the sidelines of a banking conference. "It looks like we are seeing a lot of demand for the remainder of the year and also in



2023."

Those included a request for funding food supplies from Tunisia under consideration by the ITFC, Sonbol said.

The corporation is also preparing a programme that should be launched this year to help former Soviet republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) weather economic headwinds, Sonbol said, without giving further details.

Western sanctions against Russia had creat-

ed some initial uncertainty but were not affecting ITFC programmes, he said.

The corporation wanted to encourage greater self-sufficiency in countries with large import bills but it felt "very comfortable" working with Egypt and would be ready to provide more financing once the current facility ended.

"As soon as we finish this one we'll sign the next one," Sonbol said, adding that it was unclear when that could happen. "We are here to support." ZAWYA

Faysal Islami introduces hotel booking services in partnership with Ascendant

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Faysal Bank Limited, in partnership with Pakistan's largest hospitality technology company - Ascendant, has launched a hotel booking platform for its customers that enables them to conveniently book hotels online through their website: www.faysalbank.com

The website offers 1600+ hotels and guest houses in 50 cities across Pakistan. This initiative by Faysal Islami, a leading Islamic Bank of Pakistan and winner of Best Islamic bank for Transformation and innovation at the Global Islamic Finance Awards (GIFA), marks an integral step towards the promotion of domestic tourism. In addition, the bank also plans to introduce international hotels to this service to facilitate customers who wish to travel abroad.

Speaking on the occasion of the launch ceremony, Mr. Aneeq Malik, Group Head Consumer Finance and Payment Services Faysal Bank said: "We always aim to bring the best banking services to our customers at their fingertips. Faysal Bank has always believed in innovation and digitalization of services for the ease of customers. With Ascendant by our side, our customers can now not only check the rates of any hotel rooms across Pakistan but also book the hotel and pay online using their bank accounts, debit or credit cards through our website."

CEO of Ascendant, Andre Pivrateer said: As the only hospitality tech provider able to offer real time



rates and availability at more than 80% of Pakistan's hotels, we serve the tourism sector by making the online booking experience better for the consumer. Through this strategic alliance with Faysal Bank, individuals can now book and pay with ease through this platform on Faysal Bank's website and soon to be launched on their mobile app as well."

Head of Unsecured Business and Payment services Faysal Bank, Feroz Khan further added: "This business alliance is a testimony of our commitment to our customers. We at Faysal Bank, continue to strive to build loyalty by offering innovative products and benefits for our valued customers. This collaboration aims to make travel and tourism across all corners of Pakistan more accessible for our customers."

Faysal Bank is one of the most progressive Islamic banks in Paki-

stan and has concentrated on growth through improving service quality, investment in technology, people and utilizing its extensive growing Islamic branch network.

Ascendant is a specialized hospitality technology company revolutionizing the tourism landscape in Pakistan by unlocking exceptional value for travel suppliers and customers.

Faysal Bank Limited was incorporated in Pakistan on October 3rd, 1994 as a Public Limited Company under the Companies Ordinance, 1984. The Bank's shares are listed on Pakistan Stock Exchange. Faysal Bank is engaged in Commercial, Retail, Corporate and Islamic banking activities. Faysal Bank's footprint now spreads over more than 220+ cities. As at 20th June 2022, the bank has a network of 621 branches of which 616 are Islamic banking branches.

AlHuda CIBE strengthened its roots in Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone Market is the future potential market for Islamic Finance Industry in West Africa; Muhammad Zubair Mughal

Spokesman Report

DUBAI: AlHuda Centre of Islamic Banking and Economics diverted its human resources to Sierra Leone financial market, in a couple of days by its professional excellence and technical expertise penetrated freely in Freetown. Islamic Financial Industry is a system which provides reliable economic and socially justified solutions in light of Shariah principle. The structure of Islamic financial system is the key of sustainability for developing economies like Sierra Leone. AlHuda Centre of Islamic Banking and Economics is penetrated in West African Financial Industry, it played very developmental role in some Anglo and Francophone countries. In expansion of its operations AlHuda CIBE move to Sierra Leone market, this market is new for the concept of Islamic finance industry. The lack of awareness, human resources expertise, and in-depth knowledge are the main challenge for it, but the good thing is the market is ready to adopt this new venture in this market.

AlHuda CIBE mission is present in Sierra Leone from one and half month, in this duration we met with Governor, Deputy Governor, and Directors of

Bank of Sierra Leone and have communication for the development of Islamic microfinance and Sukuk (Islamic Capital bonds) Issuance. We also met with Mr. Dennis K. Vandt, Minister of Finance, Mr. Sheku A. Fantamadi Bangura Deputy Minister of Finance (I) Government of Sierra Leone and other team and had a good conversation on issuance of Sukuk as opportunity to raise funds independently for the Government. In last week senior management Mr. Muhammad Zubair Mughal, Chief Executive Officer AlHuda Centre of Islamic Banking and Economics United Arab Emirates were in Sierra Leone. We acknowledge the response of the Sierra Leone financial industry key players to welcome AlHuda CIBE. The management of AlHuda CIBE has couple of meetings banking and finance industry and some knowledge driven activities also with some institutional collaborations. He met with Dr. J.Sanpha Koroma, Founder and Chief Executive Officer Union Trust Bank Limited; this meeting had very fruitful discussion about capital generating avenues and establishment of capital market to raise capital investment for Sierra Leone. AlHuda CIBE signed a Memorandum of Understand-



ing (MOU) with Apex Bank Sierra Leone as In-House Consultant for the development of Islamic microfinance for rural and agriculture sector. It is signed by Mr. Nelson Salia-Konneh Managing Director of Apex Bank and Mr. Muhammad Zubair Mughal Chief

Executive Officer AlHuda CIBE.

He met with Mr. Sheku Mattia, Deputy Commissioner Sierra Leone Insurance Commission (Slicom) and other directors for the designing guidelines to introduce and operate Islamic Insurance (Takaful) industry. They

also engaged a workshop where they invite all the insurance industry of for the introductory lecture about Islamic Insurance. He also had a very good conversation about future of Islamic Insurance in the country with Mr. Raymond Macauley, Managing Direc-

tor of Aureol Insurance Company Ltd and President of Sierra Leone Insurance Association. He also had a very good interactive session with microfinance sector, an interactive session arranged by Sierra Leone Microfinance Institutions Association. He also had a meeting with Ms. Sao-Kpato Hannah Isatta Max-Kyne, Commissioner National Commission for Social Action and the technical team, where they discussed future collaborations with two institutions and how to attract foreign funding for the Sierra Leone.

Mr. Muhammad Zubair Mughal highlights many opportunities for Islamic finance industry in this market for the socio-economic development, to generate capital investment, how government can generate funds for their mega construction projects and how they can attract more funding for the social and economic development. As per his diverse experience in multiple markets he is very optimistic that Sierra Leone is the future market for the Islamic Finance in West Africa. In the presence of AlHuda CIBE Mission to Sierra Leone we met with financial industry all segments; we appreciate the people for their interest in Islamic Finance.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index

Current	Prev. Close
41,540.83	41,297.73
Day's High	Day's Low:
41,559.31	41,220.49
Index Value	Change
5,521,842,366	+243.10
Percentage	Time
+0.59%	30 Jun, 2022 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index

Index Value	Change
7,169.28	-143.04
Percentage	Time
-1.96%	30 Jun, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average

Index Value	Change
30,733.43	-295.88
Percentage	Time
-0.95%	30 Jun, 12:11 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average

Index Value	Change
26,393.04	-411.56
Percentage	Time
-1.54%	30 Jun, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	144.14	145.39
Bahrain Dinar	552.02	556.52
Canadian Dollar	161.22	162.57
China Yuan	31.02	31.27
Danish Krone	29.58	29.93
Euro	214.65	216.65
Hong Kong Dollar	26.46	26.81
Indian Rupee	2.65	2.73
Japanese Yen	1.44	1.48
Kuwaiti Dinar	676.98	681.98
Malaysian Ringgit	47.15	47.6
New Zealand \$	131.07	132.27
Norwegians Krone	21.22	21.52
Omani Riyal	539.82	544.32
Qatari Riyal	57.02	57.52
Saudi Riyal	54.1	55
Singapore Dollar	149.95	151.25
Swedish Korona	20.68	20.98
Swiss Franc	217.3	219.05
Thai Bhat	5.94	6.04
U.A.E Dirham	55.55	56.55
UK Pound Sterling	247.1	251.1
US Dollar	204.1	206.6

Tapping into South Asian talent pool for software engineers

Turing makes its way to Pakistan, brings value for developer talent with remote job opportunities in top US firms

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Tapping into the South Asian talent pool for software engineers and democratizing job opportunities for the region's developers, Turing, an international platform that connects software developers from around the world with high quality, full-time remote jobs in the U.S, is launching in Pakistan to support engineers in fast tracking their careers and landing their dream jobs from the comfort of their homes.

Leveraging the work-from-anywhere model, Turing is an AI-backed intelligent talent cloud that aims to navigate employers and developers through the remote-first world by helping companies source the best, pre-vetted remote



engineering resources signed up on Turing's platform. Since its inception in 2018, Turing has already connected thousands of pre-vetted offshore software talents with more than 300 top U.S firms including Johnson & Johnson, Dell, Disney, Coinbase, Rivian, Plume, and

VillageMD.

Furthering its mission to inspire learning and development among developers, Turing has also launched a global career-centric community that is free and open to all developers worldwide to help them with job preparation, upskilling and reskilling, English communication and personal development, and mentoring. The community has a variety of sub-chapters including Asia Pacific (APAC), Europe Middle-East & Africa (EMEA), Latin American (LATAM), and Women in Tech, and organizes special programs and social events regularly to guide and support community members in their careers.

"Pakistan produces some of the finest engineering talents in the world who have the potential to bring significant value to the tech industry

with their unmatched aptitude. We are, therefore, very excited to be able to connect such talent with top firms in the US for a rewarding career through Turing's Intelligent Talent Cloud," said Jonathan Siddharth, CEO and Co-founder of Turing, while commenting on its launch in Pakistan. "Boundaryless companies are the future and to prepare for this future, we are democratizing opportunity for talented developers from around the world regardless of where they live," he added.

Currently, Turing has over 1.5 million developers listed on the platform from 150 countries who are sourced, vetted, matched, and managed by its intelligent talent cloud, enabling companies to easily hire the best-available software talent from around the world within 3-5 days.

Fleet Management Solutions

TPL Trakker partners with SNGPL

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: TPL Trakker Limited has recently partnered with Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) for fleet management solutions. SNGPL is the largest integrated gas company that serves over 7.22 million consumers in Pakistan through an extensive network in Punjab, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Azad Jammu & Kashmir.

As a result of this partnership, SNGPL will benefit from being able to better monitor and manage its transport network with an objective to streamline their fleet health, and safety of employees across Pakistan.

Commenting on the occasion, CEO of TPL Trakker, Sarwar Ali Khan said, "A great chunk of our population in North and Central Pakistan relies on SNGPL for the provision of natural gas for residential, commercial and industrial purposes. This partnership will ensure improved operational efficiency as well as cost optimization for SNGPL. We are firm believers of low-carbon-future and have successfully



maintained transformative improvements for such large scale operations, by offering a robust set of solutions and services in actively responsive environments."

TPL Trakker is revolutionizing vari-

ous industries across Pakistan through a vibrant array of Tracking, Digital Mapping and IoT services that enhance operational capabilities for government and private organizations.

Hysab Kytab signs strategic partnership with Winikon

Our Correspondent

KARACHI: Hysab Kytab—a leading FinTech that offers a suite of financial management solutions has signed a strategic partnership with Winikon – IT services company specialized in the banking business to enhance the banking experience of customers. This collaboration will help in providing individual-level personalized financial management products and services to banking customers.

The partnership between Winikon and Hysab Kytab will facilitate banking customers to manage their finances more efficiently and secure-

ly. It will improve the banking experience, and better money management and help the customers proactively manage their finances.

Viktor Weinger, CEO at Winikon said "Winikon is serving Temenos Transact clients backed up with 15+ years of experience in Temenos ecosystem. PFM is a key element of digital transformation as mobile is the most essential touchpoint with banking clients nowadays. I'm delighted to onboard Hysab Kytab as our partner. Through our partnership with Hysab Kytab, we are offering a best-of-breed, innovative PFM solution integrated with Transact."

Shell appoints Burque Corporation as distributor in Quetta for Lubricants

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Shell is a leading global supplier of finished lubricants for 15 consecutive years. Shell Lubricants business in Pakistan has appointed Burque Corporation to manage its distribution in Quetta to improve customer experience.

Shell Pakistan required a resourceful distribution partner in Quetta with proven commercial capabilities and a strong footprint to ensure wide reach and responsive customer care. With over 3 decades of experience in running one of the largest sales management



and distribution networks in the industry, an official distributor for many leading FMCG brands, Burque Corporation

brings state-of-the-art facilities for warehousing and sales across 23 cities.

General Manager Shell

Lubricants, Zubair Shaikh, stated "Our new collaboration with Burque Corporation will expand the outreach of Shell Lubricants, promising agility and costefficiency of our original, high-quality lubricants to enrich the experience of our customers. Over the next two years, Shell will be able to cover 6,000 more villages and 40,000 additional outlets across Pakistan to win customer loyalty in many unserved regions and segments."

The partnership is a testament to Shell's commitment to deliver best in class to our valued customer.

Chairman PAF Jawed Bilwani appeals PM to continue competitive energy tariff

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: The Chairman, Pakistan Apparel Forum, Muhammad Jawed Bilwani, requested to the Prime Minister to continue regionally competitive energy tariff, also fix other utility tariffs (power & water), fix exchange rates of USD & Euro to import raw materials to manufacture goods meant for exports in order to negotiate new export orders by export-oriented industries for sustainability and enhancement of exports.

He said Pakistan Apparel Forum represents Knitwear/Hosiery, Woven Garments, Textile made-ups (excluding bed wear & towel) and

Apparel collectively contributing to textile export worth USD 8.9 Billion (11 months of FY2021-22) which contributes to 51 percent of total textile exports and 31 percent of national exports. Whereas, the Value-Added Textile Export industries provide 41 percent urban employment. More than 40 allied industries are also associated with the Value-Added Textile Export industries.

Jawed Bilwani said that Textile Exporters provide them an enabling environment to compete regionally and globally by reducing and bringing at par the cost of manufacturing with the regional competing countries.

Budget Speech

PM AJK announces host of initiatives to uplift weaker segments of society

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan, has expressed the optimism that the real change for which the PTI has been struggling would take place soon in Azad Kashmir and the people would be able to materialize their dreams.

Addressing a budget session here on Thursday, the PM while hailing the budget proposed for the next financial year announced a host of new initiatives to improve lives of low income and underprivileged segments of the society.

In view of the surging inflation and rising prices of essential commodities, the PM announced to increase refugee allowance, Zakat and dowry funds for the poor and needy. "I announce an increase of Rs. 15000 per person in the Refugees' Sustenance Allowance, 3000 rupees zakat per month for poor and needy", the PM said adding that the dowry fund was also being increased to Rs. 75000. The PM also announced the appointment of Muftis in 5 districts and 17 tehsils. He said that Quran academies would be set up in Muzaffar-

abad, Mirpur and Bhimber. For the homeless, the PM said that the government was planning to construct flats for the poor and deserving people in collaboration with Kashmir Orphan Relief Trust (KORT). "In the first phase, 900 flat-style houses will be constructed for the deserving in Mirpur", he added. "The land will be provided by the Azad Kashmir government and the project will be extended to 3,000 to 4,000 houses", he said adding that 500 houses would be constructed in Mirpur for police personnel and the families of those martyred in terror-

ist incidents in Pakistan. The Azad Kashmir government, he said, would pay 50 per cent of the loss of the Bakarwal tribe caused by the snowfall in Neelam on June 22. The prime minister said that the government would provide 1000 thousand scholarships to deserving students. In order to boost small industry, the PM said that 1200 people would be trained in Punjab for the promotion of cottage industry. He said that the government was also planning to restore the Numberdari and Panchayat system in the state.

He announced to establish, Rehmat-ul-Ulameen authority in the state to teach life of prophet Muhammad (SAW) to new generation and spread the Prophet's message of peace, love and interfaith harmony. The PM while expressing solidarity with the people of the occupied Kashmir said that India must shun its policy of intransigence to pave a way for a peaceful solution of the Kashmir dispute. Terming Modi as a murderer of Kashmiris, the PM said that Modi's hands were soaked with the blood of thousands of innocents.

Emirates announces exclusive value-added offers

Spokesman Report



ISLAMABAD: Emirates is making Dubai a cooler summer holiday destination than ever before,

offering customers free entry to some of the UAE's most popular attractions plus many more exciting offers, while the city's marquee event—The Dubai Summer Surprises—returns with a full calendar of entertainment, culture and family activities.

Whether returning to Dubai or visiting for the first time, Emirates' customers can enjoy free entry to these highly popular UAE attractions: The iconic Burj Khalifa At The Top: Experience breath-taking views from the world's tallest building. Located on the 124th and 125th floors of iconic Burj Khalifa, customers on the outdoor observation deck can marvel at the stunning views of the city from 456 metres above sea level. The complimentary tickets are for admission from 30 June to 30 September 2022.

The Dubai Fountains Boardwalk Experience: Watch a spectacular show of water, music and light from a floating platform just nine metres away from the world's largest choreographed fountains, located at the foot of Burj Khalifa.

Pakistan, Bangladesh trade is growing, says HC Ruhul Alam Siddique

Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: Bilateral trade between Pakistan and Bangladesh is growing at a much faster pace and it will cross the mark of one billion dollars by the end of this year, said Md. Ruhul Alam Siddique, High Commissioner of Bangladesh in Pakistan.

He was addressing the business community in Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) here on Thursday. He said that Pakistan is very important for Bangladesh in terms of trade and we must supplement and complement each other instead of becoming competitors.

He said that trade potential between the two

countries is enormous and we must harness our skills and capabilities to tap it for the benefit of each other. He said that Bangladesh intends to cooperate with Pakistan in the fields of food processing, dairy and even textile. He said that Bangladesh does not produce even a single bale of cotton but we are second in garment export after China. He said that a large number of Pakistanis are working in Bangladesh but we still need skilled manpower for our textile sector. He said that our development is directly linked with the progress of this region and we must concentrate on reactivating SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) and SAFTA (South Asian Free Trade Area). He said that Bangladesh has signed only one FTA.

"We have some problems in signing FTA with Pakistan but we must make collaborative efforts to overcome the emerging challenges", said Ruhul Alam Siddique, adding that he has good relations with the business community of Karachi and now he will develop similar linkages with the business circles of Punjab. About the progress of Bangladesh, he explained in detail the measures taken by the Bangladeshi government and said that women empowerment has played a major role in bringing a turnaround. He mentioned the micro scheme launched in 1991 by Dr. Muhammad Younus and said that it revolutionized our economy.

He stressed the need to promote chamber to chamber links and said that after covid we

could contact each other online in addition to the exchange of trade delegations. He said that Bangladesh was termed as "bottomless basket" in 1971 immediately after its inception. "Now after 50-year of independence our per capita income is \$2824 and GDP is 40 billion dollars", he said and added that Bangladesh is number one jute producing country. "Similarly, we are second in garment exports and also second in rice production", he said and added that in 2009 our electricity generation was 14900 MW which has now jumped to 25000 MW.

He said that special measures have been taken to attract much needed FDI and in this connection special product zones have been created in addition to Korean and Indian

economic zones. He said that the "one family, one farm" scheme was introduced to overcome the problem of food security. Similarly, houses were provided to the poor and every house was provided the energy with electricity. He said that industry has its own captive power plants and we successfully achieved Millennium and sustainable economic goals paving the way to become a developed country in 2026. He said that now work has been started on mega projects and Matarbari, Nuclear and Payra Power Plants are under construction. He said that Pakistan and Bangladesh share the same values of religion and we must work together to promote bilateral trade for the betterment of our people.

PCB announces men's central contracts list for 2022-23

Babar, Hasan, Imam, Rizwan and Shaheen receive red and white-ball contracts

Our Correspondent

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Cricket Board on Thursday announced men's central contract lists for 2022-23, which comes into effect from Friday, 1 July.

For the first time, the PCB has introduced separate red and white-ball contracts, while four more players have been added to the Emerging Category. This means a total of 33 players, 13 more than the previous season, have received contracts for the next 12 months.

Pakistan's all-format captain Babar Azam, along with Hasan Ali, Imam-ul-Haq, Mohammad Rizwan and Shaheen Shah Afridi have been awarded both red and white-ball contracts.

Amongst the 10 players who have received red-ball contracts, Azhar Ali has been promoted to Category A, Abdullah Shafique, Naseem Shah have been placed in Category C for the first time along with Saud Shakeel, who has been awarded Category D.

Fawad Alam and Nauman Ali have been retained in Category B and C, respectively, whereas Abid Ali, Sarfaraz



Ahmed, Shan Masood and Yasir Shah have been handed Category D contracts.

Eleven limited-over specialists have been awarded white-ball contracts.

Fakhar Zaman and Shadab Khan, who were in Category B in 2021-22, have been awarded Category A contracts, while Haris Rauf has been promoted to Category B. Mohammad Nawaz has been retained in Category C.

Shahnawaz Dahani and Usman Qadir have been promoted from Emerging to Category D where they are joined by first-timers Asif Ali, Haider Ali, Khushdil Shah, Mohammad Wasim Jnr and Zahid Mehmood.

In the Emerging Category, the PCB as part of its strategy to encourage, develop and incentivise up-and-coming domes-

tic performers, has increased the number of players from three to seven. Players in the Emerging Category are: Ali Usman, Haseebullah, Kamran Ghulam, Mohammad Haris, Mohammad Huraire, Qasim Akram and Salman Ali Agha.

Chief Selector Muhammad Wasim: "I want to congratulate all those who have earned central contracts for the 2022-23 season, especially our four younger players who have received red-ball contracts for the first time as part of our vision and strategy to identify, groom and develop specialists for the traditional and purist format of the game.

"I understand there will be a few disappointed players who have missed out on contracts, but I want to reiterate that we are not limiting and restricting ourselves to these 33 players. As and when required, players from outside the list will be included.

"We have also expanded our category of emerging cricketers from three to seven as it is very important for us to groom those cricketers who have potential to make it to the top level and give an incentive to those players who have

excelled in our domestic tournaments."

Red And White-Ball Contracts: Babar Azam, Mohammad Rizwan, Shaheen Shah Afridi (all Category A), Hasan Ali (red-ball Category B, white-ball Category C) and Imam-ul-Haq (red-ball Category C, white-ball Category B).

Red Ball Contracts : Category A – Azhar Ali Category B – Fawad Alam Category C – Abdullah Shafique, Naseem Shah and Nauman Ali Category D – Abid Ali, Sarfaraz Ahmed, Saud Shakeel, Shan Masood and Yasir Shah

White-Ball Contracts: Category A – Fakhar Zaman and Shadab Khan Category B – Haris Rauf Category C – Mohammad Nawaz Category D – Asif Ali, Haider Ali, Khushdil Shah, Mohammad Wasim Jnr, Shahnawaz Dahani, Usman Qadir and Zahid Mehmood EMERGING CONTRACTS (7): Ali Usman (Southern Punjab), Haseebullah (Balochistan), Kamran Ghulam (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), Mohammad Haris (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), Mohammad Huraire (Northern), Qasim Akram (Central Punjab) and Salman Ali Agha (Southern Punjab).

National U19 Cup

Arafat, Danish, Mirza, Sajjad score centuries

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: As many as four centuries were scored as Central Punjab U19 Blues, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa U19 Blues and Southern Punjab U19 Blues won their second-round 50-over matches of Pool A of the National U19 Cup on Thursday.

In Pool B, Central Punjab U19 Whites, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa U19 Whites and Southern Punjab U19 Whites won their round matches of the day.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Blues' Mohammad Zubair Jnr picked six for 43 to help his side to a second successive win in the tournament.

In a Pool A fixture at the National Cricket Ground in Islamabad, Mohammad Danish's unbeaten 114 guided Southern Punjab U19 Blues to an eight-wicket win over Balochistan U19 Blues.

Chasing 269 to win, Southern Punjab Blues achieved the target in the 45th over courtesy half-centuries from Moheer Saeed (58, 79b, five fours, one six) and Sharjeel Hassan (50 not out, 59b, five fours). The right-handed Danish's knock included 14 fours and one six which came off 108 balls.

Earlier, after opting to bat first, Balochistan U19 Blues scored 268 for eight from 50 overs. Batting at number-six Sajjad Ali top-scored with a 88-ball 106, which included five fours and nine sixes. Abu Bakar contributed 53 off 84 balls.

For Southern Punjab Blues, Huzaifa Ayub and Bilal Ahmed picked two wickets apiece.

At the House of Northern in Islamabad, Central Punjab U19 Blues defeated Northern U19 Blues by a crushing 177 runs. Batting first, Central Punjab Blues scored

298 for seven from their allotted 50 overs. Captain Obaid Shahid led from the front and top-scored with a 84-ball 87, hitting 10 fours and two sixes. Opening batter Azan Awais was other notable run getter, scoring 74 off 101 balls, striking nine fours and one six. Mohammad Muaz scored an unbeaten 46 off 57 balls.

In return, Northern U19 Blues were bowled out for 121 in the 39th over. Ali Abbas Khan top-scored with 38 off 55 balls. For Central Punjab U19 Blues, Ali Asfand and Arham Nawab bagged three wickets apiece. Mohammad Saria Khan who took six wickets in the previous outing bagged two wickets for 26 runs from five overs.

At the Ayub Park Cricket Ground in Islamabad, Mohammad Zubair Jnr

six wickets and half-centuries by Abubakar Khan and Haseeb Khan helped Khyber Pakhtunkhwa U19 Blues to a four-wicket win over Sindh U19 Blues.

Batting first, Sindh Blues scored 274 for nine in 50 overs. Captain and wicket-keeper-batter Mirza Saad Baig scored 103 off 116 and struck 14 boundaries. Haroon Arshad was other notable run getter with 45 off 55, smashing five fours and one six. Left-arm orthodox ended up with match figures of six for 43 from 10 overs.

In return, Abubakar (80, 89b, eight fours, two sixes) and captain Haseeb (69, 72b, four fours and four sixes) achieved the target in the 45th over.

Sindh U19 Blues' Aftab Ibrahim grabbed three wickets for 65, while Shahzaib Aziz picked two wickets for 40.

Djokovic eases into Wimbledon last 32

LONDON: Defending champion Novak Djokovic reached the Wimbledon third round for the 16th time on Wednesday as career-long rival Andy Murray suffered his earliest-ever exit from the All England Club.

Top seed Djokovic brushed aside 79th-ranked Thanasi Kokkinakis of Australia 6-1, 6-4, 6-2 and will face Serbian compatriot Miomir Kecmanovic for a last-16 place.

"I'm very happy with my performance. I started very well, solid from the back of the court," said Djokovic, who is looking to join Pete Sampras as a seven-time Wimbledon champion. "I made him work for every point and worked him around the court," added the 20-time major winner.

Kokkinakis had likened Djokovic to a "brick wall" before the match.

"It was one-way traffic. I got chopped today," said the 26-year-old Australian after his Centre Court torment.

Former world number one Murray, the 2013 and 2016 champion, went down 6-4, 7-6 (7/4), 6-7 (3/7), 6-4 to big-serving John Isner in his second-round clash.

Murray, now 52 in the rankings, failed to break serve once against 2018 semi-finalist Isner, who unleashed 36 aces and 82 winners in total.

"He didn't give me lots of chances," said Murray, whose previous earliest exits came in the third round in 2005 and 2021. "My game was in a good place. I felt good on the court, just couldn't get the win."

Isner, 37, was gracious in the aftermath of his first win in nine meetings against the Briton. "I am most definitely not a better tennis player than Andy Murray. I might have been a little bit better than him today," said the American.

Isner also took his career aces total to 13,724 to sit just four behind the record held by Ivo Karlovic.

Third seed and French Open runner-up Casper Ruud, who was scheduled to face Djokovic in the semi-finals, was knocked out by 112th-ranked Ugo Humbert, 3-6, 6-2, 7-5, 6-4.

But Spanish teenager Carlos Alcaraz stayed on course to meet the six-time champion in the last eight by reaching the third round for the first time.

Alcaraz, just 19, triumphed over Tallon Griekspoor of the Netherlands, 6-4, 7-6 (7/0), 6-3.

The flamboyant Spanish shot-maker goes on to face Germany's Oscar Otte for a place in the last 16.

Otte needed just 15 minutes to reach the third round when American opponent Christian Harrison retired injured at 3-1 down in their second-round tie.

Lukaku completes return to Inter

MILAN: Romelu Lukaku returned to Inter Milan on Wednesday after completing a season-long loan move from Chelsea just a year after his flop transfer from Italy to the Premier League club. Belgium striker Lukaku will be reunited with his former fans at the San Siro after Chelsea agreed to a reported deal in which Inter will pay an initial eight million euros plus a potential three million in bonuses for the loan.

The London club issued a statement confirming a "season-long loan move". His return was made official in a video posted on Inter's social media channels with Lukaku saying "we're back baby" while talking to chairman Steven Zhang on the roof of the club's headquarters. The 29-year-old will again lead Inter's attack as they attempt to regain the Serie A title after taking a report-



ed pay cut to 8.5 million euros for the coming campaign. Italian media report that Inter and Chelsea have a gentleman's agreement that the loan could be extended for another season should the move work out, and his lawyer Sebastian Ledure said on Wednesday that "anything can happen" between now and the end of next season. "It's really emotional," Lukaku later said on Inter's TV channel.

"Inter have given me a lot and I hope that from now I can do even better than

before... I didn't give up my home when I left for England and I think that tells you something," Lukaku told reporters present for his arrival at Milan's Linate airport in the early hours of Wednesday that he was "very happy" to be back. He was greeted by delighted fans on his way to completing his medical tests in the afternoon, his car blocked by supporters chanting his name and "win us the Scudetto".

Lukaku left London after failing to make an impression for a second time at Chelsea, not meeting high expectations following a £97.5 million move from Inter last summer. He made himself a fan favourite over two years at Inter after scoring 64 times in 95 games and driving them to their first Serie A title in more than a decade, the 2021 Scudetto ending both an 11-year drought and Juventus' grip on Italian football.

Stakeholders demand PM to restore departmental sports

Our Correspondent

KARACHI: Stakeholders have demanded of the federal government to restore departmental teams as these institutions have played a sheet anchor role in the development of sports and well-being of the players and their families.

Speaking at the National Conference titled 'Importance of Departmental Sports and Leadership through Sports' organized by the Sports Journalists Association of Sindh (SJAS) here at the Boys Scouts Headquarters stakeholders said that a committee should be constituted with an immediate effect in order to meet the prime minister Mian Shahbaz Sharif and convince him to restore the departmental teams which have been abolished during the government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

In September last year the PTI government issued a notification

and advised the departments to stop funding their sports teams and divert the budget to support the regional teams. This forced several departments to abolish their sports teams. Even before that some departments had abolished their sports teams which created major financial issues for the players, officials and their families.

"It's a big financial issue for the players. You cannot bring in Australian or English system as they are the welfare states and players also get ample financial support through their existing systems. If we are to bring in such a system then we will also have to make massive improvement in the other sectors also. Let's set aside cricket, why you abolished departments in other sports? It's totally unacceptable," former left-arm Test spinner Iqbal Qasim said.

"Barring cricket, the rest of the sports should be given an immediate relief by restoring the depart-

ments," Iqbal was quick to add. "There are no budgetary issues with the banks. I request the premier that in cricket departments can be used as nurseries," Iqbal pointed out.

Former Pakistan hockey team captain Islahuddin Siddiqui also backed the departmental sports. "Our careers flourished when we came to the departments. Department plays the role of a tonic and oxygen. We want to regulate the departments. Here players get financial assistance which help them focus on their sports," Islah said.

"If you want to regionalise sports then for that it is important to bring regions at par with the departments and then you can isolate the wing," Islah pointed out. Pakistan Snooker and Billiards Association's chairman Alamgir Sheikh said it's a serious issue and should be highlighted. "We need to press this issue as it is a matter of bread and butter

of the players. The whole media should raise this issue and if it does not help then we should send a delegation to meet the premier," Sheikh said.

Karachi City Cricket Association's (KCCA) former president and PCB former Governing Board member Professor Ijaz Farooqui said that departments, at least, offer jobs to players which secure their life.

"If a player wants to adapt sports as career there should be departments to offer him job. And if it's not the case how parents can allow their children to go towards sports," Farooqui said. "Cricket, which is the focal point of people, suffered the most after departments were abolished as cricketers were seen doing odd jobs," Farooqui said.

Pakistan football team former assistant coach Nasir Ismail also backed the departmental sports. "If you isolate the departments it will create a chaos. There should



be such a policy and structure where departmental sports and professional sports could be run side by side," Nasir said.

He revealed that so far around 18 departments have disbanded their sports teams which has created a massive problem for the players and officials.

Senior journalist Rashid Aziz said that departments have played a key role in the development of sports in Pakistan which is facing financial issues.

"But where are the clubs, who used to contribute massively in the sports development? Unless

Training camp for tri-series begins today

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan women's national cricket team's final preparations for the tri-series in Ireland and the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham begin from today.

The 15-member squad will take part in extensive training and practice sessions in a 10-day camp at the House of Northern, Islamabad before the team's departure on 12 July.

During the camp, the squad led by Bismah Maroof would participate in fitness, fielding, batting and bowling drills besides playing scenario-based matches in accordance to the demands of the T20 format. Both the tri-series and Commonwealth Games are T20 events.

As part of the preparations for the tour, national team's head coach David Hemp worked with Karachi-based players in a four-day long camp last week which was focused on individual and scenario-based practice sessions.

Pacers Aimen Anwar, Fatima Sana and Kainat Imtiaz and batters Muneeba Ali Siddiqui and Omaira Sohail were the players involved in the camp. Bowling coach Saleem Jaffer also assisted Hemp in the camp along with Sindh women's coach Azam Khan.

The tri-series and Commonwealth bound squad would depart for Belfast via Dubai on 12 July.

Squad: Bismah Maroof (captain), Aimen Anwar, Aliya Riaz, Anam Amin, Ayesha Naseem, Diana Baig, Fatima Sana, Gull Feroza (wicketkeeper), Iram Javed, Kainat Imtiaz, Muneeba Ali Siddiqui (wicketkeeper), Nida Dar, Omaira Sohail, Sadia Iqbal and Tuba Hassan.

All set for Pak-Sri Lanka Int'l Savate C'ship

Our Correspondent

LAHORE: Secretary Sports Punjab Asadullah Faiz says Savate is a new game in this region and Pak-Sri Lanka 3rd International Savate Championship will help a lot in the promotion of this game among the young generation. He said this while addressing a press conference at National Hockey Stadium.

DG Sports Punjab Tariq Qureshi, Director Sports Nadeem Qaiser, Director Youth Affairs Syed Omair Hasan, DSO Tanveer Shah, Chairman Pakistan Savate Federation Malik Iftikhar, Secretary Ms Ambreen, Sri Lankan Manager Prasad Wickramasinghe, coach Lanka Rathnayake, captain K Dilaxiny, Pakistan team coach Saeed Butt and captain Daood Mirza were also present on this occasion.

Addressing the press conference, Asadullah Faiz said Sports and Youth Affairs Department Punjab has completed all arrangements for the smooth holding of Savate Championship. "As many as 13 competitions (4 boys and 9 girls) will be organised during the 3rd International Pak-Sri Lanka International Savate Championship being organized on June 30 and July 1 at Nishtar Park Sports Complex Gymnasium Hall under the auspices of Sports and Youth Affairs Department Punjab".

Prasad Wickramasinghe, on this occasion, expressed his hope that there will be good competitions in the championship. "We are very happy to visit Pakistan. This will be a very special championship because there will be more women than men in the championship".

Murray has no plans to retire

LONDON: Andy Murray plans to be back at Wimbledon next year despite suffering a second-round defeat to John Isner on Wednesday — his earliest-ever loss at the All England Club.

The two-time champion, 35, struggled to tame the giant American's serve, failing to break once in the match on Centre Court and going down 6-4, 7-6 (7/4), 6-7 (3/7), 6-4. The British star has a stellar record at his home Grand Slam, winning the trophy in 2013 and 2016 — his previous earliest exits came in the third round in 2005 and 2021. But the 52nd-ranked Scot said he had no plans to hang up his racquet and was in better shape than last year. "My game was certainly in a better place," he said.

"Physically I felt good, barring the sort of 10 days post-Stuttgart (earlier this month), which was frustrating. I could have had a good run here. One of the reasons why improving your ranking and trying to get seeded is important, avoid playing top players and dangerous guys like that early in tournaments." Murray said his future plans would depend on how his body holds up.

Murray had been dogged by a catalogue of injuries in recent years, undergoing two hip operations. "If physically I'm in a good place, yeah, I will continue to play," he said. "But it's not easy to keep my body in optimal condition to compete at the highest level."

Verstappen returns to crash scene, chasing first British GP win

SILVERSTONE: One year on from a painful crash, Max Verstappen returns to Silverstone as clear favourite to register his first British Grand Prix win and increase his lead in the title race.

The 24-year-old Dutchman and his Red Bull team are on the crest of a wave after six consecutive victories; one from team-mate Sergio Perez in Monaco and the rest by the world champion. But he may be wary of home hero and seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton mounting more of a challenge at the open and high-speed track in central England.

framing such schemes through which money could be generated and spent on sports. Departmental sports, not doubt, had a big role in the sports development but now corporate sector is throwing money massively in sports and it's time to go for its alternative through which sports could be backed," Waheed said.

Other famous sports anchor Mirza Iqbal also gave his thumb up for departmental sports.

"Players have been groomed by departments. There is a big need of departments in the sports sector as through these institutions we have produced world greats," Iqbal said. Senior journalist Syed Khalid Mehmood questioned the role of organisers, saying it's very unlikely to revive departmental sports in this critical economic situation.

Senior vice-president of Sindh Olympic Association (SOA) Engineer Mehfooz-ul-Haq also highlighted the importance of departmental sports.