



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
ابو ہریرہ رضی اللہ عنہ نے کہتے ہیں رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا: "یہودیوں نے (ذرا بھی) غمروں میں خضاب نہیں لگاتے، تم لوگ اس کے خلاف طریقہ اختیار کرو (یعنی خضاب لگایا کرو)" (صحیح بخاری، حدیث نمبر 3462)

Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited

Security provided to Imran Khan amid threats: Rana Sana

Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah says the federal government has provided security to former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan amid threats. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf is violating the agreement inked with the government as the party is only allowed to do jalsa, not rallies. Cases would be registered against the violation of the agreement.



Elections only way to end crisis: Khattak

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Pervez Khattak says fresh elections is the only solution to steer Pakistan out of the crisis. The masses are protesting in large numbers against the increasing inflation and the Shehbaz Sharif-led government. The former prime minister Imran Khan controlled inflation and denied accepting each and every demand of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). He said the record-high inflation has broken the bone of masse

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Fuel prices hike

Weekly inflation soars to 3.6%PC

KARACHI: The Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI) based on weekly inflation increased by 3.63 percent during the week ended on June 30, according to data shared by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) on Saturday. The SPI-based weekly inflation went up for the week ended on June 30, 2022 after registering an increase of 3.63 percent and 32.1 per cent on year to year basis. During the week under review, out of 51 items, prices of 28 (54.91%) items increased, 06 (11.76%) items decreased and 17 (33.33%) items remained stable.

The SPI for the current week recorded an increase in the prices of food items including Tomatoes (31.53%), Onions (7.86%), Tea Lipton (4.60%), Eggs (2.56%), Pulse Mash (2.30%), Pulse Gram (2.17%), Pulse Moong (1.83%), Milk Fresh (1.81%), Potatoes (1.67%), Bread (1.59%), Cooking Oil 5 litre (1.40%) and Pulse Masoor (1.34%), non-food items Electricity charges for Q1 (27.89%), Washing Soap (2.56%) and LPG (1.15%), with joint impact of (3.78%) into the overall SPI for combined group of (3.63%).

On the other hand, a decrease was observed in the prices of Chicken (6.81%), Bananas (0.78%), Vegetable Ghee 1 Kg (0.44%), Garlic (0.26%), Wheat Flour (0.08%) and Mustard Oil (0.03).

Meanwhile, inflation, measured by Consumer Price Index (CPI), rose to 21.3pc during the month of June 2022, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) said in a report. According to the stats provided by the PBS, the inflation rate in the country in June was recorded at 21.3 percent, the highest since December 2008. In June, inflation rose 6.34pc month-on-month (MoM) and 21.32pc year-on-year (YoY), which was the highest figure since December 2008 when inflation stood at 23.3pc.

Care

LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is inquiring after the health of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman here on Saturday.



Photo: PID

Probe into illegal collection of FED at airports: PM orders

Shehbaz inquires after Fazlur Rehman's health

ISLAMABAD/LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday took strict notice of the collection of Rs 50,000 federal excise duty from passengers at the airports. He expressed strong displeasure at the collection of federal excise duty from passengers at the airports. He directed that the illegal order to collect federal excise duty at the airports should be immediately revoked and the practice of causing trouble to the passengers should be discontinued immediately.

He ordered an investigation into the collection of federal excise duty. He said it should be investigated as to how the excise duty was collected from the passengers without the approval of the cabinet. He instructed the finance minister that after an immediate inquiry, strict action under the law should be taken against those responsible for the illegal act.

He said those who inflicted

suffering on the passengers had no right to hold their posts. The PM asked the finance minister to return the money to the passengers from whom federal excise duty was collected. He called for immediate implementation of his orders and submission of a report

The JUI-F chief is undergoing treatment at Lahore's Ittefaq Hospital. PM Shehbaz visited the PDM chairman in hospital and presented him a bouquet of flowers. During the meeting, Shehbaz Sharif expressed his best wishes for his good health. The premier directed the hospital management to ensure the best treatment for Fazlur Rehman. Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has been shifted to the hospital after his health condition worsened. The health condition of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman has deteriorated and he underwent a medical examination at a Lahore hospital. JUI-F sources said that Fazlur Rehman will stay in hospital for some days. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Saturday here met Chief Minister Punjab Hamza Shehbaz and discussed matters related to

performance of the provincial government of Punjab. Member National Assembly Usman Ibrahim and provincial ministers Malik Ahmad Khan and Attaullah Tarar attended the meeting. During the meeting, they also discussed the projects for the welfare and well-being of the public.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday expressed his grief over the death of Mudassar Sultan, a Pakistani citizen, in Saudi Arabia. On his Twitter handle, the prime minister said that he had just learnt about the demise of Mudassar Sultan who was a precious asset for the party. The Pakistani embassy in Saudi Arabia had been instructed to bring his body to Pakistan, he further added. The prime minister also prayed for the high ranks of the departed soul and for the family to bear the loss with fortitude.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Saturday here met Chief Minister Punjab Hamza Shehbaz and discussed matters related to

PM, CM Punjab discuss performance of provincial govt

after action against the persons responsible.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday inquired after the health of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) chairman and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman.

Immensely

PML-N ranks criticize Miftah: Khwaja Asif

Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khwaja Asif Saturday spoke in support of Finance Minister Miftah Ismail after the former hinted that he was facing criticism within the party. Earlier, the finance minister said that he was "not supposed to" appear on national television the night before to announce a hike in the prices of petroleum products but he did so after being asked by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

His comments came after a clip of his appearance on a television show was shared on social media.

However, the defence minister appreciated his colleague for executing his duties "under difficult circumstances" and called him one of the "hardest working" member of PM Shehbaz's team.

"FM Miftah is among the hardest working members of PM's team, accessible to all stakeholders. He is perform-

ing very well under difficult circumstances, with immense criticism from vested interests — including, and unfortunately, from within PML-N. Time to show solidarity with Miftah," tweeted the defence minister.

The finance minister is under pressure since the government announced multiple hikes in petroleum products and the delay in the revival of the International Monetary Fund bailout programme.

Along with this, the news of senior leader Ishaq Dar's return to Pakistan has also added fuel to the fire as many believe that Miftah may be shown the door and asked to hand over the reins of the finance ministry to senator-elect.

The possible changeover, just a few months after the coalition government took office, has left economists and commentators concerned over its possible impact on the economy and the ongoing talks with the IMF.

PPDA warns of nationwide strike from July 18

Petro dealers say fuel price hike won't benefit them

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association (PPDA) has threatened to observe a nationwide strike from July 18 in favor of their demands. PPDA chairman Abdul Sami Khan said they will observe a countrywide strike on July 18 and won't reopen the fuel stations until their demands were accepted including an increase in their commission.

Petroleum dealers' association leader said the increase in fuel prices is not benefiting them, they are worried due to the increasing cost of doing business. PTI government

promised to increase commission by 4pc till June, but the promise was not fulfilled, Abdul Sami Khan said.

He said the cost of doing business has sharply increased, after rising in the electricity tariff, and the interest rate of the bank. Petroleum Dealers Association chairman Abdul Sami Khan said they do not want to take such a decision that ultimately create problems for the masses, but they are facing hardships in doing business, which should be resolved. Earlier, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz-led coalition government again jacked up the petrol price by Rs14.85 per litre.

Govt to shift public buildings on solar energy

Marriyum says public access to green power under PM's vision to ensured

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has decided to shift public buildings to solar energy amid the energy crisis. The decision was taken during a meeting of the Task Force on Solar Energy. Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader and Shahid Khaqan Abbasi chaired the meeting, which was also attended by Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb. In a statement, the Information Minister said that the meeting reviewed various measures to increase the production of solar energy and decided to shift public buildings on solar energy.

Marriyum Aurangzeb said that the meeting has also decided to set up solar plants where electricity is being provided on subsidy. "The participants have also mulled over formulating policies to promote energy-saving and green energy," she added. She further said that steps were being taken to further increase the solar energy capacity, adding that



the use of solar panels would also enable the government to sale additional power to grid stations. In this regard, the Information Minister said, work on 4,000-5,000 MW projects would start soon and the task force would present the recommendations to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Earlier in June, the Federal and Punjab governments decided to launch a power-saving drive in government departments. "Air-conditioners of the Grade-17 to 20 officers will be kept shut for three hours during the working time,"

sources said. According to sources, the government has decided to keep the officers in loop after general public in its power-saving campaign. The Wapda, LESCO, FBR and Railways departments will be part of the drive.

The meeting opined that there was need to promote solar panels to convert public and private buildings to solar energy and attract people towards the solar energy. The minister said that the consumers using solar panels would also be able to sell additional power to grid stations, which would also help them increase their income.

Why we can't import Russian oil: Tarin

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Senator Shaukat Tarin has criticised the federal government for not importing Russian oil.

Taking to his official Twitter handle, the former finance minister asked: "If India, Bangladesh [and] Sri Lanka can import Russian oil, why can't we." "We can use swaps and also import Diesel/petrol instead of crude. The [government] would much rather pile misery on the poor people of Pakistan but avoid annoying [United States] and [European Union]," he wrote on Twitter.

In another tweet, Shaukat Tarin pointed out that the incumbent rulers used to do inflation marches against PTI government when Consumer Price Index (CPI) was around 11% and the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI) 14%. "Now CPI is 21.3% and SPI 32%. These numbers are heading towards 30 & 40%," the Senator said, adding that the lives of most Pakistanis have become hell amid severe loadshedding. "Why did we bring them when PTI was handling the economy well?" he asked.

Take steps to import coal from Afghanistan: Saad

Railways' minister briefs PM on reforms

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Minister for Railways Khawaja Saad Rafique on Saturday issued directives to the PR to make arrangements for the import of coal from Afghanistan. Khawaja Saad Rafique chaired a meeting of the Pakistan Railways officials to discuss steps for the enhancement of revenue and issues related to the transportation of coal from neighboring country, Afghanistan. The meeting was attended by the Railways secretary, the CEO and other concerned staff. Speaking on the occasion, Saad Rafique said to ensure smooth transportation of coal from Afghanistan, stations will be established in Sibbi, Kandiyan and Khushal Kot. The minister also directed officials to arrange wagons and repair the traffic for timely import.

Earlier this week, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that the government has decided to import coal from Afghanistan to counter the energy crisis in the country and the LNG shortage worldwide.

PM Shehbaz Sharif was addressing the Turnaround Pakistan conference and said that the Finance Minister Miftah Ismail has confirmed that the IMF's economic relief package of Rs2 billion will be sanctioned soon. Our priority goal is self-sufficiency, he added. Minister for Railways and



PR to run three special Eid trains

Aviation Khawaja Saad Rafiq Saturday called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and apprised him over the reforms process in railways and aviation sectors.

During the meeting, the political situation in the country was discussed. The prime minister was further apprised that implementation of Covid related standard oper-

ating procedures (SOPs) were being ensured during travelling in railways and airlines and especially on the occasion of Eid.

Pakistan Railways has announced to run three special trains on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha.

According to Pakistan railways, three special trains will be operated on multiple routes before Eid-ul-Azha. A Railway spokesperson told that the first special train would run at 10 am on July 8. It would travel from Quetta to Peshwar via Multan, Sahiwal and Lahore. The second special train would run at 6:45 pm on July 8 and would travel from Karachi to Lahore via Multan and Faisalabad, he added.

Future in sight

Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Nadeem Raza meeting Iran President Sayyid Ebrahim Raisol-Sadati in this photo released by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) on Saturday.



Photo: ISPR

CM Punjab re-election

SC hails politicians' positive attitude

Supreme Court issues detailed verdict in Punjab CM case

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Saturday appreciated the political leadership's "positive" attitude in resolving the re-polling issue for the election of the chief minister of Punjab. The Supreme Court of Pakistan (SC) on Saturday issued a written order pertaining to PTI's plea against the decision of the Lahore High Court (LHC) regarding the election of the Chief Minister of Punjab.

According to the decision of SC, the re-election of the Punjab Chief Minister will be held on July 22 at 4 pm in the Provincial Assembly, which will be presided over by Deputy Speaker Dost Muhammad Mazari. It was further stated that the Deputy Speaker Punjab Assembly will issue a notification for the election of the Punjab CM after fulfilling all the legal requirements.

The SC also directed the Election Commission to issue a notification on reserved seats within a week as per the decision of the High Court. Earlier, a three-member bench of the Supreme Court head-

Court amends LHC order after assurances from all parties

ed by Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial conducted hearing of PTI plea requesting SC to set aside LHC verdict by declaring it illegal and unconstitutional. PTI had also prayed that court suspend the process of recounting till a decision on this plea.

"All parties have agreed to hold the election of the chief minister on July 22," Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial remarked while concluding the hearing on the case. The apex court said that detailed verdict of the case will be issued by tonight. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) lawyer Imtiaz Siddiqui said that the Punjab government was ready for re-election of the province's chief executive three to four days after the by-elections, whereas, Advocate General Punjab and Hamza Shahbaz have been consulted in this regard and Hamza Shahbaz remained the Chief Minister until July 17.

Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Umar Ata Bandial while expressing happiness after both opposition groups reached consensus remarked that by the grace of almighty Allah, the political parties have agreed to some extent and this is a success for both sides.

CJCSC, Iranian President discuss regional security

Both also review Pak-Iran long-lasting defence cooperation

TEHRAN: Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC) General Nadeem Raza who is on official visit to Iran, called on Iranian President Sayyid Ebrahim Raisol-Sadati. According to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), matters pertaining to bilateral strategic interest and regional security environment including strengthening of bilateral security and defence cooperation between the two countries were discussed during the meeting.

Both sides displayed desire to initiate meaningful and long-lasting security and defence cooperation between the two countries. The CJCSC also held separate meetings with Defence Minister Brigadier General Mohammad-Reza Ghar-

aei Ashtiani, Chief of General Staff Major General Mohammad Bagheri, Commander-in-Chief Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Major General Hossein Salami, Commander of Iranian Navy Rear Admiral Shahrar Irani and Commander of Air Force Brigadier General Hamid Vahedi.

The dignitaries discussed measures to enhance the level and scope of military engagements between both countries and pledged to continue to forge deeper ties. Both sides highlighted that common borders should be "Borders of Peace and Friendship". The Iranian military leadership lauded the professionalism of Pakistan Armed Forces and acknowledged their sacrifices in fight against terrorism.

Punjab by-polls

CEC warns of action over code breach

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Saturday made it clear to the Punjab government that the violation of the code of conduct during the by-elections 2 constituencies of the province will not be tolerated. It may be recalled that by-elections in 20 constituencies will be held in the province on July 17 for which PML-N and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) candidates are campaigning vigorously. Meanwhile, the commission has received various complaints regarding the violation of code of conduct.

On the other hand, an important meeting was held in the Punjab Secretariat on the arrangements and security during the by-elections under the chairmanship of Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja. DG Rangers Punjab and other concerned officers also attended the meeting. CEC Sikandar Sultan Raja warned of strict action in case of a code of conduct breach during upcoming Punjab by-polls. The directions by the CEC were released after chairing a meeting to review the situation ahead of the by-polls.

Zardari, Ch Shujaat discuss political situation

LAHORE: Former president and Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari on Saturday met Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) leader Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain here.

During the meeting, the PML-Q chief expressed condolences over sad demise of Asif Zardari's mother. Federal ministers Chaudhry Salik Hussain and Chaudhry Shaffay Hussain and Tariq Bashir Cheema also offered condolences to the PPP co-chairman.

On the occasion, Zaka Ashraf, Malik Riaz, journalist Sohail Warraich, Amir Mir, industrialist Fawad Mukhtar and PML-N leader Malik Ahmad Khan also offered condolences to the former president on the demise of his mother. Pakistan People's Party (PPP) co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari has reached Lahore via a special flight from Islamabad. After the major political developments in Punjab regarding the chief minister's election and upcoming by-polls, Asif Ali Zardari landed in the provincial capital Lahore and summoned a session of the party leaders at Bilawal House.

Sales decline

High prices dent fuel demand

ISLAMABAD: Total petroleum and lubricant sales clocked in at 1.93 million tons in June 2022, a decrease of 11% on a month-on-month basis while it remain unchanged on a year-on-year basis. On a monthly basis, a major decline in sales was witnessed in petrol and high-speed diesel (HSD) sales, which declined 12% and 16%, respectively.

During FY22, sales of total petroleum products increased by 16% on YoY to 22.595 million tons versus 19.45 million tons in the same period last year. Nov POL sales clock in at 1.75m tons. Dissection of data revealed that growth was witnessed in all categories; MOGAS (Motor Gasoline), HSD and FO (Furnace Oil) with offtake undergoing a jump to 8.95 million tons, 8.87 million tons and 4.04 million tons, up by 9%, 15% and 35% on YoY against the same period last year, respectively. Healthy economic activities, robust agriculture activities, upbeat automobile sales and curb of HSD smuggling remained major drivers behind such



stupendous growth.

However, going forward, the brokerage house anticipated a further slowdown in diesel and petrol sales as the incumbent government has decided to manage petroleum product prices by levying Petroleum Development Levy (PDL) and sales tax even if international oil prices decline.

Increase in carpooling, use of public transport, a shift in consumer behavior (shift to two-wheelers from passenger cars), high inflation and an overall slowdown in economic activities are

likely to further dent retail fuel demand in the upcoming months. On the other hand, we expect RFO sales to remain intact due to likely drop in RLNG & imported coal based power generation.

In a late-night development on Thursday, the government announced another hike in the prices of petroleum products, with the new ex-depot price of petrol going up to Rs248.74 per litre (after a hike of Rs14.85), and diesel to Rs276.54 (after a hike of Rs13.23). The old price of petrol was Rs233.89 per litre while diesel was at Rs263.31 per litre.

IMF mistrusts us due to Imran Khan's blunders: Maryam

Says PTI govt inks a bad deal with IMF

LAHORE: PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz Saturday said that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) told the coalition government that it does not trust Pakistan because of the wrongdoings of "fitna" Imran Khan. While lashing out at former PM and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan she said that the coalition government was left with no choice but to take tough decisions due to the wrong decisions of the previous government.

Addressing a rally in Green Town on Saturday ahead of PP-167 Lahore by-election rally, she said that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was giving the incumbent government a tough time after the previous government didn't deliberately implement the action plan agreed with the international lender.

Maryam Nawaz said that she was aware of the problems of inflation,



adding that it was their responsibility to get the people out of problems. "Opponents thought that Maryam Nawaz would not come out in public now but she would be in the field whenever the people of the country are in trouble." The PML-N vice president went on to say that Nawaz Sharif and Shehbaz Sharif will steer the country out of the crisis, adding that the govern-

ment will decrease price of petroleum products once the prices come down in the international market.

Take a dig at the former PM, she said Fitna Khan signed an agreement with the IMF and the international lender was giving a hard time to the incumbent government after previous government failed to implement the agreement.

Parade Ground

I have not come to fight against state institutions: Imran

Says nation wanted Pakistan to be saved from thieves

ISLAMABAD: Former PM and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan said on Saturday that he didn't take to streets to wage a war against state institutions. He said this while addressing a rally against inflation, political destabilisation, load-shedding and recent hike in fuel prices at Islamabad's Parade Ground. "I didn't come out to damage my country," he said adding that the imported government wanted us stand in front of our institutions.

Regarding calling off sit-in on May 25, Imran Khan said that the police brutally tortured the protesters and tear gas them, adding that he was afraid of clashes between police and the nationals in Islamabad and he did not want anarchy in the country. "Toppling imported government is my only motive," he said and added an elected government was overthrown through a US conspiracy and later the thieves were imposed top rule the country."

"I want to show the sentiments of the

nation before all national institutions. I am not here to start a war against the national institutions. I know very well that this imported government want us to stand against the institutions and the judiciary." Imran Khan hit out at the coalition government over amendment in the NAB law and said that the nation was robbed of Rs1,100 billion through the NAB law amendments. The former PM said, "I do not have palaces, properties or businesses abroad and my whole life is for Pakistan, adding that he never thought of getting a passport from abroad or living anywhere other than Pakistan but the life and death of the people in the imported government is not in Pakistan."

He said Asif Zardari and Shehbaz Sharif's properties are abroad and as the rupee decline, their wealth doubles because their assets are in dollars. Asif Zardari sent a message to the US commander through Hussain Haqqani to save him, where-

as, Nawaz Sharif had invited Modi to his wedding.

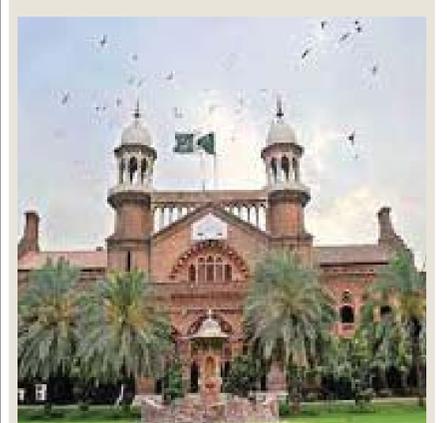
Imran Khan said that the nation wanted the country to be saved from the thieves. Imran Khan addressed a huge public gathering at Islamabad's Parade Ground today. He said, "The nation is giving a message to the institutions to save Pakistan from these thieves." Imran Khan congratulated PTI Islamabad and Rawalpindi chapters for organising a successful public gathering at Parade Ground today. The PTI chairman said that he has never seen such a big crowd in the twin cities.

He recalled that he had decided to postpone Islamabad's long march on May 25 as the nationals were outraged over the police baton charge and teargassing. Khan said that he was afraid of clashes between police and the nationals in Islamabad and he did not want anarchy in the country. "My sole motive is ousting this imported government. An elected government was toppled

by Mir Jafers and a US conspiracy and later notorious dacoits were imposed as the rulers of the country." "I want to show the sentiments of the nation before all national institutions. I am not here to start a war against the national institutions. I know very well that this imported government want us to stand against the institutions and the judiciary." Khan said that he has to live in Pakistan till his last breath but the present rulers have no interest in the country. "Sharifs have always fled from the country whenever their rulership ended up. He [Nawaz Sharif] fled Saudi Arabia during Pervez Musharraf's era and then he came back to loot the country. These rulers are once again getting NRO-II now."

He said that the currency devaluation increased the assets of the 'imported rulers' as they have assets abroad. The PTI chief censured that Asif Ali Zardari travelled to Dubai 50 times and Nawaz Sharif 22 times to London at the state expenditures.

POL price hike challenged in LHC



LAHORE: The fresh increase in the petroleum products prices by the government has been challenged in the Lahore High Court (LHC) on Saturday. The petition, filed by Advocate Azhar Siddique said that federal government increased prices of petroleum products without approval of federal cabinet. The petitioner pleaded with the court to reject the order on the hike.

Murad, Sherry Rehman agree to launch eco-tourism projects

Decide to work on depollution of Manchhar Lake, Keenjhar Lake

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and Federal Minister for Environment and Climate Change Sherry Rehman agreed to work on various eco-tourism projects.

During a meeting held on Saturday at the CM house, the two decided to work on depollution of Manchhar Lake, development of eco-tourism on Keenjhar Lake and Miani Forest, establishing fisheries cold chains and development of sustainable Fisheries Management Framework.

It was briefed that the federal government has established the 'National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF)' to finance the sub-projects that would contribute to enhancing Pakistan's resilience to climatic and other natural hazards and to strengthen the government's ability to respond to disasters triggered by natural hazards.

The fund was also mandated to support climate related interventions

for climate change adaptation and mitigation. It has already committed an amount of US\$ 38.78 million nationally for implementing the relevant projects and complementing the realization of National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP) and National Flood Protection Plan (NEPP-IV). Sherry said that the fund was planning to initiate proposal processing for Phase-II by November 2022 with anticipated approval of financing for the same by June 2023. The chief minister said that the NDRMF had approved the project 'Towards Resilient Marine Ecosystem and Sustainable Blue Economy' for Rs 1.98 billion. The location of the year-long project, (2022-23 & 2023-2024) was the coastal areas of District Thatta, Sujawal, Badin & Karachi. The project consists of two main components: Resilient Marine Ecosystem and Utilization of salinized land.

Resilient Marine Ecosystem through

Sustainable Management of Fisheries Resource ecosystem includes different components as follows: Establishment of fisheries protected areas through community engagement, establishment of community policing through Fisheries Stewardship Agreements (FSA) in identified areas, development of Sustainable Fisheries Management Framework (SFMF) for coastal fisheries (all jetties), establishment of fisheries cold chain and development of support facilities on two landing centres.

Installation of flake ice machine / chilling unit with cold storage on two landing centres, installation of RO plant for clean water supply along with solar system compatible with RO on two landing centers, expansion of existing floating pontoon on two jetties, establishment & management of field offices (porta cabin), establishment of check posts (porta cabin), installation of chill-

ers / flake ice machines on boats, provision of fish handling equipment to small boats and traders, including iceboxes, fish crates and fish basket.

Utilization of salinized land caused by sea intrusion for aquaculture. This project too has different components, including establishment of model demonstration aquaculture farm; model farms for backyard culturing of fin fish and shellfish, provision of livelihoods and family nutrition support for women, development of backyard aquaculture ponds on no more than one acre area with all required facilities for women and families of coastal areas, provision of expert / technical services for backyard aquaculture systems, support for improving fish drying practices for women entrepreneurs, provision of 24/7 extension services for target districts and training & exposure of 1000 farmers and fishermen.

Eid gift

Punjab CM lifts time restriction on businesses

LAHORE: Punjab chief minister (CM) Hamza Shehbaz on Saturday lifted timing restrictions in the province on businesses ahead of Eidul Adha. In a statement, Punjab CM Hamza Shahbaz Sharif said markets across the province can now remain open even after 9pm. There would be no time restriction on the businesses until Chand Raat.

He said that decision has been taken to facilitate the masses and business community ahead of Eidul Adha. It may be noted that the Punjab government, earlier, limited the operational hours of markets, shopping malls, wedding halls and restaurants as part of an energy conservation drive.

The decision was taken after Chief Minister Hamza Shehbaz consulted the province's business community. A post-meeting hand-out from the Directorate of General Public Relations said that from here on markets, bazaars and business centers will be closed by 9pm; restaurants by 11:30pm and marriage halls by 10pm.

Dr Mahmood elected as President APDF

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Pakistan has achieved honor and laurels, as renowned Dental Surgeon of Pakistan Dr Mahmood Shah has been elected President of the 28 countries prestigious Asia-Pacific Dental Federation. This honor has been bestowed on Pakistan after 16 years, when another prominent Dentist from Pakistan, Dr Arif Alvi was elected as President of Asia-Pacific Dental Federation in 2006. Dr Mahmood Shah is the second Dentist from Pakistan to achieve this distinction. Dr Mahmood Shah is also the President of Pakistan Dental Association and Member of Public Health Committee of World Dental Federation.



AJK President, PM vow to work together

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan called on President Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mehmood Chaudhry on Saturday. During the meeting the duo while expressing their grave concern over the fast deteriorating political and human rights situation in the Indian occupied Kashmir reiterated their commitment to work for the Kashmir for the welfare of the people of Azad Kashmir.

Minister visits Sheikh Badin Park

D I KHAN: Provincial Minister for Local Government, Faisal Amin Gandapur and Commissioner Dera Division, Aamir Afaq Saturday visited Sheikh Badin National Park. District Forest Officer Wildlife, Khan Malook informed the minister about rehabilitation projects including access road to Sheikh Badin Park, Daak Banglaw. He also briefed the minister about historic buildings situated in the park and its flora and fauna. Speaking on the occasion, provincial minister said that steps have been taken by archives department to rehabilitate historic building situated in the park. He said that rehabilitation work would help attracting tourists to this scene point besides creating opportunities of growth for the locals. Agencies



Kalat: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Shazia Marri inaugurated Benazir Nashonuma center.

Energy matters

Ambassador of Turkmenistan H.E Atadjan Molamov called on Minister of State for Petroleum Dr Musadik Malik.



Photo: Online

WSSP employees demand payment of salaries

Our Correspondent

PESHAWAR: An emergency meeting of Coal Municipal Workers Union WSSP Registered CBA Peshawar was held here on Saturday at the office of the Union at Wazir Bagh Workshop. In a joint statement, Chairman Riaz Khan and General Secretary Abid Sohail, Press Secretary Shehzad Gul and Cabinet said that it is with great sadness that they work for 18/18 hours of cleaning the city without any break.

The statement added: "The winners of the campaign are protesting today for their remnants. "The food allowance for the last Eid-ul-Adha has not been paid yet. Washing Allowance Zone C, D is still outstanding whether it is Eid-ul-Fitr overtime or second shift overtime. Weather Allowance or Coal Allowance has not been paid yet. Can't install fans in tube wells yet. In Zone B, employees could not get mobil oil for 2 months. Zone B has been closed for the last 6 days. Two months DRA allowance is outstanding and DRA has been deducted from



salaries in this and that month which is now part of salaries."

"However, the WSP management raised its hand and said that we do not have the funds. Nor has the finance department released funds to us yet. The finance department has also released the full amount to WSSP.

"If the government cannot release the WSSP funds to the finance department, then abolish the WSSP and hand over the employees to the metropolitan so that the employees are also free from the daily hassle."

And instead of emptying the coffers, the government will save. And the city's cleaning process will be disrupted. The entire responsibility will fall on the WSSP officers and the provincial government. If the arrears are not paid by July 5, the protest camp will continue from July 6 until the arrears are paid.

"The WSSP and the city's cleanup process will be disrupted. The entire responsibility will fall on the WSSP officers and the provincial government. If the arrears are not paid by July 5, the protest camp will continue from July 6 until the arrears are paid."

Farmers advised to complete moong cultivation

our correspondent

FAISALABAD: The agriculture experts have advised the growers to start the cultivation of Moong immediately and complete it by end July to get bumper yield.

A spokesman for the Agriculture (Extension) Department said on Saturday that farmers should cultivate Moong at maximum space of their land.

He said that farmers should use approved varieties of Moong including NIAB Moong 2006, Azri Moong 2006, NIAB Moong 2011 and Chakwal M-6, etc. as these varieties had not only sufficient resistance against various diseases and pest attack but also give maximum yield.

More information in this regard could be obtained from agriculture extension office or throughagri helpline, whereas, field staff of agriculture department would also be active in the field to provide guidance and necessary assistance to growers, he added.

IUB expanding cooperation with Met Department

Staff Reporter

BAHAWALPUR: The Islamia University of Bahawalpur is expanding cooperation with the Meteorological Department and other agencies for agricultural research and resettlement of millions of acres of land in Cholistan through a special system of rainfall augmentation and mutual cooperation and partnership agreements are being signed.

Weatherway is a private digital meteorological organization that uses technology to forecast the weather on modern lines. Mutual collaboration between the Islamia University of Bahawalpur and Weatherway institution will provide internship and employment opportunities to university students. Students of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur will be made meteorological ambassadors. Cooperation in setting up meteorological centers at



the university and Cholistan will be promoted. The weather forecast for agriculture in South Punjab will be improved.

Appropriate technical support will be provided for the rainfall augmentation project. International

meteorological information will be exchanged and a database will be set up. The agreement was signed by Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob, Vice Chancellor, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur and Gohar Ayub Khan Station Development Weath-

erway. Renowned meteorologist, University Alumni Muhammad Hanif and Dr. Ali Raza, Director, National Research Center, Inter-cropping Technology, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur were present on the occasion.

Anti-Dengue Day observed across Faisalabad



Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: Anti-Dengue Day was observed throughout the district with the commitment to continue wage a war against dengue for getting rid of this fatal disease.

In this connection an awareness walk was held to mark this day which was led by the Deputy Commissioner Lt.(R) Sohail Ashraf.

Anti-Dengue Walk started from Metropolitan Corporation and culminated on the same place after passing through different roads. ADCG Qaiser Abbas Rind, CEO DEA Ali Ahmad Siyan, CEO DHA Dr. Sulmeman Zahid, CO MCF Zubair Hussain, DPC Dr. Zulqarnain, Divisional Forest Officers Wajehuddin Ahmad, Muhammad Ali Butt, In charge DEOC Muhammad Sadiq, the Educationalist Muhammad Akhtar Butt, officers and staff of different departments and citizens belonging to different walks of life participated in the walk. The participants of walk were carrying banners and play cards inscribed slogans to highlight the precautionary and preventive meas-

ures against dengue.

Expressing his views, the Deputy Commissioner said that the Anti-dengue campaign will continue with more vigor and determination, so that this significant movement could be made more affective and result oriented for ensuring complete eradication of dengue problem and getting rid of it at any cost.

He said adding that the dengue is the common problem for all of us, which requires the strict feelings and reaction. He further urged upon the people to act upon the preventive measures with a great sense of seriousness. He affirmed that all possible efforts are being made for the eradication of dengue at government level, and like previous years the menace of dengue would be defeated even during this season. He said that cleanliness should be very much clear. Earlier the seminar was also held in which DPC Dr. Zulqarnain gave multi-media briefing.

The Deputy Commissioner urged the departments to give their best results during surveillance. He pointed out that, with joint efforts dengue would be defeated.



Islamabad
23° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 3:18 am
Zohr 12:12 pm
Asr 5:12 pm
Maghrib 7:22 pm
Isha 9:05 pm

EMERGENCY

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

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

COMPLAINTS

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

19 more diagnosed with Coronavirus in Rawalpindi

RAWALPINDI: As many as 19 more people were diagnosed with fatal coronavirus during the last 24 hours, raising the district's tally of confirmed cases to 46,882.

As per the latest data released by the District Health Authority here Saturday, the total infected cases included 43,358 from Rawalpindi and 3,524 from other districts.

Among the news cases, nine arrived from Rawal town, six from the Rawalpindi Cantonment, two from Potohar town, and one from Gujjar Khan and Islamabad.

"Presently, 145 confirmed patients are quarantined at homes while three patients are admitted, including two in Benazir Bhutto Hospital and one in the Holy Family Hospital", the report added.

The report further said that 6,943,222 people, including 44,797 health workers, had jabbed themselves against the lethal coronavirus (COVID-19) across the district since the vaccination administering drive launched on March 10, 2021.

District Health Authority updated that during the last 24 hours, 1,148 samples were collected, out of which 1,129 were declared negative, while the positivity rate was recorded at 1.65 per cent. APP

Experts call for increase in budget to ensure free education

Advocacy forum highlights importance of education without any gender bias



Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Education experts at an advocacy forum while projecting the vitality of education towards an educated society and national progress, have emphasized on the need for girls education with more focus on the increased allocation of budget for this sector especially in Punjab.

The advocacy forum was arranged by the Awaz CDS Pakistan here with a major focus to highlight the importance of education without any gender bias and raise demand for sufficient budgetary allocation for education sector.

Chief Executive Awaz CDS Pakistan Zia ur Rehman; Professor of Economics, University of Central Punjab, Lahore, Dr Qais Aslam, Additional Secretary (P&D) School System Qaiser Rasheed, and Director General of Punjab Assembly Anayat Ullah Lak; spoke on the occasion while a number of representatives of education sector organizations joined the forum.

In his opening remarks, Zia ur Rehman gave an overview of the educational facilities in the Punjab province in terms of gender and region. He explained that education plays a vital role in shaping up an educated and skilled society that leads to national economic prosperity.

He further emphasized upon the provincial government to ensure equal as well as quality education in all areas of the province without any discrimination.

To achieve this goal, the Awaz CDS Pakistan Chief Executive urged the government to immediately notify the Punjab Free and Compulsory Education Act 2014.

In his remarks, Dr. Qais Aslam from the University of Central Punjab said that the current overall education level in the

province is not up to the mark as there still exist a number of barricades in terms of social circumstances, access to schools, paucity of public funds, lack of furniture and other facilities.

According to him, these bottlenecks can be removed significantly if the provincial government prioritized this important sector by earmarking an increased chunk of the budget. He said that according to the Pakistan Bureau of statistics (PSLM 2019-20), 16% urban while 28% rural children of Punjab are still Out of School whereas percentage of out of school children is increasing which shows a need of great seriousness towards education as we have the one of the largest pool of young people who will go wasted otherwise.

Additional Secretary (P&D) School System Qaiser Rasheed acknowledged the irritants towards equal opportunities, especially in remote areas. He threw light on the budget allocated for education, especially girls education. He further said that Chief Minister Punjab, Mr. Hamza Shehbaz has already called for briefings from education sector and he appreciated the afternoon schools programs.

He highlighted the importance of Accelerated Learning Programs (ALPs) and vocational trainings alongwith scholarships given to underprivileged children and parents of communities working at Brick kilns. He, however, said that despite these odd factors the provincial government is making all-out efforts to ensure provision of facilities at schools across the province.

Anayat Ullah Lak shared the history of Free and Compulsory Education Act and he endorsed that the girls education is not getting the level of seriousness required to

ensure quality education for girls in the province. He said that free compulsory education can play a significant role in ensuring education to all with increased students enrolment at schools. He said that the provincial government's initiatives towards free and compulsory education is a significant initiative and mentioned provision of free text books to students on annual basis.

He assured to also take up the issue of delayed notification of the Punjab Free and Compulsory Education Act 2014 with the relevant government authorities as it would pave the way towards provision of equal and quality education to all.

Education Champion-Ms. Mariam Anjad shared that according to Economic Survey of Pakistan 2021-2022, 25.7 million children were enrolled in Primary classes (I-V) and Out of these 11.7 million (45.5%) were girls. It is interesting to note that only 8.25 million went up to the next level (Middle stage of VI-VI-II classes) and out of which 3.8 million (46.0%) were girls and only 2.5 million passed their metric (class X) and reached Inter level, out of which 1.3 million (52%) were girls. She demanded attention from Punjab Government in form of declaring Education Emergency in the province.

A question-answer session followed the discussion, where the participants raised related questions regarding contribution on the part of private sector and the government initiatives on free and compulsory education in the province.

In his concluding remarks, Chief Executive Awaz CDS Pakistan Zia ur Rehman thanked the stakeholders, experts and other participants for giving their inputs on the advocacy forum agenda.

Ceremonial beginning

The Ambassador of Turkiye Dr Mehmet Pacaci, presenting his credentials to President Dr Arfi Alvi at Awan-e-Sadr in Islamabad.



Photo: PID

RDA organizes seminar, walk on dengue control

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) on the directives of Director General, RDA, here on Saturday organized a seminar and walk on dengue control and prevention with an aim to raise awareness against the disease.

The seminar was attended by Director Admin & Finance RDA Asif Mehmood Janjua, Deputy Director Admin, Iftikhar Ali, Deputy Director, Finance Muhammad Junaid Taj Bhatti, Deputy Director, IT Dawood Khalid, Deputy Director, Public Relations Hafiz Muhammad Irfan, Assistant Director, BC, Ali Raza, RDA Staff, RDA Union President Khawaja Javed and others.

Director Admin and Finance RDA said that the government departments and citizens should join hands to control the virus.

He also recommended preventive measures against the dengue mosquitoes and stressed the importance of collective preventive measures against it. He urged the RDA staff members



to ensure cleanliness of the office and their homes.

He said awareness played a key role in the fight against dengue because prevention was far better than cure. He stressed the need for collective as well

as individual efforts along with collaboration of all the stakeholders for the awareness, implementation and control of any epidemic.

He also highlighted ways to control various developmental stages of dengue

from its eggs to larva and full grown mosquitoes. He advised the citizens to remove stagnant water so that dengue larvae could be prevented. On severe violations, strict action in accordance with the law is taken against the violators and FIRs are also lodged, he added.

He also appreciated the work being done by RDA Anti-Dengue team especially RDA's Dengue Focal Person, Ali Raza and hoped that the authority would continue its efforts against dengue.

According to RDA spokesman, The Director General RDA had urged the citizens to take special care against dengue, ensure cleanliness and adopt all possible preventive measures to control the virus.

The DG said that the citizens should remove stagnant water and adopt SOPs issued by the Punjab government to control dengue. Later, a dengue awareness walk was organized while pamphlets were also distributed among the citizens on Murree road. Agencies

Health Corner

Benefits of lemon water

Najeed Nd Khattak

ISLAMABAD: You have heard a lot about the benefits of lemons, but it is not possible for you to take half a lemon in it, give water to half a lemon in it and give you relief as well as see this musheri in the morning.

Here are some key benefits to using this drink: The positive electrolytes, potassium, calcium and magnesium in lemons and honey refresh the body and eat the full amount of dehydration immediately.

Joint and muscle pain will disappear. The system will improve. There is an abundance of enzymes in the body. The liver will be cleansed. Gets rid of throat infection and inflammation. The intestines are cleansed. The body produces antioxidants that protect against disease.

Strengthens the nervous system and relieves depression and stress. The blood vessels are cleaned. Blood pressure returns to normal. This drink raises the pH level in the body which prevents diseases. With the help of Vitamin C, the skin becomes clean and healthy.

Uric acid dissolves, which relieves joint pain. It is very useful for pregnant mothers, it protects the mother from viruses and flu and strengthens the baby's bones and nervous system, especially the brain.

Chest irritation disappears. Kidney and pancreas stones dissolve. Lemon pectin fiber helps in weight loss. Toothache and gum problems are eliminated. Alcohol properties of lemons reduce the risk of cancer.



RAWALPINDI: Rally led by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Chaudhry Nazeer on its way to participate in party's gathering at the Parade Ground, Islamabad.

Moot organized in memory of Masood Khawaja



Staff Reporter

RAWALPINDI: A condolence reference was organized in the memory of renowned TV and theater artist Masood Khawaja at the Punjab Arts Council.

The reference was presided over by Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmed while Naheed Manzoor attended the function as the chief guest. Addressing the reference, Naheed Manzoor said that during his 30-year career, Masood Khawaja had acted in hundreds of TV and theater dramas. Masood Khawaja understood humor very well, which made him popular not only in Pakistan but also internationally. He also introduced the trend of stand-up comedy in Pakistan, which has become the identity of many artists today, she added.

Naheed Manzoor further said that Masood Khawaja had the status of an academy for artists. He always welcomed new artists and also helped them to understand basics of acting. The sudden demise of Masood Khawaja has created a vacuum in comic circles of Pakistan. Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmed said that Masood was one of the artists who made a name for himself in the film industry by working tirelessly. He was more of a friend to me than a great actor. Masood Khawaja, who played comedy roles in TV dramas and theaters, was a laughing stock in real life.

He always raised his voice for the welfare of the artists and also provided financial support to the artists by founding an organization called Pakistan Artists Welfare, he added. Anjum Khabibi, Asma Butt, Afzal Latifi, Naem Akram Qureshi, Khalid Zia Siddiqui, Anjum Malik, Saeed Anwar, Anjum Abbasi, Arshad Masood Minhas, Syed Saleem Affandi, Amjad Chaudhry, Suleiman Sunni, Liaquat Shah, Jhalak Ali, Imran Roshdi. And others addressed the reference and refreshed the memories of Masood Khawaja. At the end of the ceremony, Pir Azmatullah Sultan also offered for the late Masood Khawaja. A great number of artists from the twin cities participated in the condolence reference.

44 professional beggars held

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Police, in its crackdowns on professional beggars, arrested 44 beggars to discourage the menace of begging and avoid risk of road accidents due to jaywalking of tramps.

On the directives of the in-charge Beggars Squad, along with their respective teams, took action against the professional beggars, and detained them in different police stations of Rawalpindi city, said the Rawalpindi Police spokesperson. On this occasion, SSP Operations Waseem Riaz said the special beggar squad was working hard to overcome the increasing number of professional beggars. "The professional beggars stand on various highways and squares of Rawalpindi city and not only affect the flow of traffic but also increase risk of accidents.

Therefore, the public is also requested that do not serve alms to them as discouraging such factors will not only improve the society but also the flow of traffic," he said.

Illegal cattle markets

Islamabad Police to take action

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Police have decided to take strict against illegal cattle markets hampering traffic flow and causing inconvenience for citizens.

Following directions of IGP Islamabad Dr Akbar Nasir Khan, special arrangements have been made in the Capital to facilitate citizens on the eve of Eid ul Azha. Any hindrance in traffic flow would not be tolerated and strict action to be taken against those causing inconvenience for citizens, police spokesman said.

Strict action would be taken against illegal cattle markets and those selling cattle alongside the roads, he said adding that relevant beat officers and DSPs would ensure strict action against such persons.

Additional strength has been deployed at various busy areas and specified cattle markets to ensure smooth traffic flow which would work in three shifts. Purpose of this deployment is to ensure smooth traffic flow while diversions points have been also erected.

Citizens can lodge their complaints at ICTP Helpline (1915 or 051-9261992-93) and prompt action would be ensured on it. Agencies

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The world waits for African children to die

Rania Dagash

Eight-month-old Ibrahim is silent and motionless in his grandmother's arms, as babies wail around him in the hospital ward in Mogadishu, Somalia. He is weak and emaciated from the effects of severe acute malnutrition and diarrhoea. As the worst drought the region has seen for forty years ravages the country, his mother's breastmilk has dried up from lack of food and water, and his family simply has nothing left to sustain him. His grandmother's voice cracks as she begs for treatment. But, sadly, too many across the world appear unmoved. It won't be until thousands of children like Ibrahim are buried across the Horn of Africa, that the international community might look up.

Unfortunately, we know this from experience. Just over a decade ago, the world was repeatedly warned of a devastating drought in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia. Nonetheless, famine was allowed to take hold in Somalia in 2011. Over a quarter of a million people, many of them children,

died. Only when their bodies filled TV screens, did the world leap to its feet. We said, 'never again'. But now, again, the lives of more than 1.8 million children in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia are in danger. They need urgent treatment for the deadliest form of hunger: severe acute malnutrition. An unprecedented four rainy seasons have failed in the space of two years, with forecasts suggesting the October to December rains are likely to fail too.

Climate change has pushed more than ten million children across the region into brutal drought conditions that are killing the livestock and crops they depend on, forcing them to flee their homes, severing their access to education and healthcare, and putting their safety at risk. UNICEF has been repeatedly ringing the alarm bell. We are extremely grateful for donors who have come forward, but our emergency appeal remains desperately underfunded.

The World Bank found that an emergency response to a drought that is even just one month quicker, ultimately gives a 0.8% boost in income per capita. Armed with this wealth of knowledge, why have lessons learned been short lived?

Psychology certainly plays a role. It can be difficult for donors to stick out their necks, risk committing funds before a disaster is visible, and build an ark on dry land on a sunny day. The incentive to act is also missing as overwhelming public approval tends to come with huge displays of support during a humanitarian emergency. Whereas rapid onset disasters like earthquakes or typhoons usually spur an instant reaction, creeping droughts remain some of the worst funded of all crises.

And let's be frank: African children's lives seem to matter less on the world stage. Too many emergencies on the African continent are forgotten, with children's deaths accepted as somehow inevitable. While donors and the media rightfully focus on the war and human suffering in Ukraine, it must not be at the expense of children and human suffering in Africa.

Across Eastern and Southern African countries emergency appeals are on average only 20% funded. The countries least responsible for creating climate change are abandoned to its effects. Somalia, for instance, produces 0.01% of the world's carbon dioxide emissions but is ranked in the top ten of worst-af-

affected countries in the world in UNICEF's children's climate risk index.

Back in Mogadishu, Ibrahim is very gradually improving after an urgent blood transfusion. But his condition, and that of thousands like him, remains critical. Many other children did not make it this far: they were buried by the roadside on their families' desperate journeys to seek help. In the Horn of Africa, the time has passed for early action. We need more and urgent humanitarian funding – across sectors like nutrition, water, health, child protection and education – to pull children back from the edge. Some 213,000 people in Somalia are now at risk of famine. This year in some in-patient treatment centres in the worst-affected areas, three times as many children have already died from severe acute malnutrition than in the whole of the year before. In a matter of weeks, we could witness an avalanche of child deaths.

We have a tiny, and shrinking, window to prevent a catastrophe, yet we are facing unprecedented challenges. The war in Ukraine is fuelling the emergency across the region: exacerbating rising global food and fuel prices, stopping vital wheat

imports from Ukraine and Russia, and driving up the cost of life-saving therapeutic treatment for children with severe malnutrition. The international community – led by the G7 who will meet in Germany from June 26-28 – needs to commit additional resources now to save lives, ensuring attention on the war in Ukraine does not divert funds, or focus, from other crises. We also need to prepare for future disasters, including what might hit the Horn of Africa next year, with much more urgency.

As climate change spurs more and increasingly complex emergencies, G7 leaders must follow through with their commitment to early action and invest in work that will help build the resilience of families in the region for the long term – such as improving nutrition, health, water, education, and cash transfer programmes. And, when the alarm bell rings again as the first warning signs of an emergency unfold, the world must act immediately: no matter the visibility of the crisis, and no matter where the children live.

The writer is UNICEF's Deputy Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa. Courtesy Euronews

Supply & Inflation

Inflation is rising fast, and central banks are under pressure to take drastic action. But their only real option is to reduce demand, by raising interest rates and withdrawing liquidity. These measures have already spurred a massive repricing of assets, including currencies, and they threaten to push global growth below potential, with lower-income economies suffering disproportionately, and to reduce investment in the energy transition.

There is another way; supply-side measures. Trade and investment have long enabled supply to expand rapidly in response to growing global demand. But, for nearly two decades – and especially in the last few years – proliferating trade barriers have been adding friction to this process. Creeping protectionism must be reversed, with US President Joe Biden removing the tariffs imposed by his predecessor, Donald Trump, and Europe accelerating the integration of its services markets.

At the same time, efforts must be made to improve productivity. Digital technologies will be crucial here. While the pandemic helped to accelerate the digital transformation, many sectors – including the public sector – are lagging, and concerns about the effects of automation on employment persist. But in a supply-constrained world characterised by persistent labour shortages, productivity-boosting digital technologies, together with higher wages for workers, would go a long way toward improving the balance between supply and demand.

For example, artificial-intelligence-based tools can perform a wide range of functions, from screening luggage more efficiently at airports to analysing medical imaging to detect cancers. Beyond digital technologies, regulatory regimes can be streamlined and improved, in order to reduce supply-side bottlenecks. Such an agenda must be applied to both the public and private sectors. At the international level, efforts to facilitate trade, address supply-chain rigidities, and close data gaps will be essential. Otherwise, central banks will be left to deal with inflation alone – with dire consequences for the entire global economy.

Central banks' efforts to contain high and rising inflation are fuelling growth headwinds and threatening to tip the global economy into recession. But the proximate cause of today's inflationary pressures is a large, broad-based, and persistent imbalance between supply and demand. Higher interest rates will dampen demand, but supply-side measures must also play a large role in inflation-taming strategies.

Over the past year or so, the rollback of pandemic-containment policies has spurred a simultaneous surge in demand and contraction in supply. While this was to be expected, supply has proved surprisingly inelastic. In labour markets, for example, shortages have become the norm, leading to cancelled flights, disrupted supply chains, restaurant closures, and challenges to healthcare delivery.

These shortages appear to be at least partly the result of a pandemic-driven shift in preferences. Many types of workers are seeking greater flexibility – including hybrid or work-from-home options – or otherwise improved working conditions. Healthcare workers, in particular, report feeling burned out by their jobs. If this is true, the inflation picture must include an adjustment in relative labour costs. To bring markets back into balance, wage and income increases will be needed, even for jobs for which there was previously an ample supply of workers.



Ukraine's EU membership

Charles Tannock

In September 2002, I published a commentary in *The Wall Street Journal* entitled "Kyiv Has a Case for the EU." I was a first-term Member of the European Parliament (MEP) and, I believe, the first elected official anywhere openly to support Ukraine's inherent right to future European Union membership. Nearly 20 years later, the EU has at long last decided to grant Ukraine candidate status. The move is both momentous and fully justified. For most of the intervening two decades, Ukraine's declared Euro-Atlantic aspirations had remained just that. As a European Parliament Rapporteur for the 2004 European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) Report and again as Rapporteur for the Eastern Partnership Dimension in 2007, I had long battles to convince my German and French colleagues of the merits of Ukraine's EU case.

To its credit, the European Parliament in 2007 settled for compromise wording that was vague but hopeful. It did not reject Ukraine's right, under Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union, to join the bloc. But nor did it suggest, as had been the case since 2004 for the countries of the Western Balkans, that Ukraine was entitled to the formal status of a "candidate" or "potential candidate" country.

The heady days of Ukraine's 2004 Orange Revolution and the Maidan Revolution a decade later culminated in the 2014 EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, which included a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area. But the Association Agreement merely confirmed that the EU acknowledged Ukraine's European aspirations and welcomed its European choice, including its commitment to building a sustainable democracy and market economy. The pact made no mention of the country's Article

49 rights to EU membership, nor of the Copenhagen criteria it would need to fulfil as a formal prerequisite for candidate status.

These criteria stipulate that an EU candidate state must have democratic institutions and a functioning market economy, uphold fundamental human rights, and accept the obligations of membership. But EU enlargement is essentially a political decision by member states, based on a multitude of considerations that sometimes include dramatic events. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is such a turning point. The robustness of Ukraine's institutions and the strength of its civil society in the wake of Russia's invasion have generated a sense of awe in the West. The country's resilient government stood its ground as the invading barbarians massed at the gates of Kyiv.

The country's railways have continued to operate while under massive attack by a major military power. Then there is the courage of Ukraine's armed forces and the sacrifices of civilians targeted directly by Russian missiles. Russia's war crimes, including the rape and murder of civilians in occupied territories, have shocked the West and spurred the change of mindset among EU members that made Ukraine's candidacy possible. With its large, highly educated population, Ukraine could one day play a strategic role as a bridge between Western and Central Europe and Russia.

After all, the EU allowed Turkey to become a negotiating candidate, with all the geographical and cultural controversy the move provoked, on the grounds that Turkey was a bridge between Europe and the Islamic world. Surely Ukraine has the same or perhaps an even greater right to a roadmap for its long-term goal of EU membership. Unfortunately, it has taken a brutal war for the EU finally to come to its senses and fully appreciate that its security interests are tied tightly to Ukraine's independence and Euro-

pean outlook.

Once Russia's vicious attempt to re-establish an empire by force is finally defeated and its forces are permanently driven from Ukraine, the country will need a vast reconstruction program that mobilises financial aid to rebuild its war-ravaged infrastructure. But Ukraine's efforts to build a democracy from scratch – particularly since Russia's illegal 2014 annexation of Crimea and the subsequent war started by its proxies in the eastern Donbas region – deserve greater recognition. The Association Agreement and the free-trade deal have already brought about significant structural reforms, with Ukraine implementing as much as 60% of the acquis communautaire (the body of EU law).

This will give it a head start when accession negotiations begin. EU candidate status will further encourage the reforms needed to strengthen the independence of the judiciary, bolster democracy and human rights, protect minorities, and combat corruption and cronyism, with the European Commission supervising the process and neighboring EU countries providing the necessary expertise. Given Europe's looming demographic problems and the United Kingdom's regrettable departure from the EU, a pool of highly skilled Ukrainians will be a favourable addition to the European workforce.

And, as the war has dramatically shown, Ukraine's EU accession will bring other benefits related to food security and defence capabilities. It will be many years before Ukraine becomes an EU member, but the country's candidate status is a strong morale boost in its existential war against Russia. The EU must now ensure that Ukraine eventually takes its place where it belongs – in the European family.

The writer is a former member of the European Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee. Courtesy Gulf Times

Tech & tackling human trafficking

Dr. Theodore Karasik

Human smuggling continues to be a deadly problem. There was a gruesome discovery in Texas this week, with more than 50 migrants found dead in an abandoned truck trailer in a remote area of San Antonio. The US Department of Homeland Security is now leading the investigation into how this tragedy occurred. San Antonio was the site of a similar tragedy in 2017, when 10 migrants died. They were found with dozens of other people in an unventilated trailer that was left sitting in the summer heat at a Walmart parking lot. This week's incident once again raises questions about how best to stop such human smuggling events.

Research shows that the market for people smuggling services is, in most cases, not dominated by overarching mafia-like criminal structures that have monopolized all smuggling activities from the source to the destination country. Instead, in many regions, there exists a complex market for highly differentiated smuggling services offered by a multitude of providers, from which potential migrants can choose or be forced into.

Human smuggling through transport systems is a major concern within the larger context of illicit migration methods. Research shows there is a near-unanimous consensus that people smuggling relies on a series of socially embedded networks, rather than hierarchical and rule-bound organizations. Much of the research has gone on to refute the organized crime thesis, or at least amended it by considerable degrees. Much of the criticism of the organized crime thesis was justified, as well-structured smuggling organizations were not observed and may never have played a major role in human smuggling. Smugglers act as important intermediate agents embedded in wider global markets for migration.

Transportation and technology mix in this smuggling industry. Even though some countries use

sophisticated undercarriage X-ray systems and K-9 teams, the original point of departure for smuggling rings is vital to detection. Recall that some tragedies have occurred once the smuggling victims are at their final destination. The 2017 San Antonio event was because of a local smuggling operation, which was able to load migrants onto trucks more frequently than customs and law enforcement agencies could keep up with.

Addressing human smuggling is concerned with the modus operandi of smugglers and their social organization, as well as how this relates to managing or criminalizing their activities. Containers and other box-like crates for human transport are not only inhuman but an issue that can perhaps be best addressed with more radio-frequency identification detection, known as RFID, requirements. The cloning of license plates is a major issue as smugglers use it to avoid tracking by law enforcement. Adding a technological solution to this problem could perhaps cut down on incidents.

Finally, advocacy groups' ability to help prevent migrants from entering the system in the first place can be beneficial. Building on programs designed by nongovernmental organizations can help address the point-of-origin issues by stopping migrants before they enter into the transportation system. In recent years, some actors have been accompanying and facilitating the transit of migrant families to avoid the transportation segment. Building on such efforts is important for policymakers.

Overall, knowing the communication networks and tracking trucks may offer possible solutions in terms of cutting down on vehicular transport, which would hopefully help prevent tragedies such as those seen in Texas. No one solution will stop these tragedies from occurring but their likelihood can be decreased with unity of effort in tracking and better use of technology and social work.

The writer is a senior adviser to Gulf State Analytics in Washington, D.C. Courtesy Arab News

Russians press assault on eastern Ukrainian city

Ukrainian troops say Russian artillery flattens buildings

KYIV/MOSCOW: Russian forces are pounding the city of Lysychansk and its surroundings in an all-out attempt to seize the last stronghold of resistance in eastern Ukraine's Luhansk province, the governor said Saturday. Ukrainian fighters have spent weeks trying to defend the city and to keep it from falling to Russia, as neighboring Sievierodonetsk did a week ago. The Russian Defense Ministry said its forces took control of an oil refinery on Lysychansk's edge in recent days, but Luhansk Gov. Serhiy Haidai reported Friday that fighting for the facility continued.



"Over the last day, the occupiers opened fire from all available kinds of weapons," Haidai said Saturday on the Telegram messaging app. Luhansk and neighboring Donetsk are the two provinces that make up the Donbas region, where Russia has focused its offensive since pulling back from the northern Ukraine and the capital, Kyiv, in the spring.

Pro-Russia separatists have held portions of both provinces since 2014, and Moscow recognizes all of Luhansk and Donetsk as sovereign republics. Syria's government said Wednesday that it would also recognize the "independence and sovereignty" of the two areas and work to establish diplomatic relations with the separatists.

In Slovyansk, a major Donetsk city still under Ukrainian control, four people died when Russian forces fired cluster munitions late Friday, Mayor Vadym Lyakh said on Facebook. He said the neighborhoods that were hit did not contain any potential military targets.

Elsewhere, investigators combed through the wreckage from a Russian airstrike early Friday on residential areas near the Ukrainian port of Odesa that killed 21 people.

Ukrainian Prosecutor-General Iryna Venediktova said the investigators were recovering fragments from missiles that struck an apartment building in the small coastal town of Serhiivka. They also were taking measurements to determine the trajectory of the weapons, she said.

"We are taking all the necessary investigative measures to determine the specific people guilty of this terrible war crime," Venediktova said. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said three anti-ship missiles struck "an ordinary residential building, a nine-story building" housing about 160 people. The victims of Friday's attack also included four members of a family staying at a "typical" seaside campsite, he said.

"I emphasize: this is a deliberate direct Russian terror, and not some mistake or an accidental missile strike," Zelenskyy said. The British Defense Ministry said

Saturday that air-launched anti-ship missiles generally do not have precision accuracy against ground targets. It said Russia likely was using such missiles because of a shortage of more accurate weapons.

The Kremlin has repeatedly claimed that the Russian military is targeting fuel storage sites and military facilities, not residential areas, although missiles also recently hit an apartment building in Kyiv and a shopping mall in the central city of Kremenchuk. On Saturday, Kremenchuk Mayor Vitaliy Maletsky said the death toll in the mall attack had risen to 21 and one person was still missing. Ukrainian authorities interpreted the missile attack in Odesa as payback for the withdrawal of Russian troops from a nearby Black Sea island with both symbolic and strategic significance in the war that started with Russia's Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine.

Moscow portrayed their departure from Snake Island as a "good-will gesture" to help unblock exports of grain.

Congo, South Sudan urged to work for peace

ROME: Pope Francis urged the people and leaders of Congo and South Sudan on Saturday to "turn a page" and forge new paths of reconciliation, peace and development.

Francis issued a video message on the day he had planned to begin a weeklong pilgrimage to the two African countries. He canceled the scheduled trip last month because of knee pain that makes walking and standing difficult.

In the message, Francis said he was "greatly disappointed" to not be able to travel and promised to visit "as soon as possible."

He urged the people of both countries not to allow themselves to be robbed of hope despite the violence, political instability, exploitation and poverty that he said had pained them for so long.

"You have a great mission, all of you, beginning with your political leaders: It is that of turning a page in order to blaze new trails, new paths of reconciliation and forgiveness, of serene coexistence and of development," Francis said.

He said political leaders owed the pursuit of such goals to young people who dream of peace "and deserve to see those dreams come true"

"For their sake, above all, it is necessary to lay down arms, to overcome all resentment, and to write new pages of fraternity," the pope said.

UAE sends medical aid to Afghanistan



ABU DHABI: The UAE has sent three planes of medical supplies, including a 1,000 square-meter-field hospital, to aid the injured of Afghanistan's earthquake that killed over 1,000 people and wounded scores more, Emirates new agency (WAM) reported on Saturday.

The dispatched hospital includes 75 beds and two operating rooms equipped with medical supplies and devices, the WAM statement read.

The planes also carried 16 metric tonnes of equipment and a medical team to operate the hospital and provide urgent medical services.

The UAE earlier established an air bridge to transport aid in the wake of the disaster.

The relief efforts come as Afghan authorities reported a shortage of food, shelter and medical supplies for the victims of the country's deadliest earthquake in decades.

Last week, the country dispatched a plane carrying 30 tons of urgent food supplies to Afghanistan as aid continued to pour in from different parts of the world.

Brazil assumes rotating presidency of UNSC for July

UNITED NATIONS: Brazil has assumed the rotating presidency of the United Nations Security Council for July.

During the month, Brazil would aim to foster greater cooperation between the Security Council and other UN bodies, especially the Peacebuilding Commission, as it can make a comprehensive contribution to discussions on renewal of peacekeeping and political missions, Ronaldo Costa Filho, Brazil's permanent representative to the UN and president of the Security Council for July, told a press briefing Friday.

In July, the Security Council will focus on issues including the crises in Ukraine and Syria with meeting on food security and consultations on the chemical weapons file on Syria, as well as renewals of a raft of peacekeeping or special political missions and sanctions regimes, Filho said.

The signature events include the adoption of a presidential statement, the renewal of four peacekeeping or special political missions, renewal of two sanctions regimes and one authorization of humanitarian assistance.

Meanwhile, the 15-nation council is scheduled to hold meetings on Colombia, children and armed conflict, Libya and Sudan.

Brazil's priorities also include incorporating a gender perspective as a cross-cutting issue throughout Brazil's presidency and inviting civil society briefers into meetings whenever possible, Filho said.

The Security Council has 15 members and its primary responsibility is the maintenance of international peace and security. The presidency of the council is held by each member state for one month.

India will never succeed in misleading world about IIOJK situation

NEW DELHI: The illegally detained All Parties Hurriyat Conference Chairman, Masarrat Aalam Butt, has said that Narendra Modi-led fascist Indian government is attempting to mislead the international community about the ground situation of Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir but will never succeed in its nefarious designs.

Masarrat Aalam Butt in his message from New Delhi's infamous Tihar Jail said the Modi regime's plan to host the G20 summit in IIOJK is part of its ploys to give credence to its false claims of normalcy in the territory. He appealed to the G20 members not to attend the meeting in IIOJK which is an internationally recognized disputed territory. The APHC Chairman maintained that the occupied territory is witnessing grave human rights violations at the hands of Indian troops and an end to these abuses is the foremost responsibility of the world community.

Meanwhile, the occupation authorities shifted over 50 illegally detained Kashmiris including Hurriyat leaders Muhammad Yousuf Falahi, Aadil Zargar and Dr Muhammad Shafi Shariyateem from Kot Bhalwal jail in Jammu to the prisons in the Indian states of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

40 years of INL programs

US Assistant Secretary wraps up Pakistan visit

Muhammad Arshad

ISLAMABAD: Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) Todd D. Robinson visited Islamabad June 29-July 2 to discuss the U.S.-Pakistani partnership, highlighting the 75th anniversary of bilateral relations.



During his visit, Assistant Secretary Robinson met with senior government officials to discuss U.S.-Pakistan cooperation on several topics, including counternarcotics, gender issues, transnational crime, and border security. Assistant Secretary Robinson also took part in celebrating the 75 years of U.S.-Pakistani relations and INL's 40-year partnership with Pakistan under the theme "justice, security, and prosperity."

On June 30, the Assistant Secretary participated in the groundbreaking of the Anti-Narcotics Force Academy (ANF) construction and training project, valued at \$2.2 million (451.7 million PKR), hosted by implementing partner Unit-

ed Nations Development Program (UNDP), Ministry of Narcotics Control Minister Shahzain Bugti and ANF Director General Ghulam Shabbir Narejo also attended. "On behalf of the U.S. Government, I thank UNDP and ANF for their efforts and partnership with INL on our common objectives of combatting drugs transiting through Pakistan and promoting the recruitment, retention, advancement, and gender mainstreaming of women police in Pakistan," said Robinson.

The Assistant Secretary also attended a ceremony to celebrate the delivery of \$1.44 million (295.7 million PKR) of commod-

ities to the Excise, Taxation and Narcotics Control of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a KP provincial agency that has a drug interdiction mandate. In his remarks, Robinson stated, "The fight against drugs and illicit contraband is a priority for Pakistan, the United States, and the international community, and I recognize that Pakistan faces special challenges because of its neighborhood. But when we work together, we achieve great things."

On July 1, the Assistant Secretary joined Inspector General of Frontier Corps Khyber Pakhtunkhwa North Major General Adil Yamin, Inspector General of Frontier Corps Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa South Major General Muhammad Munir Afsar, and senior Frontier Corps leadership for an inauguration and agreement signing ceremony for two joint projects worth approximately \$10.5 million (2.1 billion PKR). The inauguration celebrated completion of 45 new structures at FC KP North's Warsak Training Center, including accommodation barracks for 500 men and 128 women, classrooms, and facilities for physical training.

Officials also signed an agreement for the construction of women's facilities at eight existing FC KP South regional headquarters. The U.S. government-funded project will provide barracks, dining halls, kitchens, and other facilities that will support stationing of up to 128 women Frontier Corps members at each location. Regarding the women's facilities, Robinson said, "The United States is pleased to partner with Pakistan to enhance opportunities for women to access justice and to participate in the administration of justice."

UN condemns protesters' storming of Libya's parliament

CAIRO: A senior U.N. official for Libya on Saturday condemned the storming of the parliament's headquarters by angry demonstrators as part of protests in several cities against the political class and deteriorating economic conditions.

Hundreds of protesters marched in the streets of the capital Tripoli and other Libyan cities on Friday, with many attacking and setting fire to government buildings, including the House of Representatives in the eastern city of Tobruk.

"The people's right to peacefully protest should be respected and protected but riots and acts of vandalism such as the storming of the House

of Representatives headquarters late yesterday in Tobruk are totally unacceptable," said Stephanie Williams, the U.N. special adviser on Libya, on Twitter.

Friday's protests came a day after the leaders of the parliament and another legislative chamber based in Tripoli failed to reach an agreement on elections during U.N.-mediated talks in Geneva. The dispute now centers on the eligibility requirements for candidates, according to the U.N.

Libya failed to hold elections in December following challenges including legal disputes, controversial presidential hopefuls and the presence of rogue militias and foreign fighters in

the country.

The failure to hold the vote was a major blow to international efforts to bring peace to the Mediterranean nation. It has opened a new chapter in its long-running political impasse, with two rival governments now claiming power after tentative steps toward unity in the past year.

The protesters, frustrated from years of chaos and division, have called for the removal of the current political class and elections to be held. They also rallied against dire economic conditions in the oil-rich nation, where prices have risen for fuel and bread and power outages are a regular occurrence.

There were fears that militias across

the country could quash the protests as they did in 2020 demonstrations when they opened fire on people protesting dire economic conditions.

Sabadell Jose, the European Union envoy in Libya, called on protesters to "avoid any type of violence." He said Friday's demonstrations demonstrated that people want "change through elections and their voices should be heard."

Libya has been wrecked by conflict since a NATO-backed uprising toppled and killed longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi in 2011. The country was then for years split between rival administrations in the east and west, each supported by different militias and foreign governments.

Australia PM hails 'new start' in ties with France

PARIS: Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese welcomed a "new start" in relations with France as he met President Emmanuel Macron in Paris, after an acrimonious row between the countries over a submarine contract last year.

"My presence here represents a new start for our countries' relationship," Albanese said after arriving at the Elysee Palace. "Australia's relationship with France matters. Trust, respect and honesty matter. This is how I will approach my relations," he added.

Macron said that the first conversations between the pair since leftwinger Albanese's elec-

tion in May "mark a willingness to rebuild a relationship of trust between our two countries, a relationship based on mutual respect." After acknowledging "difficult times", Macron emphasised the two countries' strategic partnership, their shared war history in Europe and their joint interests in stability in the Pacific region.

"We're going to talk about the future, not the past," Macron added to reporters, stressing that Albanese was "not responsible for what happened." The statements, which followed a warm greeting between the two men and their wives in the courtyard of the presidential palace, underline

the sea change in ties since the departure of former Australian premier Scott Morrison. Macron was left furious last year after Morrison secretly negotiated to buy US-designed submarines and then ditched a landmark contract with France signed in 2016 and worth Aus\$50 billion (33 billion euros) at the time.

France broke off diplomatic contacts with Australia and Macron repeatedly the conservative leader of having lied to him during a dinner they shared in Paris in June 2021. Morrison's actions were marked by "brutality and cynicism, and I would even be tempted to say of unequivocal incompetence", outgoing French

foreign minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said as he handed over to his successor Catherine Colonna on May 21.

Albanese announced earlier this month that French submarine maker Naval Group had agreed to a "fair and an equitable settlement" of 555 million Euros (US\$584 million) for Australia ending the decade-old submarine contract. Canberra has switched to buying nuclear-powered US subs as part of a new security pact with Britain and the United States called AUKUS.

After the deal was announced, Macron recalled France's envoys to both Australia and the United States in a serious and rare



diplomatic crisis between leading Western powers. Macron praised Albanese's commitment to the

fight against climate change, which reverses the stance of his conservative predecessor Morri-

son. The Australian government recently asked the United Nations to raise the country's 2030 emissions reduction target.

"The new Australian position — proactive, ambitious — offers us opportunities to advance together," Macron said. Morrison's predecessor as premier, Malcolm Turnbull, said the meeting in Paris on Friday was a "big opportunity" to help Paris and Canberra get over a "very bad period" when the French government did not even "pick up the phone." Albanese "is not Scott Morrison, so that's a big advantage", he told French journalists at an event organised by the Institut Montaigne in Paris this week.

Gold price increases by Rs600

Price increases by Rs515 per 10 grams.

KARACHI: Gold shined once again with the precious metal seeing an increase of Rs600 in its price on Saturday after declining for the last two days. According to the All Sindh Sarafa and Jewellers Association (ASSJA), the price of the yellow metal settled at Rs141,700 per tola and Rs121,385 with an increase of Rs515 per 10 grams in the local bullion market.

Meanwhile, in the international market, the gold price gained \$23 per ounce to settle at \$1,811.

Gold rates in Pakistan are around over Rs1,000 as compared to the gold rate in the Dubai market.

Silver prices in the domestic market remained unchanged at Rs1,520 per tola and Rs1,303.15 per 10 grams today.

Gold dealers across Pakistan raised concerns after Finance Minister Miftah Ismail imposed fixed income and sales tax on small gold shops. On Friday, Miftah announced that a fixed income and sales tax worth Rs40,000 has been imposed on gold shops that cover an area of less than 300 square feet so that all gold shops come into the tax radar.

Meanwhile, 17% sales tax has been reduced to 3% for shops covering an area of more than 300 square feet (and falling under tier-1) as such higher tax can never be received from jewellery markets. Moreover, the withholding tax of 4% has been brought down to 1% for local consumers who sell gold in the markets. However, the market players rejected the revision in taxes and warned to go on strike if the decision wasn't reconsidered.

Karachites protest against new load shedding schedule

KARACHI: The K-Electric has added to the despair of Karachi's residents as it has issued a new schedule of load shedding in Karachi and even the exempted areas are experiencing hours-long power outages. As per the SMS sent by K-Electric, residents of exempted areas of Karachi will face 2 to 3 hours of nighttime load shedding in different areas.

Different areas of the metropolitan is experiencing 16 to 18 hours of load shedding while the exempted areas will also experience load shedding at night. The K-Electric management has said that the areas where electricity has been stolen will experience load shedding four times of 2.5 hours. While in areas where ratio of steeling the electricity is less, will observe load shedding three times of 2 hours and exempted areas will experience power outages of 3 to 6 hours. Due to the prolonged power outages, the daily routine of citizens and business men has badly been affected. Citizens are also unable to sleep due to the power outages.

Urea & DAP

Govt hikes fertilizer prices

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has increased the prices of Urea and DAP fertilizers by Rs450 & Rs2,751. According to details, the price of Urea and Diammonium Phosphate (DAP) fertilizers has been increased by the federal government. The price for a bag of Urea had been increased by Rs450 while the price for DAP has been increased by Rs2,751 from Rs9500 to Rs12251.

It is to be mentioned here that farmers across the country protested against the unavailability and price hike of fertilizer for their crops in recent days. According to a report released by the federal Ministry of Interior, the government of Sindh as well as I.G. Police Sindh and the provincial agriculture department were directed to act against the smugglers and hoarders of fertilizer.

The interior ministry's report pointed out hoarders and smugglers in provinces behind the fertilizer shortage in the country. "In Sindh 40 dealers, Balochistan 28 and Punjab 24 dealers were involved in fertilizer hoarding," according to the report.

Pakistan's first

Walee-NUST launch center of excellence for social & digital media technologies

KARACHI: Walee Technologies Pvt. Ltd. (Walee), Pakistan's leading influencer marketing technology company, and the country's top academic institution, the NUST School of Electrical Engineering & Computer Science (SECS) have established Pakistan's first industry-academia centre of excellence to develop innovative social and digital AI-driven solutions and deeper intelligence to serve the USD100 billion global creator economy. The initiatives will first serve the Middle East, North Africa, and Pakistan (MENAP) market, which has a digital advertising and e-commerce marketing expected to exceed USD 60 billion in 2022 and an overall potential to double by 2030.

The Walee-NUST Centre of Excellence (WNCE) for social and digital media technologies is a long-term mutually-beneficial collaboration by

way of research and development activities, continuous upgrading of academic course content and knowledge transfer between faculty, students and Walee's engineering teams. WNCE can also enhance their professional visibility by way of contributing to publications, leading to higher global rankings. Walee's adoption of web 3.0 is a strong step in meeting its vision to shape the media-advertising space in the next five years with innovative solutions and techstacks. The physical, co-branded and fully functional tech facility on NUST's premises will boost participants' team dynamics when working on deliverables.

From a media industry perspective, Walee is the only martech that has collaborated with academia to invest in the country's future talent. Muhammad Ahsan Tahir, CEO Walee and a 2014

SEECs engineering graduate, said, "As an alumni, I am privileged to give back to SEECs' 2,500 students and faculty members. We will help them contribute to design and development projects, and to deliver globally scalable, AI-driven system serving largest B2B and B2C brands in MENAP and Turkey market" He added, "Walee Technologies helps leading brands and agencies across these areas to serve more than 500 million in population, to impact fully collaborate with creators and others to market, sell and service products to consumers using AI-driven solutions."

The partnership supports NUST's SEEC program strategy in ensuring it ranks as Pakistan's top engineering program for the sixth consecutive year (QS Programs). Dr Rafia Mumtaz, Head of Software Engineering department at NUST, said, "By working with



Walee's engineering teams, we aim to enhance our marketing and media technologies knowledge in context to in-demand programming languages, data science and Web 3.0. This partnership will empower our students to

President sets aside Banking Mohtasib's orders

Directs private bank to refund defrauded money to senior citizen

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has directed Faysal Bank Ltd to refund defrauded money to a senior citizen who was subjected to bank fraud and set aside the orders of the Banking Mohtasib. The President directed the bank to pay the defrauded account holder the full amount of 1.1 million as against the partial payment of Rs. 388,100. He said that the partial payment by the bank was sufficient to prove that the entire claim of the account

holder was just and right.

The President passed these directions while accepting a representation of Sardar Arshad Mahmood Jalwana (the complainant), who had to lose Rs 1.1 million after he disclosed his confidential banking data to an unknown caller. The customer had lodged a complaint with the Bank which had returned him Rs 388,100 but the remaining money was not being returned to him despite his persistent

efforts.

He approached Banking Mohtasib which closed the case stating that since a partial sum had already been credited to his account, therefore, the complaint was being closed. The complainant then filed a representation with the President against this decision of the Mohtasib. The President set aside the orders of the Banking Mohtasib and accepted the senior citizen's representation.



Acknowledgment

ISLAMABAD: Ms Naima Ansari President Islamabad Women Chamber of Commerce & Industry (IWCCI) hosted a dinner in honor of Award Winning Ladies of IWCCI. Zafar Bakhtawari Secretary General United Business Group, Raja Azhar (Businessman from London) Ch. Iftikhar (Gujrat CCI), Ms Samina Fazil (Group Leader), Ms Sadaf Asim Abbasi, Ms Mumtaz Akhtar, Ms Rizwana Asif, Ms Farida Rashid, Ms Mussarat Jabeen, Ms Rabia Raheel, Dr Johria Azhar, Ms Irum Irfan, Ms Zunaira Umer and others in a group photo on the occasion.



Photo: The Spokesman

FCCI concerned over 10% Super Tax

Atif Sheikh terms super tax contrary to finance minister's budget speech

Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: Mr. Atif Munir Sheikh, President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) has expressed the serious concerns over the ten percent super tax and said that business community was expecting that government would overcome the deteriorating economic situation with its "super performance" instead of resorting to the traditional strategy of levying new taxes.

Addressing a delegation of the business community, he said that the annual federal budget for the year 2022-23 has just been approved by the National Assembly along with super tax contrary to the budget

speech of the finance minister. "Actually Government has clubbed the mini budget in the main annual document", he said and reiterated its demand that government will have to take up such ticklish issues with the chambers and business community to thresh out its pros and cons as we are in a position to give better options to control the deficit.

He termed super tax as an additional budget which would directly hit the industrial sector in addition to catalysing inflation at the grass root level. He differed with the opinion of the government that it would collect funds from wealthy segments which would be spent to mitigate the sufferings of the poor. He said that the bloodbath of

the Pakistan Stock Exchange is indicative of its immediate and ill impacts on the overall economy. He said adding that 65% of the local textile industry has already get closed while the remaining is at the verge of collapse.

He further affirmed that the emerging situation would be detrimental to the economy which would also open the flood gates of unemployment. He further said that its fall out impact would also be in the form of deterioration in law-and-order situations and would become difficult for the government to control it in near future. He urged upon the government to start immediate negotiation with the chambers to save the economy from total annihilation.

Upward trajectory

Pak exports to US to cross \$8b mark: Masood Khan

Says The United States is the single largest export destination for Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Ambassador to the United States Masood Khan has said that Pakistan's year-on-year exports to the US have increased by 23% and last year, the total volume of exports, for the first time, crossed \$5 billion. During this financial year, exports have already grown to \$6.16 billion in the July-May 2021-22 period. The figures of June, which have yet to come, he said, would further enhance the overall volume of total Pakistan's exports the US. "The United States is an important trading partner and the single largest export destination for Pakistan. The spurt in our exports is a very promising trend", a press release on Saturday quoted ambassador Masood Khan as saying.

He said Pakistan's total exports to the US in the sectors of services and IT crossed \$2 billion mark. Cumulatively, the total volume

of exports should be more than \$8 billion, including services and IT. "Pakistan's tech sector, supported mainly by the United States' entrepreneurs, has shown extraordinary results. It is poised to continue on its positive trajectory", he added.

In the recent months, the tech startups in Pakistan had invested and earned half a billion dollars. The digital enterprises in Pakistan were fast becoming global, ready for exponential growth. "The Pak-US partnership in the tech sector will grow in strength in the years to come", Masood Khan said.

He said, in the last financial year, Pakistan's imports from the United States stood at \$2.4 billion. In the July-May 2021-22 period, these have increased to \$2.72 billion. So, imports from the United States increased

marginally whereas there had been a huge rise in Pak's exports. In the recent past, the ambassador said, Pakistan has emphasized closer trade and investment ties between Pakistan and the United States. The remarkable performance of Pakistan's exports to the US market would reinforce such trends and deepen the engagement between the two countries.

Pakistan and the United States held an inter-session meeting of trade and investment in March 2022, which was led by Christopher Wilson, Assistant US Trade Representative, from the US side, and Secretary Commerce Muhammad Sualch Ahmad Faruqi, from the Pakistani side. Both sides are preparing for a Ministerial meeting under Trade and Investment Framework (TIFA) during summer or early fall this year.

ADB, Punjab to improve LGs' service delivery

LAHORE: A one-day consultative workshop was organized with relevant stakeholders to share findings of Training Need Assessment (TNA) of local govt officials besides devising strategies to strengthen design of Punjab Local Govt Academy to transform it into a leading training institution for effective service delivery at grass-roots level.

Workshop was organized under the aegis of Punjab Intermediate Cities Improvement Investment Program (PICIP) at a local hotel where participants including Secretary Local Government and Community Development (LG&CD) Department, Special Secretary LG&CD, Directorate General LG&CD, Secretary Local Government Board, Project Director PMU PICIP, Director PLGA Lalamusa, Team Leader PICIP and local govt officials from 9 districts of province participated in.

The first-ever district-wise TNA was carried out in nine districts of Attock, Jhelum, Sialkot, Sargodha, Lahore, Nankana Sahib, DG Khan, Multan and Bahawalpur by PICIP Capacity Building team. Technical trainings would focus to improve planning and regulations of solid waste management, water, sanitation, parks, horticulture, recreation, and public libraries. While non-technical trainings would focus on governance, finance, human resource management, interpersonal skills, IT skills, and community participation.

"The Punjab govt with the

support of ADB is investing in high quality training facilities including IT lab, high-tech training rooms and research & development cell at PLGA. A state-of-the-art new campus of PLGA with residential facilities is being constructed in Lahore," said Project Director PMU PICIP Muhammad Hamza Salik.

Secretary Local Govt Asad Rehman Gilani said that reformed PLGA would be ideally placed to fill capacity building gaps among local govt and elected representatives for improved service delivery. He said that PLGA would develop linkages with national and international institutes for staff capacity building trainings regularly.

Participants discussed organizational design, structure, capacity building & partnership models, learning and stakeholder engagement models of PLGA so that it could become a world-class facility for govt officials for effective service delivery.

PICIP is a six years project co-financed by ADB and Punjab govt to improve efficiency and sustainability of cities and effectiveness of urban services including capacity building of local govt, water supply, sanitation, solid waste management, urban transport and open spaces. IBF a Belgium based organization is managing institutional support and capacity development component of the PICIP internationally and Rehman Habib Consultants is managing it locally with other partners TTT, IConsult and AAS.

Super Tax lifts air fares

KARACHI: The airline fares have jacked up for passengers travelling abroad following the imposition of a 10pc direct tax in the form of a 'super tax' by the incumbent coalition government. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif imposed a super-tax of 10 percent on large-scale manufacturers and industries in the country in order to address the economic woes of the country.

The prime minister, while announcing the tough decisions in the wake of the ongoing economic situation, said that industries related to

steel, cement, sugar, oil and gas, fertilizers, energy and terminal, and textile will face a 10 percent tax.

According to a notification, the government has increased international airfares for passengers travelling via first class and business class. "The Federal Excise Duty (FDA) RG tax has been increased from Rs10,000 to 50,000 on all first and business tickets for travel with effect from July 1, 2022," the notification stated. It further stated that the difference will be collected on all tickets issued prior to July 2022 at the time of check-in.

Pakistan trump Sri Lanka to win Int'l Savate Championship

Mehreen, Insa, Muneera, Amir Khan, Kareema and Rohan Pari win gold medals

LAHORE: Pakistan overpowered Sri Lanka to clinch the International Savate Championship at the Nishtar Park Sports Complex in Lahore.

Pakistan won eight gold and four silver medals, meanwhile the Sri Lankan contingent bagged six gold and six silver during the event.

Pakistan's Mehreen, 40-45kg, Insa, 45-50kg, Muneera and Amir Khan, 60-65kg, Kareema, 65-70kg and Rohan Pari, 70-75kg were among the players who won gold medals for their country.

The two-day event, June 30-July 1, was conducted by Sports Board Punjab. A total of 13 fights, which included both boys and girls, took place during the championship.

Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab, Asadullah Faiz, lauded Sri Lanka squad's tour of Pakistan for the Savate Championship.

"Despite the circumstances back home, Sri Lankan team touring Pakistan is commendable," said Faiz. "This event will bring both countries together while also promoting Savate," he added. 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. Savate is an art of fighting which origi-

nated in France during the late 17th century. The matches take place in three rounds

of two minutes, each, with a one-minute break in between.

Tan crushes Boulter to make last 16

LONDON: France's Harmony Tan continued her stellar Wimbledon debut on Saturday to book her maiden fourth-round spot at a Grand Slam, crushing Briton Katie Boulter 6-1 6-1 in just 51 minutes.

The 24-year-old Tan proved that her thrilling win over seven-times Wimbledon champion Serena Williams in the opening round was no fluke and she has now won three straight Tour-level matches for the first time in her career.

"No I don't believe it yet — if I sleep a little bit, tomorrow maybe I will believe it, but it's amazing," Tan said on court. "I think I like grass, I never



play on this court but I like to play with slice and volley and everything with my game so I'm really happy.

"It was really emotional for the first round against Serena and after it was just playing match by match and today was really good tennis." Despite partisan support

from the home crowd on Court two, Boulter failed to put up any resistance against Tan's variety and superb court coverage and the world number 118 did not help her cause by committing 21 unforced errors.

After breaking Boulter's serve twice, Tan sent down

three aces in her fourth service game to bag the opening set in 27 minutes. The 115th-ranked Frenchwoman secured another early break in the second set, pulled off a "tweener" trick shot to break Boulter again and a third break sealed a one-sided contest.

The big-smiling Tan did not allow Boulter a single look at her own delivery, hitting her slices to perfection to open up the court and hit 16 winners against just five unforced errors.

She will next meet one of two Americans, either Coco Gauff or Amanda Anisimova, for a place in the quarter-finals.

Agar unavailable for 2nd Test against Sri Lanka

COLOMBO: Australia left-arm spinner Ashton has been ruled out of their second Test against Sri Lanka, which begins on 8 July.

The 28-year-old will fly home after failing to recover from a side strain and has been replaced by left-arm finger spinner Jon Holland.

Agar, who hasn't played a Test since 2017, was not considered for the first Test against Sri Lanka either, with leg-spinner Mitchell Swepson in the XI. Australia won the first Test by 10 wickets.

Australia captain Pat Cummins was impressed with Swepson's bowling and praised the leggie after their comprehensive victory under three days.

"Really happy with Swepo," said Cummins. "A couple of key breakthroughs in the first innings and then today, top-order wickets. Really valuable, I thought he controlled the tempo of the game, he had some batters come really hard at him. I thought he bowled beautifully."

Interestingly, Agar's replacement Holland himself is nursing an injury. He hurt his finger before the second Australia A four-day match against Sri Lanka A but is on the road to recovery and in with a chance to be considered for the final match of the tour.

35-year-old Holland, who made his debut in 2016, has featured in only four Tests so far, picking up nine wickets. His last Test was against Pakistan in October 2018. The second and final Test will be played in Galle from 8 to 12 July.

Broad bowls most expensive over in Test cricket history

BIRMINGHAM: England fast bowler Stuart Broad conceded 35 runs against a merciless Jasprit Bumrah in the most expensive over ever bowled in test cricket on Saturday.

Broad had already celebrated his 550th test wicket on the second day of the series-deciding fifth test at Edgbaston against India before his disastrous over late in the first innings.

Bumrah hit Broad for four boundaries and two sixes in the over. The India captain took 29 runs off the over which also cost 5 wides and a no-ball. With the second new ball only three overs old, Bumrah top edged Broad for four off the first ball before another short delivery which went for 5 wides.

Bumrah got a top-edged six off the third delivery which was signaled a no-ball and then followed it up with three successive boundaries, a six and a single off the last ball.

Wallabies beat England to end 8-game losing streak

PERTH: A 14-man Australian side ended an eight-match losing streak against England with a 30-28 win Saturday in the first of three test matches, adding more pressure on embattled losing coach Eddie Jones.

England arrived in Western Australia last week after losses to Ireland, France and most recently a surprise 52-21 defeat by the Barbarians invitational side.

The Australians were forced to play a man down for more than half the match after lock Darcy Swain was sent off for head-butting his English rival Jonny Hill. But Australia scored three second-half tries to end England's domination of Australia that dated to 2015.

The visitors scored two late tries to make the result close before 47,668 spectators. Australia was hard-hit by injuries early. Wallabies fullback Tom Banks sustained an apparent broken arm during the first half and Quade Cooper was a last-minute withdrawal after straining his left calf in the warm-up.

After leaping high into the air in a bid to catch Nic White's 22nd-minute restart, Banks' left arm bent the wrong way as he crashed to the ground and attempted to avoid a head-first landing.

The Wallabies were completing their warm-up when Cooper injured his calf. Noah Lolesio was moved into the starting lineup in place of Cooper at No. 10 while James O'Connor was brought onto



the bench.

Cooper led the Wallabies to five straight wins last year after his four-year exile from the national side. O'Connor was part of a corporate function before the match but was rushed to the dressing room to get changed once Cooper's injury was confirmed.

The Wallabies led 30-14 but England scored in the 80th and 83rd minutes to close the margin to two points. Swain's red card on 34 minutes will likely see him sit out the remainder of the series in Brisbane and Sydney over the next two weekends. The 22-year-old Lolesio's kicking proved decisive for Australia,

with the youngster booting three conversions and three penalties.

After the scores were level 6-6 at half-time, Australia extended its advantage to 28-14 in the 77th minute through Pete Samu, while England debutants Henry Arundell and Jack van Poortvliet crossed late. Australia captain Michael Hooper said his side improvised well.

"We came up with a lot of solutions, so I'm proud of the effort despite a lot of changes at the last minute," Hooper said. "You can't script that stuff. You can have all those plans and then they go out the window. Our coaching staff did a great job of managing the game."

Djokovic, Alcaraz close in on Wimbledon duel

LONDON: Novak Djokovic and Carlos Alcaraz closed in on a Wimbledon generational clash as the women's draw was left with just four top-10 seeds standing.

Three-time defending champion Djokovic demolished Serbian compatriot Miomir Kecmanovic 6-0, 6-3, 6-4 in the third round to stay on course to equal Pete Sampras as a seven-time champion, one behind Roger Federer's men's record. Friday's win was the 330th of Djokovic's Grand Slam career. "So far, so good," said the 35-year-old top seed.

"I expect high standards from myself. You always want to raise the level and things are shaping up well." Djokovic has now won 22 successive matches on grass

and is in the last 16 at Wimbledon for the 14th time. He has not lost a grass-court match since falling to Marin Cilic in the final at Queen's four years ago. "I started very well, very strong with a lot of intensity and focus," added Djokovic, whose only blip was being broken when he served for the match at 5-2 in the third set. In the last 16, he will face Dutch wild card Tim van Rijthoven.

Playing in his debut Grand Slam main draw, the world number 104 defeated 22nd seed Nikoloz Basilashvili of Georgia, 6-4, 6-3, 6-4. The 25-year-old Van Rijthoven proved his prowess on grass by winning the 's-Hertogenbosch title last month, defeating world number one Daniil Medvedev in the final.

"Before the tournament started, it was a dream for me to play Djokovic," said Van Rijthoven, only the seventh man since 2000 to reach the round of 16 on his Grand Slam debut. "So to be able to have that chance and to maybe even play on Centre Court or Court 1 is beautiful and magical."

After needing four sets to get past Kwon Soon-woo in the first round, Djokovic has dropped just 14 games since. If he beats Van Rijthoven, he could meet Alcaraz in the quarter-finals. The 19-year-old Spaniard swept past Germany's Oscar Otte 6-3, 6-1, 6-2 to make the fourth round for the first time. Alcaraz, who hit 37 winners in total, goes on to face Italian 10th seed Jannik Sinner, who put out John Isner

in straight sets. The only consolation for Isner was passing Ivo Karlovic as the sport's greatest hitter of aces, taking his career total to 13,748. British ninth seed Cameron Norrie also qualified for the last 16 with a thumping 6-4, 6-1, 6-0 win over Steve Johnson.

Maria Sakkari became the sixth of the top 10 women's seeds to crash out before the end of the third round. The fifth-seeded Greek lost 6-3, 7-5 to German world number 103 Tatjana Maria, who returned to the tour last year after maternity leave. Maria, in the fourth round of a Slam for the first time, will face former French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko for a place in the quarter-finals. "It feels amazing, first time in the last 16. To



win against Sakkari, it's pretty awesome," said mother-of-two Maria. Ostapenko, a semi-finalist in 2018, took her winners count to 102 over three rounds

Pak Tennis player off to France



Muhammad Arshad

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Muhammad Hussain Ali Rizwan 14 & Under tennis player has been selected for the Grand Slam Player Development Programme -GSPDP /ITF/ATF 14 & U Team to Europe 2022. The player proceeded to Paris Saturday to participate in the programme.

This is the first time in the history of Pakistan tennis that a 14& under player has been selected by the ITF/ATF for a team travelling to Europe. Hussain is currently ranked No-2 in Asian Tennis Federation (ATF) 14& under category. He will participate in different training sessions and matches in different international tournaments in France, Germany and Belgium till August 7, 2022.

Salim Saifullah Khan President-PTF stated that the selection of Mr Hussain Ali Rizwan is a huge honour for the country and a matter of great pride for the Pakistan Tennis Federation. The President-PTF also stated that the selection of young lads will prove to be a source of great inspiration for the other young promising players. He advised that through hard work, dedication and passion for tennis, such targets can be achieved by them.

Salim Saifullah Khan also extended his gratitude and appreciation to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for facilitation and ensuring the endorsement of a visa in a very short time through personal concern and interest.

Pakistan deaf cricket team leaves for Sri Lanka



Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Pakistan National Deaf Cricket Team has left for Sri Lanka to take part in the forthcoming white-ball series.

On this occasion, President Pakistan Deaf Association Irfan Miraj was also present to see off the team at the Lahore Airport. Speaking on the occasion, he said in very short time, we have arranged the tour and the situation in Sri Lank is quite better now.

Before departure, team had a short stay at home of renowned businessman Chaudhary Sultan. He said that hopefully the Pakistan team will perform well during the Sri Lanka tour. The Pakistan Deaf Cricket team will play three ODIs and two T-20 matches during the Sri Lanka Tour and Zaka Ahmed Qureshi will lead the Pakistan Deaf team.

Khabib, Cormier inducted in UFC Hall of Fame

LAS VEGAS: Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) inducted former MMA titleholders Daniel Cormier and Khabib Nurmagomedov into its Hall of Fame.

It must be noted that the duo, who share a wonderful friendship, retired from MMA in 2020.

During his 11-year UFC career, Cormier amassed a 23-3, 1 NC record including defeats over former heavyweight champions Stipe Miocic and Frank Mir, and former middleweight champion Anderson Silva. "Me and Khabib going in together, it's just a tremendous night," Cormier said. "This means everything to me."

On the other hand, during his time in UFC, Nurmagomedov was one of the most dominant champions to ever live. Losing only two rounds on judges' scorecards in his 13-fight unbeaten UFC career, "The Eagle" retired the undefeated, undisputed champion. Defeating the likes of Conor McGregor, Dustin Poirier and Justin Gaethje, Nurmagomedov successfully took over the lightweight division as one of the most feared wrestlers on the planet.

"Ten years ago, my mind was completely different," Nurmagomedov said. "I'm going to be champion, I'm going to be rich, buy everything. But last two years, everything that happened, my mind changed. The way I was thinking changed. My father is not with me, and it's very hard time to stand here and talk about him. It's very emotional for me."

Lesia Tsurenko in three sets.

Also exiting Friday was 2018 champion Angelique Kerber, with the German 15th seed beaten 6-4, 7-5 by Elise Mertens. The Belgian, who had to save two match points in her previous round, next faces world number two Ons Jabeur. A quarter-finalist in 2021, Tunisia's Jabeur breezed past French teenager Diane Parry 6-2, 6-3. World number one Iga Swiatek, Jabeur, Paula Badosa and Jessica Pegula are the only top-10 seeds left. Frances Tiafoe and Tommy Paul kept up American momentum at Wimbledon by reaching the last 16 for the first time. In all, eight American men made the third round, the most at Wimbledon since 1995.