



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
رسایک شخص نبی کریم صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم کی خدمت میں حاضر ہو اور عرض کیا کہ رسول اللہ! میرا نام فلاں ہے، فلاں میں جا نے کے لیے لکھا گیا ہے۔ اور میری بیوی جیج کرتے جا رہی ہے۔ آپ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم نے فرمایا کہ پھر جاؤ، اور بیوی کے ساتھ جیج کر آؤ۔ (بخاری، حدیث نمبر 3061)

Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited

RAWALPINDI

Steps should be taken to shift to solar energy; President

President Dr. Arif Alvi says all Governor Houses, Universities, and Offices of the ombudsmen should take practical and time-bound measures to shift to solar energy for financial savings and mitigate the energy woes of the country. All Chambers of Commerce and Industry around the country to transfer businesses and industries under their purview to solar energy in order to reduce the cost of their inputs which will make local products and services competitive in both national and international markets.



Allies should end supporting thieves: Sh Rashid

AML chief Sheikh Rashid says MQM-P and BAP to leave the sides of the thieves otherwise; they will face the wrath of the nation. They are fighting the corrupt leaders who purchased properties in London and the United States (US) by looting the national exchequer. The inflation rate was increased by 31% and the interest rate stood at 15% now.

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Weekly inflation soars by 1.32%

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The weekly inflation report shows an increase of 1.32% in the last week, taking the overall inflation rate to 33.66%. According to details, the inflation rate in the country reaches 33.66% as the weekly inflation report shows an increase of 1.32%. Data issued by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) show that the price of 30 essential items increased, dropping for five items while the price for 16 items remained stationary. The price for petrol increased by 6.36%, diesel soared by 5.06% while the price for Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) increased by 2.33%. The rates for a 2.5 kg box of Ghee increased by 1.64%, while potatoes gained by 2.57%, the data shows.

PPP slams PTI for establishing "Gogi Raj"

Bureau Report

KARACHI: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety and Information Secretary of PPP-P Shazia Atta Marri on Friday said that PTI chief Imran Khan had established "Farah Gogi Raj" in the country by sloganeering to establish New Pakistan, while terrible face of Imran Khan had been exposed in the meeting of Public Accounts Committee of the National Assembly.

While slamming the PTI chief, she said that Imran Khan allegedly called his opponents thieves and now he himself has turned out to be a source of financial and moral dishonesty, said a statement.

Ms Marri added that there is famous maxim of Hazrat Ali that power and wealth reveal the true nature of man so that all the shapes of Imran Khan reflect his criminal mentality.

Economic coop

Ambassador of Indonesia for Pakistan H.E Adam Mulawarman Tugio calls on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Lahore on Friday.

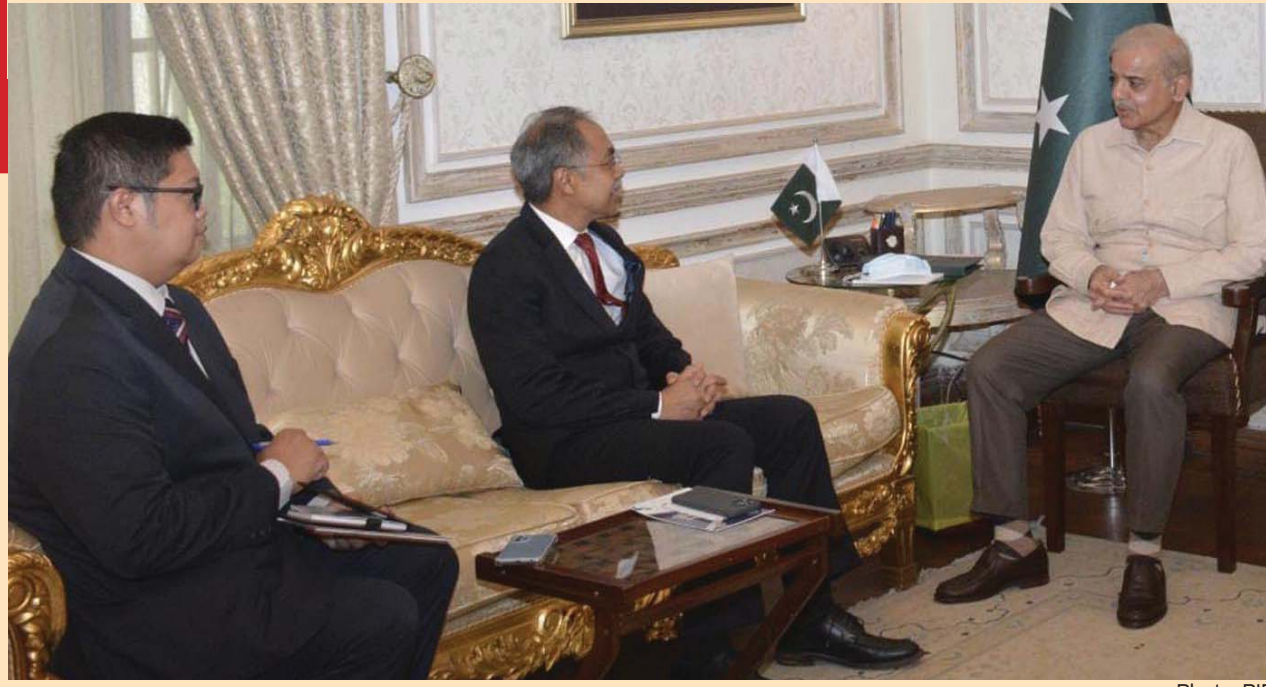


Photo: PID

PM's interactions

Pakistan, UAE to further diversify bilateral relations

Islamabad, Doha agree to work together on issues of common interest

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has held a telephonic conversation with President of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan to convey warm greetings to him on the blessed occasion of Eid-ul-Azha. The Prime Minister also extended best wishes for the continued progress and prosperity of the brotherly people of the UAE. Reaffirming the fraternal relations between Pakistan and the UAE, the two leaders reiterated their mutual commitment to further expand and diversify special bilateral relations.

The President of the UAE reciprocated the greetings from the Prime Minister and extended best wishes to the people of Pakistan on this occasion. The Prime Minister

extended a cordial invitation to the UAE President to visit Pakistan, which his highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed accepted with great pleasure. Pakistan and the

Al Thani on Friday and extended greetings on the blessed occasion of Eid-ul-Azha. The Prime Minister also conveyed his best wishes to the brotherly people of Qatar. The

close contact and work together on all issues of common interest.

Pakistan and Qatar enjoy close and cordial relations rooted firmly in shared faith, mutual understanding and commonality of interests. Qatar is home to 200,000 Pakistani diaspora that is playing a positive role in the development of State of Qatar. Prime Minister Shehbaz felicitated the pilgrims of Hajj-e-Akbar and prayed for the blessings of Allah Almighty upon the Muslim Ummah and Pakistan.

In a message, he appealed to the fortunate pilgrims performing the Hajj-e-Akbar to offer special prayers for the humanity and seek forgiveness from miseries. M Sharif said it was the blessed occasion to pray for the prosperity of mankind and its deliverance from epidemics and diseases.

Hajj-e-Akbar-PM prays for Ummah's unity, Pakistan's prosperity

UAE enjoy close fraternal ties for five decades that are rooted firmly in common belief and shared values and culture. The UAE is Pakistan's largest trading partner in the Middle East and a major source of investments.

Prime Minister Shehbaz telephoned the Amir of the State of Qatar Sheikh Tamin Bin Hamad

Amir of Qatar warmly reciprocated the greetings and extended best wishes to the people of Pakistan. Both the leaders expressed satisfaction over the excellent state of bilateral relations and resolved to carry forward the robust political and economic cooperation that exists between the two countries. The two leaders agreed to maintain

ECP condemns Imran Khan's allegations against CEC

Terms PTI claim of changes in voters' lists as 'propaganda'

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD/ KARACHI: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Friday condemned the allegations leveled by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman and ousted prime minister Imran Khan against Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikan-dar Sultan Raja. The Election Commission spokesperson said that declaring a "Fatwa" of treason does not make any institution a traitor. The Election Commission will continue to make all its decisions as per the constitution and the law without any provocation and will not come under any pressure, said spokesperson.

On the other hand, the Election Commission imposed a fine of Rs45,000 on Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) candidate Salman Naeem for violating the code of conduct in Multan.

District Election Commissioner Multan Saleem Akhtar said that Salman Naeem has received a fine for breaking the regulations. PML-N

candidate Salman Naeem had headed the meeting at the government office. Salman Naeem attended the meeting of Central Cotton Research Institute, Multan. (ECP termed the PTI claim of changes in the voters' list of the 20 by-election constituencies as propaganda and said that the polls are being held on previous lists. The ECP issued the statement today after multiple press conferences from PTI leaders Asad Umar and Fawad Chaudhry in which they announced to challenge the pre-poll rigging in the elections through the induction of unknown voters into the lists. The commission said that the elections on 20 by-poll constituencies are being held on old voter lists. "The voter lists are frozen after the announcement of the election schedule for preparing polling schemes," it said adding that no changes could be made to the lists after the announcement of the schedule unless the polls are concluded.

In a message from its

Twitter handle, the ECP said that no institution could be declared a traitor if people starts labeling them as traitors. "We want to clarify that the election commission will not be provoked or pressurized and will continue to make decisions as per the constitution and law," the ECP said.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has taken notice of the violation of the election code by Sindh police after a senior officer from Kashmir was transferred to Hyderabad. The provincial election commission took notice of a violation of the code ahead of the second phase of Sindh local government (LG) polls, ordering Inspector General (IG) Sindh Police to stop the transfer of a senior officer. The provincial police department issued an order to transfer Superintendent Police (SP) Kashmir Amjad Shaikh to Hyderabad despite the ECP ban on transfers and postings on the government officers due to the upcoming Sindh LG polls.

Accusations, apologies 'PTI politics': Marriyum



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Friday said the patriotic people were regarded as traitors in line with the vision of Imran Khan's wife Bushra Bibi.

The minister, in a tweet, said attempts were made to link patriotism of the people with sedition for saving Imran and her wife's corruption.

She said both Imran Khan and her wife had consensus on Usman Buzdar as Chief Minister Punjab, who ultimately became tool of their corruption. "Accusations, apologies and explanations are the leftover of Imran Khan's politics," she said, terming the "foreign funding" to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf an "undeniable" evidence of his crimes.

Have no fight with the neutrals: Imran Khan

Says Hamza will be sent packing after by-polls results

Bureau Report

LAHORE/ KHUSHAB: Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan said on Friday that he has no fight with the neutrals and government should detain him if it wants but he is not afraid of arrest. Speaking with the senior journalists on Friday, he said that he has no fight with neutrals and asked why he would fight as this would only weaken country. "Free and fair elections would be the topic of discussion if talked to neutral," he said and added he will never enter in an alliance with thieves.

The former PM said that sitting in opposition is way better than sitting with the PPP, adding that there is no backdoor communication through any external and internal force, those who destroyed the country's economy took NRO of Rs 1100 billion. Imran Khan said that throughout his three and half year tenure of PTI government, they had to face blackmailing from the coalition partners. Apart from Usman Buzdar, the other candidates did not agree on each other's name as Chief Minister, the PTI chairman said adding that if he had made anyone other than Buzdar Punjab CM, there would be corruption in the province.

The PTI chairman said, "Aleem Khan and Pervez Elahi did not agree on each other's name as Chief Minister."



Khan went on to say that the country would not emerge from the crisis without clean and transparent elections. PTI chairman said that a man sitting in Lahore is on a mission to rig elections for the crooks but Hamza Shahbaz will be sent packing after results of by-polls. Addressing a rally in Khushab on Friday, he said that threats were being received from the unknown numbers to pressurize. "I am telling the man sitting in Lahore to do whatever he want but he will only humiliate yourself as people will callout him." The PTI chairman said the by-election in Punjab will decide the future of Pakistan either the thieves will rule the Pakistani nation or a 'Riyasat-e-Madina' will be established here.

He challenged that PTI will win all seats despite the registration of FIRs,

threats, and rigging from the rulers against him and his party leadership. Earlier, speaking with the senior journalists, Imran Khan said that he has no fight with the neutrals and government should detain him if it wants but he is not afraid of arrest. He said that he has no fight with neutrals and asked why he would fight as this would only weaken country.

"Free and fair elections would be the topic of discussion if talked to neutral," he said and added he will never enter in an alliance with thieves. The former PM said that sitting in opposition is way better than sitting with the PPP, adding that there is no backdoor communication through any external and internal force, those who destroyed the country's economy took NRO of Rs 1100 billion.

Rs1.55 per unit

NEPRA okays another power tariff hike

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Neptra) has approved an increase of Rs1.55 per unit in power tariff on account of periodic adjustments in tariff for the second quarter of current financial year. A notification in this regard has also been issued by the power regulatory authority. Power distribution companies will recover Rs39 billion from the consumers following the tariff revision. Neptra said that it had decided to apply the same with effect from July 1, 2022, which would be recovered within three months from the date of notification.

However, the increase in the electricity tariff will not be

applicable to lifeline consumers and the consumers of K-Electric, the power regulatory authority added. A day earlier, the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) approved an additional fuel cost adjustment (FCA) of Rs9.52 per unit for K-Electric (KE) consumers for the month of May.

According to a notification issued by the power regulatory authority, the K-Electric had requested a fuel cost adjustment of Rs11.34/kWh. Neptra conducted a public hearing on July 4 on the petition submitted by KE for fuel charges adjustment for May 2022. The increase will be applicable to all consumer categories, except for KE lifeline consumers.

Electioneering

SHEIKHUPURA: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) vice president Maryam Nawaz is addressing a public gathering here on Friday.



Photo: PID

Farooq Sattar likely to return to MQM-P



Bureau Report

KARACHI: Former Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) leader Farooq Sattar will likely return to the party as his reservations were addressed by Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui. As per the sources privy to the matter, a meeting was attended by Farooq Sattar and Khalid Maqbool in presence of other party leaders from both camps including Moeed Anwar, Furqan Attayab, Kamran Farooqui, Faisal Rafiq and Nighat Shakil.

The meeting focused on the reservations of Sattar and the formula was also finalized regarding the appointment of office bearers and adjustment of independent local government candidates. It was also disclosed that the members of the Sattar group will be adjusted in Karachi and Hyderabad.

The sources revealed that an announcement regarding Farooq Sattar rejoining MQM-P will be made after Eid-ul-Azha adding that a general workers' meeting will be organized where Sattar would be welcomed back to the party along with his associates. Earlier, MQM-P leadership invited Farooq Sattar to rejoin the party and to contest for the NA-245 by-polls under the symbol kite.

Govt will soon unveil relief in POL prices: Maryam

Says people know that inflation is due to Imran Khan

Staff Reporter

SHEIKHUPURA: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) vice president Maryam Nawaz on Friday said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will announce huge relief for masses in the prices of petroleum (POL) products in the next few months. Addressing an election rally in PP-140 constituency of Sheikhupura, Maryam Nawaz said after July 17, 100 units of electricity will be provided free to the people of Punjab.

Maryam said that Punjab still stands by the lion, people know that inflation is due to Imran Khan, adding the people's sympathy for the PML-N has not diminished. PML-N vice-president said, "I greet the people here with both hands." Maryam said: "As much love as the city has given me in spite of this heat, I could not control myself from going to people. Seeing the spirit here, it seems that the lion is coming back on July 17." PML-N vice president said she congratulates Mian Khalid Mahmood, adding that he has won the election from this constituency.

Maryam said: "Imran Khan went to Sheikhupura after holding a small meeting from here. I want to tell you that this

city belongs to PML-N." PML-N vice president said Imran Khan can't say anything as he hasn't done anything in the last four years. She added: "Imran calls us by names and lies always." Maryam said: "We did a lot of work in two and a half months, but Imran Khan did not do a single thing in four years." She said: "There is definitely inflation, when I start-

Maryam to address 7 public rallies between July 11-15

ed my campaign, people said we had to do inflation because of Imran Khan."

Maryam went on to say that the country has witnessed inflation (including rise in POL products), due to agreement with International Monetary Fund (IMF), which was signed during the tenure of PTI. Maryam said no matter how big the problem is, PML-N including Nawaz Sharif and Shehbaz Sharif will take the country out of the crisis, adding that the hope of the people will never be dashed.

Maryam Nawaz said that Hamza

Shahbaz gave a gift of 100 free units to the people of Punjab, adding that instead of giving free electricity to the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, he (Imran Khan) went to court, against the relief which the people are getting. Maryam Nawaz said Imran Khan Punjab's enmity has gone to great lengths and through oppression, he ended the people relief, adding that the people will not forgive him. PML-N Vice President said that other prices, including oil, are falling sharply in the global market, and the people will be greatly relieved in the next few months.

Maryam Nawaz will address as many as seven public gatherings from July 11-15 ahead of the Punjab by-polls. According to details, Maryam Nawaz will address seven public gatherings in multiple cities ahead of the by-elections in 20 Punjab Assembly constituencies. Information Minister Maryam Aurangzeb shared the schedule of the party vice president's speeches on Twitter.

According to the schedule, Maryam will address a public gathering in Sahiwal on 11 July, Jhang on July 12 and Layyah on July 13. Maryam would address two gatherings on 14 and 15 July. She will address gatherings in Khushab and Rawalpindi on July 14 and Lahore and Multan on July 15.

By-elections

We will retake mandate from PML-N in: Elahi

Summons PTI, PML-Q joint parliamentary party meeting on July 18

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Speaker Punjab Assembly Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi on Friday claimed to retake the mandate from the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) by winning all 20 seats in the province's by-elections. The Speaker of the Punjab Assembly said in a statement that defected lawmakers appear weak in their constituencies. Pervaiz Elahi said the deviant members have been rejected by the general public and lack the guts to face the masses.

Pervaiz Elahi added that Imran Khan will save the populace from this dishonest

and corrupt regime and claimed that he is currently the only choice for the country. The PML-Q leader claimed that the graph of PTI in by-election is quite high, adding that the PML-N has robbed the mandate of PTI.

Pervaiz Elahi said that Hamza Shahbaz has recanted from the oath given in the Supreme Court, adding that the Supreme Court should take notice of appointments, transfers and development works in the by-election constituencies. Pervaiz Elahi said the PML-N was flagrantly breaking the election code of conduct, adding that in a utility store truck, PML-N candidates are delivering items to voters.

Govt taking steps to provide relief to masses: Interior Minister

Sanaullah says govt fully committed to reduce inflation

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah says the government is taking all-out steps to provide relief to masses and it is also fully committed to reduce inflation. Talking to a private news channel, he said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is working hard to steer the economy out of crisis. The minister said that the Prime Minister is loyal to the nation, and he would never disappoint people.

He said that the government was taking all-out steps to provide relief to masses and it was also fully committed to reduce inflation. He said that the PML-N was confident that it would win 12-16 seats in the by-elections. Tough competition was expected on 7-8 seats, however, the party would manage securing at least half of them. The minister said the PML-N voters and supporters fully understand the situation, besides knowing about the political disturbance the party had been facing.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had been working hard to steer the economy out of crisis, the minister said, adding that

the PM was loyal to the nation, and he would never disappoint people. Sanaullah said there was no difference in Miftah Ismail and Ishaq Dar except that the latter was senior and more experienced. Miftah had sacrificed a lot for the party and he was in fact Nelson Mandela of the Memon community, the minister added. He further informed that the legal procedure was underway for Ishaq Dar's return this month.

He also expressed the desire for PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif's return to the country and leading the election campaign. "Maryam Nawaz can run election campaign in a best possible way but Nawaz Sharif's return will be appreciated." The interior minister further said the institutions and establishment should remain neutral but Imran Khan was inviting them to interfere in politics which was not in state's favor. "We strongly condemn Imran Khan's approach, however, we do know that he is approaching institutions not for the welfare of the state in mind, but to gain personal benefits and relief."

Weekly roundup

Lacklustre week drags PSX downward

KARACHI: The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed tepid trading in the outgoing week as delay in the revival of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme kept market participants mostly on the sidelines. Resultantly, the KSE-100 index declined 286 points or 0.7% to end the week at 41,344.01 points. The market commenced the week on a negative note, amid concerns over the resumption of the IMF programme and the monetary policy announcement.

Moreover, the Pakistani rupee climbed up by Rs3.06 against the US dollar, closing the week at Rs207.91. In addition to this, the cement offtake reported a decline of 7.9% year-on-year during the fiscal year 2021-22. Whereas, petrol and high-speed diesel sales during June 2022 witnessed a drop of 12% and 16% month-on-month, respectively. Meanwhile, the reduction in Arab Light price by 4% provided some respite to the investors and cushioned the overall dip.

Other major developments during the week were: SBP extended the deadline for implementing IFRS-9 to January 1, 2023, bank advances to the private sector swelled by 14.2%, Rs9.42 per unit tariff hike approved for K-Electric, and urea sales rose by a massive

73% month-on-month. Meanwhile, foreign buying was witnessed this week, clocking in at \$1.63 million against a net buy of \$1.52 million recorded last week. Buying was witnessed in all other sectors (\$0.63 million), and technology (\$0.56 million).

On the local front, major selling was reported by mutual funds (\$2.91 million), followed by banks (\$2.20 million). During the week under review, average volumes clocked in at 90 million shares (down by 55% week-on-week), while average value traded settled at \$15 million (down by 52% week-on-week). Sector-wise negative contributions came from cement (-97 points), and fertiliser (-57 points), commercial banks (-30 points), chemical (-27 points), and power generation and distribution (-24 points).

On the flip side, positive contributions came from technology and communications (+27 points), oil and gas marketing companies (+18 points), oil and gas exploration companies (+13 points), and close-end mutual funds (+4 points), and real estate investment trust (+3 points). Scrip-wise major losers were Lucky Cement (-49 points), Engro Polymer and Chemical (-34 points), BAHF (-33 points), and Engro Corporation (-33 points).

Punjab by-polls

Voters' lists forged massively: Asad

Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Asad Umar on Friday said that there has been a clear violation in voter list and registration of the by-polls in Punjab. While talking to media here, he said whatever is happening, the current government knows it all. "We have said it before that Punjab government is a fake," he said. Asad Umar lamented that the constitutional laws have been violated by the Punjab government. He further said that the representative of AC and DC have been threatened while he also said that PTI workers have also been threatened by current government.

The PTI leader said that the current government is aware that they are going so that is why they are ordering transfers of officials. He said that the election of Punjab Chief Minister was against the law and now verdict from court has also been issued. Former minister said Pakistan will have to face further problems if the by-polls in Punjab will be unfair.

Omar Ayub gets pre-arrest bail

HARIPUR: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader and former federal minister, Omar Ayub on Friday got pre-arrest bail in a case related to vandalizing government properties and attacking policemen. As per details, Omar Ayub was booked at Hassan Abdal police station under charges of attacking government properties and policemen. Following the registration of FIR, Omar Ayub moved to Additional and Sessions court through his lawyer for pre-arrest bail.

The additional and session judge granted bail to Omar Ayub after hearing initial arguments. It may be noted former minister Omar Ayub Khan has submitted an application in Hasanabdal police station on Sunday, seeking registration of case against Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah and police officials for allegedly attempting to take his life.

The PTI leader reached the police station in an ambulance to lodge his application. As per the application, police had attempted to take his life and tortured him as well as party workers near Kitty Hill. Mr Khan alleged that Rana Sanaullah, inspector general of police, DIG, DIG (operation), DPO and some local officers were involved in the incident. Agencies

No gas price increased for any sector: Musadik

Says protection of poor segments against inflation Govt's priority:

Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Petroleum Musadik Malik says protection of poor segments of society against the rising inflation is part of government's priority policy. Addressing media along with the leaders of Fiqh Jafria in Islamabad on Friday, he said for this purpose, we have decided that economically-empowered people and Federal government will share the burden of poor people. The Minister said our government believes in the freedom of thought according to people's belief and religion. He assured the religious leaders that the government will take every possible step for the protection of religious places especially during the holy month of Muharram.

He categorically said the government had not increased the rate of gas for any sector, being

provided to consumers on networks of SNGPL and SSGC, turning down speculative reports circulating in section of media about the price-hike. "The gas price has not been increased in the country for any of its sector. It [the gas price] is the same that was two months before," he said while addressing a news conference here. He explained that his ministry had prepared a framework, comprising suggestions especially to save 50 per cent of the country's total population, which constituted poorest of the poor people, from the gas price hike when it would be revised/determined by OGRA under the new law.

The suggestions would be presented in the Federal Cabinet for consideration and approval, however, it would be the prerogative of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to take the final decision, he added.

"If the Federal Cabinet agrees with our suggestions, the gas price for 50 per cent citizens would either reduce or stay unchanged," he said. Before leaving the government, he said, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) made legislation under which the Federal Government had no authority to change the gas price determined by the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA).

"Under the new law, whatsoever the price is proposed by OGRA, it would be the prescribed rate in the country after 40 days [of submitting the proposal]," he said, adding all the documentation, public hearings on petitions of Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) and Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) to determine the gas price for fiscal year 2022-23 by OGRA, and other related correspondence had been completed in the November last during



the tenure of PTI government.

The incumbent government had no role in this evaluation of the gas price; however it had only option to save the poor segments of the society, and the rich people would have to

pay the commodity's revised rate. The minister said it was unfortunate that the poor people were using the expensive Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) in the country, while those who had multiple geysers, stoves and cooking ranges, were using the cheap natural gas. The price of LPG was four-six times higher than the natural gas, he added.

He said the incumbent coalition government had a clear policy that it would make utmost efforts and protect poor segments of the society from all kinds of additional financial burdens and negative impacts of inflation. Replying to a question, Dr Musadik said it was unfortunate that the past government of PTI did not procure Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) cargoes that were available at the reduced rate of \$4 per MMBTU (Metric Million British Thermal Unit) two years ago, which now cost \$40.

Domestic, int'l flights to be increased for Multan: Saad

The Minister says govt striving hard to strengthen all institutions of the country

MULTAN: Federal Minister for Pakistan Railways and Aviation Khawaja Saad Rafique said on Friday that domestic and international flights would be increased at Multan International Airport.



During his visit of Multan International Airport, the minister said that he was excited to visit the international airport.

He said that his government was striving hard to strengthen all institu-

tions of the country. He said that country was facing hardships but govern-

ment would overcome the issues.

He visited different departments of the airport and also presided over a meeting. The Manager Airport Raja Azhar Mahmood briefed the minister about the facilities being offered to masses at the airport.

The minister expressed satisfaction on the available facilities.

Earlier, federal minister visited Pakistan Railways headquarters and chaired a meeting of divisional officers.

Addressing the meeting, Khawaja Saad Rafique said that protection of passengers and best facilities for them was top priority and no negligence would be tolerated in this context. He directed officers concerned to extend facility of clean drinking water at all railways stations.

He added that Pakistan Railways be stabilized soon. The federal minister planted a sapling at railways headquarters. APP

NTDC to ensure uninterrupted power supply during Eid-ul-Adha: MD



Staff Reporter

LAHORE: In pursuance of Ministry of Energy (Power Division) Govt of Pakistan Notification, Engr. Dr. Rana Abdul Jabbar Khan has taken over as acting Managing Director National Transmission and Despatch Company (NTDC) on stop gap arrangement.

The NTDC spokesman said that Engr. Dr. Rana Abdul Jabbar Khan did BSc/ BE from University of Engineering & Technology Pakistan, MS Engineering from University of Wollongong Australia and PhD. from Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) Australia.

He rendered service over 30 years of extensive experience of power sector. He has served in power sector including NTDC on key appointments like Deputy Managing Director (AD&M), GM (Project Delivery / GSC) North, GM (Technical), GM (ISG) and GM Asset Management North. He also served as CEO FESCO, CEO IESCO, Chief Operating Officer Quaid-e-Azam Solar Park and CEO AEDB.

After assuming the charge, MD NTDC conveyed a meeting of NTDC senior officers here at WAPDA House Lahore, today. Engr. Dr. Rana Abdul Jabbar Khan said that in compliance of directions of Ministry of Energy (Power Division) Govt of Pakistan, NTDC will ensure uninterrupted power supply to distribution companies (DISCOs) during Eid ul Adha. NTDC teams will remain alert at NPCC and at all grid stations across the country, surprise visits will also be paid by the management in this regard.

NHA Executive Board discusses technical expertise, financial capability

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The 400th meeting of the Executive Board of National Highway Authority was held on Thursday under the chairmanship of Chairman NHA, Capt (Retd) Muhammad Khurram Agha here on Friday.

The National Highway Executive Board, in line with the vision of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif approved a number of measures pertaining to the procurement process to award contracts to construction companies which are both technically and financially sound. These include measures to ensure improved eligibility of contractors for construction, extension and repair of motorways and National Highways.

According to details, NHA will Pre-qualify contractors for all projects. Measures have further been added to enhance technical expertise and financial capability during pre-qualification. To be eligible for prequalification, the condition of past specific experience of construction of having executed similar projects for a contractor has been enhanced from 70% to 80% of the project cost.

Further, contractors will now be required to provide bank guarantees instead of insurance guarantees. Physical inspection of machinery, equipment and technical staff availability will be conducted during the pre-qualification process and a certificate with evidence to that effect will be provided by the Planning Wing of NHA. Additionally, a third party ground validation of projects will be conducted at various stages of projects by a firm of international repute.

Attock police chalk out security plan for Eidul Azha

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: The Attock police have chalked out a comprehensive security plan for Eidul Azha under which over two thousand police personnel will be deployed at worship places including mosques, Imambargahs and important buildings.

District police spokesman Tahir Iqbal while talking to newsmen here on Sunday said that as many as 35 sections of elite force would also perform security duties. He added that besides worship places, security personnel would man important buildings to thwart any untoward incident. He said police would guard as many as 377 worship places during Eid prayers including 329 mosques, 20 Imambargahs, 20 open places and two worship places of Ahmedi community. He said that all types of leaves for police officers have been canceled for Eidul Azha. He added "We have to sacrifice our happiness for the sake of providing the community the happiness and calm environment. It's our responsibility that must be fulfilled under any situation". Responding a question, the spokesman said that security plan has been chalked out in collaboration with the district administration and other law enforcement agencies, adding that elaborated measures have been chalked out to ensure peace and tranquility.

Reuniting with Families

LAHORE: People travelling on a rooftop of a passenger bus to go back home ahead of Eid al-Adha, in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Burhan Wani Shaheed imbided new spirit in resistance movement in IIOJK

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan while paying eulogizing tributes to Shaheed Burhan Muzaffar Wani has reiterated Kashmiris' pledge to take the ongoing liberation struggle to its logical conclusion.

"Burhan Wani will always be remembered in the annals of Kashmir as a symbol of courage and resistance", the PM said adding that Wani had imbided new spirit in the resistance movement by sacrificing his life.

He said the Kashmiri nation will continue the mission of Shaheed Burhan Wani and other martyrs who laid down their lives for the noble cause of freedom from Indian occupation. "No power can stop the struggle of the Kashmiri people for independence", he said adding India cannot suppress Kashmiris' spirit and passion for freedom through its military might.

Stressing the need for early resolution of the Kashmir dispute, the PM said that it was high time that the world



should realize the fact that peace in the restive region would remain a distant dream unless the lingering dispute is resolved in line with the wishes and aspirations of Kashmiri people.

"Kashmir is an internationally recognized disputed territory that needs to be resolved in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council", he added.

Urging world community to help stop continued bloodshed and violence in the region, the PM said there was a dire need that

the world should take effective notice of the systematic genocide in Kashmir. "Indian atrocities in occupied Kashmir have crossed all limits of barbarism and brutality", he said adding that IIOJK was now the world's highest militarized zone where 900,000 Indian troops were stationed. He said that India's hands are stained with the blood of Kashmiris. More than 6,000 unmarked graves have been discovered in occupied Kashmir. "India is the largest terrorist country in the world which is engaged in genocide in Occupied Kashmir",

he said adding that India has issued fake domiciles to more than 4.2 million Hindus to change the demographics of Occupied Kashmir.

Terming Hindutva ideology as a threat to peace and stability in the region, the PM said that India under Modi regime was no longer safe for Muslims and other minorities. After August 5, 2019, he said, "India had turned Occupied Kashmir into military cantonment where basic human rights of citizens are denied and innocent Kashmiris are being martyred by Indian occupying forces".

ITP to support PML-N in by-elections: Dastgir

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Power Engineer Khurram Dastgir on Friday said Islamic Tehreek-e-Pakistan (ITP) would support Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) candidates in by-elections on 20 constituencies of Punjab Assembly scheduled for July 17.

Addressing a press conference along with ITP Secretary General Allama Dr Shabbir Hassan Meesami, the minister said a memorandum of understanding (MoU) has already been signed between the Interior Minister and ITP yesterday and it would fully support PML-N in forthcoming by-elections in Punjab.

The MoU would not only be beneficial for the PML-N but also a positive development for the country.

He said they were thankful to ITP for being a part of democratic 'Caravan'. PML-N and ITP alliance would also remain intact in next general elections to be held in 2023.

Ulemas had decided to support PML-N for strengthening and development of Pakistan, he added.

The minister said it was need of the hour to include people of all schools of thought in mainstream for larger interests of the country.

Speaking on the occasion, Allama Dr Shabbir Hassan Meesami said that under the reconciliation process, ITP would fully support PML-N in the coming by-elections. He expressed the hope that now the problems of the people would address in a better way. APP

Parts of Dadu district received heavy rain

Azad Baloch

DADU: Different parts of Dadu district received heavy rains time to time during the last three days. Despite the rain emergency alert Municipal committee Dadu and Public Health Engineering departments have failed to drain out rain water from Dadu city. Since last three days, Dadu, Johi, KN Shag Mehar is receiving rain time to time. According to metrological department Dadu received 38mm rain.

Deputy Commissioner Dadu Syed Murtaza Ali Shah visited drainage disposals a Masan Road, Pir Murad, Gharibabad, college road and Mallah Chowk. DC Dadu briefed media that despite issuing alert of rain emergency the MC and PHED Public Health Engineering Department staff have not taken any measures to face emergen-



cy of rain in city. He said that MC and PHED officials were responsible of failure of drainage and not draining out rain water in city.

Assistant Commissioner AC Dadu Dr Shahnawaz Meerani issued notice

to officers of PHED and MC Dadu over failure of draining out the rain water from city.

AC Dadu wrote a letter to secretary PHED, Secretary local government, District and Session Judge Dadu and DC

Dadu against MC and PHED officials failing to drain out rain water from city.

Rain water from one feet to three feet water is standing at main roads and streets in different parts of city and MC and PHED officials have not brought any machineries to drain out rain water from city.

The citizens held four demonstrations against MC and PHED officials for not draining out rain water in city. Since last 36 hours, it has power crisis and stopped to supply power to various parts of Dadu and its surrounding areas.

Mehar, KN Shah and Johi towns received heavy rains and it has caused failure of drain out of rain water. Kheer Thar ranges mountains received heavily rains since last three days continuously time to time. 17 feet high Water has flown into Nai Gaaj Nullah and seven other nullahs.

IUB signs MOU with Farmdar

The farmdar will provide agricultural equipment to the University for research purposes



Staff Reporter

BAHAWALPUR: A memorandum of understanding was signed between the Islamia University of Bahawalpur and Farmdar, an agricultural development agency. Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob, Vice Chancellor, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur and Mujib Arjmand Khan, Director Business Development, Farmdar signed on behalf of their respective institutions.

According to the agreement, the two institutions will cooperate in the field of civil sciences, especially in the field of soil sampling, censorship and work. The farmdar will provide agricultural equipment to the University for research purposes. Internships and job opportunities will be provided to students and satellite analysis of university agricultural farms will be provided.

It is worth mentioning that the Isla-

mia University of Bahawalpur has a unique position in agricultural research in Pakistan. Teaching and research at BS Honors, MSc and PhD level is going on in the University Agricultural College. Key areas include agronomy, forestry range and wildlife management, plant breeding and genetics, civil science, plant pathology, food science and technology. There is also the National Cotton Breeding Center and the National Research Center for Intercropping Technology where advanced research is being conducted.

Prof. Dr. Moazzam Jameel, Registrar, Rizwan Majeed, Director IT, Prof. Dr. Abid Shehzad, Director International Linkages, Dr. Muhammad Abdullah Director Bio-Diversity Park, Imran Manzoor Manager Farms, Dr. Muhammad Nafees, Bilal Irshad Additional Registrar, Arif Ramoz additional Registrar and Muhammad Khalid were also present.

ISLAMABAD
23° - 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 3:22 am
Zohr 12:13 pm
Asr 5:12 pm
Maghrib 7:21 pm
Isha 9:03 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance 115
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

British HC wishes happy Eid



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner in Pakistan Christian Turner, in a video message on Friday, wished happy Eid to Muslims all over the world with a message to protect environment and fight climate change.

"Assalam-u-Alaikum friends! Today, I am very happy that I am back in the Northern Areas, in the beautiful mountains. I am absolutely delighted to be back here in the Northern Areas—one of the most beautiful landscapes in Pakistan where I am trekking with my family and friends and enjoying all that it has to offer," Christian Turner said. "But as I see the rising flood waters, the melting glaciers, I know we must work ever hard to protect our environment, to fight climate change and protect our communities. Our world is our responsibility. Wherever you are this Eid, happy Eid to you from me," he wished happy Eid.

Security Arrangements

2,500 police personnel to perform duties on Eid

Capital police have chalked out a comprehensive security plan to maintain peace and tranquility in district on eve of Eid-ul-Azh

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police on Friday announced to deploy 2,500 personnel at Eid congregations, public places, shopping malls and other important buildings to prevent any suspicious activities.

According to the spokesperson, the capital police have chalked out a comprehensive security plan to maintain peace and tranquility in the district on the eve of Eid-ul-Azh. He said that following special orders of the IGP Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan a comprehensive security plan for Eid Ul Azha prayer has been issued.

According to the security plan, more than 1000 police personnel, including 4 SPs, 11 ASP/DSPs will shield Eid prayers to be offered in 1032 mosques and 28

imambargahs which have been categorized according to their sensitivity.

Likewise, more than 100 police personnel will be deployed at Faisal Mosque to provide security cover to the devotees. All the mosques, imambargahs, religious places, public parks and other important places would be provided maximum security on Eid adding that DIG Operations Sohail Zafar Chatha will monitor all the security arrangements in the city. Security of the city will also be monitored through safe city cameras and special police squads.

Likewise, 800 personnel of the Eagle squad will be deputed in the city for patrolling all public and sensitive places while more than 150 personnel of the

special branch will perform their duties during Eid prayer.

Similarly, 278 traffic officials, including one SP and 4 DSPs are deployed to ensure a smooth flow of traffic in the city.

SSP Traffic will monitor the traffic arrangements. One wheeling will not be allowed and those violating traffic rules will be dealt with iron hands while public places, parks, and playgrounds will be kept under strict vigilance and security cover.

IGP Islamabad, Dr Akbar Nasir Khan has strictly directed all the zonal officers that a large number of people will gather for Eid prayer and the concerned zonal officers would be responsible of the security around worship places in their respective areas.

Pak-Egypt Ties

ISLAMABAD: Women diplomats posing for a group photograph on the occasion of 76th anniversary of Egypt and Pakistan Friendship, at a local hotel.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Translate Science in Urdu to help Muslims step into reality

Iqbal advised the Father of Urdu in 1932, says Walid Iqbal

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: COMSTECH organized a webinar on "Allama Iqbal's Perspective on Science and Technology" which was delivered by Senator Walid Iqbal, the grandson of Allama Dr. Muhammad Iqbal.

Walid said that a few are aware that Iqbal had a complete understanding of all contemporary disciplines and had deep understanding of the scientific developments and philosophical debates of the 20th century. He said that Iqbal was well versed with the

science and the science of anatomy and the latest inventions in the fields of engineering and technology.

He said that Iqbal's poetry and philosophical thoughts are not only a combination of the impact of modern scientific developments but also contain impressive predictions on the basis of his study of modern science.

Mr. Walid said that in poetry, lectures and particularly the reconstruction of religious thought in Islam, Iqbal had benefitted from the modern scientific theories.

He said Iqbal was in firm

belief that Muslim students should get involved in scientific education in order to meet the modern day challenges. He informed that Iqbal advocated the translation of scientific books into Urdu so that Muslim students can understand scientific concepts.

He mentioned that in 1932, Iqbal advised the father of Urdu Moulvi Abdul Haq, that he should understand the need of the hour and translate books of science into Urdu to help Muslims to extricate themselves from the world of fantasy and to step into the field of real knowledge. He said

that Iqbal was in the view that Muslims had failed to understand that it was the religion of Islam which has furnished to the world the basic perquisites of scientific study.

He mentioned many examples of the predictions of scientific discoveries Iqbal wrote about many years before their actual discovery. Walid said that Iqbal remained obsessed, with the past glory of the Muslims and the sorts of attitude that they had towards science and learning, and what happened to the Muslims after the decline of Islamic civilization.

Health Corner

Intermittent Fasting: Impact on COVID Severity

ISLAMABAD: Intermittent fasting has previously shown to have a host of health benefits, including lowering the risk of diabetes and heart disease. Now, researchers from Intermountain Healthcare have found that people who regularly fast are less likely to experience severe complications from COVID-19.

In a new study published this week in BMJ Nutrition, Prevention & Health, Intermountain researchers found that COVID-19 patients who practiced regular water-only intermittent fasting had lower risk of hospitalization or dying due to the virus than patients who did not.

"Intermittent fasting has already shown to lower inflammation and improve cardiovascular health. In this study, we're finding additional benefits when it comes to battling an infection of COVID-19 in patients who have been fasting for decades," said Benjamin Horne, PhD, director of cardiovascular and genetic epidemiology at Intermountain Healthcare.

In the Intermountain study, researchers identified patients enrolled in the INSPIRE registry, a voluntary health registry at Intermountain Healthcare, who had also tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 between March 2020 and February 2021 — before vaccines were widely available.

They identified 205 patients who had tested positive for the virus. Of those, 73 said they regularly fasted at least once a month. Researchers found that those who practiced regular fasting had a lower rate of hospitalization or death due to coronavirus.

"Intermittent fasting was not associated with whether or not someone tested positive COVID-19, but it was associated with lower severity once patients had tested positive for it," Dr. Horne said.

In the Intermountain study, participants who said they regularly fasted did so for an average of more than 40 years. Intermountain researchers had the opportunity to closely study this specific cohort of long-time intermittent fasters because a large portion of its patients fast regularly for religious reasons.

Nearly 62 percent of Utah's population belongs to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, whose members typically fast the first Sunday of the month by going without food or drink for two consecutive meals.

While Dr. Horne said that more research is needed to understand why intermittent fasting is associated with better COVID-19 outcomes, he said it's most likely due to a host of ways that it affects the body.

For example, fasting reduces inflammation, especially since hyperinflammation is associated with poor COVID-19 outcomes. In addition, after 12 to 14 hours of fasting, the body switches from using glucose in the blood to ketones, including linoleic acid.

"There's a pocket on the surface of SARS-CoV-2 that linoleic acid fits into — and can make the virus less able to attach to other cells," he said.

Another potential benefit is that intermittent fasting promotes autophagy, which is "the body's recycling system that helps your body destroy and recycle damaged and infected cells," Dr. Horne added.

Dr. Horne stressed that these results are from people who have been practicing intermittent fasting for decades — not weeks — and that anyone who wants to consider the practice should consult their doctors first, especially if they are elderly, pregnant, or have conditions like diabetes, heart, or kidney disease. (Courtesy: Science Daily)



Save our people from dying of diabetes, Dr Asjad Hameed urges upon government



RAWALPINDI: Renowned Group of doctors and participants in a group photo with Chairman, The Diabetes Centre, Dr Asjad Hameed here on Friday.

Staff Reporter

RAWALPINDI: Renowned General Physicians and Diabetologists of twin cities gather here at a local hotel in Rawalpindi to hear an exclusive talk of Dr Asjad Hameed, Chairman, The Diabetes Centre, senior Diabetologist and Endocrine specialist on 'Limbs for Life'.

The session was organized by a national leading pharmaceutical. While giving his talk, Dr Asjad apprised the participants of a continuous rise in number of patients with diabetes in Pakistan.

"Pakistan has 33 million people with diabetes at the moment and ranks third in world" Dr Asjad said while quoting statistics from International Federation of Diabetes — IDF. Diabetes harm main organs of body as heart, brain, eyes, limbs. "In worst case scenario, patient limbs have to be imputed making him or her crippled and burden."

Experts laud Uzbekistan's SCO Chairmanship for greater socio-economic integration

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Experts appreciated Uzbekistan's SCO Chairmanship for greater socio-economic integration, greater regional connectivity, formation of corridor of knowledge, integrated transport system, investment, trade and education cooperation for further strengthening of bilateral and trilateral cooperation.

Most recently an international online conference was held titled "Uzbekistan's chairmanship in the SCO: the way forward for greater development of regional connectivity" was held between The Center for South Asia & International Studies (CSAIS) Islamabad and the ISRS under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Leading regional experts, diplomats, researchers, academia, students and media community of both the countries rigorously participated in this prestigious international conference. Matters of Uzbekistan's SCO Chairmanship, its strategic importance, utility and scope along with chances of greater regional connectivity through integrated transport system, prospects of socio-economic cooperation, peace and stability in Afghanistan, trans-regional cooperation in anti-terrorism, drugs and

human trafficking were tabled and discussed. All the prominent speakers stressed the need to have close liaison between Pakistan and Uzbekistan to achieve the pending dreams of greater regional connectivity through trans-regional mega railway project and other innovated means.

The Embassy of Uzbekistan in Islamabad under Ambassador Aybek Arif Usmanov assisted both the think tanks to hold the said conference at embassy. The event was moderated by Dr Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan, the Director of CSAIS.

ISRS Deputy Director Bobur Usmanov in his opening remarks termed Uzbekistan's SCO chairmanship as the priority multilateral foreign policy platforms for implementing a political course focused on the development of interregional connectivity.

He supported to realize the full potential of the SCO in the new conditions of its development, primarily through increasing practical cooperation in promising areas that meet the interests of all member countries."

Furthermore Usmanov urged the need to develop Uzbek-Pakistan cooperation within the framework of the SCO which is deeply connected with the issues of restoration and expansion of ties between the regions of Central



and South Asia.

During his opening remarks the CSAIS President Syed Khalid Jaffery expressed his satisfaction with the growing Uzbekistan-Pakistan ties based on mutual respect, trust, cooperation in diverse fields of economy, trade & investments, joint ventures, regional connectivity, peace & stability in Afghanistan and trans-regional railways cooperation within various international platforms, including the SCO.

He pinpointed that the mutual interest of the two states in expanding the

SCO cooperation agenda is must for future cooperation. The Pakistani expert also expressed his conviction that current Uzbekistan's chairmanship in the SCO opens up new opportunities for all members and partner countries of the Organization to consolidate efforts to form a common economic future.

Speaking positively about the practical initiatives of Uzbekistan within the framework of the SCO, Shahid Hashmat, an expert of the CSAIS, emphasized the high productivity of current

Uzbekistan's chairmanship in the Organization.

Moreover, he noted that further strengthening of cooperation between Uzbekistan and Pakistan could become a catalyst for further expansion of trade and economic exchanges in the Shanghai G8 space.

In this direction, he noted the need for including issues of restoring trans-regional connectivity between Central and South Asia in the agenda of the SCO. "All SCO member states are interested in creating a reliable overland transport route capable of ensuring the continuous exchange of goods and services", he explained.

Akhtar Nawaz, a Senior Member of the Board of Directors of the CSAIS, highlighted the importance of normalizing the situation in Afghanistan for the implementation of interregional projects. The expert emphasized that the Afghan issue should not be left out of the attention of the SCO member states.

In this regards, Akhtar Nawaz shared that Tashkent and Islamabad act as reliable and trusting partners in helping to overcome the humanitarian crisis and establish long-term stability on Afghan soil. "Peaceful Afghanistan will open a reliable path to broad and multifaceted interregional cooperation

and will act as a link between the two parts of the SCO space", the Pakistani expert added.

In his detailed presentation/speech, Dr Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan, Director of CSAIS, emphasized that Afghanistan and Pakistan have great potential to connect the Central Asian Countries and South East Asia through amalgamation of Chinese BRI and CPEC.

In this context, the planned construction of the Trans-Afghan corridor among Pakistan, Afghanistan and Uzbekistan will create unique opportunities for expanding not only inter-regional trade and economic ties, but also ensuring the rapid socio-economic growth of the states of the two neighboring regions."

The Pakistani expert highlighted the government of Pakistan huge investments for the development of the transport sector through the China Pakistan Economic Corridors (CPEC) program, the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) program and other initiatives. Pakistan has been applying the Cluster Trading System (CTS), Turks Trading System (TTS) and last but not least, the Transport Internationaux Routier (TIR) to form a dynamic and diversified transport system between Uzbekistan.

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Ukraine War & Nuclear Proliferation

Joseph S. Nye Jr.

When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Ukraine inherited part of its nuclear arsenal. But under the 1994 Budapest Memorandum, Ukraine agreed to return these weapons to Russia in exchange for "assurances" from Moscow, the UK and the US that its sovereignty and borders would be respected. Russia brazenly violated this promise when it annexed Crimea in 2014 and tore up the memorandum with its full-scale invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24. Many observers have concluded that Ukraine made a fateful mistake by agreeing to surrender its nuclear arsenal (once the world's third-largest). Are they right? Others advocate the abolition of all nuclear weapons, a goal enshrined in the 2017 UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which entered into force in 2021. It currently has 86 signatories and 66 parties (though none of the nine states with nuclear weapons have signed up).

argue that, while nuclear abolition may be a worthy long-term aspiration, efforts to get there too quickly could increase instability and the likelihood of conflict. The real ethical challenge, they maintain, is not nuclear weapons' existence but the probability of their use. It might be better if humanity had not learned to harness the power of a split atom in the 1930s; but that knowledge cannot be abolished, so it is better to focus on reducing the risks of its use in warfare.

Suppose that you live in a neighborhood that suffers continuous devastating break-ins, burglaries and assaults. One day, some of your neighbors decide to equip their houses with massive explosive devices and tripwires, and post warning signs to deter intruders. The problem is that, if these devices are used, your house will be damaged too. Yet there are also considerable dangers in trying to dismantle the system in the short run. What would you do? You might ask your neighbors to use the system only to defend against intruders and not to threaten others. You could encourage them to install devices to reduce the risk of accidents and demand compensation for

the risk they impose on you by including your house under their warning signs.

And you might persuade them to take steps to dismantle the system sometime in the future, when relatively safe means can be found. By rough analogy, these are the types of conditions enshrined in the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and that is why the Russian invasion of Ukraine is so damaging. Russia has not only violated its explicit security guarantee under the Budapest Memorandum; it has also hinted at nuclear escalation to deter others from coming to Ukraine's aid. It is thus weakening the taboo against treating nuclear weapons as normal war-fighting weapons — a convention that the Nobel laureate economist Thomas Schelling called the most important global norm since 1945.

But it would be a mistake to exaggerate the harm that the invasion of Ukraine has done to the nonproliferation regime. For one thing, those who think the invasion will teach other states that they would be more secure if they had nuclear weapons are oversimplifying history. One cannot assume that nothing

would have happened if Ukraine had kept its Soviet-era nuclear weapons. After all, such weapons do not come ready to use "off the shelf." The fissile material in the long-range Soviet missiles stationed in Ukraine would have had to be removed, reshaped and repurposed. Not only would that have taken time and expertise, but it might have accelerated Russia's intervention.

When states approach the nuclear threshold, they enter a "valley of vulnerability" that may reduce their security and increase general instability. Even when stable deterrence is imaginable in a region, it may be highly risky to try to get from here to there. Some theorists argue that, just as nuclear weapons encouraged prudence among great powers by giving them a "crystal ball" with which to foresee the devastation that would follow from nuclear war, the spread of nuclear weapons would similarly produce stability among smaller regional rivals. Nuclear porcupines would act like rabbits, not wolves.

But not all regions are equal in terms of escalation risk and it cannot be assumed that all leaders would have the wisdom to

use their crystal balls. Regions differ in terms of the number of civil wars and overthrown governments, civilian control of the military, the security of communications and weapons-control protocols. If new proliferators have a higher risk of using nuclear weapons — even if inadvertently — they and their neighbors will become even more insecure in the valley of vulnerability.

Ultimately, when nuclear weapons proliferate, the chances of inadvertent or accidental use tend to increase, managing potential nuclear crises becomes more complicated, and establishing controls that may someday help to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in world politics becomes more difficult. In short, the greater the spread of supposedly defensive weapons, the higher the risks of blowing up the whole neighborhood. The real lesson from Russia's war in Ukraine is that we must reinforce the existing Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and refrain from actions that erode it.

The writer is a professor at Harvard University. Courtesy Arab News

Inflation

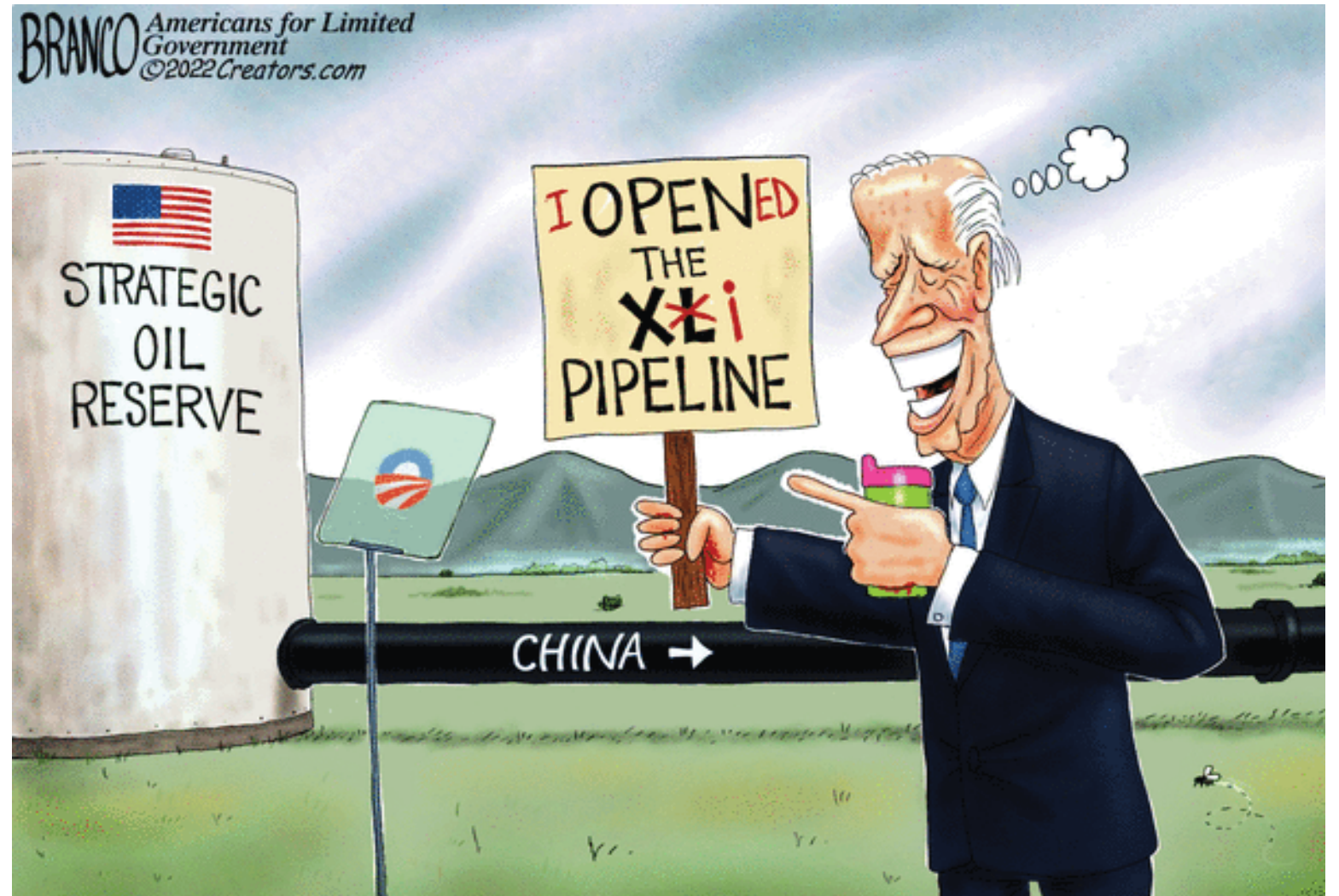
Rich Western industrialised countries appear to be caught in a time loop, with unexpectedly higher inflation bringing back not just memories of the 1970s but also that era's policy debates and the political insecurities. The debates of the 1970s were not just about technical matters of macroeconomic management. They also raised doubts about the sustainability and legitimacy of the Western model of democracy. The world was beset by geopolitical instability, and the United Nations General Assembly endorsed calls for a New International Economic Order.

And now that many of the same old political and geopolitical issues are heating up again, inflation is a thermometer. As more money chases fewer goods, prices rise — the economy becomes feverish.

During periods of monetary innovation, however, it becomes harder to tell what money even is. No-one would dispute the fact that monetary innovation has been proceeding at a breakneck pace over the past decade. But it is worth remembering that the 1970s also featured a financial revolution, one that blurred previously hard distinctions between money and non-money. This was partly a consequence of inflation, which prompted bank customers to flee from non-interest-bearing checking accounts to alternatives such as certificates of deposit or accounts in non-traditional banks. Friedman was contemptuous of all the conservative voters and politicians who thought that fiscal policy was to blame for inflation. But his disdain was misplaced, because there was indeed a connection between fiscal and monetary policy: high government deficits had been financed through the central bank. In both the United States and the United Kingdom, the treasury and the central bank had come to be seen as a unified "macroeconomic executive." Regarding themselves as globally dominant powers, both countries aimed to use their monetary sovereignty to secure advantages at the expense of the rest of the world.

In the event, the US and UK ended up with higher inflation compared to most other industrialised countries, and this same distinction is apparent again in 2022. The US and the UK have the highest inflation rates in the G7, and they also both enacted massive central-bank-assisted fiscal-stimulus packages in response to the Covid-19 shock. The UK is a particularly dramatic example of this. In the first financial year of Covid-19, the Bank of England (BoE) bought up 99.5% of government debt — and over 100% the following year. Under these circumstances, it is not credible to argue that the central bank is independent. The upshot is that central banks are not as independent as they purport to be. In both the UK and the US, governments and central banks have been responding to the political pressures created by apparently intractable societal divisions. Such extreme polarisation raises questions about whether the political union can continue. Hence, the 1970s-era debate about the UK's ungovernability is reappearing, with both Scotland and Northern Ireland eyeing paths out so that they can rejoin the European Union. Even more ominously, a slew of recent books prophesy a civil war in the US.

Of course, Europe, too, faces threats of disintegration. The European Central Bank (ECB) has been even slower than the Fed or the BoE to raise interest rates. This is partly because the character of the inflation is different, and because Russia's war in Ukraine has driven up energy costs. European labour markets also have somewhat more slack (though some European economies are suffering the same dramatic shortages of skilled labour seen in the US and the UK).



Digital revolution & global financial inclusion

David Malpass

Around the world, high inflation, slow economic growth, and food shortages are hurting the poor the most. Coming on top of the unequal effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, today's multiple crises have already caused dramatic reversals in development and led to a substantial increase in global poverty. On the positive side, the Covid-19 crisis spurred unprecedented change, especially in industries with a large digital component. This digital revolution has catalysed increases in access to and use of financial services in developing economies, transforming how people make and receive payments, borrow, and save.

These changes are strikingly evident in the latest edition of the Global Findex database, compiled from a survey of more than 125,000 adults in 123 economies, covering use of financial services throughout 2021. The survey found that 71% of adults in developing economies now have a formal financial account — whether with a bank, another regulated institution such as a credit union or microfinance lender, or a mobile money service provider — compared to 42% when the first edition of the database was published a decade ago. In addition, the difference in the share of men and women in developing economies who own an account has fallen for the first time, from nine percentage points to six.

Government social programmes can now reduce delays and leakage by channeling transfers directly to their beneficiaries' mobile phones. Millions of people in developing countries received payments in this way during the pandemic, helping to cushion the

impact of Covid-19 on livelihoods.

Governments and the private sector can help further this transformation in several critical areas. First, they need to create a favourable operating and policy environment. For example, enabling the interoperability of systems allows for payments across different types of financial institutions and between mobile money service providers. Improving access to finance depends much more on the mobile-phone system than on the physical banking system. Cheap and functional mobile phones and affordable Internet access are prerequisites for expanding digital finance. Consumer protections and stable regulations are also needed to foster safe and fair practices that bolster trust in the financial system.

Establishing digital-identification systems also is essential, because lack of verifiable identity is one of the main reasons why some adults remain excluded from financial services. We know from the experiences of countries such as India and the Philippines that government identification programmes and financial-inclusion programmes can work in tandem to equip hard-to-reach populations with official identification documents and financial accounts. India, for example, has pioneered a successful biometric universal ID system that pays due attention to safety and privacy.

Another high priority should be to promote the digitalisation of payments. The Global Findex data for 2021 show that 865mn account owners in developing economies opened their first account at a bank or similar institution in order to receive money from the government. This helped households directly and also helped build the digital financial ecosystem, because people who received payments into an account were more likely to use their account to make payments

and access other services. Digital payments by governments thus serve as a foundation for assembling credible social registers and identifying gaps and overlaps.

As digital payments become more widespread and less costly, many private businesses will be able to pay their workers and suppliers electronically — and should. The digital revolution offers a chance to increase formal-sector employment without making compliance excessively burdensome. At a time of tighter government budget constraints, digital payments can help broaden the revenue base by reducing tax avoidance and evasion.

Finally, policymakers will need to make additional efforts to include underserved groups. The gender gap in financial access has narrowed, but it still exists.

Women, along with the poor, are more likely to lack a form of personal identification or a mobile phone, to live far from a bank branch, and to need support to open and use a financial account. Financial-education programmes, especially those that involve peer-to-peer learning (such as through women's self-help groups) are essential as well. The World Bank is firmly committed to expanding financial inclusion through digitalisation. We will continue to support countries as they enhance mobile-phone networks, rework regulations to foster access to finance, adopt e-government platforms, and modernise social-protection systems. For the many millions of people who still lack an account, we need to redouble our efforts and find creative ways to connect them to the financial system, build economic resilience, and reap the benefits of inclusion.

The writer is President of the World Bank Group. Courtesy Gulf Times

SC stops US from Global Climate Leadership

Ashok Swain

The US Supreme Court had one more shocking verdict on June 30. It decided against federal agencies using their regular executive power to phase out fossil fuel power plants in the country. This verdict came only a few days after it allowed the carrying of firearms in public and overturned abortion rights. However, unlike these two previous verdicts, the latest one in limiting some of the key powers of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the US has profound global implications. The Supreme Court's conservative supermajority has virtually made it impossible for President Joe Biden to fulfill his commitment to bring down America's greenhouse gas emissions by 52 per cent by the end of this decade against 2005 levels.

The 19 Republican states, which had gone to the Supreme Court to protect their coal-fuelled power sectors, contributed 44 per cent of the US's emissions in 2018. In the last two decades, they have only managed to reduce 7 per cent of their emission on average. The US might be home to only 4 per cent of the global population, but its present share in global emissions is 14 per cent. Historically, the US alone has contributed more than 20 per cent of the total emission. The failure of the US to reduce its carbon emission will take away any hope for the world to limit global warming to 1.5-degree C. More than its failure to reduce emissions, this verdict also takes away the moral authority of the Biden administration to lead the global fight against climate change.

Climate change is not the only adverse effect of air pollution. According to a recent report published in The Lancet Public Health, pollution is responsible for the premature death of around 9 million people globally every year. The

deaths by air pollution have increased by 66 per cent over the past two decades. A study by Pure Earth says air pollution is the most dangerous as it is responsible for 6.5 million deaths annually. Another study claims that fossil fuel-caused air pollution kills one in five people worldwide. As per this research, exposure to fine particulate matter, or PM 2.5, from burning fossil fuels had caused 8.7 million deaths in 2018 alone.

Whatever that number, the number of people killed by fossil fuel-induced air pollution is very high, and the annual death rate can surpass the total number of officially confirmed COVID-19 deaths. Air pollution is fuelling the climate crisis and killing people, and it has also become the reason for enormous economic loss. According to the World Bank's estimate, the global cost of air pollution is more than \$5 trillion annually. Though air pollution causes most of the deaths in the countries of the Global South like China, India, and Nigeria, thousands of Americans die every year due to polluted air. It's estimated that nearly 110,000 Americans die every year from dirty air. About one of every 25 premature deaths in the US is caused due to air pollution, and the number is higher than the combined deaths in the country in road accidents and shootings.

The US has made significant progress in curbing its air pollution in the last three decades, but still a long way to go. There is no doubt that the US Supreme Court's ruling in restricting EPA's power to limit greenhouse gas emissions has brought a devastating blow to the world's ongoing struggle to protect the planet from climate change. The Supreme Court has also hindered the US from taking a leadership role in global climate change negotiations and closed its eyes to the thousands of American dying every week due to polluted air.

The writer is a Professor of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University, Sweden. Courtesy Gulf News

Islamic values require avoiding everything that causes hatred: Hajj sermon

1m pilgrims arrive in Arafat with religious zeal, zest

MAKKAH: Sheikh Muhammad Bin Abdul Karim on Friday delivered the Hajj sermon with the status of khateeb [speaker] of Hajj at Masjid-e-Nimrah, as Muslims from across the world gathered in Makkah to offer the pilgrimage which is one of the key obligations of Islam. Huge crowds of Muslim pilgrims scaled Mount Arafat in Makkah early this morning (Friday), the high point of the biggest hajj pilgrimage since the pandemic forced drastic cuts in numbers for two years in a row.



In his sermon, Sheikh Karim urged the Muslims to steer clear of everything that is a cause of spreading hatred as per Islamic values. "Islamic values require that one should avoid everything that causes hatred," he said. The khateeb also said that Allah has repeatedly ordered to maintain piety and only the pious get the closeness to Allah. "Allah says there is a good omen of getting to Jannah [paradise] for the pious," Sheikh Karim said. He urged the Muslims to worship only Allah who made the sky and earth for them to live, saying that toheed [belief in the oneness of Allah] is the biggest blessing for Muslims.

"Fear only Allah, for that is the way to success. No one can relieve your hard-

ships," he said, adding that success in the hereafter will also be achieved by following the orders of Allah. Sheikh Karim further said that all humans are the children of Prophet Adam (AS), who was created with soil. He said that Muslims are obliged to value and respect humanity. As many as 1 million pilgrims are performing Hajj this year. Of these 1 million Muslims, 83,433 pilgrims are from Pakistan. He advised the Muslims to perform Hajj the way Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) did. "Our Hajj will be accepted if we

avoided things that have been advised to avoid [during the pilgrimage]," he said.

One million pilgrims hailing from every nook and cranny of the world including Pakistan on Friday arrived in the ground of Arafat to perform the most essential rite of Hajj called 'Waqoof-e-Arafah' with religious zeal and zest. In a bid to manage the crowd of faithful in proper manner, the government of Saudi Arabia started to transport the pilgrims from Mina to Arafat as per its elaborated plan last

night. After reaching Arafat, a large number of people thronged to the Mount Arafat that is also called the 'Jabl-e-Rahmat' and Masjid-e-Nimrah to seek the blessings of Allah Almighty as both of places are great importance in the Islamic history. The Arafat is roused with the voice of 'Talbiya, Labaik Allahumma Labaik, which means 'Here I am, O'Allah, here I am'.

It is worthy to mention here that this beautiful moment is being observed once a year particularly on the day of Arafah, otherwise, this sacred premises is kept close for the visitors. Talking to APP, the pilgrims lauded the splendid services of the host country and said they were feeling at homes. The way Saudi government had looked after their needs keeping in view the requirement of the day, they could not express their feelings in the words, they added.

Chaudhry Saqib, a pilgrim from Pakistan, said the Saudi government had transformed the whole Hajj process on the scientific lines through introducing online applications developed for smooth sailing of Hajj operation. He said all the departments of Saudi government were well-trained and performing their duties in more professional way to facilitate the pilgrims.

Abbas meet with Gantz ahead of Biden visit to region



RAMALLAH: Israeli Defence Minister Benny Gantz and Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas held talks in Ramallah to prepare for US President Joe Biden's visit to the region, Israeli officials said Friday. The rare meeting late Thursday, coming six months after the two officials held talks in Israel, was to mark the Muslim feast of Eid al-Adha and "discuss security and civilian coordination ahead of the visit of US President Biden to Israel," Gantz's office said in a brief statement. "The meeting was conducted in positive terms. The parties discussed regional civilian and security challenges (and) agreed to continue security coordination and to avoid activities that may cause instability," Gantz's office said.

Abbas "stressed the importance of creating a political horizon" between Israelis and Palestinians and "the need to create a (positive) atmosphere before the visit of President Biden," the official Palestinian news agency Wafa said. Abbas and Gantz, a former army chief of staff who heads the centrist Blue and White party, met in December in Israel, sparking a heated debate in Israeli political circles. Their new meeting in Ramallah, headquarters of the Palestinian Authority in the occupied West Bank, comes less than a week before Biden visits as part of his first Middle East tour as US president.

Biden is due to visit Israel and the occupied West Bank from July 13 to 15, and will hold talks with new Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid and Abbas before heading to Saudi Arabia. Lapid's predecessor as prime minister, Naftali Bennett, then head of the radical right-wing Yamina party, refused to meet Abbas. After a visit to Paris this week, where he met French President Emmanuel Macron, Lapid said he did not rule out a meeting with Abbas, but said it was "not a priority" in the run-up to Israeli elections on November 1.

Japan ex-PM Abe assassinated

TOKYO: Former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the longest-serving leader of modern Japan, was gunned down on Friday while campaigning for a parliamentary election, shocking a country where guns are tightly controlled and political violence almost unthinkable. Abe, 67, was pronounced dead around five and a half hours after the shooting in the city of Nara. Police arrested a 41-year-old man and said the weapon was a homemade gun. "I am simply speechless over the news of Abe's death," Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, Abe's protege, told reporters.

Earlier, as Abe still lay in hospital where doctors tried to revive him, Kishida struggled to keep his emotions in check. "This attack is an act of brutality that happened during the elections—the very foundation of our democracy—and is absolutely unforgivable," he said. Abe had been making a campaign speech outside a train station when two shots rang out. Security officials were then seen tackling a man in a grey T-shirt and beige trousers. "There was a loud bang and then smoke," businessman Makoto Ichikawa, who was at the scene, told Reuters.

"The first shot, no one knew what was going on, but after the second shot, what looked like special police tackled him." Kyodo news service published a photograph of Abe lying face-up on the street by a guardrail, blood on his white shirt. People were crowded around him, one administering heart massage. Abe was taken to hospital in cardiopulmonary arrest and showing no vital signs. He was declared dead at 5:03 p.m. (0803 GMT), having bled to death from deep wounds to the heart and the right side of his neck.

IS **HOJK** in focus

Indian troops martyr 1,697 Kashmiris since July 8, 2016

ISLAMABAD: Indian troops have martyred 1,697 Kashmiris, including 37 women and 122 young boys, after the martyrdom of popular youth leader, Burhan Muzaffar Wani, on July 8, 2016 till date in the territory, in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir. According to a report, of those 189 were killed in fake encounters and in custody during the period. The report said at least 29,892 people were critically injured due to the use of brute forces, firing of bullets, pellets, PAVA and teargas shells on peaceful demonstrators and mourners by Indian military, paramilitary and police personnel in the occupied territory, said a press release.

It said that thousands of Hurriyat leaders, activists, youth, women, politicians and civil society members, including APHC Chairman, Masarrat Aalam Butt, Shabbir Ahmad Shah, Muhammad Yasin Malik, Aasiya Andrabi, Naheeda Nasreen, Fehmeeda Sofi, Nayeem Ahmad Khan, Ghulam Ahmad Gulzar, Islam, Mush-taq-ul-Islam, Ayaz Akbar, Altaf Ahmed Shah, Peer Saifullah, Raja Merajuddin Kalwal, Farooq Ahmad Dar, Rafiq Ahmad Ganai, Muhammad Yousuf Mir, Muhammad Yousuf Fahlai, Muhammad Hayat Butt, Syed Shahid Yousuf, Syed Shakeel Yousuf, Ghulam Muhammad Butt, Engineer Rashid, human rights defender Khurram Parvaiz, Muhammad Ahsan Untoo, and journalists Asif Sultan and Fahad Shah, have been facing illegal detentions in different jails of India and the occupied territory.

US senator visits island

China military holds combat drills around Taiwan

BELJING: China's military recently held multi-unit joint combat readiness exercises, patrols and combat drills in the sea and airspace around Taiwan, the Eastern Theatre Command of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) said in a statement on Friday. The exercises were organized in response to "collusion and provocations" by the United States and Taiwan, Wu Qian, spokesman for China's ministry of defense said, according to the ministry's official Weibo account on Friday. Several Chinese fighter jets crossed the median line of the Taiwan Strait on Friday in the northern part of the strait, a Taiwan source briefed on the matter told Reuters, adding the aircraft did not enter Taiwan's airspace.



Senior United States senator, Republican Rick Scott, arrived in Taiwan on Thursday for a visit and met with Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen on Friday. The Florida Republican chairs the

National Republican Senatorial Committee and also sits on the Senate's Armed Services Committee. "The US side's move seriously violates the one-China principle and the provisions of the three Sino-US joint communiqués, seriously damages the political foundation of Sino-US relations, seriously undermines the relationship between the two countries and the two militaries, and escalates tensions in the Taiwan Strait region," Wu said, in response to a reporter's question about the senator's visit.

"The Chinese People's

Liberation Army is ready for war at all times, and will take all necessary measures to resolutely thwart the interference of external forces and the secessionist attempts of Taiwan independence, and resolutely defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity," Taiwan's defense ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the drills.

After meeting with President Tsai in Taipei on Friday Senator Scott told reporters that he believes that following Russian President Vladimir Putin's actions in Ukraine "the

world has changed." "We all have to put ourselves in a position that we can make sure we defend the freedom we all believe in," he said. "I do think it would be helpful if Taiwan participated in RIMPAC and I hope that's what happens in the future."

The Rim of the Pacific exercise, known as RIMPAC, is billed as the world's largest international maritime exercise, with the latest one kicking off late last month with 26 nations participating in drills around Hawaii and southern California. "Taiwan will continue to work closely with the United States to jointly safeguard the stability and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region," Tsai told Scott earlier on Friday during their meeting at her office. US-China tensions are high over a number of issues including Taiwan, the South China Sea, trade tariffs and China's refusal to openly criticize Russian leader Putin over the war in Ukraine.

EU Court slams Greece over mass refugee drowning



LONDON: The European Court of Human Rights has condemned Greek authorities for acting unlawfully in failing to protect refugees in a 2014 mass drowning in the Aegean Sea that left 11 dead. The landmark ruling also found that Greek officials subjected 12 of the survivors to degrading treatment when they reached land by strip-searching them, and failed to conduct an effective investigation into the circumstances surrounding the boat's sinking that led to the drowning.

In its judgment, the court said Greek authorities violated the refugees' human rights on three counts "by failing to protect them, by failing to conduct an adequate investigation and by subjecting them to degrading treatment." Sixteen survivors of the incident — 13 Afghans, two Syrians and a Palestinian — said the Greek coastguard were responsible for the sinking when they towed the boat at high speed toward Turkey in what is known as a pushback operation. The Independent reported. Greek authorities refuted the allegation of a pushback operation, saying the boat capsized because of panic and sudden movements of those onboard as it was being towed to the Greek island of Farnakonisi.

However, the court raised concern about a "significant delay" in the mobilization and arrival of additional rescue resources that could have saved more lives, with a 13-minute delay between the boat's sinking and a rescue helicopter being called. A press release from the ECHR said: "The court noted that the government had not provided any explanation as to the specific omissions and delays in the present case and that serious questions arose as to the manner in which the operation had been conducted and organized."

Muslims should maintain 'unity' & 'spirituality': Khamenei

TEHRAN: Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has issued a statement in the midst of this year's Hajj pilgrimage. The Supreme Leader underlined that the current situation is readier than ever for Muslims to attain elixirs of "unity" & "spirituality." The following is the full text of Imam Khamenei's message to the 2022 Hajj Pilgrimage:

The unity of the Muslim nation is one of the two basic foundations of the Hajj Pilgrimage. When this foundation is combined with spirituality and remembering God (dhikr) — which together comprise the other basic foundation of this religious duty, which is full of secrets — they can take the Islamic nation to attain the heights of honor and felicity. They can enable it to become an example of [the verse], "All might belongs to Allah and His

Messenger and the believers." [Qur'an 63:8] Hajj is a combination of these two political and spiritual elements. And the sacred religion of Islam is a glorious, majestic fusion of the political and spiritual spheres.

In recent history, the enemies of Muslim nations have undertaken an extensive drive to weaken the two bolstering elixirs of Islamic unity and spirituality among our nations. The enemies of Islam strive to weaken spirituality by promoting a western lifestyle that is devoid of spirituality and which is rooted in a short-sighted, materialistic vision of the world. They strive to undermine Islamic unity by promoting and promulgating baseless factors that foster division, such as [differences in] language, color, race, and geography.

The Islamic nation, a small portion

of which can now be seen in the symbolic ritual of Hajj, must rise up against this with every ounce of its being. This means on the one hand, we must increase remembrance of God, work for God, contemplation on God's words, and our trust in His promises in all of our minds. And on the other hand, everyone must work to overcome the factors that foster division and disunity.

The first reason is that the elites and much of the general population in Islamic countries are now aware of the great wealth of their religious understanding and spiritual heritage, and of its significance and value. Today, liberalism and communism, the most significant contributions of Western civilization, no longer have the same appeal they did 100 years or 50 years ago.

Russia dismisses West's 'frenzied' criticism

G-20 fails to evolve consensus on Ukraine, war's global impact

JAKARTA/ NUSA DUA: Top diplomats from the world's leading rich and developing nations failed to find common ground on how to deal with Russia's war in Ukraine and its global impact as they met in Bali on Friday. The conflict in Ukraine, one of the world's breadbaskets, has disrupted global supply chains and stoked an energy crisis, as international sanctions slapped on Moscow — a major oil and gas producer — have led to rising inflation in many countries.

The Group of 20 foreign ministers' meeting took place as Indonesia, which this year holds the rotating presidency, has been facing pressure to exclude Russia from the G-20 summit, which is scheduled to take place in Bali in November.

The group includes Western countries that have accused Russia of war crimes in Ukraine, but also nations like China, India and South Africa that have remained neutral. Amid deep divisions within the bloc, Friday's gathering also saw the first meeting between Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken since the start of the Russian invasion in February. Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi, who hosted the meeting, told reporters there was a "strong push from many participants for an immediate end to the war and peaceful resolution of conflict through diplomacy and negotiations."

"Some members expressed condemnation on the act of

invasion; the war has caused tremendous suffering to the civilian population," she said, adding that participants had agreed that "there is an urgent need to strengthen multilateralism." "Multilateralism remains the best way to resolve global challenges, cooperation in pandemic response including ensuring equitable access to vaccines is one of multilateralism's success story," Marsudi's final press statement and her opening session remarks — in which she called for settling differences "at the negotiating table, not at the battlefield" — were the only part of the conference to which access was granted to the media.

Lavrov, at whom reporters shouted, "When will you stop the war?" as he posed for a photo

with Marsudi on his arrival at the meeting's venue, the Hilton Bali Resort in Nusa Dua, left the conference before it concluded, Russian Embassy spokesperson Denis Tetushin told Arab News.

He said there was no particular reason for Lavrov's early departure, as "he usually doesn't join the last agenda." Lavrov also reportedly walked out several times during the proceedings, including when Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba addressed the conference via a video link. "I think that after everything Russia has done in the past half a year, it has no place at any international fora," Kuleba was quoted as saying in a statement issued by the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"Stopping Moscow's aggressive



colonialism is the global priority No. 1 if we want to preserve stability, avert a deepening food and energy crisis, and protect multilateralism from those who try to destroy it," Indonesia: Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Friday dismissed what

he cast as the West's "frenzied" criticism of the war in Ukraine at a G20 meeting, scolding Russia's rivals for scuppering a chance to tackle global economic issues. "During the discussion, Western partners avoided following the mandate of the G20, from

dealing with issues of the world economy," Lavrov said.

He said the West's discussion "strayed almost immediately, as soon as they took the floor, to the frenzied criticism of the Russian Federation in connection with the situation in Ukraine. 'Aggressors', 'invaders', 'occupiers' — we heard a lot of things today," Lavrov said. Indonesia urged the G20 on Friday to help end the war in Ukraine, as foreign ministers from the group met for a summit that has put some of the staunchest critics of Russia's invasion in the same room as Moscow's top diplomat. Lavrov added that Russia is ready to negotiate with Ukraine and Turkey about grain but it is unclear when such talks might take place.

Business
community hails
ECC decision

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) Sunday hailed the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the cabinet's decision of allowing trade with Afghanistan in Pak Rupee saying that Pak-Afghan trade is a potential source for the creation of livelihood for thousands of people and can bring about prosperity in the region. PBF Senior Vice President, Muhammad Riaz Khattak in a statement said the Federal government took a major decision to allow trade of all products with Kabul in the rupee via land routes owing to the non-availability of tradeable Currency through banking channels which was long-standing demand of the business community and it would also support our balance of payment.

The ECC approved a summary of the commerce ministry amending the Import Policy Order (IPO) to allow trade with Afghanistan in rupees for a period of one year. It is believed the regime will remain in place until the restoration of regular banking channels in Afghanistan. Afghanistan was the third largest export destination for Pakistani products, but the trend changed in the past couple of years.

Pakistan's exports to Afghanistan fell by 30 per cent to \$717.

53 million in 2021-22 from \$1.018bn in 2020-21, said the statement. However Pak-Afghan bilateral trade has a vast potential of \$8 billion annually, which seems to be eased now after the decision. Khattak said the number of scanners at the Torkham border needed to be doubled to expedite goods handling. He said poor trade infrastructure at border crossing points were also to be upgraded to modern and scientific lines to ensure uninterrupted flow of trade volume. APP

Pakistan
participates in
Investment, Trade
Fair in Lanzhou

BEIJING: The Pakistani businessmen and traders participated in the 28th China Lanzhou Investment and Trade Fair kicked off in Lanzhou, capital of northwest China's Gansu Province.

The five-day event that will feature business negotiations and forums aims to boost economic and trade cooperation among countries along the Belt and Road.

Malaysia and the United Arab Emirates have been invited as the guests of honor at this year's fair, and the representatives of business associations and commercial establishment from countries including Australia, Spain, Thailand and Indonesia are also attending the event, China.org.cn reported on Friday.

First held in 1993, the fair has become an important platform for the opening up of northwest China and a major event for Belt and Road economic and trade cooperation.

Gansu saw rapid growth in trade revenue with countries along the Belt and Road this year, rising 24 percent year on year in the first five months and accounting for nearly half of the province's total foreign trade revenue during the period. APP

Gold price increases
by Rs.200 to
Rs.142,200 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold witnessed an increase of Rs.200 per tola and was sold at Rs.142,200 on Friday against its sale at Rs.142,000 the previous day in the local market.

The price of 10 gram 24 karat fold also increased by Rs.172 and was sold at Rs.121,914 against its sale at Rs. 121,742 whereas the prices of ten gram 22 karat gold also increased to Rs.111,754 against its sale at Rs 111,597, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained stagnant at Rs1520 and Rs 1,303.15 respectively. The price of gold in international market decreased by \$2 and was sold at \$1842 against its sale at \$1744, the association reported. Agencies

Highest Since 1993

Annual inflation
in Greece hit 12.1%
in June

MOSCOW: Inflation in Greece reached 12.1% year-on-year in June, which is the highest rate since November 1993, the Greek statistical service Elstat said on Friday.

Prices in Greece rose by 1.6% compared to May, the agency added. The highest annual price increase was registered for energy resources, with natural gas prices rising by 117.7%, electricity by 70.4%, heating oil by 65.1%, fuels and lubricants by 45.6%, and solid fuels by 8.2%.

In food products, oils and fats prices increased by 24.9%, meat rose by 14.9%, vegetables rose by 11.3%, fresh fruits increased by 9.3%, and bread and cereals grew 15.9%. The agency added that prices of second-hand cars went up by 15.9% while prices for mobile telephone equipment decreased by 9.7%, and telephone services and books prices fell by 2.1%. Sputnik

Advancing agriocommodity sector
in sustainable ecosystem

International Agriocommodity Expo and Summit 2022 held in Malaysia

Spokesman Report

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia International Agriocommodity Expo and Summit 2022 (MIACES'22) could not have been organised at a better time as the anticipated openings for the Agriocommodity sector to further flourish in the global market. Malaysia International Agriocommodity Expo and Summit 2022 will be the premier event in the calendar of Agriocommodity and primary industries internationally. MIACES'22 will create opportunities to expand to new markets for Agriocommodity exports.

The agriocommodity subsector, which comprises of oil palm, rubber, timber, cocoa, pepper and kenaf, has been one of the main drivers of the national economy, contributing significantly to export earnings, creating jobs

as well as providing income particularly to the small stakeholders.

"In September 2020, the Malaysia Rubber Council was given a fresh perspective, and it is now striving for excellence through various design and development initiatives, automation and digital technology, and efforts to promote quality and trusted rubber products in order to strengthen the country's position in the global value chain, said Nor Hizwan bin Ahmad, the Chief Executive Officer of Malaysian Rubber Council.

"We are expecting approximately 250 companies, 500 trade delegates and 10,000 visitors to attend in these 3 days event and we are also anticipating to have MOUs signed and

witnessed by our distinguished dignitaries," he added.

The event comprises of 3 days exhibition, conference, ministerial roundtable and award night to appreciate the industry practitioners that have been putting their efforts uplifting the industries.

The Minister of Plantation Industries and Commodities, YB Datuk Hajah Zuraida Kamarudin also said that, "The increasing price not only boosted up the economy, but it helps Malaysian oil palm producers and technology firms who were suffering from financial struggles as an outcome of the Covid-19 outbreak."

"The theme of this year's event, "Advancing Agriocommodity Sector in Sustainability

Ecosystem" giving Malaysia their own prospects of growth and help to realise potential opportunity", she said.

The event will gather local producers, agencies, private sectors and government authorities to discuss issues, sharing updates and policy. Showcasing latest equipment and technology also will be the highlight of the event.

"We believe that we can grow the agriocommodity sector into a stronger economic contributor, increase agriocommodity industry players, producer, investors, stakeholders and advance sustainable primary production here in Malaysia," she added.

She also firmly highlighted that "We want to grow a cluster of large agriocommodity firms that can take on the world, and build on Malaysia's agriocommodity strength."



Waiting for Customers

ISLAMABAD: A vendor is selling spices in his stall at Friday weekly bazaar at sector H-9 in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Interest rates raised unnecessarily,
says Mian Zahid Hussain

The economy will shrink, difficult for businesses to continue

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Friday said the central bank has unnecessarily increased interest rates which.

The decision will increase the difficulties of the business community and add to the cost of doing business, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the move will shrink the economy, increase unemployment and make many things more expensive.

Talking to a delegation of traders, the veteran business leader said that industrialists



and traders were already facing severe difficulties in getting electricity and gas. The central bank has increased the interest rate by 125 basis points to reduce inflation, cut trade deficit, and subdue demand to save foreign exchange reserves.

Now the interest rate is at 15 percent; the highest since June 2008, making it difficult for many to continue their busi-

ness. Mian Zahid Hussain said that at present the overall inflation in the country is 21.32 percent, food inflation in urban areas is 24 percent and in rural areas is 27 percent while the central bank has said that this year inflation will be between 18 to 20 percent.

The central bank has asked the government to protect the poor from the effects of inflation through targeted subsidies while the rich should play their due role. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the negative effects of the SBP's tough decision will soon be felt while the achievement of the bank's targets is not certain.

He further said that the relentless use of monetary policy to control inflation is not right as it poses a threat of recession and unemployment

so the government should take administrative and policy measures to provide relief to the people.

Agricultural commodities are very expensive in Pakistan at the moment and it is impossible for the central bank to control their prices. For this, the government will have to reduce the difficulties of the agricultural sector so that agricultural production can be increased.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the prices of crude oil, edible oil and other agricultural commodities in the global market have come down significantly due to which the prices in neighbouring countries have been reduced twice a week therefore steps should be taken to reduce prices in Pakistan.

JS investments launches
JS rental REIT

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: JS Investments, Pakistan's oldest private sector asset management company and a subsidiary of JS Bank, has launched their first Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) fund called JS Rental REIT.

Real estate is one of the most preferred investment vehicles in Pakistan. However, the sheer size of the upfront capital requirement renders the vast majority incapable of investing in this asset class.

JSIL aims to launch a series of rental and hybrid REIT funds making real estate a more affordable and accessible investment avenue. JS Rental REIT seeks long-term growth in the Net Asset Value and dividend distribution for its Unitholders through

investing in a portfolio of commercial real estate assets & generating rental income.

The JS Rental REIT Scheme will be anchored by The Centre—a 22-story commercial establishment located in the Saddar area of Karachi. The REIT will own the leasehold of multiple floors belonging to The Centre and accordingly generate a rental yield.

The Centre is a prime commercial office building located on the corner of Abdullah Haroon Road. The project location is in close proximity to all major hotels in the city and I.I. Chundrigar Road, the financial district of Karachi. The site has a land area of 3,988 sq. yds. and offers a shopping arcade on the lower floors, secured parking, and ample office space on the upper floors.

Zong 4G brings again
Calling Int'l bundles
on Eid-ul-Adha

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: On the joyous occasion of Eid, Pakistan's digital and cellular front runner Zong 4G continues the legacy to bring the best-in-class International Dialling bundle to Saudi Arabia. The International dialling bundle will be able to add to the joy of Zong 4G's customers by keeping them connected at all times to their families and friends.

Connecting Pakistanis with their beloved family members in Saudi Arabia, the company's subscribers can choose from a wide array of bundle packages that serve their needs and suit their budgets.

The special bundles are available for both prepaid and postpaid connections. Zong 4G's prepaid customers can subscribe to Bundles for PKR 100+taxes and PKR

250+taxes to get 15 and 40 call minutes respectively for one week.

While both postpaid and prepaid customers of Zong 4G can get 90 and 250 call minutes for one month by subscribing to special Monthly Bundles for PKR 500+taxes and PKR 1,000+taxes respectively.

For activation of these special IDD bundles, Zong subscribers can dial *6911# or by visiting the online store on the official website.

"Zong 4G is a customer-centric company, that is cognizant of evolving needs of its valued customers. The international dialling bundle is a testament to our aim to offer an unmatched experience to our subscribers to remain connected with their loved ones in Saudi Arabia (Mobily), especially during Eid festivities." Shared the spokesperson of Zong 4G.

Alibaba.com report finds e-commerce helped MSMEs
Mitigate Pandemic Impact

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Global B2B e-commerce platform Alibaba.com and AliResearch Institute, Alibaba Group's research arm, have co-published the report "Challenges, Responses, and Transformation of MSMEs in the Post-Pandemic Era". The report takes a multi-focal look at how Micro-Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) fared during the pandemic to provide a better understanding of the action businesses took to survive, revealing key findings that include:

MSMEs are critical to the global economy, comprising 90% of businesses worldwide and contributing 70%+ of global employment and 50-60% of GDP.

MSMEs were hit hard by the pandemic, with micro-businesses suffering disproportionately: up to 70% of global MSMEs saw sales decline with two-thirds reporting their sales dropped by 40%.

MSMEs' offline business has been severely disrupted by lack of demand while online sales have skyrocketed;

digitalisation is an effective way for MSMEs to risk-proof their business: the survival rate of MSMEs is 7 percentage points higher in the regions with the highest e-commerce penetration than in those with the lowest.

The research finds that, of all MSMEs, the pandemic took the largest toll on smaller MSMEs. This was to be expected since many smaller businesses did not have the resources or infrastructure to roll with the punches of repeated shutdowns, local restrictions, shortages and other issues caused by the pandemic. Less than a quarter of MSMEs escaped the negative effects of the pandemic, with only 23.5% of them not suffering from a decline in sales. Two-thirds of MSMEs had business drop by 40%.

In Pakistan, there are 5 million SMEs which contribute 40% in GDP of Pakistan and 25% in overall exports, as per the estimates of Small & Medium Enterprise Development Authority (SMEDA). For some countries, business continuation would remain grim if lockdowns persisted –

Close to 30% of Pakistani MSMEs in the survey indicated that they had to shut down their businesses completely during the pandemic. 30% of MSMEs that participated in the survey reported a huge loss of close to 50% because of the pandemic.

"We have to recognize that MSMEs are not only critical economic players but their health and prosperity are also critical to a full and sustaina-



ble global economic recovery. Consequently, we have released this report to help return MSMEs to the center stage and facilitate broader and more practical discussions about supporting MSMEs and equipping them for greater economic impact," said Hongbin Gao, Vice-president of Alibaba Group, Head of AliResearch Institute. The potential for market expansion remains huge for Asia-Pacific, never-

theless. For example, according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, exports in Pakistan were 500 billion Pakistan Rupees in November '21 compared to 421 billion PKR the year before. Digital transformation has proven to be a lifeline to many MSMEs during the pandemic, by reducing their costs, providing timely access to information, optimizing workflows, and helping them expand into new markets.

Unsurprisingly, the research revealed that the survival rate of MSMEs is 7 percentage points higher in the regions with the highest e-commerce penetration than in those with the lowest. In addition, the economic downturn was less severe in regions with higher e-commerce penetration rates.

Andrew Zheng, Vice-president of Alibaba.com, said, "The pandemic has changed global trade forever. There is no denying that businesses and individuals have suffered tremendously. However, the creativity and ingenuity that MSMEs have put into action to overcome the many hurdles created by the pandemic are nothing short of impressive. E-commerce may have served as a survival mechanism throughout the pandemic, but moving forward, it will remain a valuable tool for global trade. Social selling, live commerce, virtual trade shows, and request for quotation (RFQ) marketplaces allow sellers to get creative in how they reach their audiences and make it easier for them to connect with their ideal clients. Through digitalisation, MSMEs can also easily access insights related to internet traffic, demand forecasting, and other key analytics that empower them to make better decisions for their businesses."

However, the report also revealed a significant gap in the adoption of digital strategies between smaller and larger enterprises. Smaller enterprises were found to have lower adoption of sophisticated digital technologies and tended to digitalise only general administration and marketing functions, neglecting aspects including enterprise resource planning, customer relationship management and big data, comparatively speaking.

100-Day countdown begins to ICC Men's T20 CWC 2022

The Trophy Tour was set to visit 35 locations in 13 countries across four continents, more than ever before

ISLAMABAD: The countdown to 'The Big Time' has officially begun with Melbourne's iconic Yarra River the backdrop for a city centre cricketing arena created to celebrate 100-days-to-go until Australia hosts the ICC Men's T20 World Cup for the first time.

Melbourne Cricket Ground's hallowed turf took centre stage with the pitch relocated into the centre of Melbourne to mark 100 days to go until the world's best cricketers from 16 teams compete for the ultimate prize in T20 cricket, said a press release.

Australian International stars Aaron Finch, Georgia Wareham and Tayla Vlaeminck along with cricket legends Shane Watson, Waqar Younis and Morne Morkel teamed up with other Australian personalities to launch the ICC Men's

T20 World Cup Trophy Tour, driven by Nissan.

The Trophy Tour was set to visit 35 locations in 13 countries across four continents, more than ever before. The Men's T20 World Cup trophy would make stops in Fiji, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Indonesia, Japan, Namibia, Nepal, Singapore and Vanuatu for the first time, taking the sport to more fans in different countries to get a glimpse of T20 cricket's ultimate prize.

The Trophy Tour that was designed for anyone, anywhere at any time will enable fans to get involved from home with a 3D augmented reality filter, housed on the

official T20 World Cup Facebook and Instagram channels.

Fans are encouraged to get creative and show the world where you play cricket using the trophy filter. The best of the fan-generated images will be celebrated weekly and a lucky few will be rewarded with ICC Men's T20 World Cup themed prizes.



Beginning in Melbourne and circling the globe, the Trophy Tour would make its final stop in Geelong on October 16 for the opening match of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2022 between 2014 Champions Sri Lanka and Namibia.

Over 800,000 fans were anticipated

to attend the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2022 with additional tickets to all matches released on Friday, with the exception of the India and Pakistan match on October 23.

ICC Chief Executive Geoff Allardice said, "With just 100 days to go until the start of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup there is a real sense of excitement ahead of the 16 teams coming together in Australia to compete for the ultimate prize in T20 cricket.

Australian men's captain Aaron Finch said, "In a World Cup every game is a tough game, and anyone can beat anyone on their day so the white ball cricket we've got coming up over the next couple of months is going to be crucial to make sure we are ready come the first ball of the World Cup in October." Agencies

Shahzaib clinches National U19 Cup for KP U19 Whites

Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Shahzaib Khan's all-round performance helped Khyber Pakhtunkhwa U19 Whites to a five-wicket win over Central Punjab U19 Blues and clinch the National U19 Cup title here at the Rana Naveed Cricket Academy in Sheikhpura on Friday.

Chasing 215 to win, last year's finalist Khyber Pakhtunkhwa U19 Whites achieved the target in the 47th over for the loss of five wickets. Left-handed batter Shahzaib top-scored with a 95-ball 73, hitting eight fours. He also took three catches and was named player of the match. The 17-year old Shahzaib added an unbeaten 49 runs for sixth wicket with wicketkeep-



er-batter Zubair Shinwari (19 not out, 33b, one four).

For Central Punjab U19 Blues, Mohammad Zeeshan and Mohammad Maooz bagged two wickets apiece.

Earlier, after opting to bat first, Central Punjab managed to score 214 for eight from their 50 overs. Opening batter Azan Awaiz top-scored with a 125-ball 100, which included 11 fours. The last year's player of the tournament Azan ended

up scoring 267 runs in the competition - a tally which included two half-centuries. Captain Obaid Shahid was other notable run-getter with 31 off 41 balls, striking one four and one six.

For Khyber Pakhtunkhwa U19 Whites, captain Abbas Ali bagged three wickets for 34 runs from 10 overs. Jawad Ali picked two wickets for 46 runs from eight overs.

In individual awards, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa U19

Whites captain Abbas was named best player of the tournament for his all-round heroics, managing 172 runs and picking 10 wickets. Ali Ishaq from Sindh U19 Whites was named best batter of the tournament for scoring 316 runs from five matches at 105.33. Aftab Ibrahim representing Sindh U19 Blues was named best bowler of the tournament with 13 wickets. His teammate, Saad Baig was named the best wicket-keeper of the tournament for nine dismissals behind the stumps and scoring 299 runs.

The 12 teams will now feature in the National U19 Championship later this month. The PCB will announce the schedule and squads in due course.

Alvarez, Golovkin vow to take decision out of judge's hands



LOS ANGELES: Saul "Canelo" Alvarez and Gennady Golovkin have not agreed on much during the heated lead-up to their Sept 17 trilogy bout but both boxers told Reuters the fight will be decided inside the ring and not on the judge's scorecards.

Alvarez and Golovkin, known as "Triple G," first met in 2017 and fought to a disputed draw. In the rematch in 2018 the Mexican won an even more controversial points decision that many observers thought could have gone the other way. "Each of us will try to end this early and we both know how to do that," Golovkin (42-1-1) told Reuters.

"We will try not to have this fight go the distance and give it to the judges."

In a separate interview, Alvarez (57-2-2) concurred. "Look, it's going to be a hard fight. Golovkin is a good fighter, strong fighter, but my goal is to end this fight before 12 rounds," he said.

The lead-up to their third fight has been marked by a ratcheting up of the rhetoric, particularly from Alvarez, who has said he plans to send the 40-year-old Golovkin into retirement after the fight in Las Vegas.

A relaxed Golovkin shrugged off Alvarez's barbs. "I don't know how to assess his behavior but I'm used to it," he said. "I feel very comfortable and very strong mentally."

Golovkin, who hails from Kazakhstan, has won four consecutive fights since losing to Alvarez in 2018 and said he will know when the time is right to hang up his gloves. "I will listen to my body. If I feel like I'm strong and can continue, I will stay in boxing," he said.

"But if my body is telling me something is not right, that it is time to retire, I will listen to my body and I will follow its advice."

And what is his body telling him now? "Let's go buddy, let's go!," he said with a laugh.

As for Alvarez, who holds all four major belts at super middleweight, the 31-year-old is eager to finish off Golovkin and turn his attention to a rematch against Russian Dmitry Bivol, the light heavyweight who beat him in May.

'I did not think I would ever wake up'

Shehroze Kashif details sleeping at 7,500m on Nanga Parbat

ISLAMABAD: Shehroze Kashif, who became the youngest climber to ever summit the killer mountain, has detailed how he and Fazal Ali survived after getting lost high on the mountain after summiting it.

The Lahore-based climber, along with Ali, had summited the 8,126 meters tall Nanga Parbat, earlier in the week. But on their way back from the summit, a storm hit the mountain and contact was lost with the two climbers. It took a hectic rescue, mounted by the aviation division of the army to trace and bring the two climbers back.

In a video, that surfaced today after Shehroze and Fazal Ali were rescued on Wednesday, the 20-year-old climber was seen detailing the circumstances of his survival.

"As we were descending from the summit, I did



not understand where to go because there were no ropes fixed there," he said, noting that they had gotten lost a few hundred meters below the summit.

Before they could find a way down from the mountain, Shehroze said that night fell. With it, the temperature on the mountain also plunged to -45 degrees Celsius.

"We dug a hole in the ice to protect our heads," Shehroze could be seen stating in the video. At this, one of the

helicopter pilots, who had flown the rescue, asked did they build an igloo - a small dwelling made of ice. But Shehroze clarified that it was not an igloo.

"It was a hole big enough to fit our heads," he said. He then motioned at how they pushed their heads into the ice while the rest of their bodies lay exposed. He was asked if the hole was dug at camp-III (6,750 meters).

But Shehroze said that they had not managed to climb down by that much

by then and that they were still at around 7,500 meters, just 600 meters below the summit. This meant that they survived the night above even Camp-IV, which is at 7,300 meters. He continued that the two climbers then went to sleep in harsh and inhospitable conditions.

"We did not think that we will even wake up, that this is all the life there was to live," Shehroze said, continuing that their survival was a miracle. "When I woke the next morning, I thought it was a miracle," he said.

The two climbers were seen descending to camp three from the basecamp on Wednesday morning. They then managed to descend to Camp I on their own, having crossed the Kinshofer Wall. They were then picked up by Army helicopters at 4,948 meters and flown to Jaglote. Agencies

Verstappen counting on home support in Austria

SPIELBERG BEI KNITTELFELD: This weekend's Austrian Grand Prix is a home race for world champion Max Verstappen while offering a chance for Yuki Tsunoda to cool his brain and Carlos Sainz to start as a winner.

AFP examines three topics doing the rounds in the paddock at the Red Bull Ring. As befits a Formula One world champion with a few euros in the bank Max Verstappen can count on a number of places he considers 'home' in Formula One.

A particular favourite of the Dutch driver's boasts an immaculately tar-macked 4.318km drive tracing a loop in the Styrian mountains. For the past few years he has kept the tens of thousands of his fellow countrymen who descend on this verdant fir-lined patch of perfection for a weekend-long party in



high spirits.

With four wins out of the last six races on the circuit he is the true master of the Red Bull Ring, the venue for Sunday's Austrian Grand Prix. And it falls at a good time the week after a substantial chunk of Yuki Tsunoda's Alpha Tauri hitched a lift on his car at Silverstone to put paid to his British Grand Prix chances.

He added half a dozen points for finishing seventh,

but has strong ambitions for all 34 points on offer this weekend with the second of the season's sprints on Saturday. He left Monza's sprint with the maximum haul after winning the 100k dash, race and fastest lap.

"It's always a really enjoyable weekend for me to have so much support coming from Holland," he told Thursday's press conference. "But also it's a home grand prix for us and we've had really good results

in the past. So, somehow, it's always been good to us."

Alpha Tauri's Yuki Tsunoda, whose deft command of some of the earthier words in the English language can turn the team radio exchanges midnight blue, is having a rocky time at the moment.

He followed his crash coming out of the pitlane in Montreal by colliding with teammate Pierre Gasly at Silverstone when both were in contention for points.

"We had our contact, fully my fault. I straight away apologised to the team," he said on the eve of opening practise in Austria. "And, also on top of it, my debris went into Max's car as well. So, I mean, it was a really bad day for me."

He confirmed he was working with a sports psychologist to curb what Red Bull special advisor Helmut Marko described as his fiery temper.

Djokovic faces Norrie for place in Wimbledon final

LONDON: History-chasing Novak Djokovic takes on Britain's Cameron Norrie in the Wimbledon semi-finals on Friday as Nick Kyrgios gets a day off following the withdrawal of Rafael Nadal with an injury.

The Spanish second seed was Thursday forced to pull out before his last-four match against Kyrgios with an abdominal problem.

Nadal's withdrawal deprives the tournament of a blockbuster semi-final, which had been on the cards since Australia's Kyrgios beat Stefanos Tsitsipas in a bad-tempered third-round match.

Kyrgios will have an enforced break before Sunday's final while Djokovic, the top seed, can now see the path to a fourth consecutive Wimbledon title easing.

The Serb had to come back from two sets down against Italian 10th seed Jannik Sinner in his quarter-final on Tuesday.

But the 35-year-old finished the match looking fresh, even pulling off an outrageous winner while doing the



champion.

Djokovic, who beat Norrie in their only previous meeting, is braced for a partisan crowd on a hot day in London. "For him, not much to lose," he said. "Every victory from now onwards is a big deal for him."

"I know that. But, you know, I practised a few times. I know his game well. He's been around. Of course I will do my homework and get ready," Kyrgios is kicking his heels on Friday, deprived of the chance to repeat his famous 2014 victory over Nadal at Wimbledon, which the Spaniard avenged five years later.

The Australian cruised through his last-eight match against unseeded Chilean Cristian Garin in straight sets to reach his first Grand Slam semi-final but instead gets a day off.

Kyrgios has wished Nadal well, with the Spaniard predicting his injury would take up to four weeks to heal. "Different players, different personalities. @rafaelnadal I hope your recovery goes well and we all hope to see you healthy soon - till next time," Kyrgios wrote on Instagram.

Mahathir Bin Mohamad supports Pakistan, Malaysia Baseball Federation



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Syed Fakhar Ali Shah president Pakistan Baseball Federation/Vice President Baseball Federation Asia along with Sazali Hussain President Malaysia Baseball Federation, Fakhar Ameer Kazmi legal advisor of PFB meet with His Excellency Tun Mahathir Bin Mohamad, Chairman Pejuang Party /Member of Parliament Langkawi /Chairman of Perdana Leadership of Foundation. The Foundation is helping all future students/youth to become leaders.

His Excellency Tun Mahathir Bin Mohamad will be supporting Pakistan and Malaysia Baseball Federation to organized international events in Langkawi and support baseball development in both countries.

He appreciated the efforts of Syed Fakhar Ali Shah and congratulated him on his election as Vice President of BFA. He welcomed the holding of Pak-Malaysia Women Series in Lahore, Pakistan and assured all possible cooperation in the future.

Karachi's PSB Coaching Centre severely affected by rain



KARACHI: The Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) Coaching Centre in Karachi has been severely affected by rain.

According to details, athletics track and football ground were submerged by rainwater after heavy downpour on Friday. Poor drainage also meant that the outdoor facilities of the centre were inaccessible to local athletes who train at the venue.

The basic function of PSB Coaching Center, which is spread over 24.50 acres, is to provide sports facilities to the sportspersons of national and international level and general public.

According to the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), "monsoon currents are continuously penetrating in the country and likely to weaken during next 24 hours and may strengthen in the country during the weekend (09th/10th July)".

The Met Office added that all concerned authorities should remain alert and take necessary precautionary measures during the Eid-ul-Adha holidays, which are set to run till July 12. Agencies

US women book World Cup berth

MONTERREY: The United States steamrolled Jamaica 5-0 on Thursday to book a return to the women's World Cup, helped by Haiti's 3-0 victory over Mexico in the CONCACAF W Championship.

Sophia Smith bagged a brace in the space of three minutes and Rose Lavelle, Kristie Mewis and Trinity Rodman scored second-half goals to complete the rout over the Jamaican team - known as the "Reggae Girlz" - who had surprised Mexico 1-0 in their tournament opener. Five minutes into the contest, Smith attacked down the right side and, after slipping the ball over Jamaican defender Deneisha Blackwood, she drove into the box and delivered a right-footed shot into the net. Three minutes later she struck again, played forward by a deep ball and scoring in front of goalkeeper Rebecca Spencer.

The eight-team tournament in Monterrey serves as the regional qualifier for the 2024 Paris Olympics and the 2023 women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand - where the United States will be vying for a third straight title after triumphs in 2015 and 2019.

The two top teams in each group book World Cup berths along with their semi-final spots in the CONCACAF tournament. The United States had opened their campaign with a 3-0 win over Haiti, but the Haitians bounced back with a vengeance against Mexico.

Roselord Borgella in the 14th minute and Nerilia Mondesir in the 67th converted penalties for Haiti and Sherly Jeudy curled in a spectacular free kick in the 78th to seal the win.