



Imran was launched to impede national development: Maryam

Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) Vice President Maryam Nawaz says former prime minister Imran Khan was launched to impede the country's development and sabotage the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Imran Khan, who used to deliver lectures of liberating the nation of slavery, had himself proved to be a slave of foreign powers (after the ECP verdict in his party's prohibited foreign funding case).



The law will take its course on PTI's future: Shahid Khaqan

Senior PML-N leader Shahid Khaqan Abbasi says the law will take its course on the matter of future of PTI. The PTI created hurdles in the proceedings of the prohibited funding case and also put pressure on the Election Commission of Pakistan. PTI received one hundred and fifty crore rupees from the sources which are not permissible under the law of Pakistan. The party also received funds from Indians and Israelis.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Oil levy

Pakistan meets last pre-condition: IMF

Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Tuesday said that Pakistan has fulfilled all previous actions by raising the Petroleum Development Levy (PDL) on petroleum products. The IMF representative said that Pakistan has fulfilled the pre-conditions for joint seventh and eighth reviews. This condition was fulfilled by increasing the PDL on July 31. Along with this, Pakistan has also completed the preliminary process for the seventh and eighth reviews.

The IMF representative said that a board meeting would be convened once adequate financial assurances will be confirmed. The board meeting can be tentatively called on August 24. The representative said that the UAE, Saudi Arabia and China have given adequate financial assurance to provide the necessary financial support through the privatization process.

Esther Perez Ruiz, the IMF's Resident Representative for Pakistan, confirmed the last prior action in a statement sent to the media. "Pakistan has fulfilled the preconditions for the seventh and eighth joint review by increasing the PDL (petroleum development levy) on July 31," said the statement. "The IMF Executive Board meeting will be held at the end of August if adequate funding is assured to Pakistan," the IMF statement said. According to sources, the IMF meeting is contingent on assurances of \$4.2 billion in funding from Pakistan's friendly countries.

Addition

President Dr. Arif Alvi administering the oath of office to Sardar Ayaz Sadiq as the Federal Minister, at Aiwane-Sadr, Islamabad on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

ECP verdict proves Imran Khan 'a certified liar': PM

Grieved over shahadat of army officers in copter crash

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said the verdict of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had yet again proved Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan as a 'certified liar' over submitting false affidavits. "The ECP verdict on PTI foreign funding case charge sheets Imran Niazi for violating the Constitution, submitting false affidavits, and accepting foreign money," the prime minister said in a tweet after the ECP announced the verdict this morning.

"Proven yet again that he is a certified liar," he added and urged the nation to ponder over the implications of Imran Khan's politics funded by foreigners. The ECP, in a unanimous verdict, ruled that the PTI received the prohibited funding and issued

a notice to the party asking why the funds should not be confiscated. A three-member ECP bench headed by Chief Election Commissioner Sikander Sultan Raja announced the verdict in a case filed by PTI's founding member Akbar S. Babar which remained pending since November 14, 2014.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Tuesday expressed his deep grief and sorrow over shahadat of Corps Commander Quetta Lt. Gen. Sarfraz Ali and five other army officers and soldiers in an unfortunate helicopter accident in

Lasbela. The prime minister said the entire nation saluted Shaheed Lt. Gen Sarfraz Ali, DG Pakistan Coast Guard Major General Amjad Hanif, Commander Engineer 12 Corps Brigadier Muhammad Khalid, Pilot Major Saeed Ahmed, Co-Pilot Major

the entire nation was grieving over the gloomy incident. The prime minister said Lt. Gen. Sarfraz Ali and his companions were the living examples of serving the humanity and discharging their duties with devotion.

Shaheed Lt. Gen. Sarfraz Ali was the best professional, dutiful, an able officer and good human being, he added. The prime minister prayed for the high ranks of the departed souls and for the families to bear the losses with equanimity. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has once again expressed his strong commitment for the resettlement of the flood affected people. In his tweets, he said the devastation caused by continuous rains and floods in Balochistan is infeasible. He said all the government institutions have stepped up rescue and relief work keeping in view the situation.

PM expresses commitment for resettlement of flood affectees

M. Talha Manan and Crew Chief Naik Mudassar Fayyaz.

While expressing his condolence and sympathies with the bereaved families, the prime minister said these sons of the soil were the pride of nation who laid down their lives while saving the countrymen trapped in floods in Balochistan province. He said

Unanimous decision

ECP rules PTI received prohibited funding

Imran submitted 'false' affidavit

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Tuesday announced verdict in prohibited funding case against the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). ECP, in its unanimous verdict, ruled that the party received funds from business tycoon Arif Naqvi and from 34 foreign nationals. It went on to say that the party had taken ownership of eight accounts and kept 16 hidden. Unknown accounts have also come to light, said the commission in its verdict, adding that hiding accounts is a "violation" of Article 17 of the Constitution.

The electoral watchdog also decided to issue a show-cause notice to the PTI to explain why the commission should not seize the funds it received.

The commission also said that PTI chief Imran Khan had submitted a "misdeclaration" with the commission. The Election Commission of Pakistan had reserved its verdict in prohibited funding case — previously referred to as the foreign funding case — after the conclusion of arguments from both sides of the case on June 21.

The case was filed by PTI founding member Akbar S. Babar and was pending since November 14, 2014. Babar had alleged serious financial irregularities in the party's funding from Pakistan and abroad. In March 2018, a scrutiny committee was constituted to examine the PTI financing. The committee submitted its report on January 4, after 95 hearings and nearly four years.

Three legal options

Govt, PDM bigwigs discuss ECP verdict

ISLAMABAD: A meeting of the ruling coalition parties and Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) on Tuesday discussed the verdict of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) over Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) prohibited funding case.

A summit meeting of the coalition government and PDM parties was held at Prime Minister House, which was chaired by PM Shehbaz Sharif himself. Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto, Maryam Nawaz, Maulana Fazlur Rehman and other leaders attended the meeting. Moreover, leaders from MQM-P, PML-Q, ANP, BNP and BAP also attended the meeting.

In the meeting, deep grief and sorrow were expressed over the martyrdom of six officers including Lieutenant General Sarfraz Ali in the helicopter accident.

On the occasion, prayers were offered to seek eternal peace for the martyrs, patience for the bereaved families. It was said in the meeting that while helping the flood victims, the sons of the nation have achieved the great status of martyrdom, on which the entire nation pays homage to them.

The coalition government mulled over three legal options against the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) after the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) announced its verdict in the prohibited funding case. The coalition government received the ECP verdict regarding the PTI prohibited funding case which was sent to the interior and law ministries. The government started consultations for the enforcement of the decision came against the PTI. APP

Imran Khan, PTI on foreign powers' agenda: Fazl

Calls for PTI ban, Imran Khan's disqualification

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: PDM Chief Molana Fazlur Rehman has demanded the government disqualify Imran Khan and ban Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) after the ECP announced its verdict on the PTI prohibited funding case on Tuesday. Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam (JUI-F) head Fazlur Rehman in a press conference on Tuesday said that the Election Commission's (ECP) decision has proven his view about Imran Khan and PTI. Government should disqualify Imran Khan for life and ban PTI, he demanded.



reserved verdict said prohibited funding against PTI has been proven.

ECP, in its unanimous verdict, ruled that the party received funds from business tycoon Arif Naqvi and from 34 foreign nationals. A three-member bench headed by Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikander Sultan Raja, comprising Nisar Ahmed Durrani and Shah Muhammad Jatoti announced the reserved verdict. Pakistan Democratic Alliance (PDM) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Tuesday While reacting to the verdict of the Elec-

tion Commission of Pakistan (ECP) over the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) prohibited funding case said that today's verdict proved Imran Khan is a 'Jewish agent'.

Taking a dig at PTI chairman, Fazl said that Imran Khan and his party are on the agenda of foreign powers, and PTI is working against the interests of Pakistan on foreign funds. He also expressed regret over the martyrdom of army soldiers in Balochistan's army helicopter incident and said that his heart was saddened by the martyrdom of army soldiers. The martyrdom of officers and soldiers is a national tragedy.

He further said that the entire nation shares the grief with the families of the martyrs of the Pakistan Army. The officers of the Pakistan Army sacrificed their lives for the service of the nation. The services of the Pakistan Army soldiers in the relief operations are commendable, may Allah raise the ranks of the martyrs and grant patience to the bereaved.

CAD rises to \$17.4b in FY2022

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's current account deficit (CAD) has swelled to \$17.4 billion in the fiscal year of 2021-22. According to details, the country recorded a CAD of USD 17.406 billion in FY22 compared to just USD 2.82 billion in FY21. The massive CAD speaks a lot about the severe problem of the balance of payments. The deficit of over USD 17.4 billion is more troubling in the wake of no inflows as loans while the commercial markets are not ready to accept Pakistan's bonds due to higher risks.

It is to be mentioned here that the CAD was a record high in 2018 at \$19.2 billion. The record CAD was incurred by PTI after the five-year rule of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz. Finance Minister Miftah Ismail has been hinting at an early deal with the IMF, but with the passage of time, the trust deficit is rising; the currency market reflects the trust deficit by depreciating the local currency on a day-to-day basis.

PTI rejects ECP verdict on foreign funding case

Top brass Announces to challenge ECP's verdict

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) top brass rejected the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) verdict over prohibited funding case and decided to uphold a peaceful protest call outside ECP. Sources privy to the matter said that PTI chairman Imran Khan presided over the meeting after the announcement of verdict, which was attended by party leaders. During the meeting Imran said that verdict was biased, adding that they will not come under any pressure. In this regard, the sources further said that the PTI leadership unanimously rejected the decision of the Election Commission and put legal defects of the decision before the nation.

Former foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said that the party will challenge the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP's) verdict in court, using political and legal means. The ECP, in a unanimous verdict, said that the PTI received foreign funds from 34 individuals and 351 busi-



ISLAMABAD: Police personals stands alert outside Election Commission of Pkaiстан during foreign funding case decision, in Federal Capital. Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

nesses. The donations were sent from America, Australia, Canada, and the UAE. In addition, PTI took funds from an American businessman, the ECP said, issuing a show-cause notice to the party.

The PTI leader said that the party met all the criteria and submitted all the evidence to come clean. "Today's verdict proved that there was no foreign fund-

ing case. The media trial going on for years has finally come to an end today," Qureshi said that his party has objections against the election commission for not being impartial. "We provided everything that the commission asked us to, however, it did not seek any evidence from the other parties," he added.

"We demand action against those parties that

received funding from former Al-Qaeda chief Osama Bin Laden and Libya. They should also be held accountable," he said. The former foreign minister added that the coalition government had wished that the PTI should be nullified.

However, "God once again made Imran Khan victorious and the government had once embarrassed itself", he said.

Legalities

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Rana Sana Ullah Khan addressing a press conference along with Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

IHC rejects PAC's directives ex-NAB chief

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has rejected the Public Accounts Committee's (PAC) recommendation to remove former chairman NAB Javed Iqbal as the chairman of the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances. Acting IHC Chief Justice Amir Farooq heard former justice (retired) Javed Iqbal's petition, challenging the decision of PAC that barred him to head the missing persons' commission.

While rejecting the PAC's recommendation, the Islamabad High Court issued notices to Secretary National Assembly, Secretary Public Accounts Committee and others and sought replies in the next hearing on August 13. It may be noted that on July 7, Public Accounts Committee (PAC) Chairman Noor Alam Khan accused former chairman National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Javed Iqbal of harassing Amina Masood Janjua. During the PAC meeting, the PTI lawmaker narrated that when Janjua attended the meeting on the commission on missing persons Iqbal told her: "She is so beautiful what is the need to get married?"

Exports drop by 23.95%

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's exports have declined by 23.95% while the trade deficit dropped by 46% in the first month of the fiscal year 2022-23, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) data shows. According to data issued by the PBS, the monthly export dropped by drastically by 23.95% in July while a drop of 5.17% was experienced in annual exports.

The data showed that Pakistan's exports amounted to \$2.219 billion in July 2022 which dropped from \$2.918 billion recorded in June 2022.

Govt will decide to ban PTI, Imran Khan

Federal ministers observe disqualification of PTI members will be also seen

ISLAMABAD: Federal Law Minister Azam Nazir Tarar and Federal Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah on Tuesday said that the government will decide to ban Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf and its chairman Imran Khan. While holding a press conference with Rana Sanaullah, Azam Nazir Tarar said that former prime minister Imran Khan has done his politics with funds worth millions of rupees. The ministers said it would also be seen whether other party members would also be disqualified, adding that the PTI chairman should be banned for life for concealing the facts.

While appealing to the Supreme Court, the PML-N leaders said that the full SC bench should hear the matter. Azam Nazir Tarar has asked Imran Khan to apologize to the country and resign following the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) verdict on the prohibited funding case. Taking a dig at Imran Khan, Tarar said that he used the donation money for politics. Tarar said that every political party has to report expenditure, income and resources to the ECP. Tarar said PTI has expressed disinterest with its accounts and

Govt to place PTI leaders on ECL

ISLAMABAD: Following the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) verdict over the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf prohibited funding case, the incumbent government on Tuesday decided to place the names of PTI leaders on the Exit Control List (ECL). The government has decided to include the names of former National Assembly speaker Asad Qaiser, former Sindh Governor Imran Ismail, Ahmad Rasheed, Samar Ali Khan, Seema Zia, and Najeed Haroon. Jahangir Rahman, Khalid Masood and Zafarullah Khattak will also not be able to go abroad after being named in the ECL. Staff Reporter

said Imran Khan's money trail contradicts its statement.

Rana Sanaullah said that today a constitutional body has declared Imran Khan a thief. Taking a swipe at the former prime minister, the interior minister said the PTI chief used charity money for politics. Imran Khan should apologize to the country for today's decision of Election Commission and resign, Rana asked the former premier. Apart from this, Rana further said that the information has just been received that the senior officers of the Pakistan Army aboard the missing helicopter have been martyred.

The Federal Interior Minister prayed

for the uplift of the ranks of the officers and staff of the Pakistan Army who were martyred in the helicopter incident. He said that when the helicopter went missing yesterday, the entire country was praying for the safety of its Army brothers. The Interior Minister prayed that Allah Almighty would give courage and strength to the families of martyrs to bear this trauma. Rana said that in the Holy Quran, there is a clear command of Allah Almighty about those who sacrificed their lives for the country that, "You should not call them dead, they are alive, but you do not know about it". He said, "This shock is unbearable for all of us."

Persistent absence

NA Speaker de-seats four more PTI MNAs

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf on Tuesday de-seated four more PTI MNAs citing their absence from the assembly for over 40 days. According to details, Raja Pervaiz Ashraf has de-seated four more Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) from the National Assembly saying that the members have been absent from the assembly proceedings for over 40 days.

The de-seated PTI members include Saleh Muhammad Khan, Ghulam

Muhammad Lali, Mian Muhammad Soomro and Ghulam Bibi Bharwana. The de-seated members neither resigned nor submitted a leave application, the NA speaker added. Earlier on July 28, the Speaker accepted the resignations of 11 Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Members of the National Assembly.

The government accepted the resignations of 11 PTI MNAs including Shireen Mazari, Ali Muhammad Khan, Ijaz Shah, Farrukh Habib, Shandana Gulzar, Fazal Muhammad, Fakhar

Zaman, Abdul Shakoor Shad, Jameel Ahmed and Akram Cheema. According to details, the decision was taken during a meeting of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) under the chairmanship of Maulana Fazlur Rehman.

Sources had said that the National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf had decided to accept more resignations of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Members. "The Speaker has decided to accept resignations of 11 more members of the PTI," sources said.

18-member

Punjab's cabinet line-up gets Imran Khan's nod

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan on Tuesday approved the 18-member cabinet of Punjab, former chief minister Usman Buzdar has been nominated as the parliamentary leader of PTI in the provincial assembly. According to sources, only PTI members of the assembly were included in the 18-member cabinet of Punjab. In the first phase, not even one member of the PML-Q was included in the cabinet.

The sources further said that PML-Q had two ministries in the Usman Buzdar cabinet but none in the new cabinet that sent a wave of concern

President telephones COAS

Condoles martyrdom of army officers in heli crash

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi on Tuesday telephoned Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa and expressed his condolences over the martyrdom of the high-ranking army officers. He expressed his deep sorrow and grief over the martyrdom of the army officers and soldiers in the helicopter crash while on a mission to provide relief to flood victims of Balochistan, a press release issued here by President's Media Wing said.

The President offered his deep condolences to the Army Chief on the martyrdom of Corps Commander 12 Corps Lieutenant General Sarfraz Ali, Director General Pakistan Coast Guard Major General Amjad Hanif, 12 Corps Brigadier Muhammad Khalid, Pilot Major Saeed Ahmed, Assistant Pilot Major Muhammad Talha Mannan and Naik Mudassar Fayyaz during the relief and rescue operations in aid of flood victims.

Expressing his deep sorrow and grief over the unfortunate incident, he prayed for the elevation of their ranks in Jannah and also expressed sympathy for their families for the irreparable loss.

Paying tribute to the martyrs' services for the country and the

nation, the President said that these officers were selflessly engaged in relief operations disregarding the danger posed to their lives to alleviate the suffering of the flood victims.

He added that the entire nation was indebted to them and saluted them for responding to the call of duty and providing relief to the people facing hardship due to heavy floods and bad weather.

During his conversation, the President affectionately recalled a briefing given to him by Corps Commander Lt. General Sarfraz Ali during one of his visits to Gwadar and said that he found the officer extremely capable and intelligent having exceptional management skills.

Chief of the Army Staff, while apprising the President of the unfortunate incident, said that the helicopter met an accident because of low visibility due to bad weather and added that the wreckage of the helicopter had been recovered and all military officers had embraced martyrdom. During the telephonic interaction, the President said that he would personally attend the funerals of the martyrs and would personally offer his condolences to their families and relatives.

ECP's verdict proves Imran as certified liar: ANP Chief

PESHAWAR: Awami National Party (ANP) President, Asfandiyar Wali Khan here on Tuesday said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chief Imran Khan, who was declared 'Sadiq and Ameen' by former Chief Justice (ret'd) Saqib Nisar, had been proved as certified liar in the PTI's foreign funding case.

In a statement here, Asfandiyar Wali Khan said that the Election Commission has proved that not only prohibited funding was made to PTI but its chief also submitted a false affidavit and concealed accounts from ECP.

He said submission of false affidavits by the PTI chairman testified that Imran Khan had made a lie. He said receiving funds from foreign companies was a complete violation of the Election Act 2017.

The ANP Chief alleged that PTI was a company running on foreign funding. He questioned what had been given to 34 foreign companies in response to funding to PTI. He expressed hope that the Federal Government would fulfill its responsibilities in the light of ECP's judgment in the PTI's foreign funding case.

Miftah must sell toffees: Chairman PAC



ISLAMABAD: The chairman of Public Accounts Committee (PAC) and a Member of the National Assembly (MNA) Noor Alam Khan has suggested Finance Minister Miftah Ismail to better start selling 'toffees' instead of dealing with the financial matters. Noor Alam Khan launched sharp criticism against Finance Minister Miftah Ismail over skyrocketing fuel prices in the country. He censured that Ismail failed to provide relief to the nation.

He said that the government should reduce the diesel price instead of petrol to provide relief to the masses. Khan criticised that the finance minister has no feelings for the miseries of farmers and transporters. "The modification in diesel price impacts all commodities, increasing its rates after the hike in diesel rate. At this time, diesel for the farmers' tractors and tubewells is expensive but petrol for elites' cars is low-priced."

Efforts afoot to boost Pak-UAE cooperation: Miftah

UAE envoy shows a keen interest in enhancing economic ties

Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue, Miftah Ismail here on Tuesday highlighted that the incumbent government was focusing on various new avenues of mutual interest to extend the existing bilateral relations between Pakistan and United Arab Emirates (UAE) to a new level.

The minister was talking to Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates, Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salim Al-Zaabi who called on him here at Finance Division, according to press statement issued by finance ministry. He said that Pakistan and UAE share long-standing bilateral ties in various areas including energy, refinery, petroleum and trade.

The minister apprised the Ambassador about the potential investment areas where

UAE can invest and also assured him of greater facilitation and support. The minister shared welcoming sentiments for pursuing new investments in Pakistan and assured the UAE's Ambassador of full support and cooperation by the present government. The ambassador showed a keen interest in enhancing and strengthening the bilateral relation between both countries especially on economic fronts.

Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Miftah Ismail also held a meeting with delegation of Mardan Chambers of Small Traders and Small Industry (CSTSI) headed by its President Muhammad Fayyaz Khan and President Markazi Tanzeem-e-Tajraan KP Sharafat Ali Mubarak at Finance Division today. Coordinator to the PM on Commerce & Industry Rana Ihsan Afzal and other senior



officers attended the meeting.

Mr. Sharafat Ali Shah and President Mardan Chambers of Small Traders and Small Indus-

try Mr. Fayyaz Khan shared with the Finance Minister regarding the issues being faced by the Mardan Chambers of Small Traders and Small Industry especially related to imposition of tax on electricity bills, property taxes and sales tax. The Finance Minister was also briefed about the contribution of this sector in the economic development of the country and it was added that the issues of this sector should be resolved at the earliest time possible.

The Finance Minister acknowledged the contribution of this sector economic development of the country and assured the delegation that their comprehensions would be addressed. He also apprised the delegation that reviews are being carried out for resolving the aforementioned issues. The delegation thanked the Finance Minister for his full support and cooperation.

IS Helicopter crash

Six Pak Army personnel martyred in Balochistan

Helicopter crashed due to bad weather, says ISPR

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: The Pakistan Army helicopter that had gone missing on Monday evening in Balochistan crashed, leaving six military personnel martyred, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Tuesday.

The military chopper had gone missing as it was en route from Quetta to Karachi at around 5:30pm. The personnel in the chopper were overseeing the flood relief efforts in the southwest of the country.

Above normal monsoon rains and deadly flooding have hit Pakistan hard this year, killing hundreds of people so far and wreaking havoc, particularly in



Lt General Sarfraz Ali



Brig (Approved Maj Gen) Amjad Hanif



Brig Muhammad Khalid



Maj Saeed Ahmed



Maj M. Talha Manan



Naik Mudassar Fayyaz

Balochistan. The army has remained involved in rescue and relief efforts there.

The ISPR, in a statement, said

that the wreckage of the unfortunate helicopter was found in Musa Goth, Windar, Lasbela. It said that the accident occurred due to "bad weather" as

per the initial investigation.

All six officers and soldiers, including Corps Commander Quetta Lieutenant General Sarfraz Ali, embraced martyrdom, the military's media wing added.

Lieutenant General Sarfraz Ali, who was commandant at the Command & Staff College in Quetta, had been commissioned in six Azad Kashmir regiments in March 1989 and served the Pakistan Army for 33 years. The Director-General Pakistan Coast Guard Major General Amjad Hanif had been commissioned in 19 Azad Kashmir regiments in April 1994 and served for 29 years in the Pakistan Army.

Transporters strike

LAHORE: A view of public transport buses stands at Badami Bagh bus station due to transporters strike against taxes on petrol and vehicles, in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

NHA starts releasing tenders for repair of rains affected network



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: National Highway Authority has started advertising tenders in the newspapers for construction and repair of national highways affected by the recent heavy rains and floods in the country. Due to untiring efforts of the zonal offices, the restoration of traffic on most roads is going on gradually.

Federal Minister of Communications Asad Mahmood is personally supervising the restoration work of the national highways affected by rains and floods. According to the latest reports, the work of removing the stagnant flood

water and destroying the weeds on Gujarat Bypass and Lahore Eastern Bypass is in progress. Similarly, the restoration work of Lunda Bridge in Balochistan has been completed and it has been opened for traffic.

Further traffic on Hasanabdal-Thakot and Mansehra-Gittidas sections continues as normal. While on the Thakot-Sazin section mud clearance activities have been accelerated to restore the road. Traffic on Quetta, Nushki, Nokundi, Zhob, Sibbi and LoraLai highways is continuing as usual. Ramk-Pezu, Wanda Banuchi-Lachi Toll Plaza and Lachi Toll Plaza-Peshawar sections of Indus

Highway have been restored for traffic. Gharo-Keti Bandar, Karachi-Hub, Lyari Expressway, Karachi Northern Bypass, Karachi-Hyderabad, Hyderabad-Skrand, Mirpur Khas-Umarkot-Khokhra Par, Qazi Ahmed Amri Bridge and Jam Shoro-Dadu-Wagan highways are safe and traffic is plying on them.

Federal Secretary Communications/Chairman National Highway Authority Capt (R) Muhammad Khurram Agha has urged the construction experts and staff to complete the maintenance and repair work of the highways on an emergency basis so that the problems faced by the people could be solved at the earliest.

IS Independence Day of Pakistan

Re-recording of National Anthem set to release on Aug 14

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: To mark the 75th Anniversary of the Independence of Pakistan, the Steering Committee for the Re-recording of the National Anthem of Pakistan looks forward to its official release by the Government of Pakistan on 14th August 2022. Formed in June 2021, and further mandated by the present Government in April 2022, the Steering Committee has endeavoured to create a re-recording of the original national anthem that reflects updated inclusivity in voices and expression while ensuring the sanctity of the original words and the musical composition.

The stirring, powerful musical score by Ahmed Ghulam Ali Chagla was formally approved in 1949 by then-Prime Minister Quaid-e-Millat, Liaquat Ali Khan. However, the beautiful, inspiring words, as written later by Abu Al-Asar Hafeez Jalandhari were formally approved and then recorded with the music in 1954.

Mastercard: Consumers in Pakistan embrace digital payments

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Adoption of a broader range of digital payment methods is accelerating in Pakistan and the technology fueling the future of payments is already here, according to Mastercard's New Payments Index 2022. In addition to being aware of solutions like digital cards, biometric payments, BNPL (Buy Now Pay Later), and open banking, consumers in Pakistan are increasingly and actively using these solutions in their everyday lives.

Mastercard's New Payments Index 2022 found that 89% of people in Pakistan have used at least one emerging payment method in the last year. The research shows that 31% have used a digital money transfer app and 19%



used biometric payments. Consumers are also making purchases in increasingly diverse ways, for example through voice assistant, through digital

assets, through social media apps, and through mobile apps.

While traditional payment methods still have traction, one in ten (12%) consumers in Pakistan indicated they used less cash in the past year. By contrast, 68% of Pakistan users (compared to 61% globally) increased their use of at least one digital payment method in the last year, including digital cards, SMS payments, digital money transfer apps and instant payment services. These behaviors are expected to continue, with comfort and security key to growing adoption.

The Index confirmed security is top of mind when deciding what payment methods to use, globally and in Pakistan (48%). In the region, security is followed by considerations for ease

of use and promotions. Highlighting sustainability as a key driver, 28% of Pakistan consumers said they also consider social and environmental benefits.

"It is exciting to see the increased adoption of emerging payment methods and consumers' eagerness to reap the benefits of the digital economy in Pakistan and across the region. Mastercard is committed to understanding the needs and preferences of the people in the markets we serve, and we will continue partnering with the public and private sectors to develop market-relevant solutions as we build an inclusive and connected digital future that works for everyone," said J.K. Khalil, Cluster General Manager, MENA East, Mastercard.

Zong 4G's Iran Ziyarat Roaming Bundle offered

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's leading digital and telecommunication company, Zong 4G continues the streak of unbeatable international roaming bundle – Iran Ziyarat offer.

To facilitate the subscribers on their religious journey, the Iran Ziyarat bundle offers 60 minutes of airtime at PKR 1,000 + tax only for 30 days. To subscribe, Zong's prepaid customers can dial *4255# or visit the online store and MyZongApp.

"Our Iran Ziyarat bundle is a testament towards our customer-centric approach that will allow Pakistanis to stay in touch with their loved ones back at home. At Zong 4G, we are ensuring that we address the needs of our digitally-savvy customers as they travel for business, personal or religious reasons," said the spokesman.

The spokesperson added "We are committed to expand our roaming portfolio for our subscribers by offering more innovative products and services."

Zong's industry-leading international roaming plans have allowed Pakistanis to stay in touch with friends and family when travelling internationally. These bundles have been a major help to Pakistani travelers in cross-border communication, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Prior to the Saudi Arabia bundles, Zong had launched industry-leading foreign roaming packages for Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, and a number of other countries.

IS Clarification

PTA only regulates tariff for dominant mobile operator

ISLAMABAD: With reference to news item which appeared in a section of media that the regulator is not allowing increase in tariffs of mobile operators, it is clarified that this assertion is incorrect and misleading. PTA only regulates tariff for the dominant mobile operator in Pakistan i.e. PMCL (Jazz) in line with Significant Market Player (SMP) determination and Jazz-Warid Merger condition with the aim to prevent any anti-competitive practices by the market leader. Whereas, rest of the Cellular Mobile Operators (CMOs) are free to set their tariffs as per their commercial considerations, and PTA does not intervene in their tariff changes.

During the month of June 2022, PTA approved all 25 tariff proposals submitted by Jazz, with an average price increase of 14%, keeping in view the increasing operational costs of the company. Other operators have also increased their tariffs, such as: Ufone increased tariffs of its 42 packages by an average of 16.4% in June 2022.

Telecom customers in Pakistan have been enjoying one of the most affordable telecom services in the world due to competitive telecom market and progressive policies and regulations. The Economist Intelligence Unit's (EIU) Inclusive Internet Index 2022 shows that Pakistan has improved 15 points in the affordability ranking, where it was at 78th position in 2021 and improved to 63rd in 2022, performing better than Bangladesh (64th).

METRO join hands with Indus Hospital

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: METRO, the leading international wholesale company, has joined hands with Indus Hospitals and Health Network (IHHN), to extend its support for their health and charity initiatives. As part of the support METRO Pakistan (Pvt) Limited commemorated the World Hepatitis Day at its Canal and Model Town Stores in Lahore, where Indus Hospitals setup kiosks for creating awareness and distributed flyers among the staff and customers.

Speaking at the occasion, Pervaiz Akhtar, Director Corporate Affairs, METRO Pakistan, said; "We, as a responsible corporate citizen, are always open to provide support to the health related initiatives, and this cooperation with Indus Hospitals & Health Network is part of the same thought process. We hope that our small contribution will help spread the right knowledge for our customers, as well as for our own staff."

A detailed session on types, prevention, and cure of Hepatitis was held for METRO staff at the Model Town Store conducted by the qualified doctors from IHHN, which estimated that approx. 14 million patients across Pakistan suffer from Hepatitis C virus (HCV), and how Indus hospital provides free of cost and quality treatment to as many patients as possible.

Furthermore, the kiosks at METRO stores also distributed colorful collectible money-box among the children, to encourage the habit of taking out money for charity.

Raja Farooq invites PM Tanvir to APC on Kashmir, 15th amendment

PM Tanvir Ilyas Khan shocked over Helicopter crash in Balochistan, terms it a national tragedy

Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: Former Prime Minister Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan called on Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Tanvir Ilyas Khan here on Tuesday. Raja Mohammed Farooq Haider Khan on the occasion extended an invitation to the PM to participate in All Parties Conference on Kashmir and 15th Amendment being held on August 7.

Speaking on the occasion, Prime Minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas Khan said that there would be no compromise whatsoever on 13th amendment, which had led to political, administrative and financial autonomy of the government of the state of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Referring to India's 5th August 2019 move, the PM said that it was primarily the agenda of the BJP's mother organization RSS.

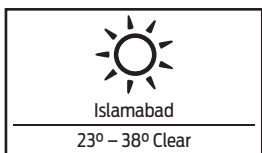
The main purpose of the move, he said, was to convert the majority of Kashmiri Muslims into a minority and to rob the state of its Muslim identity.

"Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists living within the state of Jammu and Kashmir are familiar with this conspiracy and demand the restoration of the statehood", the PM said, adding that Kashmiris have outrightly rejected the move.

He said that during the last three years, India's racist regime has illegally occupied Kashmiris' land and reduced to second-class citizens.

While terming the Indian move as illegal, the former premier Raja Farooq Haider Khan said that the abysmal situation in the Indian held territory demands that all the political parties of the AJK including Hurriyat leaders should adopt a clear cut stance on the issue. "Protection of rights we have got through the 13th Amendment is the collective responsibility of all of us", he added.

Raja Farooq also inquired after the health of his father Sardar Ilyas Khan. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Tanveer Ilyas Khan, expressed his deep sorrow over the martyrdom of the Pakistani Army officers and others who embraced martyrdom in the helicopter crash in Balochistan. Terming it a national tragedy, the PM while paying eulogizing tributes to the martyrs said that the nation would always remember the sacrifice of these officers and who embraced Shahadat during the service of humanity. Extending his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family of Corps Commander Quetta Lieutenant General Sarfraz Ali, Major General Amjad Haneef, Major Talha and other officers, said that the whole nation stands with the relatives of the martyrs at this hour of immense grief.



SERVICES

Namaz Timings
 Fajr 3:43 am
 Zohr 12:14 pm
 Asr 5:07 pm
 Maghrib 7:09 pm
 Isha 8:44 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
 Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

COMPLAINTS

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

11 outlaws including three bike lifters held

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory police have arrested 11 outlaws including 03 members of a bike lifter gang from different areas of the city and recovered 04 stolen bikes, spare parts, drugs and weapons during the last 24 hours, a Police Public Relations Officer said.

He said that, DIG (Operations) Sohail Zafar Chatha had categorically ordered all zonal officers to curb the crime in their respective areas and arrest those involved in looting innocent people and involved in illegal activities.

Following these directives, Lohi Bher police station arrested three members of a bike lifters gang namely Nubeen Waris, Rab Nawaz and Sohail Umair and recovered four stolen bikes, spare parts of 09 bikes from their possession. Accused have previous criminal record also and cases were registered against them in Lohi Bher and Koral police station. Similarly, a CIA police team arrested an accused from Golra area namely Khayal Jameer involved in drug peddling and recovered 205 gram hashish and 50 gram ice from his possession.

Tackle natural disasters

Govt, civil society efforts improve human wellbeing

PHF members reached out to 19.9m people to initiate human, uplift projects with Rs25 billion

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Appreciating the significant contribution of INGOs towards humanity and development, Government and Civil society representative expressed that the role of civil society and development and humanitarian agencies is highly crucial to bring transformational change at the societal level.

These views were expressed at the annual showcasing event of the Pakistan Humanitarian Forum (PHF) on the work of PHF member organizations which was accomplished in year 2021.

Director General, Federal Directo-

rate of Immunization Dr. Soofia Younas stressed on the joint efforts at all levels to meet the desired outcomes of development and humanitarian goal in the country. She further highlighted the importance of investing in the overall health with special focus on mother child health and immunization of children for a healthy and prosperous future.

Head of Office Pakistan & Iran, European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office - ECHO, Taheeni Thammanna-goda said that organizations are aligning their program with development and humanitarian needs in the country. She highlighted their role in providing human-

itarian relief such as food and nutrition, shelter, health care, water and sanitation and education in emergencies.

A five-year strategic plan of PHF was also shared at the ceremony to better educate audience at large about future plans to contribute to development and humanitarian sector of Pakistan.

Giving details of the PHF member organizations' projects, Country Coordinator of Pakistan Humanitarian Forum Syed Shahid Kazmi informed the audience that 275 development and humanitarian projects were completed during the year 2021 with a total funding of Rs25 billion by reaching out to 19.9 million people in Pakistan.

Security heightened

ISLAMABAD: Police persons searching vehicles during security high alert due to Election foreign funding case decision at Commission of Pakistan, in Federal Capital, As Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan's party accepted millions of dollars in illegal funds from foreign individuals and groups, the election commission ruled.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

IIUI keen to enhance its ties with universities across world: Dr. Hathal

IIUI President calls on Chairman HEC

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Hathal Homoud Alotaibi, President, International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIUI) called on Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Chairman Higher Education Commission (HEC) and felicitated him on assuming the charge.

During the meeting, issues of mutual interest including initiatives for promotion of quality education and role of universities in society building were discussed. The meeting was also attended by Dr. N.B. Jumani, Vice President, Administration and Finance, IIUI.

IIUI President briefed Dr. Mukhtar on IIUI's vision, future plans and strategy for academic excellence. IIUI President vowed that he will be in the leading ranks for cooperation with the HEC chief as per his aspirations for improvements in the education sector. Dr. Hathal said that IIUI will



be keen to enhance its bilateral ties with the universities across the world. Dr. Hathal also apprised him that university after the transitional period, now all set for a new journey of success as it has completed its new strategic plan that he also presented to the Chairman HEC. The IIUI President also briefed him about the university's vision of digitization and successful launch of its Open and Distance Learning system.

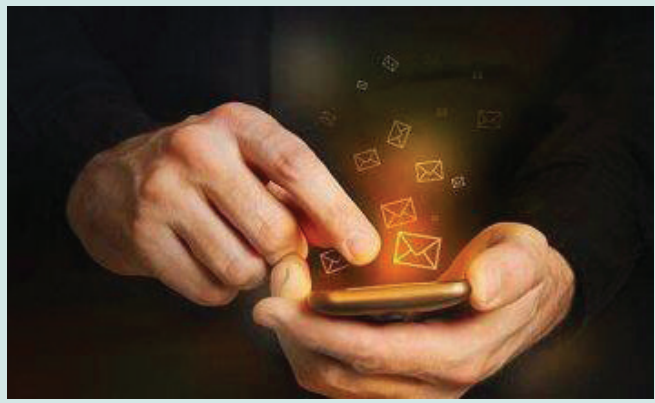
On the occasion, Chairman HEC said that he has special regard for the scope and statu-

re of IIUI. He told he has been the member of its highest statutory body and university has potential to excel as one of the best educational institutions in the world. He desired that the league of Islamic Universities must hold gatherings to form a consortium in the light of the OIC vision and IIUI must lead as a hub of this consortium. He also thanked Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and the Imam Muhammad Ibn e Saud University of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the

continuous support of IIUI. He added that Saudi Arabia has a special place in the hearts of Pakistanis. Appreciating the vision and future plans of IIUI President, Dr. Mukhtar said he was happy to see that IIUI was heading towards the right direction under the leadership of a hard working president. He assured of maximum support saying the role of HEC shall be all about facilitation and cooperation for all the universities and positive steps will be encouraged.

Health Corner

Using smartphones could help improve memory skills



ISLAMABAD: Using digital devices, such as smartphones, could help improve memory skills rather than causing people to become lazy or forgetful, finds a new study led by UCL researchers.

The research, published in Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, showed that digital devices help people to store and remember very important information. This, in turn, frees up their memory to recall additional less important things.

Neuroscientists have previously expressed concerns that the overuse of technology could result in the breakdown of cognitive abilities and cause "digital dementia."

However, the findings show that using a digital device as external memory not only helps people to remember the information saved into the device, but it also helps them to remember unsaved information too.

To demonstrate this, researchers developed a memory task to be played on a touchscreen digital tablet or computer. The test was undertaken by 158 volunteers aged between 18 and 71.

Participants were shown up to 12 numbered circles on the screen, and had to remember to drag some of these to the left and some to the right. The number of circles that they remembered to drag to the correct side determined their pay at the end of the experiment. One side was designated 'high value', meaning that remembering to drag a circle to this side was worth 10 times as much money as remembering to drag a circle to the other 'low value' side.

Participants performed this task 16 times. They had to use their own memory to remember on half of the trials and they were allowed to set reminders on the digital device for the other half.

The results found that participants tended to use the digital devices to store the details of the high-value circles. And, when they did so, their memory for those circles was improved by 18%. Their memory for low-value circles was also improved by 27%, even in people who had never set any reminders for low-value circles.

However, results also showed a potential cost to using reminders. When they were taken away, the participants remembered the low-value circles better than the high-value ones, showing that they had entrusted the high-value circles to their devices and then forgotten about them.

Senior author, Dr Sam Gilbert (UCL Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience) said: "We wanted to explore how storing information in a digital device could influence memory abilities."

"We found that when people were allowed to use an external memory, the device helped them to remember the information they had saved into it. This was hardly surprising, but we also found that the device improved people's memory for unsaved information as well."

"This was because using the device shifted the way that people used their memory to store high-importance versus low-importance information. When people had to remember by themselves, they used their memory capacity to remember the most important information. But when they could use the device, they saved high-importance information into the device and used their own memory for less important information instead. (Courtesy: Science Daily)

CIA police apprehends 96 accused in July

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Police Crime Investigation Agency (CIA) succeeded and arrested 96 outlaws during the last month, Police Public Relations Officer said.

He said that CIA police also recovered looted items worth Rs. 13,444,000 including gold ornaments, laptops, mobile phones, motorcycles, weapons and drugs.

According to the details, IGP Islamabad had assigned tasks to the CIA police to arrest those involved in heinous as well as street crimes and recover the looted items.

While sharing the performance of CIA police for the last month, SSP Investigation said that the CIA teams conducted a massive crackdown against the criminals and succeeded in apprehending 96 criminals during the last month. Police teams also recovered 04 pistols, 4238 gram hashish, 10 gram Ice, 1740 gram heroin, 570 liter liquor and ammunition, the Police Public Relations Officer added.

Investigations on 57 cases were also completed and their challans were submitted in relevant courts while nine criminal gangs were also busted.

DIG (Operations) Sohail Zafar Chatta also appreciated this overall performance adding that it is the prime responsibility of police to provide relief to the citizens and every possible effort would be made to ensure it.

The DIG maintained that the CIA Wing of Islamabad Capital Police is very active against criminals and it got success during the last month in curbing the crime from the city.

He reiterated that Islamabad police would not leave any stone unturned to curb the crime from the city and to secure the life and property of the citizens. Agencies

NDMA dispatches relief ration for flood affectees



ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Tuesday dispatched 1,000 King Salman Relief Fund ration bags for Balochistan flood affectees.

The NDMA Spokesperson in a media release said that King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KS Relief) provided a thousand ration bags for the flood victims of Balochistan.

The ration bags were handed over Deputy Commissioners of Jafarabad, Naseerabad, Sahbatpur, Sibi and Kutuch. The ration consists of flour, pulses, sugar and ghee. It may be noted that its first shipment was sent to Balochistan on July 15, which included 3,000 ration packs. APP

Promoting Tourism

Punjab govt to hold festivals on oldest civilizations: DG

Staff Reporter

RAWALPINDI: Punjab Arts Council Director General Saman Rai on Tuesday said that the Punjab government had planned to organise festivals in 2022-23 on world's oldest civilisations to promote tourism in the country and apprise the world that the same were still alive in Pakistan.

Presiding over a meeting here at Rawalpindi Arts Council (RAC) to review the arrangements for holding the festivals, she said that the oldest civilisations, including Gandhara, Harappa, Rohi and Sindhi were preserved in Pakistan in their original shape.



The provincial government would organise fairs on Gandhara, Harappa, Sindhi and Rohi in Taxila, Sahi-

wal, Faisalabad and Bahawalpur respectively, Saman said.

RAC Director Waqar Ahmed said that every nation had a cultural personality; some aspects of the personality were similar to other civilisations. Still, some individual characteristics distinguished the culture of a nation from other civilisations, he added.

He said that the programmes for the fairs were being finalized, and would feature artisan stalls, folk music, musical nights, craft competitions and documentary films.

Waqar mentioned that diplomats, NGOs, and students would also be invited to the fairs.

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Palestinians' political cards & Israel's refusal

Ramzy Baroud

Until recently, Israeli politics did not matter to Palestinians. Though the Palestinian people maintained their political agency under the most demoralizing conditions, their collective action rarely influenced outcomes in Israel, partly due to the massive discrepancy in power between the two sides. Now that Israelis are embarking on their fifth election in less than four years, it is important to ask the question: How do Palestine and the Palestinians factor in Israeli politics? Israeli politicians and media, even those decrying the failure of the "peace process," agree that peace with the Palestinians is no longer a factor and that Israeli politics almost entirely revolves around its own socioeconomic, political and strategic priorities. However, this is not exactly true.

While it is appropriate to argue that none of Israel's mainstream politicians are engaged in dialogue about Palestinian rights, a just peace or coexistence, Palestine remains a major factor in the election campaigning of most of the political parties. But instead of advocating for peace, these camps advocate sinister ideas, ranging from the expansion of illegal settlements to the destruction of Al-Aqsa Mosque. The former is represented by

ex-Prime Ministers Benjamin Netanyahu and Naftali Bennett and the latter in more extremist characters like Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich. Palestine has always factored in Israeli politics in such a vulgar way. Even before the establishment of the state of Israel on the ruins of historic Palestine in 1948, the Zionist movement understood that their state could only exist and maintain its majority through force, and only when Palestine and the Palestinian people ceased to exist.

"Zionism is a colonizing adventure and, therefore, it stands or falls on the question of armed forces," Zionist ideologue Ze'ev Jabotinsky wrote nearly 100 years ago. This philosophy of violence continues to permeate Zionist thought to this day. "You can't make an omelet without breaking eggs. You have to dirty your hands," Israeli historian Benny Morris said in a 2004 interview, in reference to the Nakba and the subsequent dispossession of the Palestinian people. Until the war of 1967, Palestinian and Arab states mattered, to some extent, to Israel. Palestinian and Arab resistance cemented Palestinian political agency for decades. However, the devastating outcome of the war, which once again demonstrated the centrality of violence to Israel's existence, relegated Palestinians and almost entirely sidelined the Arabs. Since then, Palestinians have

only mattered to Israel based almost exclusively on Israeli priorities. For example, Israeli leaders have flexed their muscles before their triumphant constituencies by attacking Palestinian training camps in Jordan, Lebanon and elsewhere. Palestinians also factored in as Israel's new cheap labor force. In some ironic but also tragic way, it was the Palestinians who built Israel following the humiliating defeat of the Naksa (setback). The early stages of the peace process, especially during the Madrid talks in 1991, gave the false impression that Palestinian agency was finally translating into tangible outcomes. But this hope quickly evaporated as illegal settlements continued to expand and Palestinians continued to lose their land and lives at an unprecedented rate.

The ultimate example of Israel's complete disregard for Palestinians was the so-called disengagement plan carried out in Gaza by late Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in 2005. The Israeli government believed that Palestinians were inconsequential to the point that the Palestinian leadership was excluded from every phase of the scheme. The approximately 8,500 illegal Jewish settlers of Gaza were merely resettled on other illegally occupied Palestinian land and the Israeli army simply redeployed from Gaza's heavily populated areas to impose a hermetic blockade on the impoverished

Strip. The Gaza siege apparatus remains in effect to this day. The same applies to every Israeli action in the Occupied Territories. Due to their understanding of Zionism and experience with Israeli behavior, generation after generation of Palestinians rightly believed that the outcome of Israeli politics could never be favorable to Palestinian rights and political aspirations.

The last few years, however, have begun to alter this belief. Though Israeli politics has not changed — in fact, it has pivoted further to the right — Palestinians, wittingly or otherwise, have become direct players in it. Israeli politics has historically been predicated on the need for further colonialism, the strengthening of the Jewish identity of the state at the expense of Palestinians, and a constant quest for war. Recent events suggest that these factors are no longer controlled by Israel alone. The popular resistance in East Jerusalem and the growing rapport between this and various other forms of resistance throughout Palestine are reversing Israel's previous success in segmenting Palestinian communities, thus dividing the Palestinian struggle among different factions, regions and priorities. The fact that Israel is forced to seriously consider Gaza's response to its annual provocation in Jerusalem, known as the "flag march," perfectly illustrates this.

As demonstrated time and again, the growing resistance throughout Palestine is also denying Israeli politicians the chance to wage war for votes and political status within Israel. For example, Netanyahu's desperate war in May 2021 did not save his government, which collapsed shortly after. A year later, Bennett hoped that his flag march would provoke a Palestinian response in Gaza that would buy his crumbling coalition more time. The strategic decision by Palestinian groups not to respond to Israel's provocations thwarted Bennett's plans. His government also collapsed shortly after. Still, a week after the dismantling of Israel's latest coalition, groups in Gaza released a video of a captured Israeli who had been presumed dead, sending a message to Israel that the resistance in the Strip still has more cards at its disposal.

The video attracted much attention in Israel, compelling new Prime Minister Yair Lapid to assert that Israel has "a sacred obligation to bring home" its captives. All these new elements have a direct impact on Israeli politics, policies and calculations, even if the Israelis continue to deny the obvious impact of the Palestinians, their resistance and their political strategies.

The writer is an internationally syndicated columnist, a media consultant. Courtesy Arab News

Heat waves, wildfires: climate change

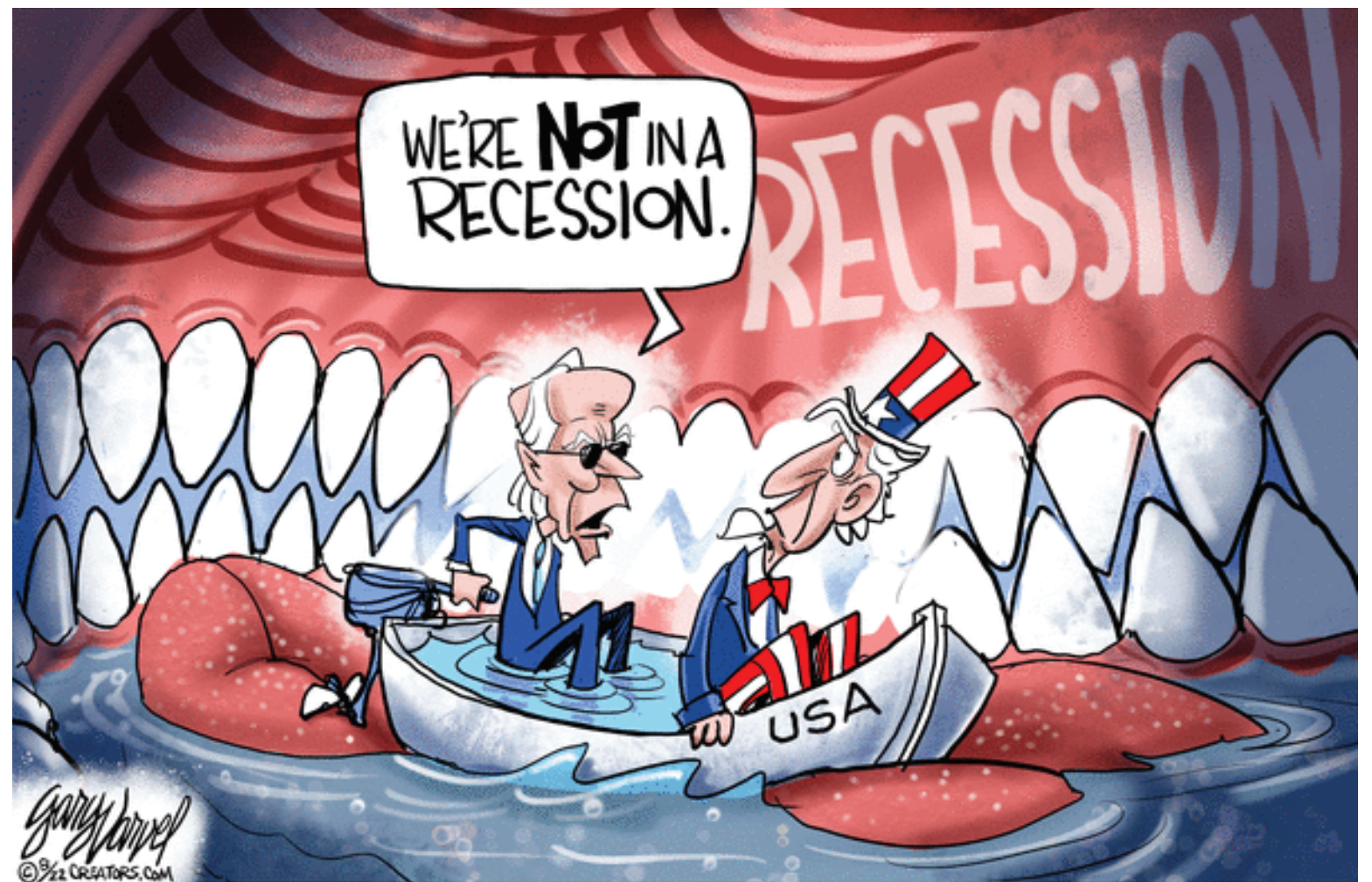
If scorching heat waves, raging wildfires and unusually high number of deaths caused by extreme heat in parts of East Asia, Western Europe, North Africa and North America hogged headlines a week ago, towards the end of last week, it was the turn of unseasonal summer rains and the resultant floods and deaths elsewhere. The common thread in these extreme natural calamities is the dangers caused by climate change. Countries as geographically distant as the UAE, the US and Iran experienced the havoc caused by incessant downpour. Far away in the US, flash flooding caused by torrential rains killed at least 25 people in eastern Kentucky and the death toll is expected to rise. Hundreds of people had been rescued by boat and there had been about 50 aerial rescues using helicopters deployed by the National Guard. Eastern Kentucky floods a lot but we've never seen something like this. Folks who deal with this for a living who have been doing it for 20 years have never seen water this high. Some areas reported receiving more than eight inches of rain in a 24-hour period. The water level of the North Fork of the Kentucky River at Whitesburg rose to a staggering 20ft, well above its previous record of 14.7ft.

Seven Asian expatriates were found dead in the UAE following floods across the country, the UAE's interior ministry said on Friday when evacuations were underway in the emirates of Ras Al Khaimah, Sharjah and Fujairah, in the aftermath of torrential rainfall. In next door Iran, rescuers searched overflowing rivers and through piles of debris on Friday to try to find people missing after landslides and floods triggered by heavy rains. 100 towns and 300 villages in 18 of Iran's 31 provinces had been affected by floods in the past days. Most of the country's highways were closed.

Friday's worst hit area was Firouz Koo, in the foothills of Alborz Mountains northeast of Tehran, where at least 10 people lost their lives and around 16 missing, Tehran governor Mohsen Mansouri told state TV. The town of Firouz Koo, about 140km from Tehran, is a favourite retreat for vacationers because of its cool summer temperatures. The area's lush trails are also popular with trekkers. On Thursday, state media said at least eight people died in a landslide caused by floods in the village of Imanzadeh Davood in northwestern Tehran that also damaged a religious shrine. As many as 14 people were reported missing. The previous Saturday, flash floods in the southern Fars province killed 22 people.

In Qatar, the surprise, unseasonal summer downpour last Thursday flooded many roads, temporarily disrupting life. Represented by the Joint Rainfall Emergency Committee, the Ministry of Municipality provided the work teams, equipment and mechanisms necessary to pump out rainwater from various regions of the country on a timely basis and around the clock.

The rain, which brought down temperatures below 30 degrees Celsius for a day, provided a sigh of relief for many residents amid searing temperatures in the past two months. It is bizarre that weather patterns have become so unpredictable across the world. As Qatar Museums' Chairperson Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani posted on Instagram last Thursday, heat waves in Europe, rain & floods in the Gulf...climate change doesn't get more real.



Biden's Whale

garyvarvel.com

An Enlightened Future of Pakistan



Analysis

Mushtaq Sadozai

The Rural Education and Development (READ) Foundation is a non-profit educational network in the Rural Areas of North Pakistan. This network was established in 1994. It is an organization which is playing a vital role in spreading quality education in the rural areas and imparting education to the orphan and very poor students free of cost. It has addressed the dire need of education and literacy in Pakistan.

It is based in Islamabad, Pakistan and Serving the Regions of Azad Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. At present, it runs a network of 390 schools in Sialkot, Jhelum, Gujrat, Kharian, Azad Kashmir (All Districts), Murree, Gilgit-Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the outskirts of Islamabad/Rawalpindi. It has 5948 teachers and serves 112,006 children including 11341 orphans.

In a country like Pakistan which is still in process of developing educational infrastructure, Read Foundation is a true asset in our education system. This asset not only works for welfare of orphan and deserving students, but it has potential to serve entire nation. The best national resource in today's world is human capital. Education is not only a success for Rural areas in probing better opportunities for the society, but also helps the nation to take out the lagnappe from this asset.

Read Foundation provides quality education which helps students in understanding many prospects of life such as enrichment of the personal advancement, increases social status, social health, and helping to progress economically, setting goals in life and escalates students awareness towards prevailing social issues. The modern education system of Read Foundation is removing the complexities and is fully competent to evacuate the prevailing social issues of bewilderment and discrimination done among people on the basis of caste, race, religion and creed.

Read Foundation is focusing on such type of education which evolves an individual's mind that triggers his acumen giving him a sense in working towards the betterment of the society. This organization is endeavouring on the formula to educate a man and a woman to become not only a good learner but also to understand every facet of life. It provides the ability to understand all the human rights, social rights, duties and responsibilities towards the country. It transforms the speculations by bringing in the positivities and kicking off the negativities.

Read Foundation is playing a pre-eminent role in shaping children minds towards quality education since childhood. Read Foundation is providing us the best educational institutions where our children are provided with innumerable opportunities to boost their knowledge and open their minds to the various issues around the world. They are being inculcating the habits like reading news papers, watching educational programmes on TV, reading knowledgeable books, etc to make our future generation more refined and better educated. It is not only helping them in achieving the dreamed positions but also making them good citizen, a good Muslim and a good human being.

Read Foundation refers to the organized process of attaining knowledge and know-how through study and guidance. Because

nowadays education is not only about sticking to books and securing good marks; it means to discover and explore things which were unknown, so that our future generation can enhance our knowledge and skill set. Read foundation is making efforts to educate our children to demarcate between good and evil.

In such an ambitious organization, the relevance of education has increased in securing a good job and moving in the direction on goals. They are providing proper education which makes our children mentally and socially strong by increasing their Islamic knowledge. In the present era the values, we all know that educational intuitions are not there to produce saints, but they can indoctrinate the values, feeling of respect so that the individuals are able to understand the concept of human welfare and read foundation is doing it very well.

Read foundation is working on the concept of Education which is producing country's future. We all know that the children of today are the citizen of tomorrow, thus if a child studies hard today and becomes a wise man he will surely be a good citizen in coming era. It is very difficult to access the loss endured by the entire human race on account of want of education by men and women who had exceptional talent but could not utilize it. So read foundation is exceptionally doing their good job on these lines.

Read foundation is shaping a child's life, building the character of a person and making him a responsible person who is aware of his duties and responsibilities. We sincerely hope that read foundation will extend its services in all rural areas of the country for orphan and poor students. I appreciate the founder of Read Foundation who conceived and implemented the beautiful idea.

The writer is senior analyst and columnist.

BRI & Future Common Development

Shi Xiaomeng

For many years, commuters, merchants and tourists had to spend endless hours to travel by land from the Croatian mainland to the southern part of the eastern European country. A bridge recently inaugurated has made those exhausting experiences a thing of the past.

Opening for traffic earlier this week, the 2.4-km-long bridge finally connects two parts of the nation facing each other across the blue waves. Now it just takes a breezy three-minute drive for local residents and travelers to cross the strait for their trips to Dubrovnik, a medieval city known as the "Pearl of the Adriatic." Connectivity matters, not only for tourism, but also for the movement of goods and access to services. A much smoother flow of trade is expected to create thousands of local jobs. Another piece of good news for people living in the southernmost part of Croatia is that they now can enjoy easier access to educational and health facilities on the country's mainland.

In the long run, this flagship project of Belt and Road cooperation, along with others of its kind, is expected to help revive growth in the region and spark new possibilities for common development in other parts of the world. This is precious against the backdrop of the lingering COVID-19 pandemic, a tottering global economy and mounting geopolitical uncertainties. Initiated by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) envisions trade and infrastructure networks connecting Asia with Europe and Africa along the ancient Silk Road routes. Over the past 10 years or so, the BRI has followed the guiding principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits. It has made impressive headway in delivering tangible benefits to local resi-

dents through such connectivity projects as the Peljesac Bridge, the Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway in Africa, and the new Haifa port in Israel, among others.

"We are seeing connectivity, we are seeing airports remodeling, and we are seeing ports remodeling," said Charles Onunaiju, director of the Nigeria-based Center for China Studies, when speaking of China's infrastructure investment in Africa. When describing the economic benefits of Belt and Road cooperation, Onunaiju invoked Lekki Deep Sea Port, Nigeria's first deep seaport under construction by China Harbour Engineering Company in Lagos. Official data show the project will create up to 170,000 jobs and bring revenues totaling 201 billion U.S. dollars to the state and federal government through taxes, royalties and duties. "What is really happening is that this connectivity is aiding the future and long-term growth of Africa, so that Africa can begin to participate in global supply chains," said Beatrice Matiri-Maisori, a senior economics lecturer at Kenya's Riara University, who shares similar views with Onunaiju on Africa's infrastructure development.

Besides high expectations for growth, connectivity brings certainty to a world of uncertainties. Connectivity is at the heart of supply chain resilience, said Josephine Teo, Singapore's minister for communications and information and second minister for home affairs. When logistic woes caused by the pandemic frustrated businesses worldwide, the China-Europe Railway Express managed to help sustain supply chains, and maintain trade transactions across the Eurasian landmass. In 2021, the total number of China-Europe freight train trips reached 15,183, and registered a yearly increase of 55 percent on average from 2016 to last year.

The writer is senior analyst and columnist. Courtesy Xinhua

US strike kills al-Qaeda leader al-Zawahiri in Afghanistan

Taliban condemns attack, calling it violation of int'l principles and Doha Agreement

WASHINGTON: A US drone strike killed al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri in Afghanistan over the weekend in what President Joe Biden said was a "clear demonstration" of American resolve to carry out its fight against the terrorist group.

"Now justice has been delivered, and this terrorist leader is no more," Biden said from the White House's Blue Room balcony in nationally-televised remarks. "We made it clear again tonight that no matter how long it takes, no matter where you hide, if you are a threat to our people, the United States will find you and take you out."

Zawahiri had long evaded US efforts seeking to kill or capture him. He led the US-designated terrorist group since 2011, when American forces killed al-Qaeda founder Osama bin Laden in Pakistan.

The US strike took place early Sunday morning local time and targeted a safe house in downtown Kabul that Zawahiri, his wife, daughter and grandchildren had relocated to earlier this year, according to a senior administration official who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity.

The US had studied the location for months, and Biden received updates since May. His intelligence community put forward a potential operation



to take out Zawahiri on July 1, and the president worked since then to ensure any strike "would minimize" the risk of civilian casualties, the official said.

The official said two hellfire missiles were fired from a US drone targeting Zawahiri while he was alone, and none of his family members or other civilians were killed during the strike.

US intelligence indicates that members of the Taliban worked to conceal the al-Qaeda leader's presence at the building after the strike and carried out what the official said

was a "concerted effort to restrict access to the safe house and the surrounding area for hours after the strike."

"Taliban members acted quickly to remove Zawahiri's wife, his daughter and her children to another location consistent with a broader effort to cover up that they had been living in the safe house," she said.

Zawahiri's presence in Kabul was a "clear violation" of the agreement the US struck under former President Donald Trump for the withdrawal of American forces from Afghanistan, the

official said, noting the US expects "to continue to have a dialogue with them about matters of our interests."

"Going forward with the Taliban, we'll continue to hold them accountable for their actions. And we have made clear with them in the intervening days that we also expect them to take no action that would harm Mark Frerichs as we are involved in efforts to secure his release after his long detention and captivity," the official added.

Frerichs is an American national who has been held in Afghanistan since 2020.

For its part, the Taliban condemned the US attack, calling it a "clear violation of international principles and the Doha Agreement," a reference to the pact that set out the US exit from Afghanistan. Zawahiri was originally from Egypt and had spent decades in al-Qaeda serving as its deputy leader under bin Laden before assuming the mantle over a decade ago. He is believed to have plotted the 2000 attack on the USS Cole in Yemen which killed 17 US sailors and helped coordinate the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on New York City and the Pentagon.

The US had offered a reward of up to \$25 million for information on him under its Rewards for Justice program.

Türkiye leading contributor of forces to NATO: Defense Minister

ANKARA: Türkiye is the leading country in terms of contribution of forces to NATO, the country's defense minister said.

"Türkiye is the first in the contribution of forces to NATO, it is fifth in contribution to the operations and eighth in terms of contribution to the minimum budget (of the alliance)," Defense Minister Hulusi Akar on Monday told Anadolu Agency's Editors Desk. Türkiye has contributed to NATO missions and will continue to do so, Akar affirmed.

He further noted that Türkiye's contributions to regional and global peace are recognized by all and the fulfillment of its missions at NATO is "greatly appreciated and praised."

Türkiye joined the military alliance of 29 North American and European countries in 1952 and boasts of having the second-largest army among



member states after the US. Ankara attaches utmost importance to NATO's role in maintaining security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area.

Akar also commented on Sweden and Finland's NATO bid, saying: "Türkiye is in no way opposed to NATO's open door policy. We fully support its open door policy." The defense chief said his country has fulfilled all its responsibilities with no letup for 70 years.

"NATO should expand, but while NATO is expanding, this enlargement

must be made according to NATO criteria, NATO principles, NATO elements, without prejudice to the sensitivities and security of each of the NATO member countries, respecting their security," he added.

Türkiye, a longstanding member of the alliance, voiced objections to Sweden and Finland's membership bids, criticizing the countries for tolerating and even supporting terror groups such as the PKK and its offshoots.

Ahead of a NATO summit in Madrid last month, Türkiye, Sweden, and Finland signed the accord, which allows the two Nordic countries to become NATO members but conditions them to take steps over Türkiye's terrorism concerns and lift an arms embargo on Ankara.

Following the deal, NATO formally invited Sweden and Finland to join the 30-member military alliance.

Feeding new centrifuges was response to US action: Iran

TEHRAN: Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian said on Tuesday that feeding gas into hundreds of new-generation centrifuges was a response to the United States' action.

Speaking to reporters at a human rights conference, Amirabdollahian gave an account of the developments regarding the talks to revive the 2015 Iran nuclear deal. He said that the parties were preparing for a new round of talks several weeks ago, but the US suddenly proposed a resolution in the International Atomic Energy Agency to force Iran to make concessions at the negotiation table.

EU signs contract for new Spanish Covid vaccine

BRUSSELS: The European Commission has signed a contract to allow EU member states to buy up to 250 million doses of a new Covid-19 vaccine developed in Spain, it said Tuesday.

The HIPRA vaccine has yet to be approved by the European Medicines Agency (EMA), but if it gets the green light it would be the eighth to join the EU joint procurement program. The Brussels EU executive oversees a joint buying strategy that has secured 4.2 billion Covid vaccine doses so far, underpinning the bloc's immunization strategy.

Contracts have already been signed with AstraZeneca, Sanofi-GSK, Janssen, BioNtech-Pfizer, Moderna, Novavax and Valneva, although the latter has suspended production. The



HIPRA vaccine, also known as PHH-IV, is protein-based and intended as a booster shot for adults whose immunity is receding after their first two or three shots.

The EMA has placed it on "rolling review" and is studying the results of laboratory and clinical trials, with a view to possibly authorizing its use later this year.

"With Covid-19 infections on the rise in Europe, we need to ensure maximum preparedness as we head into the autumn and winter months," EU health commissioner Stella Kyriakides said. "The HIPRA vaccine adds yet another option to complement our broad vaccine portfolio for our Member States and citizens. An increase in vaccination and boosting is essential over the coming months."

Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, speaking to reporters on a visit to Palma de Mallorca, seized on the contract as a sign that approval was imminent, declaring: "We have finally achieved this vaccine." He hailed Brussels' confidence as a victory for "innovation and the pharmaceutical industry in our country" and for public research funding from the national and Catalan governments.

Mirwaiz appeals people to observe Black Day on Friday

SRINAGAR: Senior APHC leader Mirwaiz Umar Farooq who continues to remain under house arrest since 4th August 2019 has appealed to the people of Jammu and Kashmir to observe 5th August as Black Day to convey a strong message to the entire world that Kashmiris do not accept India's illegal occupation of Jammu and Kashmir.

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq in a statement released to the media in Srinagar said, "Kashmiris will continue their struggle till they achieve right to self determination. Oppression of India cannot stop them from getting their inalienable right."

It was on 05 August in 2019 when RSS-backed fascist government led by the enemy of humanity Narendra Modi usurped political, social, religious and other basic rights of Kashmiris, turned the territory into a big open-air prison.

The Mirwaiz believes that the August 5 action is an attack on Kashmir's unique identity, culture, demography and fundamental rights.

He urged the Kashmiris all over the world to hold protest demonstrations on Friday against the Indian aggression and to draw the attention of the world towards the suffering of oppressed people of occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

APHC leaders Hilal Ahmad War and Abdul Samad Inqilabi in their statements while terming August 5 a darkest day in the history of Jammu and Kashmir, said "The Modi government has unleashed a reign of terror in IIOJK since August 5, 2019 by using its occupational forces." They appealed to the global community to intervene and stop the bloodbath in Kashmir.

APHC leaders Khadim Hussain and Syed Sibte Shabbir Qummi in a joint statement in Srinagar said that the sacrifice by the grandson of the Holy Prophet in Muharram, the first month of Islamic calendar, is a message of hope for all the oppressed nations including the people of occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The leaders said that India is hell-bent on eliminating the very existence of Muslims in IIOJK for demanding their right to self-determination.

Russia backs China over Pelosi visit to Taiwan

LONDON: Russia backed China on Tuesday over an expected visit to Taiwan by US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi, warning Washington that such a provocative trip would put the United States on a collision course with Beijing.

Chinese leader Xi Jinping warned US President Joe Biden against playing with fire over Taiwan in a call last week but three sources told Reuters on Tuesday that Pelosi was still set to visit the island.

"We cannot say for sure right now whether she will or will not get there, but everything about this tour and the possible visit to Taiwan is purely provocative," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters. Maria Zakharova, Russia's foreign ministry spokesperson, said the expected visit was a provocative attempt by Washington to pile pressure on China - with whom Russia has forged a strong partnership in recent years.

"We consider a possible visit by Pelosi to Taiwan... as another provocative action by the United States aimed at exerting additional pressure on Beijing," she said.

"Russia confirms the principle of "one China" and opposes the independence of the island in any form," Zakharova said. China views visits by US officials to Taiwan as sending an encouraging signal to the pro-independence camp in the island. Washington does not have official diplomatic ties with Taiwan but is bound by US law to provide the island with the means to defend itself.

In the Chinese civil war, Mao Zedong's Communists defeated the forces of the Kuomintang (KMT), or nationalist party, under Chiang Kai-shek, forcing him to flee to Taiwan in 1949.

China has repeatedly warned Pelosi against going to Taiwan, which it claims as its own. Beijing says a Pelosi visit would contravene the one-China principle that Washington has vowed to abide by.

New Kuwaiti government sworn in

KUWAIT CITY: The new Kuwaiti government led by Prime Minister Ahmed Nawaf Al-Ahmad was sworn in on Tuesday, according to the state news agency KUNA.

Crown Prince Meshal Al-Sabah received the 12-member Cabinet at the Bayan Palace in the capital Kuwait City at a ceremony attended by top officials, the broadcaster said. A royal decree was issued by the country's emir on Monday to form a new government made up of 12 ministers.

Oil Minister Mohammad Al Fares, Finance Minister Abdul Wahab Al Rasheed and Foreign Minister Sheikh Ahmed Nasser Al Mohammed Al Sabah were all reappointed to their posts in the new government.

NATO chief, Ukraine's president discuss grain shipments

BRUSSELS: NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg and Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Tuesday discussed military assistance and grain shipments.

Stoltenberg said on Twitter that he had a "good call" with Zelenskyy to discuss "priorities for military support." He added it is "vital that NATO and allies provide even more assistance to Ukraine even faster."

The leaders also talked about the first Ukrainian grain shipment and the need to "fully implement the deal sponsored by the UN and our ally Türkiye."

Zelenskyy's office said he informed Stoltenberg of "the need for Ukraine to quickly receive more heavy weapons from NATO member states in order to successfully repulse Russian attacks and proceed to a further counteroffensive."

The US on Monday announced sending another \$550 million in military aid to Ukraine, bringing the total support to over \$8 billion since Russia's war on Ukraine began on Feb. 24.

The EU defense and foreign ministers are also expected to discuss further increasing the bloc's €2.5 billion (\$2.56 billion) military aid to the country at their informal meeting later this month.

Türkiye, the UN, Russia, and Ukraine signed the deal on July 22 to reopen three Ukrainian ports for grain that has been stuck for months because of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war. After departing from the Ukrainian port of Odesa, the first grain-loaded ship will arrive in Istanbul later on Tuesday for a joint inspection before setting off for Lebanon.

Congo to reassess UN force after 36 killed in protests

KINSHASA: Congo's government is reassessing the presence of United Nations peacekeepers after protests against the force in the country's east have killed at least 36 people.

President Félix Tshisekedi chaired a crisis meeting as demonstrations escalated after U.N. peacekeepers opened fire on civilians, killing three, in Kasindi, an eastern border post with Uganda.

In addition to the deaths in Kasindi others have died in the eastern towns of Goma, Butembo, Uvira and Kanyabayonga, Congo's government spokesman Patrick Muyaya said in a statement Tuesday.

He said the government had consulted civic groups in the affected areas and "the populations made a clear request: that of seeing (the U.N. peacekeepers) leave Congo," he said.

At the crisis meeting, Congo's president said that he spoke with U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who expressed deep condolences after the killings at the Kasindi post, according to the statement. Tshisekedi said shared his total disapproval of the behavior of the U.N. peacekeepers and told the secretary-general that those guilty of the violence must be severely punished. Guterres had called for justice over the weekend.

The government will convene a meeting with the U.N. mission to discuss the possibility of its withdrawal, Muyaya said in the statement. No date has been set for the meeting.

The U.N. force in Congo, known as MONUSCO, has about 16,000 uniformed personnel but has not succeeded in stabilizing the country's volatile east. Recently the M23 rebels have carried out numerous attacks. The U.N. force has already withdrawn from two provinces of Congo, Kasai and Tanganyika.

Ceremony held in Manchester to pay homage to volunteers

Spokesman Report

MANCHESTER: A ceremony was organized by Manchester City Council Community Learning Department UK, to recognize and encourage the passion, work and dedication of Community Learning Volunteers who volunteer their services and skills in various established Community Learning Centers across Manchester. A simple but dignified ceremony to pay homage was held here in the spacious auditorium of the People's History Museum, Manchester, presided over by District Program Leader Naomi Bath and assisted by Nawala Trece.

It should be remembered that immigrants coming to Britain from different countries across England, whose mother tongue is other than English and who are unable to speak English in the society, are given free educational courses in these institutions for their educa-

tional and linguistic training.

On this occasion, in his address to the participants of the ceremony, the speakers praised the work of the volunteers and admitted that they are performing a difficult but important national duty. There has been a significant change in the lives of many people. Acknowledging the passion of the volunteers, he also said that you may never have realized or thought about the fact that talking politely with your learners, Listening with empathy, giving them attention with a smile on their face is changing their days and giving them the confidence to go out of the classroom, conversation club and speak English.

He also said that we received good, encouraging feedback from the classroom tutors and conversation club organizers about the learners and volunteers.

which is a good title that the organizations are getting better results from the objectives for



which they are working and in this context the volunteers will also get some better learning opportunities, he expressed hope.

The speakers expressed their happiness on this matter and said that many people have learned the necessary sciences and skills including English and mathematics by using these learning centers and now they are living a happy, economically prosperous family life in the new society. are

On behalf of Manchester City Council's Community Learning Team, which included Peter Wilson, Lisa Robinson, Kate Lloyd, Lindsey Loftus, Jess Mock, Clunder Farrar, Anna Zilla, Gaynor Hood and Anna Thurston, all participants attended the event, Senior Volunteers Attallah. Thanks to Cheema, iApp and the community for their generous participation.

The host country in the event is Great Britain, Pakistan, Poland, Turkey, India, Syria.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index

Current	Prev. Close
40,075.96	40,150.36
Day's High	Day's Low:
40,380.64	40,070.67
Index Value	Change
2,853,710,632	-74.40
Percentage	Time
-0.19%	1 Aug, 2022 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index

Index Value	Change
7,413.42	-10.01
Percentage	Time
-0.13%	1 Aug, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average

Index Value	Change
32,960.44	+115.31
Percentage	Time
+0.35%	1 Aug, 11:48 am GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average

Index Value	Change
27,993.35	+191.71
Percentage	Time
+0.69%	1 Aug, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	167.81	169.06
Bahrain Dinar	638.56	643.06
Canadian Dollar	187.57	188.92
China Yuan	35.6	35.85
Danish Krone	32.97	33.32
Euro	241	245
Hong Kong Dollar	30.59	30.94
Indian Rupee	3.03	3.11
Japanese Yen	2	2.05
Kuwaiti Dinar	780.68	785.68
Malaysian Ringgit	53.95	54.4
New Zealand \$	150.83	152.03
Norwegians Krone	24.84	25.14
Omani Riyal	624.44	628.94
Qatari Riyal	65.96	66.46
Saudi Riyal	63	64
Singapore Dollar	173.91	175.21
Swedish Korona	23.76	24.06
Swiss Franc	252.05	253.8
Thai Bhat	6.53	6.63
U.A.E Dirham	65	66
UK Pound Sterling	288	294
US Dollar	241	246

Alleviating Concerns

SBP making difficult decisions to help avert economic crisis

SBP management visits OICCI for interactive session with members

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Overseas Investment Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) members met with Dr. Murtaza Syed, Acting Governor, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Dr. Inayat Hussain, Deputy Governor, SBP and Sima Kamil, Deputy Governor, SBP for a discussion on urgent fiscal and monetary policy measures that need to be taken to help stabilize Pakistan's economy.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Murtaza Syed commented, "SBP is taking tough measures and making difficult decisions to help avert the economic crisis. Global inflationary

pressures coupled with a procyclical expansionary fiscal policy during a pro-cyclical period is one of the main reasons Pakistan is at this crossroads today. Once these measures are implemented and the IMF loan is received, the pressures on the economy will ease, specifically with regards to the depreciating Rupee."

Ghias Khan, President OICCI and Abdul Aleem, Secretary General, OICCI led the discussions and raised member concerns related to the pre-approval procedure of LCs for import of machinery and spare parts, timely remittance payments, approval exemptions of shipping values being too low, and

other operational issues. It was stressed upon the SBP leadership to set timelines so that industry supply chain is not compromised.

The SBP team gave a comprehensive overview of the current economic situation and the planned strategy to tackle issues in 2023. Pakistan is primarily a consumer-driven economy with consumption driving up to 95% of the GDP. The SBP team was confident that Pakistan's problems were temporary and urged the OICCI members to work on improving exports to help balance the exchange rate fluctuations and currency depreciation.

Ghias Khan stated, "This meeting was a

much needed first step towards the recovery of Pakistan's economy. It is imperative that we implement cogent measures to halt our pattern of circular debt. The SBP has always played a critical role in stabilizing Pakistan's economy, and I am confident that under Dr. Murtaza Syed's leadership we will be able to withstand the current economic climate while charting a path for growth."

OICCI serves as a platform to promote foreign investments and plays a major role in the growth of commerce and industry in the country. Collectively, OICCI invested USD 2.4 billion last year, contributing one-third of the country's total tax collections.

Oman keen to invest in railway, power projects in Pakistan

Federal Minister Salik Hussain assured the delegation of full support and complete cooperation

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Chaudhary Salik Hussain welcomed an Omani delegation led by Dr. Anwar Al Balushi Chairman, Al Anwar Asian Investments, Syed Najam Saeed, CEO RAILCOP and Tauseef Zaman, CEO Bil Pakistan here on Tuesday.

The Federal Minister assured the delegation of full support and complete cooperation. Salik Hussain said that he will facilitate and expedite the process of investing in Pakistan by the Omani Company.

The Minister was briefed that the project that the Omani group is interested in is worth \$2.3 Bn i.e. the Besimah-Jacobabad railway line. Minister assured the delegate that they will be accommodated in every way possible.

Dr. Anwar Baluchi briefed



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Chaudhary Salik Hussain welcomed an Omani delegation led by Dr. Anwar Al Balushi Chairman, Al Anwar Asian Investments, Syed Najam Saeed, CEO RAILCOP and Tauseef Zaman, CEO Bil Pakistan here on Tuesday.

Minister that he is interested in Railway Infrastructure Development projects and power projects in Pakistan. He identified the construction of rail link from Gwadar to Jacobabad (track length 1,087 Km) and as a first tranche of financing, his company is ready to transfer \$500 Million to Pakistan for this rail link project. Moreover,

he said that he can offer financing/loans for undertaking other projects also. He said that he will work together to improve bilateral relations and strengthen economic ties between the two countries.

Both delegates agreed to enhance bilateral relations through mutually beneficial development projects.

EZ Wage partners with Bank Alfalah

To revolutionize financial wellness in Pakistan

Our Correspondent

KARACHI: Singapore-based EZ Wage, a leading regional financial wellness platform, has signed an agreement with Bank Alfalah as its Digital Payments Partner to facilitate Earned Wage Access (EWA) in Pakistan with secure payment transfers. Under the agreement, EZ Wage will route payments in real-time to its users through Bank Alfalah's platform.

EZ Wage's state-of-the-art mobile app enables employees to withdraw a portion of their earned salary before their scheduled payday. This earned wage access facility allows them relief in case of monetary emergencies, such as an unexpected expense due to a medical emergency in the family. The financial wellness platform has

already signed up companies employing more than 135,000 salaried individuals across Pakistan and is rapidly adding more companies that are interested in providing this revolutionary employee benefit to their employee base. EZ Wage will also be introducing additional offerings specifically geared towards improving employee financial literacy and independence.

The founder of EZ Wage, Fatima Batool, hopes to bring about a revolution in financial wellness for the masses in the emerging markets of South/Southeast Asia. She is focused on the women segment in particular, which in her opinion is the most marginalized segment in terms of financial independence.

Yahya Khan, Group Head, Digital Banking

Group at Bank Alfalah stated "Bank Alfalah through its diverse and ever-evolving services portfolio is empowering employees and working towards the financial wellness of the masses in Pakistan. This FinTech partnership is another step towards our objective to offer seamless services in order to digitize the payments eco-system and revolutionize daily use finance."

Fatima Batool mentioned, "We are proud to partner with Bank Alfalah to boost financial inclusion and independence by making access to earned wages an option for employees across Pakistan. A dedicated and motivated workforce is the engine of growth in any economy and both EZ Wage and Bank Alfalah aim to further financial wellness with this partnership."

Starcom Pakistan wins the business of ekaterra

To manage media planning and buying activities in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: ekaterra, the name home to leading tea brands such as Lipton and Brooke Bond, has appointed Starcom Pakistan to manage its media activity in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan (BSPAN). The new partnership will see Starcom Pakistan deliver IMC planning, buying & execution for Offline and Online media for BSPAN with Pakistan being the lead agency. The agency has won the account after a time Inducing pitch against several competitive players. Key to the win was the strength of the agency's strategic approach, agility and digital mindset.

Starcom Pakistan was incorporated in 2010 as an affiliate of Brainchild Communications Pakistan (BCP) which has operated as a full-service agency operating in the space of media. Since its inception, Starcom Pakistan, has worked with various

clients across all categories of business and is now one of the largest media houses in Pakistan. Starcom Pakistan was also ranked #1 in the RECMA media agency ranking for 2020 in Pakistan. This is due to its focus on people, data, and technology. Hakima Mirza, Marketing Lead for BSPAN, said, "I am delighted to partner with Starcom Pakistan. I am sure that the talented team will enable our journey to grow a world of well-being. With the rapid digitization of consumer lives - accelerated even further by the Covid pandemic - has driven the convergence of media, commerce, entertainment and shopping. In this context, it's great to be embarking our journey with Starcom Pakistan. We are looking forward to working with Starcom's team to execute creative campaigns across all touch points along the consumer journey, offline and online, while providing critical insights about our consumer base."

Envoys at Pakistan-ASEAN Economic Linkages urge to tap huge ASEAN market

Call to start free trade between Pakistan and ASEAN

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Envoys at a special meeting on "Pakistan-ASEAN Economic Linkages" urged to tap the huge market of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The speakers called for finalizing the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Pakistan and ASEAN without any delay.

The meeting was organized by the Asian Institute of Eco-civilization Research and Development (AIERD) in Islamabad which was well attended by the Ambassadors of Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, and Philippine, among others, President RCCI Nadeem Rauf, and faculty of AIERD. The meeting also discussed the possibility of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) third party coop-



eration with the hope that it would bring prosperity to the region.

Adam Mulawarman Tugjo, Ambassador of Indonesia in his address proposed that there should be a focal desk at RCCI to promote economic and trade linkages between Pakistan-ASEAN.

Nguyen Tien Phong, ambassador of Vietnam stressed the need for stability, continuity, and consistency in policies for improving economic and trade link-

ages. Ms. Maria Agnes M. Cervantes Chargé D'affaires of the Philippines urged to enhance the linkages through improved exchanges. Abdul Mubdi Osman, Brunei Darussalam, shared that Brunei offered good opportunities to invest and trade, especially in the field of LNG. Deddy Faisal Ahmad Salleh, Chargé d'Affair High Commission of Malaysia said that Malaysia is working to enhance connectivity with Pakistan and trying to opera-

tionalize direct flights.

Zahid Latif Khan Chairman, AIERD, in his address said that with ASEAN's US\$ 3 trillion economic power and a large market of 650 million people in the region, the mutual US\$7 billion trade between ASEAN and Pakistan is far below its potential. The economic and trade relations between Pakistan and ASEAN need to be further enhanced, he added.

Nadeem Rauf, President RCCI said that Pakistan is a land of opportunities with diverse economic fields, geography, and potential to become the hub of connectivity and ASEAN must explore avenues to benefit from these opportunities, he added. He suggested that RCCI and AIERD will jointly work to establish the Desk aiming to promote trades and information related to ASEAN.

US Special envoy for Business Affairs visits NICL, LUMS

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Dilawar Syed, Special Representative of the US Department of State for Commercial and Business Affairs, was hosted at the National Incubation Centre Lahore (NICL) by Shahid Hussain, Rector, LUMS, and Saleem Ahmad, Chairman Advisory Board, along with the NICL management team. He was apprised of the Centre's pioneering role in bolstering the start-up ecosystem in the country by providing founders with training and resources to develop and scale ventures that solve Pakistan's most pressing problems.

Ahmad's presentation highlighted the high-impact areas for Pakistan which are the core focus for NICL including agriculture, education, environment, financial inclusion, and healthcare with an overlay of key technologies like AI/ML, blockchain, cloud/IoT, hardware/robotics, and VR/AR. He discussed Pakistan's start-up ecosystem, the critical importance of upskilling talent, encouraging gender diversity and



outreach to underserved communities in Pakistan. He spoke about the ecosystem of support through NICL's Foundation Council comprising role model entrepreneurs and respected venture capitalists, and hundreds of mentors across the world.

Syed toured the Centre's state-of-the-art facilities including the Makers Lab (3D printing and prototyping) and Facebook Innovation Lab and engaged with start-ups currently in incubation. He praised NICL's efforts and said, "Wish we could do more of this in communi-

ties across this country. We've got to make sure that the underserved regions and the underserved communities in this amazing country have access to these kinds of facilities." He also talked about how inspired he was by the diversity of ideas that ranged from aviation space to solving speech impediment problems.

NICL aims to inspire bootstrapping entrepreneurs to build #TechForBetter through its 6-month Incubation Programme. Successful applicants are given the platform for capacity building and scaling up their start-ups using NICL's free resources like business skills and technical training, mentoring support from business leaders, a growth conducive co-working space at the LUMS campus, and industry networking opportunities.

With over 150 seasoned mentors, start-ups at NICL have the perfect opportunity to absorb their experience and apply it to prove their mettle. Once ready, they are given the opportunity to pitch to the 100+ investors on the Centre's panel to take their start-ups to newer heights.

Ahsan, and Asad assure to participate in ICCI's APC

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Iqbal, Federal Minister for Planning & Secretary General of PML(N) and Asad Umar Secretary General PTI have assured the participation of their parties in the "All Parties Conference on Revival of Economy" being organized by the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) on August 6, 2022. The assurances were given to Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry when he presented them letters of invitation in person. Jamsaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President ICCI, Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi former President ICCI and others were also present at the occasion. Both political leaders appreciated the initiative of ICCI for APC and termed it a positive move to bring all stakeholders at one platform to find a way forward for the economic stability of Pakistan.

Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry briefed them about the key objectives of APC and hoped that all political parties would take active participation in this important event.

SECP launches WeChat service to facilitate Chinese investors

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) becomes the first-ever regulatory body and public sector organization to enable WeChat service.

The WeChat service will help the Chinese investors in making informed investment decisions and easily incorporate companies in Pakistan. Through WeChat, users can instantly get information from SECP personnel regarding name availability and company incorporation in Mandarin language.

This initiative is part of SECP's ongoing efforts to build a culture of digitalization and enhance user experience.

The use of WeChat is already prevalent in jurisdictions including Singapore, Malaysia and it is paving its way into Europe and South America. With China becoming a global financial powerhouse, it is more important than ever to enable communication with Chinese investors as it is one of Pakistan's top trading partners.

England to launch Pakistan's bumper season in Karachi, Lahore

National Stadium will host matches on 20, 22, 23 and 25 September

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: England will play seven T20Is from 20 September to 2 October in Karachi and Lahore in what will be their first visit of the country in 17 years, the Pakistan Cricket Board announced on Tuesday.

The National Stadium will host the matches on 20, 22, 23 and 25 September, before the action will shift to the cricket headquarters at the Gaddafi Stadium where the remaining three matches will be played on 28 and 30 September and 2 October. All matches will start at 1930 PKT.

The seven T20Is will be part of the first leg of England's tour of Pakistan and they will return after the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Australia 2022 for three Tests in December.

The T20I series against the second-ranked side will launch Pakistan's bumper international season. Following the September and December matches against England, Pakistan will host New Zealand twice – first for two Tests and three ODIs in December/January and then in April for five ODIs and five T20Is – West Indies for three T20Is in late January and finally the 50-over ACC Asia Cup.



Complete schedule of England Test series as well as New Zealand and the West Indies series will be announced in due course.

Apart from five Tests, eight ODIs and 15 T20Is in the 2022-23 season, Pakistan will also stage 187 men's domestic matches in six senior competitions, 33 HBL Pakistan Super League 2023 fixtures and 19 Pakistan Junior League 2022 games.

Zakir Khan, PCB Director International Cricket: "We are absolutely delighted to confirm hosting England

for seven T20Is in Karachi and Lahore as a curtain-raiser to a busy, entertaining and exciting season of home internationals. England is one of the top-ranked T20I teams and them playing the shortest format in the lead up to the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in Pakistan will not only help the team management to finalise their preparations, but will also set the tone for December's three-Test series.

"We demonstrated our event planning and operational skills in the high-

ly-successful series against Australia in March/April and I am confident we will be able to replicate these when England visit us for the first time since 2005. We have been able to confirm schedule of the T20Is following a successful tour by the England and Wales Cricket Board rece team, which was pleased and satisfied with all our arrangements.

"I am confident that the cricket fans, like they did in the series against Australia, will turn up in big numbers to support both the sides and also make our Diamond Jubilee celebration year an unforgettable one." Rob Key, ECB Managing Director England Men's Cricket, said: "We are looking forward to returning to Pakistan and playing these seven T20Is as the team builds up to the ICC Men's T20 World Cup.

"We have been liaising closely with the PCB over arrangements for this visit and the Tests later in the year, and will continue to work closely with the PCB, British High Commission and other relevant authorities as we continue to prepare for these tours." "We would like to thank the PCB and the city authorities for all their ongoing assistance with planning for the tours, including hosting the recent pre-tour planning visit by ECB representatives and the PCA CEO."

Asia Cup 2022 schedule announced

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Asia Cup 2022 will commence on 27 August in UAE with the final set to be played on September 11. The schedule for the 15th edition of the Asia Cup has been announced with the tournament set to begin on August 27, with the hosts Sri Lanka taking on Afghanistan in the tournament opener.

India and Pakistan will renew their rivalry a day later

in Dubai. The final is set to be played on September 11. The Asia Cup, which was last played in 2018, will be played in the T20 format, with nine teams participating.

UAE, Kuwait, Singapore and Hong Kong will play a qualifying round with the winner joining India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Bangladesh in the main tournament.

The main tournament will feature six teams divided into two groups. India, Paki-

stan and the qualifier are in Group A while Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Afghanistan form Group B. Each team plays within the group once.

The top two teams qualify for the Super 4 round where the teams play against each other in league format again before the final where the top two would feature. The tournament was moved out of Sri Lanka to UAE as confirmed last week.

Schedule: Group A: India v Pakistan: 28 August, Dubai

India v Qualifier: 31 August, Duabi Pakistan v Qulaifier: 2 September, Sharjah Group B: Sri Lanka v Afghanistan: 27 August, Dubai Bangladesh v Afghanistan, 30 August, Sharjah Sri Lanka v Bangladesh, 1 September, Dubai Super 4: B1 v B2: 3 September, Sharjah A1 v A2: 4 September, Dubai A1 v B1: 6 September, Dubai A2 v B2: 7 September, Dubai A1 v B2: 8 September, Dubai B1 v A2: 9 September, Dubai Final: 11 September, Dubai

First China Youth Football League kicks off

CHANGCHUN: The opening game of the first China Youth Football League (CYFL) kicked off in Changchun of northeast China's Jilin Province.

The first CYFL, featuring U13 and U15 tournaments, is organized and hosted by the Chinese Football Association (CFA) under the guidance of China's Ministry of Education and State General Administration of Sports, with the aim of creating a youth football league with the widest coverage, the largest number of participants, the highest level of competition and the most social influence.

Both the U13 and U15 tournaments, consisting of 59 and 60 teams each, are divided into eight groups to compete in single round-robin format, with top two teams of each group advancing to the finals, which will take place from August 13 to 22.

"Through the competition, I get to know my shortcomings, learn more about football, and improve my skills," said Li Chuan'en, captain of Changchun Yang Guang team. "I look forward to leading my team to good results in the following games."

According to Qiao Daihu, a CFA official who is in charge of the organization of the league, the competition fields are lessened to 90 meters long and 64 meters wide compared to standard fields in order to increase the intensity and enjoyment of the games. Qiao also introduced that an additional quarter is added after each regular game, giving young players who didn't have enough playing time a chance to gain experience.

South American countries to launch 2030 WC bid

MONTEVIDEO: Four South American countries will on Tuesday launch an unprecedented joint bid to host the 2030 World Cup with the hope of bringing the global showpiece back to its first home.

Uruguay, Argentina, Paraguay and Chile's intention to bid has long been in the making. More than three years ago they committed to create a local organizing committee to co-ordinate with South American football's governing body CONMEBOL to plan their

bid. But it has taken until now for the "Juntos 2030" (Together 2030) bid to be made official. It centers on the desire to "bring the World Cup back to its original home: South America," said CONMEBOL president Alejandro Dominguez. The very first edition of the World Cup in 1930 was held in Uruguay and won by the hosts, beating their neighbors Argentina 4-2 in the final.

The joint South American bid aims to stage the 2030 final in the very same Centenario stadium that hosted the first

title match 100 years earlier. "For us it should be called the 2030 Centenary World Cup," said Uruguay's sports minister Sebastian Bauza. "What we have to focus on is the Centenary World Cup. The 100 year celebration of the first World Cup will be here. Back to the legend, back to its roots!" Should it be successful, though, the two tournaments could not be more different. In 1930 there were only 13 teams and the entire tournament was played in the same city – Montevideo – in just three stadiums.

SBP Table Tennis Academy inaugurated

LAHORE: Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Asadullah Faiz along with Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi inaugurated Sports Board Punjab's first ever table tennis academy here at Nishtar Park Sports Complex Gymnasium Hall on Tuesday.

Director Sports Nadeem Qaiser, Director Youth Affairs Syed Omair Hasan, Deputy Director Rauf Bajwa, Administrator NPSC Gymnasium Hall Mustafa Shah and a large number of table tennis players were also present on this occasion.

Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Asadullah Faiz and Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi also witnessed exhibition

table tennis matches on this occasion. The parents can register their children for training at the table tennis academy where head coach SAF Games silver medallist Yasir Iqbal Bhatti will impart training to young male and female players in two sessions daily.

Speaking on the occasion, Secretary Sports Punjab said that the launching of table tennis academy is part of our talent hunt campaign and through this drive we are aiming to unearth fresh talent from across the province. "The prime objective of this initiative is to find emerging players from all parts of the province. At our academy, we are emphasizing on the grooming of U-10 and U-12 table tennis

players."

He said that Sports Board Punjab is planning to launch academies of 10 prioritised games at district level in future. "After finding talented players from different districts, they will be further nurtured in Lahore under the supervision of qualified coaches for future national and international events."

Asadullah Faiz further said that expert coaches will train the players and prepare them for international competitions. "With the establishment of academies, several budding players will emerge who will win laurels for the country."

Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi said that

Sports Board Punjab's focus is to prepare Under-10, U-13 and U-14 players from schools and other educational institutions. "Table tennis academy is part of our long-term planning. To compete with the world, we have to train our young players systematically."

Answering a question, he said that apart from table tennis, Sports Board Punjab will also establish academies for other sports including lawn tennis, badminton, boxing, powerlifting etc. "Our qualified coaches will groom young players with an aim to make them ready to represent Pakistan in international competitions in the next three to four years," he added.

Aqib, Ismail shine with ball in drawn game

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Southern Punjab U19 Whites' Aqib Asghar and Mohammad Ismail shared seven wickets between them as match against Balochistan U19 Whites of the opening round of the National U19 Championship ended in a draw at the UBL Sports Complex in Karachi.

Resuming their first innings on 11 for three, Balochistan U19 Whites managed to score 104 for nine in their 83 overs. Abdul Saboor coming to bat at number four top-scored with a 61-ball 25, hitting four fours.

Left-arm spinner Aqib bagged four wickets for 12 runs from 21 overs. He was equally supported by right-arm fast Ismail who took three wickets for 30 runs from 18 overs and Abubakar who ended up taking two wickets.

With 120 first innings lead, Southern Punjab U19 Whites were 42 for no loss from six overs in their second innings when stumps were drawn. The second round of the National U19 Championship will begin from 4 August.

Ryan Burl better his own feat with stunning onslaught



HARARE: Zimbabwe's Ryal Burl hit Nasum Ahmed for 34 runs in an over in the third T20I between Zimbabwe and Bangladesh in Harare.

Ryan Burl smashed five sixes in a 34-run over in the third T20I against Bangladesh in Harare. In the 15th over of the innings bowled by Nasum Ahmed, Burl hit four successive sixes followed by a four and a six to take 34 runs in the over, the joint-second most runs scored in an over in men's T20Is.

The first six disappeared over long-on while the next three were also smashed on the leg-side. He missed a big one off the fifth with the ball bouncing once before hitting the ropes. Off the last ball, he cleared long-off to complete a stunning over for Zimbabwe.

Yuvraj Singh and Kieron Pollard hold the record for the most runs in an over (36) in men's T20Is after recording six sixes against Stuart Broad and Akila Dananjaya respectively.

Tim Seifert and Ross Taylor hit 34 runs in an over off Shivam Dube in 2020. Burl equalled this tally with his incredible hitting in Harare on Tuesday.

However, Burl also broke his own record for most runs in an over by a Zimbabwe batter. He had earlier hit Shakib Al Hasan for 30 runs in an over in a T20I in Mirpur in 2019. Then, Burl hit three sixes and three fours off Shakib in the 16th over of the innings.

Zimbabwe posted a competitive total in the third and final T20I with the series tied at 1-1. The T20Is will be followed by three ODIs, also to be played in Harare.

Sprinters Shajar, Aneela out of medal race



BIRMINGHAM: Pakistan's sprinters Shajar Abbas and Aneela Gulzar failed to move to next rounds as they finished fourth and last in their respective heats of first round of 100m race of men and women events at the Alexander Stadium, Birmingham on Tuesday.

Shajar, who appeared in heat four of 100m race, finished fourth with a time of 10.38. Jamaica's Conroy Jones, finished the heat in a time of 10.28 and Scotland's Adam Thomas, who finished second as he ran a time of 10.30 advanced to next round

Erric Harrison Jr of Trinidad and Tobago remained third as he ran a time of 10.37. In the women's 100m race, Pakistan's Aneela ended last in her as well as in all heats as she took 14.01 to cover the distance.

Murray falls in Washington opener while Halep, Pegula win

WASHINGTON: Three-time Grand Slam champion Andy Murray of Britain crashed out in the opening round of the ATP and WTA Washington Open on Monday, falling to Sweden's Mikael Ymer.

The 35-year-old Scotsman fell to 115th-ranked Ymer 7-6 (10/8), 4-6, 6-1 after two hours and 50 minutes at the US Open tuneup tournament. "I'm excited," said Ymer, who saved four set points in the first set. "A lot left to do but it's a very good start of the American swing." World number 50 Murray, the 2012 and 2016 Olympic champion, is trying to earn a seeding at the US Open, which he won a decade ago.

"It's still possible," Murray said. "I would just need to have a good run in Canada or Cincinnati really. It's pretty straightforward if I was to make a quarterfinal or a semifinal, which right now — after a loss like that — doesn't seem realistic. "I do feel like if I play very well that I could do that. But I'll need to

certainly play better than I did today." Ymer, who lost his only career ATP final last August in Winston-Salem, will next face 15th seed Aslan Karatsev.

Ymer won 75 percent of his first-serve points, 49-of-65, and smashed 37 winners past Murray, who made only 25 with 35 unforced errors, five more than Ymer. Murray had a set point in the 12th game of the first set but sent a backhand wide and Ymer held into a tiebreaker.

Murray had three more set points in the tiebreak but Ymer smashed two forehand winners and a forehand volley winner to pull level at 7-7, prompting Murray to toss his racket in frustration. Ymer, 23, took the set on a backhand volley winner.

"Had chances in the first set to close that out," Murray said. "Didn't get it. Yeah, frustrating."

While Murray clawed back to force a third set, Ymer raced to a 4-0 lead, they exchanged breaks on double fault



and Ymer ended the match on a backhand crosscourt winner. Murray said he will explore why he has had cramping issues in his past two matches when he often thrives in heat and humidity. "I started cramping at the end of the first set, Murray said. "After that you're just trying to find a way to get through the match."

"Need to have a little look at that with my team and maybe see why that is,

make a few changes."

Two-time Grand Slam champion Simona Halep, coming off a Wimbledon semifinal run, beat Spanish qualifier Cristina Bucsa 6-3, 7-5. "Always the first round is difficult when you change the surface," third seed Halep said. "I know it's going to take time to make the game more solid."

US top seed Jessica Pegula cruised 6-2, 6-2, over US wildcard Hailey



Baptiste. Pegula won the most recent WTA Washington event in 2019 after two missed years due to Covid-19. "It definitely feels weird," Pegula said. "It's great to be back."

Britain's Kyle Edmund made a triumphant return to ATP singles after three left knee surgeries and a 20-month layoff by defeating Japa-

nese qualifier Yosuke Watanuki 6-4, 7-6 (10/8).

Edmund, who next faces British 16th seed Daniel Evans, played in his first tour-level singles match since October 2020 at Vienna, a month before his first operation. "I didn't find it easy today," said Edmund. "I hung in there and I got my reward in the end."