



# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ  
نبی کریم ﷺ نے ایک مرتبہ فرمایا ہے  
عائش! یہ جرائل آئے ہیں، تم کو سلام  
کہہ رہے ہیں۔ عائشہ رضی اللہ عنہا نے  
جواب میں کہا کہ وہ یہ سلام ہر مرتبہ اللہ  
اور کاہنہ۔ آپ وہ چیزیں دیکھتے ہیں جنہیں  
میں نہیں دیکھ سکتی، عائشہ رضی اللہ عنہا کی  
مراد نبی کریم ﷺ سے تھی۔  
(بخاری، حدیث نمبر 3217)  
Barkat Rice Mills  
(Pvt) Limited

## Minus Imran formula moved before no-trust vote: Asad

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Asad Umer has said that a 'Minus Imran Khan' formula was proposed to them 2,3 days before the motion of no-confidence but he rejected it. The PTI leader said that he was asked to submit three names for a possible replacement of Imran Khan as the Prime Minister including his own name. I was asked to suggest three to replace Imran Khan.



## We are not afraid of such filthy tricks: Asad Qaiser

Former speaker national assembly Asada Qaiser says I want to tell the imported government that we are not afraid of such filthy tricks. The imported government should avoid using the national institutions for taking political revenge, advising them to sow as much as they can bear later.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Muharram 8, Sunday, August 7, 2022

www.dailyspokesman.net

@daily\_spokesman



Daily Spokesman Vol: 15, Issue: 129 Price Rs. 25.00 Pages 8

## IIOJK in focus

NEW YORK: Ambassador Munir Akram handed over a letter to Ambassador Zhang Jun China, as President Security Council United Nations by Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, FROM Pakistan on the eve of 3 years of India's unilateral action in IIOJK since August 5, 2019 and continued worsening situation there which poses a threat to International peace and security.



Photo: PID

## UAE plans to invest \$1b in Pakistan

DUBAI/ISLAMABAD: The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is planning to invest one billion dollars in Pakistan's economic and investment sectors, quoting an official source in Abu Dhabi the state news agency has reported. The move aims at exploring new investment opportunities, expanding bilateral economic relations and to enhance mutual cooperation in projects covering various sectors of the economy. The UAE investment will likely be channeled to key sectors including gas, energy infrastructure, renewable energy, healthcare, biotechnology, agriculture technology, logistics, digital communications, e-commerce and financial services.

between the two countries amounted to \$8.19 billion (Dh30 billion) in 2019. Both countries also have significant investments in various sectors in each other's economies such as real estate. The move is expected to help in revival of investor sentiment in the country. As an IMF package becomes clearer, the sentiment has improved.

The UAE is Pakistan's largest trading partner in the Middle East and a major source of investments and remittances. The trade volume

According to a report, the IMF is likely to start the process for releasing the seventh and eighth tranches of a loan programme for Pakistan later this week. Pakistan and the IMF signed the \$6bn bailout accord — Extended Fund Facility (EFF) — in 2019. But the release of a \$1.17 billion (seventh and eighth) tranche has been on hold since earlier this year, when the IMF expressed concern about Pakistan's compliance with the deal.

## Chopper crash

## Saudi CGS condoles with COAS

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa received telephone call from Chief of General Staff of Saudi Arabia General Fayyadh Bin Hamed Al-Ruwaili on Saturday.

The Saudi Chief of General Staff expressed deepest condolences over tragic loss of precious lives due to helicopter crash in Lasbela.

## Armed forces protectors of country: Khawaja Asif

Says propaganda against armed forces is condemnable

SLALOT: Minister for Defense Khawaja Muhammad Asif while condemning the malicious campaign against institutions on social media platforms said armed forces were the protectors of the country. "Some people launched a campaign on social media against institutions on the Lasbela helicopter crash which is highly condemnable. People who blame the institutions are working on enemy's agenda," he said in a presser here. Khawaja said Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan had ended the politics of tolerance in the country. "Do not insult the sacrifices of those who gave their lives for the country and the nation," he said.

He added that the officers martyred in Lasbela were helping flood-affected people in Balochistan. Some elements are maligning state institutions to further our enemies' cause, he added. He added that a person that was imposed on the nation in 2018 is trying to drag the establishment into political issues. Pakistan Army is the guardian of Pakistan's borders and the nation is proud of their sacrifices, he added.

## Drone attack

## Was US allowed to use Pak airspace: Fawad

Demands clarity from ministries over issue

ISLAMABAD: PTI Senior Vice President Fawad Chaudhry on Saturday questioned whether the government allowed the US to use Pakistan's airspace for conducting a drone strike in Afghanistan that killed Al Qaeda leader Ayman al Zawahiri. "The question is not if Pakistan's land was used for the Afghanistan drone attack, the question is whether permission was granted for Pakistan's airspace to be used," the ex-information minister said in a tweet. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Director-General Inter-Services Public Relations Major General Babar Iftikhar have clarified that the country's airspace was not used for the

drone strike in Kabul. The United States killed Zawahiri with a missile fired from a drone while he stood on a balcony at his Kabul hideout on Sunday, US officials said, in the biggest blow to the militants since US Navy SEALs shot dead Osama bin Laden more than a decade ago. But the senior PTI leader demanded relevant ministries issue a formal statement in response to his question as their current comments were "unclear".

Diplomatic sources said that they could not reveal the strategy of the Pakistani government, however, the concerned authority was looking into different aspects of Zawahiri's killing.

# Govt sets up Relief Fund for flood affectees

PM Shehbaz reviews relief work in flood-hit areas;

ISLAMABAD/ LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday set up 'Prime Minister's Relief Fund' for the flood-affected people and passionately appealed to the philanthropists and well-off segments of society to support the flood hit people with their generous donations. The donations for the flood affectees can be deposited in Account No: G-12164 of the Prime Minister's Relief Fund 2022.

The prime minister said that the countrymen had already set a precedent in the world by making generous donations during 2005 earthquake and 2010 floods to support the affected populace. He stressed that there was a

need of showing a suck-like spirit. The prime minister observed that the historic rainfall triggered a huge catastrophe which badly affected Balochistan province, leaving a trail of unmatched destruction.

Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab provinces were badly hit, he said, adding despite the difficult financial situation, the government had released Rs5 billion for the flood affectees. The prime minister while making an appeal to the wealthy people said that they should support government's efforts in the rehabilitation of the affectees. The affected brothers, sisters and children required support with the rekindling of the Ansar-e-Madina-like

passion.

The federal government had already declared an emergency situation in the flood-affected areas. The provincial governments had also been urged to do so.

**PM condemns killing of Palestinians, terms Israeli act as terrorism, barbarism**

declare them as calamity-hit areas, so that relief and rehabilitation efforts could be expedited. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in a follow-up meeting here Saturday

reviewed the implementation of decisions regarding relief work in the flood-affected areas. The PM instructed that national and provincial management authorities increase coordination to carry out the rescue and relief activities in the flood-affected areas.

Minister for Communication Maulana Asad Mahmood, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi, and Chairman Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) participated in the meeting.

While Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal, Minister for Housing Maulana Abdul Wasay, and Advisor to Prime Minister for Kashmir Affairs Qamar Zaman

Kaira attended the meeting through video link.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Saturday said that Pakistan strongly condemned Israeli airstrikes in Gaza in which ten Palestinians, including a 5-year-old girl, were martyred. On his Twitter handle, the prime minister said if impunity and barbarism had a face, it would have been that of Israel, which had targeted Palestinians without any care for the consequences. According to media reports, on Friday, Israel launched missiles throughout the besieged Palestinian city, killing 10 people, including a five-year-old girl and a 23-year-old woman.

## Over the week

### Rupee gains 6.40% against USD

KARACHI: The local currency in the last week gained by Rs 15.3 in the interbank market against the US dollar. According to the weekly currency report issued by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), an increase of 6.40% was recorded in the PKR's value against the US Dollar. The Greenback dropped from Rs 239.37 to Rs 224.04 in the interbank market in the last week.

However, the local currency gained by Rs 26 in the open market and settle at Rs222. The highest rate of the USD against PKR was recorded at Rs248 while the lowest was Rs222. The EURO dropped by Rs26.50 against the PKR and settled at Rs226, while the price of the British Pound fell by Rs30 in the week.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Tuesday confirmed that Pakistan has achieved all the set targets for the revival of the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) programme. Exclusively talking to ARY News, International Monetary Fund's (IMF) resident representative in Islamabad, Esther Perez Ruiz said Pakistan has achieved all the financial targets set by the fund.

## PTI used charity funds for politics: Marriyum

Says Sadiq and Ameen mask removed from Imran Khan's face

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister of Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb has said that former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan submitted false documents in the prohibited funding case, now this matter is being given a technical color.

Addressing a press conference here on Saturday, she said that on the directions of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, emergency has been declared in the flood-hit areas to speed up relief activities. The minister said National Disaster Management Authority and Provincial Disaster Management Authorities have also been directed to conduct surveys for compensation to the affected people.

Appreciating the efforts of armed forces for relief activities in flood and rain hit areas, she strongly condemned the trolls on social media against the Helicopter crash incident.

Marriyum Aurangzeb said such element of division and confrontation against national institution is backed by the country's only foreign aided party PTI. She said the Election Commission of Pakistan clearly declared that PTI has violated Political Party Order 2002. The Foreign Funding case has exposed that PTI

chairman used the charity income for political purposes. She said the decision also made clear that PTI chairman Imran Khan has submitted a false affidavit in ECP.

The Minister said this foreign aided political party compromised national interest by receiving such funding. She said this funding was used to destabilize the country through economic collapse and



making deal on Kashmir issue. She said this foreign agent also derailed the mega CPEC project.

She said during his four years rule, Imran Khan robbed the masses and involved in corruption in every sector of the country. She said Imran Khan was engaged in political revenge for four years because controlling inflation and fixing the economy were not his

priorities. Expressing hope for the betterment of country's economy in near future, she said the government will do everything possible for this purpose.

Aurangzeb said that Imran Khan is trying to underplay the prohibited funding case terming it a technical issue, but he submitted false documents to the ECP. The PML-N leader said that PTI is the first-ever party to be declared 'foreign funded' by the ECP. The decision after 8 years, yet PTI claims the decision was rushed, she added.

She added that no party can gather funds from foreign nationals, Imran Khan gathered funds in his employees' accounts but is now denying it. PTI's 2014 sit-in was organized using foreign funds, the PML-N leader alleged. Marriyum added that the ECP's findings have removed the 'Sadiq and Ameen' mask from your face. Imran Khan used foreign funds to derail a nuclear state, she added.

The PTI Chief collected funds in the name of charity and then used them to further his political agenda, she claimed. The government formed a six-member FIA committee to investigate the PTI funding after the ECP issued their findings.

## PDM, Govt postpone meeting again

KARACHI: A meeting of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) and other parties in the unity government was on Saturday postponed again. According to sources privy to the matter, the meeting of the PDM and the other parties in unity government was postponed due to unavailability of the top leaders of multiple parties. "The meeting is now scheduled after Ashura," they said. On Friday it was reported that the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) and coalition parties in the federal government would meet again on August 6 and Nawaz Sharif and Ishaq Dar would attend the session via video link.

According to sources, PDM and government coalition parties would hold another meeting in Islamabad tomorrow to discuss the political scenario and strategize the coming situations. The participants would be briefed about the cabinets' decisions. The meeting was supposed to be held on Thursday but was postponed citing security issues.



## Look East

PHNOM PENH: Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari meeting with Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, Hun Sen at his Palace in Cambodia on Saturday.



Photo: PID

## Saved country from going default: Miftah Ismail

*Says govt took tough decisions to bring economy on right track*

KARACHI: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Miftah Ismail said that the federal government had made tough decisions and saved the country from going default. He further said that the country was experiencing an incredible challenging environment. He stated this while talking to media persons during his visit to Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) here on Saturday.

The federal minister said that he was never willing to go to International Monetary Fund (IMF) for loan but the circumstances compelled him to do so. He said we were giving petrol subsidy of \$500 million and did not export anything. Finance Minister Miftah Ismail said that Pakistan's economic hardships

would continue till September but expressed hope of reviving the economy after obtaining loans from global institutions and friendly countries.

In a press conference after meeting the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), the finance minister said that the coalition government had taken tough decisions — cutting subsidies and broadening the tax base — after coming into power — and apologised to the businessmen for it.

"We will face difficulties till September. You will have to pay your share of tax no matter what [...] and I apologise for the difficulties everyone is facing, but my primary objective is to save the country from default," Miftah said.

The finance minister said that economy is moving in

the right direction due to the "prudent policies" of the government and steps that are being taken to stabilise it. And for bringing the economy on the right track, the finance minister said the govern-

Miftah Ismail says economic hardships to persist till September

ment had to take tough decisions of withdrawing subsidies on petroleum products and power. The finance minister also confirmed that the United Arab Emirates (UAE) was investing in the country's stock exchange — in its bid to

expand bilateral economic ties. Earlier, the UAE expressed its intention to invest \$1 billion in Pakistani companies in various economic and investment sectors.

The state-owned Emirati news agency reported that the move aims to explore new investment opportunities and areas for cooperation in projects across various sectors, so as to expand bilateral economic relations in the best interest of the two countries. "...when I asked a [Gulf] state's officials to give us loans, they told me that we haven't repaid their earlier loans. I feel ashamed. It isn't a good feeling that you still have to ask for loans," he said. Finance Minister Miftah Ismail said the government had to take tough decisions of withdrawing subsidies on petroleum

products and power to bring the national economy on the right track.

Addressing a ceremony in Karachi on Saturday, Finance Minister said that the ban on import of luxury items will continue till next month, as it is in the interest of national economy. He however said import of only export supporting items can be considered to be allowed. Miftah Ismail said the national economy is moving in the right direction due to prudent policies of the government and steps are being taken to stabilize it. The Finance Minister assured that problems of business community would be resolved on priority basis. He urged the business community to extend cooperation to the government in its efforts to stabilize the national economy.

## Pakistan, Cambodia to intensify bilateral coop

*FM Bilawal reiterates Pak's support for ASEAN-led processes in Asia Pacific*

PHNOM PENH: Pakistan and Cambodia have agreed to intensify bilateral engagement and dialogue at all levels and promote cultural and people to people contacts. The understanding was reached at a meeting between Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen on the sidelines of the ASEAN Regional Forum Ministerial Meeting in Phnom Penh.

The Cambodian Prime Minister desired for a strong bilateral ties with Pakistan. In his remarks, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari appreciated friendly relations between the two countries and conveyed Pakistan's keen interest to further strengthen bilateral cooperation. The Foreign Minister also reaffirmed Pakistan's continued support to Cambodia through its Technical Assistance Program. He also expressed Pakistan's eagerness to further strengthen ties with ASEAN.

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Saturday expressed support for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) led processes in the Asia Pacific and extended Pakistan's support for the

Cambodian Presidency of ASEAN. The foreign minister held a meeting with the Cambodian Foreign Minister Prak Sokhonnon on the sidelines of the 29th ARF Ministerial Meeting.

Foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari underlined the critical importance of ARF for regional security and expressed Pakistan's continued commitment to ARF. He also expressed Pakistan's keen desire to enhance its engagement with ASEAN. The foreign minister congratulated his counterpart on successfully hosting the 29th ARF Ministerial Meeting and appreciated the hospitality extended to the Pakistan delegation.

The two foreign ministers also discussed regional issues of mutual interest. The two foreign ministers appreciated the friendly ties between Pakistan and Cambodia and expressed their determination to further develop mutually beneficial cooperation. They also agreed to enhance high-level dialogue and engagement between the two countries and to promote business-to-business ties.

## Political unrest to create chaos: Sh Rashid

RAWALPINDI: Awami Muslim League Pakistan (AMLP) Sheikh Rashid on Saturday said that the ongoing political unrest in the country and that the whole responsibility have fallen on the shoulders of judiciary. Taking to Twitter, former Interior Minister Rashid said, "Political instability and unrest will create further chaos and disturbance. Those who are trying to disqualify Imran Khan and his party will regret it. The political turmoil in August will only add to the domestic and public problems. Responsibilities

have fallen on the shoulders of the judiciary. August 30 is an important date."

Earlier, the Speaker of National Assembly (NA), Raja Pervaiz Ashraf had accepted the resignation of the nine MNAs. Elections in the nine constituencies are scheduled to be held on September 25.

While on Friday, Speaker Pervaiz Ashraf sent reference to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to disqualify PTI chairman and former Prime Minister Imran Khan in light of the Toshakhana case.

### IS Intra-party polls

## PML-Q moves LHC against ECP's decision

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League (PML-Q) leader Kamil Ali Agha has moved a petition before the Lahore High Court (LHC), seeking a stay on a decision from the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to halt intra-party polls to elect the new president and general secretary.

He filed the petition before the LHC through his counsel Safdar Shaheen. He said in his plea that party head Chaudhry Shujaat wrote a letter to deputy speaker during election for CM Punjab which was based on illegal directives. "The working committee termed the directives from Chaudhry Shujaat as non-democratic act and decided to remove him from the slot," he said.

The plea stated that the ECP suspended the decision to hold intra-party polls citing no meeting of the central executive committee. "If their argument is accepted then how Shujaat could remain party head?" he asked. The plea stated that the ECP's decision to bar intra-party election

was illegal and therefore should be halted immediately. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Friday retained Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain as Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) chief.

Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) President Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain filed an application with the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to stop intra-party elections. Barrister Umar Aslam in his argument before the ECP said Kamil Ali Agha, who is PML-Q Punjab secretary-general chaired the party's huddle illegally and announced intra-party elections.

As per rules, the provincial office-bearer of any political party does not enjoy such right over through party's chief and central secretary-general. He stated that the intra-party elections are scheduled for August 10 without the permission of the party president and secretary general.

### IS Probe starts

## FIA summons PTI leaders in prohibited funding case

*Summons Asad Qaiser, Mian Mahmood-ur-Rashid along with other leaders*

PESHAWAR/KARACHI: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Saturday kickstarted its countrywide investigation launched a day earlier into the utilization of funds from "prohibited" sources by PTI after an Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) ruling that the party secured illegal donations. A total of six inquiries have been opened simultaneously in major cities of Pakistan, including federal capital Islamabad, Lahore, Peshawar, Quetta and Karachi.

According to FIA authorities, 13 accounts have been identified in which these funds were transferred, and the agency has issued notice

es to the banks under which these accounts have been operating. Courts have also directed these banks to submit complete details of these bank accounts to the FIA in order to help the inquiry teams with the investigation. The probe was launched on a letter written by PTI founding member Akbar S Babar, requesting an investigation against the PTI for receiving funds through accounts opened in the name of junior employees.

The investigation agency also summoned former National Assembly speaker and senior PTI leader Asad Qaiser and Punjab Minister Mian Mahmood-ur-Rashid

along with others. A day earlier, the FIA had called four employees of the PTI secretary to investigate the money laundering and embezzlement in these funds, and statements of these employees were recorded. Confirming that he has received a notice from FIA, Qaiser wrote on Twitter: "I want to tell the imported government that we are not afraid of such filthy tricks."

"The imported government should avoid using the national institutions for taking political revenge," he said, advising them to sow as much as they can bear later. FIA Peshawar's office has summoned Qaiser on August 11 (Thursday) at 2pm. The

notice sent to the former speaker stated that as per the verdict on Akbar S Babar's case, Qaiser has two bank accounts and he is associated with the functioning of those two accounts; therefore he has been asked to appear before the inquiry team to answer questions regarding the details of the bank account.

According to sources, FIA has formed five investigation committees comprising of three members each in different cities, while a committee has been set up at the headquarters for coordination.

Sources further added that the committees will proceed with the investigation in line with the directions of the ECP;

the terms of reference (TOR) have been issued in this regard.

FIA Director-General Mohsin Butt is overseeing all investigations. In Karachi, the FIA has formed a five-member team headed by Deputy Director Bank Circle Rabia Qureshi comprising Assistant Director Rauf Sheikh, Inspectors Sabeen Ghauri, Aftab Watoo, and Sub Inspector Rahat Khan.

The committee has been directed to investigate funding companies, individual bank accounts, and all other monetary details, which are to be later shared with the central committee formed in the headquarters.

### Pakistan strongly condemns Israeli air strikes on Gaza

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has strongly condemned recent air strikes by Israel on Gaza that resulted in deaths including of a 5-year old girl, and injuries to so many innocent Palestinians. In a press release, Foreign Office spokesperson Asim Ifikhar said the latest spate of aggression is typical of the Israeli atrocities, illegal actions and indiscriminate use of force against innocent Palestinians over the decades in complete defiance of international human rights and humanitarian laws.

## PTI moves IHC against by-polls schedule of 9 NA seats

*Announces to hold power show in Islamabad on Aug 14*

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has moved Islamabad High Court (IHC) against schedule of by-elections in nine constituencies of National Assembly. PTI, in its plea, has asked the high court to suspend election schedule as a petition regarding phased acceptance of PTI lawmakers' resignations is being heard by the same court. A day earlier, ECP had scheduled the by-polls on nine National Assembly (NA) seats on September 25.

According to the schedule notified by ECP on Friday, hopefuls can submit their nomination

papers to the returning officer between August 10-13. Names of nominated candidates will be published on August 14 while an appellate tribunal of the ECP will have until August 25 to decide on all appeals against the decisions of the returning officer to accept or reject nominations. The polls will be held for NA-22 Mardan-III, NA-24 Charsadda-II, NA-31 Peshawar-V, NA-45 Kurram-I, NA-108 Faisalabad-VIII, NA-118 Nankana Sahib-II, NA-237 Malir-II, NA-239 Korangi Karachi-I, NA-246 Karachi South-I, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf

(PTI) has decided to hold a public gathering in Islamabad on August 14, a day after the party gave a one month deadline to the federal government to hold general elections in the country. According to sources privy to the decisions taken by the party during a meeting headed by Imran Khan today, all party organizations have been directed to make arrangements for holding Independence Day gatherings. "A major show of power will be held in Islamabad on August 14 to mark Independence Day," they said.

It is pertinent to mention

here that the PTI is trying to up the ante against the incumbent government, demanding them to hold early elections in the country. The party held a long March, Azadi March, towards Islamabad on May 25, which faced stiff resistance from PML-N-led federal government from entering into the capital. However, it remained successful in entering the capital, only to be canceled later by the PTI Chairman Imran Khan who termed that he canceled it to avoid confrontation and announced that he would return to the capital again.



# 21 members Punjab cabinet sworn in

Governor Punjab administers oath to the provincial cabinet

LAHORE: A 21-member Punjab Cabinet was sworn in during a ceremony at the Governor's House here on Saturday.

Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman administered oath to the provincial cabinet which included 21 ministers. Secretary I & C Zaid Bin Maqsood read the order of appointments by the governor Punjab under Article 132 (1) of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Chief Minister Punjab Chaudhry Parvez Elahi, Speaker Punjab Assembly Sibtain Khan, former Governor Punjab Omer Sarfraz Cheema, former minister MNA Moonis Elahi, MPAs, lawyers, journalists, party workers and people from all walks of life attended the ceremony.

The portfolios likely to be assigned to the cabinet members are as under:



Dr Yasmin Rashid (Health), Mohsin Dogar (Home and Prisons), Taimoor Laghari (Finance), Col (ret'd) Hashim Malik Bhatti (Sports & Youth Affairs),

Raja Yasir Humayun (Higher Education & Information Technology), Ansar Majeed Niazi (Labour), Raja Basharat (Cooperatives and Prosecution), Sardar Shahabuddin (Livestock),

Muneeb Cheema (Transport), Murad Raas (School Education), Khurram Shahzad Virk (Parliamentary Affairs), Sardar Asif Nakki (Excise and Taxation), Ali Afzal Sahi (Communication & Works), Nawabzada Mansoor Khan (Revenue), Hussain Jahanian Gardezi (Agriculture), Ghazanfar Abbas (Social Welfare), Latif Nazir (Mines and Minerals), Sardar Husnain Bahadur Dreshak (Food and Energy), Mian Mehmood-ur-Rasheed (Local Government and Community Development), Mian Aslam Iqbal (Housing) and Ali Abbas Shah (Forest, Wildlife & Fisheries). APP

## TEVTA starts admissions in Technical Colleges across Punjab



Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority have started admissions in three years Diploma of Associate Engineering (DAE).

A meeting was held at the Government Institute of Leather Technology in which Principals of 13 Central Zone's Technology Colleges participated. SDG Akhtar Abbas Bharwana has advised College Principals to run an effective admission campaign as per the priorities of the Punjab Government. He said that this admission campaign should be made successful.

He also informed the meeting that now students of DAE are eligible for admission to engineering universities like students of FSc Pre Engineering which is a big achievement. He further said that technical education plays an important role in the progress of any country and we want to inform these students and parents.

SDG Akhtar Abbas Bharwana noted that there are not many jobs available in the market for Fsc graduates but a graduate of DAE can easily get a job in the market. Now, these graduates are eligible for admission to engineering universities, he added.

He also advised principals that they should monitor the admission campaign for the following merit in admission as these students can earn in the local and international job market.

The meeting was also attended by Additional DG Waleed Jahangir, Regional Director Engr Tariq Mahmood, Project Director Government Institute of Leather Technology Gujranwala Syed Muhammad Athar Raza Zaidi and all principals, and directors of Central Zone.

## Two rehab centers to be established for drug addicts

PESHAWAR: Mayor Peshawar, Haji Zubair Ali here on Saturday announced establishment of two rehabilitation centers for treatment of drug addicts aiming to make them useful citizens of the society.

Addressing a ceremony during his visit to Al-Khidmat Hospital at Nishtarabad, the Mayor said that our immediate goal was to maintain a drug-free society and steps were underway to achieve the target.

He said two new drug rehabilitation centers would be established in Kohati and Nishtarabad and work on it would be started soon.

Haji Zubair said that it was our prime responsibility to serve for the sake of our country and to create awareness among youth about addiction side effects so that more and more people can be saved from addiction.

He said that Al-Khidmat Foundation has always rendered matchless sacrifices during calamities and disasters and played an important role in emergencies. Al-Khidmat Foundation Provincial President Khalid Waqas said that the foundation was at forefront of serving public and providing treatment to drug addicts.

Later, Mayor inquired about health of drug addicts who were under treatment in Al-Khidmat Foundation and also announced all kinds of support to them. Agencies

## Seven held with narcotics

SIALKOT: The district police have arrested seven persons with narcotics and liquor.

According to a spokesperson, the police teams conducted raids in different areas of the district and detained Arsalan alias Slanty, Qasim alias Ferrari, Naveed, Muzamil Hussain, Dilawar, Afzal, Muhammad Qasim alias Machar with hashish and 5 bottles of liquor.

Police have sent the accused behind bars after registering separate cases against them.

## 8 Assistant Professors promoted

FAISALABAD: Eight assistant professors of Govt Municipal Graduate College Jaranwala Road have been promoted to Associate Professors in different disciplines including English, Urdu, History, Political Science, Biology and Health & Physical education.

A spokesman for the college said here on Saturday that those assistant professors who were promoted include: Khalid Hasan, Muhammad Ahmad Khan, Abdur Rauf, Ejaz Nasir, Muhammad Waheed, Akhtar Ali, Tanvir Hameed and Abid Farooq.

Meanwhile, college principal Prof Dr Zahoor Ahmad Bhatti congratulated the promoted professors.

## 16 more test positive for Covid-19 in Faisalabad

FAISALABAD: Sixteen people were tested positive for COVID-19 in the district during the last 24 hours.

According to the Health Department spokesperson, 468 coronavirus tests were conducted in public and private sector labs during the same period. He said that a total of active cases in the district were 205 while 28,762 patients recovered from the disease.

He said that 119 beds were allocated at the Allied Hospital, 52 at the DHQ Hospital and 150 at Govt General Hospital Ghulam Muhammad Abad for COVID-19 patients.

At present, 5 patients were under-treatment at the Allied Hospital. He further said that 200 confirmed patients were isolated at their homes in the district.

## Protection

QUETTA: Jawans of Frontier Corps (FC) walking in front of 7th Muharram-ul-Haram procession in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

## Relief goods sent to Balochistan

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has sent relief goods to Balochistan government for the affected by recent floods due to torrential rains, said the spokesman of Pakistan Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) on Saturday.

On the directives of Chief Minister KP Mahmood Khan, the members of Provincial Cabinet included Kamran Bangash and Barrister Mohammad Ali Saif sent the 32 truckloads to government of Balochistan.

The relief goods consisted of 1,000 tents, 2,000 blankets and 1,000 meters, one thousand hygiene kits, one thousand mosquito nets, and 20 D-watering pumps.

In addition to above, the food package comprising 1000 boxes of food items were sent to people of Balochistan.

Several household commodities were included in the boxes that are 40Kg flour, 5Kg rice, 3Kg cooking Oil, 3Kg Sugar, 2Kg Daal Chana, 1Kg Mong, 1Kg Daal Masoor, tea items and other essential things.

Speaking at the event, Advisor to KP CM on Information, Barrister Moham-



mad Ali Saif said the PTI government will not leave the flood affectees alone of Balochistan during this situation. He said that the people of both the provinces share religious and cultural values and we are always ready to support the

residents of Balochistan in this hour of need.

He said that we not only share the grief with the affected people but actually stand with them to provide maximum relief to them. APP

## Monsoon rain spell continues in Karachi, Lahore

KARACHI/LAHORE: Parts of Karachi and Lahore were hit by a new monsoon season on Saturday, flooding low-lying areas and interfering with daily life.

The top regions of the country are being penetrated by monsoon currents. The western and upper regions of the nation are also being affected by a westerly wave.

Parts of Karachi have been experiencing rain since early morning. During the current monsoon in Karachi, the Met Office anticipated torrential rains.

Even the Lahore Development Authority (LDA) office in Lahore was flooded as a result of the rain. Rainwaters have caused several low-lying places to become inundated. Sunday is expected to be hot and muggy across most of the nation, according to the Met Office.

However, higher Punjab, upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Gilgit Baltistan are predicted to see rain, wind, and thundershowers. In a few locations in lower Sindh and north Balochistan, rain, wind, and thundershowers are predicted. During this time, isolated significant falls are also anticipated in Kashmir, upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and higher Punjab.

## Boat capsizes near Karachi's Do Darya

KARACHI: At least 11 people were injured after a boat capsized in the Arabian sea near Karachi on Saturday.

As per the initial reports, the fishermen were out in the sea to catch fish near Do Darya when their boat capsized.

Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum Chairman Kamal Shah confirmed that all the fishermen, who are experts at swimming, managed to save themselves after the boat flip mishap. "They have minor injuries and do not require tertiary care as of now," he added.

## Polling on four NA seats in KP on Sep 25

PESHAWAR: Election Commission Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Saturday announced election for the vacant seats of four National Assembly seats from the province that polling would be held on September 25, 2022.

The Constituencies included NA-22 Mardan, NA-24 Charsadda, NA-31 Peshawar and NA-45 Kuram. According to the election schedule, the returning officers issued a public notice that nomination papers would be submitted from August 10 to August 13.

The Names of the candidates would be published on 14 August and the nomination papers will be scrutinized till August 17. Appeals

against acceptance or rejection of documents by the returning officers would be submitted till August 20 and the tribunal will decide on these appeals by August 25.

The revised list of candidates would be released on August 26 and candidates will be able to withdraw their papers by August 27. The election symbols would be allotted to candidates on August 29. Returning Officer (Provincial Election Commissioner) has fixed the date of August 13 for PTI's preferred list of candidates for women's reserved seat.

It is worth mentioning here that the Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf had accepted the resignations of 11 MNAs out of a total 131.

## Punjab govt bans pillion riding



LAHORE: The Punjab cabinet on Saturday decided to ban pillion riding and suspend cellular services during Ashura.

The decision was taken during its first ever meeting chaired by Punjab Chief Minister (CM) Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi. On the recommendation of security institutions, the cabinet banned pillion riding on the 9th and 10th of Muharram (August 8 and 9) in the province.

Moreover, cellular services will remain suspended near

sensitive places and near the routes of Muharram processions. CM Elahi also directed the provincial ministers, advisers, and special assistants to supervise the security arrangements in their respective districts.

"Regular meetings should be held at the district level to maintain peace on Ashura Day," he added. The chief minister warned those involved in hate-mongering to refrain from disrupting inter-sect harmony or face dire consequences.

CM Pervaiz Elahi ordered the authorities to expedite the relief efforts for flood victims. The top provincial minister also vowed to compensate for the damage to crops and property in the inundated area.

## Wildlife Dept rejects hyena's attack on children in Mardan

PESHAWAR: The Wildlife Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has shown disagreement with report about hyena's attack on children in Madey Baba village near Takker in Mardan district.

A couple of days earlier a dog-like animal attacked few children in Madey Baba village, injuring few of them. The animal quickly escaped when local people rushed to the site after listening shouts of terrified children.

In a press statement issued here on Saturday in a response to the claim of locals that few children were attacked by hyena in the area, the Wildlife Department argued that hyena was a nocturnal animal that comes out of den at night while the children were attacked at around 10:00 in morning.

Hyena is mostly visible in Lakki Marwat and D.I.Khan districts of KP

and according to record, the animal has never been seen in Mardan district during the last 20 years, the statement reads.

Even in Lakki Marwat and D.I.Khan districts, no such reports of Hyena attack on human was reported, the Wildlife Department said.

The statement further said the department did not directly reject reports of locals about presence of hyena in the area as in view of changing climate and habitats of animals due to increasing population, migration of animal to the area could not be totally rejected.

The staff member of the Wildlife Department are vigilant and monitoring the situation besides remaining in contact with locals who are also educated about precautionary and safety measures to prevent any attack by animal in future, the statement concludes. Agencies



Islamabad  
23° - 38° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr ..... 3:49 am  
Zohr ..... 12:14 pm  
Asr ..... 5:04 pm  
Maghrib ..... 7:04 pm  
Isha ..... 8:37 pm

**EMERGENCY**

Rescue (Police) ..... 15  
Bomb Disposal ..... 15  
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad ..... 1122 & 16  
Emergency Ambulance ..... 1122 & 4451122  
Motorway Police ..... 92706044  
Motorway Police ..... 9270601-20

**Women Police Stations**

Islamabad ..... 9222596  
Rawalpindi ..... 9270601-20

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

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

**DEPARTMENTS**

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

**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

**Curbing Dengue**

**RDA making efforts to raise awareness**

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) on the directives of Director General, RDA, is making efforts to raise awareness against dengue.

According to RDA spokesman, a walk on dengue control and prevention was organized with an aim to raise awareness against the disease. The DG RDA has urged the RDA staff members to ensure cleanliness of the office and their homes.

He said awareness played a key role in the fight against dengue because prevention was far better than cure. He stressed the need for collective as well as individual efforts along with collaboration of all the stakeholders for the awareness, implementation and control of any epidemic.

He also highlighted ways to control various developmental stages of dengue from its eggs to larva and full grown mosquitoes. He advised the citizens to remove stagnant water so that dengue larvae could be prevented.

On severe violations, strict action in accordance with the law was being taken against the violators and FIRs are also being lodged, he added.

He informed that the authority would continue its efforts against dengue. Later, the pamphlets were also distributed among the citizens on Murree road.

# Pakistan will soon become polio-free: RI

Rotary's PolioPlus investment for polio eradication is \$353.8 mln

ISLAMABAD: President Rotary International Jennifer Jones hopes that Pakistan would soon achieve the status of a polio-free country, saying Rotary was committed to keep contributing until the world becomes safe and secure from this disease.

"Rotary's PolioPlus investment in Pakistan for polio eradication is US\$353.8 million and overall it's global contribution has been around US\$2.5 billion. Rotary is committed to keep contributing until the world becomes polio free," she said during a discussion with media persons here at a local hotel on Saturday.

She also thanked the government of Pakistan, media and civil society for supporting the Eradication of Polio program and hoped that Pakistan would soon achieve the status of a polio-free country.

Director of Rotary International (RI) Mohammad Faiz Kidwai, Trustee of Rotary Foundation Aziz Memon, District Governor Adnan Rohaila and Media Coordinator

Imran Gaznavi were also present on the occasion. Jennifer, who was the Founder and President of Media Street Productions Inc., an award-winning media company in Ontario, said Rotary was working in more than 200 countries of the world. "RI's 1.4 million members are constantly striving to improve the lives of their communities and the people of the country."

She said Rotary was dedicated to causes that build international relationships, improve lives, and create a better world. "Rotarians all over the world are involved to undertake projects in seven areas of focus which includes peace-building and conflict prevention; disease prevention and treatment; water, sanitation, and hygiene; maternal and child health; basic education and literacy; community economic development and environmental sustainability & climate change."

Jennifer, while appreciating the performance of Rotary in Pakistan on the occa-

sion of natural disasters, said whether its earthquake situation or flood disaster, Rotary has always stepped forward and played a full role in providing immediate relief to the victims and their rehabilitation.

"Rotary Pakistan has distributed around 25000 shelter boxes/tents donated by Rotary in UK. 'Rotary Jo Goth' was the best project for the rehabilitation of the victims of earth quake in Pakistan, in which 160 houses alongwith a sustainable infra structure was built and given to the underprivileged and homeless victims with ownership rights."

Jennifer, who uses her voice to raise hundreds of millions of dollars to eradicate disease, support peace and provide clean water and sanitation in developing areas of the world, appreciated Rotary's role towards Total Literacy and Quality Education where almost each of the 500 clubs in Pakistan were involved to eliminate illiteracy from Pakistan. APP

## Preparatoins

ISLAMABAD: A vendor is displaying national flags attraction for costumers on a green belt alongside Islamabad Express Highway ahead of 75th Independence Day in federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

## Kashmir Exploitation Day

# Chairman JKSM expresses gratitude to Pakistan

Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Kashmiri leader and Chairman Jammu and Kashmir Salvation Movement (JKSM) Altaf Ahmed Bhat expressed gratitude to the government and the people of Pakistan for observing August 5th as Exploitation Day.

Chairman JKSM Bhat while addressing the media here said that Pakistan's observance of Exploitation Day against the illegal, immoral and undemocratic actions of India on 5th August 2019 has once again proved that Pakistan stands side by side with the freedom struggle of Kashmiris.

The purpose of observing Exploitation Day in Pakistan and across the world was to send a message to the Kashmiris that Pakistanis all over the world will continue to support them in freedom struggle.

While appreciating the government of Pakistan Chair-



man JKSM Bhat said that, Pakistan has encouraged all over the world especially the diaspora community to observe August 5 as Exploitation Day to show solidarity with the oppressed Kashmiris. While Pakistan also condemned the Indian hegemonic agenda, violations of International law and Human Rights, suppression and subjugation of besieged Kashmiris in IIOJ&K.

Chairman JKSM Bhat while praising the valour and commitment of the people of Kashmir to freedom movement said that, Indian repression and violence have failed

to weaken the resolve of Kashmiris. Since August 05, 2019 Indian occupation forces have martyred 662 innocent Kashmiris including 13 women, 38 women widowed and 91 children orphaned, the troops damaged over 1,093 houses and structures and molested or disgraced 125 women and arrested 17,993 people, at least 2,278 people were critically injured due to the use of brute force including the firing of bullets, pellets and teargas shells by Indian troops, paramilitary and police personnel on peaceful demonstrators and mourners in the territory.

While Appreciating and thanking the armed forces of Pakistan for backing Kashmiris political struggle.

Bhat added that Kashmiri people are grateful to the people of Pakistan all over the world and we are sure that Pakistan will not leave Kashmiris alone and at the mercy of India. To draw the world's

attention to Indian atrocities in Occupied Kashmir, protest rallies were held in major cities of Pakistan and around the world. Observing Exploitation Day yesterday made it clear that every Pakistani is united with oppressed Kashmiris and supports their struggle for freedom.

Occupied Jammu and Kashmir have become the centre of international attention due to Narendra Modi's illegal move to abrogate Article 370.

With the help of Allah and the support of the people of Pakistan, the people of Occupied Kashmir will emerge victorious in their struggle against Indian occupation. He added.

Chairman JKSM further said that they are grateful to the people around the world who participated in Kashmir Exploitation Day against India on August 5th yesterday on the call of the government of Pakistan.

## Health Corner

### Engineers develop stickers that can see inside body

ISLAMABAD: Ultrasound imaging is a safe and noninvasive window into the body's workings, providing clinicians with live images of a patient's internal organs. To capture these images, trained technicians manipulate ultrasound wands and probes to direct sound waves into the body. These waves reflect back out to produce high-resolution images of a patient's heart, lungs, and other deep organs.

Currently, ultrasound imaging requires bulky and specialized equipment available only in hospitals and doctor's offices. But a new design by MIT engineers might make the technology as wearable and accessible as buying Band-Aids at the pharmacy.

In a paper appearing today in Science, the engineers present the design for a new ultrasound sticker — a stamp-sized device that sticks to skin and can provide continuous ultrasound imaging of internal organs for 48 hours.

The researchers applied the stickers to volunteers and showed the devices produced live, high-resolution images of major blood vessels and deeper organs such as the heart, lungs, and stomach. The stickers maintained a strong adhesion and captured changes in underlying organs as volunteers performed various activities, including sitting, standing, jogging, and biking.

The current design requires connecting the stickers to instruments that translate the reflected sound waves into images. The researchers point out that even in their current form, the stickers could have immediate applications: For instance, the devices could be applied to patients in the hospital, similar to heart-monitoring EKG stickers, and could continuously image internal organs without requiring a technician to hold a probe in place for long periods of time.

If the devices can be made to operate wirelessly — a goal the team is currently working toward — the ultrasound stickers could be made into wearable imaging products that patients could take home from a doctor's office or even buy at a pharmacy.

"We envision a few patches adhered to different locations on the body, and the patches would communicate with your cellphone, where AI algorithms would analyze the images on demand," says the study's senior author, Xuanhe Zhao, professor of mechanical engineering and civil and environmental engineering at MIT. "We believe we've opened a new era of wearable imaging: With a few patches on your body, you could see your internal organs."

The study also includes lead authors Chonghe Wang and Xiaoyu Chen, and co-authors Liu Wang, Mitsutoshi Makihata, and Tao Zhao at MIT, along with Hsiao-Chuan Liu of the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

To image with ultrasound, a technician first applies a liquid gel to a patient's skin, which acts to transmit ultrasound waves. A probe, or transducer, is then pressed against the gel, sending sound waves into the body that echo off internal structures and back to the probe, where the echoed signals are translated into visual images.

For patients who require long periods of imaging, some hospitals offer probes affixed to robotic arms that can hold a transducer in place without tiring, but the liquid ultrasound gel flows away and dries out over time, interrupting long-term imaging.

In recent years, researchers have explored designs for stretchable ultrasound probes that would provide portable, low-profile imaging of internal organs. These designs gave a flexible array of tiny ultrasound transducers, the idea being that such a device would stretch and conform with a patient's body.

But these experimental designs have produced low-resolution images, in part due to their stretch: In moving with the body, transducers shift location relative to each other, distorting the resulting image.

The MIT team's new ultrasound sticker produces higher resolution images over a longer duration by pairing a stretchy adhesive layer with a rigid array of transducers. "This combination enables the device to conform to the skin while maintaining the relative location of transducers to generate clearer and more precise images," Wang says.

The device's adhesive layer is made from two thin layers of elastomer that encapsulate a middle layer of solid hydrogel, a mostly water-based material that easily transmits sound waves. Unlike traditional ultrasound gels, the MIT team's hydrogel is elastic and stretchy. Courtesy Science Daily

## Chancellor Riphah Int'l University visits TDC Islamabad



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Diabetes Centre (TDC) Islamabad was visited by Chancellor Riphah International University Hassan Muhammad Khan and Lt Gen (Rtd) Ashraf Saleem.

On arrival, management of hospital including Chairman Dr. Asjad Hameed and CEO Tahir M. Abbasi received and greeted them with a warm welcome

The guests were given a visit to various departments and services engaged in treatment. They appreciated the management's vision, treatment and the efficiency of related services and treatment procedures.

Officials of TDC and Riphah International University later agreed on an agenda to materialize the matter of cooperation.

## Muharram Processions

### 6,000 cops deployed in Rawalpindi for security

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Police have deployed over 6,000 cops to provide security cover to 447 processions and 1925 Majlis to be held in various parts of the city till 10th Muharram.

According to the police spokesman, Rawalpindi Police has made special managements to ensure foolproof security during Muharram. During Muharram, more than 2,000 volunteers would perform duties along with officers and volunteers of the district police, ladies police, elite force, traffic police and dolphin force, he added.

He said special arrangements had been made for the training of volunteers whereas officers and officials from Punjab Highway Patrol and Punjab Constabulary would also perform security duties.

Although, the senior officers were ensuring security arrangements by reviewing the routes of the processions, the personnel were also being briefed in advance to manage the routes' security arrangements, he added. Moreover, prohibition on display of weapons and use of loud-speakers would be ensured by the security personnel. "No person will be allowed to enter processions and meetings without checking. More than 1,000 traffic police officers will perform their duties to ensure traffic arrangements," the spokesman said.

# RAC to organize 'Gandhara Festival'

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: Director General of Punjab Councils of Art Saman Rai has said that Rawalpindi Arts Council will organize 'Gandhara Festival' to highlight the ancient Gandhara civilization of Taxila, in which the young generation will be informed about the ancient civilization sites of Potohar region besides introducing to them ancient art and culture.

She said that festivals are being organized to highlight the culture of Punjab as well as the ancient civilizations of Gandhara, Harappa, Rohi and Sindh in the province. She said this while presiding over a meeting at the Rawalpindi Arts Council in which the schedule and arrange-



ments of the 'Gandhara Festival' were reviewed. Director Rawalpindi Arts Council Waqar Ahmad and other relevant officers also participated in the meeting.

Saman Rai said that similar festivals will be organized in Sahiwal regarding Harappan civilization, Faisalabad regarding Sindh civilization and Bahawalpur regarding

Rohi civilization. She said that there is a close relationship between culture and ancient civilizations which spans many centuries because the civilization of any region must have an impact on its culture.

She said that all cultural festivals have been included in the schedule of arts councils across the province and these festivals will be held throughout the year. Director Rawalpindi Arts Council Waqar Ahmad said that the Potohar region has a special identity due to its distinctive culture apart from the Gandhara civilization. He said that the Rawalpindi Arts Council is the guardian of the culture of Potohar region and the Gandhara civilization of Taxila. He said that the exhibition of Buddha statues made by local



Group Chairman/Chief Editor: **Almas Ayoub Sabir**  
 Vice Chairman: **Asim Nazir Ahmad**  
 Managing Editor: **Naveed Ahmad Khan**  
 Head Editorial Advisory Board: **Amjad Mehmood**  
 Bureau Chief Karachi: **Saleem Zaman Khan.**  
 (mszk786@gmail.com)  
 Bureau Chief Lahore: **Syed Afraz Ali Nazish**  
 (afrazalishah@gmail.com)  
 Islamabad Office: **Rose Plaza, I-8 Markaz.**  
 Karachi office: **Flat No.C.3.A.One Comfort, Block No 11.**  
**Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Main Rashid Minhas Road.**  
 Lahore Office: **7-E,Samanberg, Johar Town.**  
 Email: **spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com**  
 Whatsapp: **0346-5008408**

# The G20 in an Age of War

**Andrew Sheng & Xiao Geng**

Last October's G20 Leaders' Summit – held in Rome, and hosted by then-Italian prime minister Mario Draghi – produced a declaration brimming with promises to “address today's most pressing global challenges” and “converge upon common efforts to recover better from the Covid-19 crisis and enable sustainable and inclusive growth” across the world. What a difference a year makes. The promise of 2021 should not be understated. The Leaders' Declaration that the Rome summit produced included noble pledges to give “particular regard to the needs of the most vulnerable.” When it came to global public goods, the 61-paragraph document covered virtually every base, from food security to the circular economy, from the environment to the international financial architecture.

That makes the events of 2022 all the more disappointing. The meeting of G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors in Bali last month – largely overshadowed by discord over Russia's war in Ukraine – did not produce a communiqué at all. And, as it stands, there is little reason to think that this November's G20

Leaders' Summit in Bali will go any better.

In terms of global crises, the Ukraine war is just the beginning. In the United States, spiking inflation – which reached a 40-year high of 9.1% year-on-year in June – has spurred increasingly aggressive interest-rate hikes by the US Federal Reserve, raising fears of recession. Midterm elections – to be held just a week before the G20 summit – compound the uncertainty emanating from the US.

In Europe, the struggle to escape the yoke of Russian energy dependency is occurring against a backdrop of skyrocketing prices and supply disruptions. Meanwhile, the continent is experiencing record-high temperatures, forest fires, and drought – a mere taste of what is to come if the world does not act fast. And there remain plenty of political disruptions to contend with, with Draghi's recent resignation as Italy's prime minister as a case in point.

Emerging-market economies, already shaken by the collapse of the Sri Lankan economy, are bracing for higher inflation, escalating food shortages, and increased debt distress. JPMorgan notes that intensifying pressure on external and fiscal accounts is driving a growing number of countries to engage the International Monetary Fund for assistance, or at least to move in that direction.

Amid such far-reaching and interconnected crises, one might

imagine that global cooperation would be forthcoming. But there seems to be little appetite to compromise, especially at the G20 level. The situation is very different within the G7. At 47 years, the G7 has been around more than twice as long as the 22-year-old G20 – though it is worth noting that the G7 was the G8 for much of that history. Russia was kicked out in 2014. This points to a defining characteristic of this older, smaller club: it comprises the Western democracies that have largely dominated the world economy since 1945. In 2020, the G7 accounted for over half of global net wealth and roughly half of world GDP, despite being home to just 10% of the world's population.

This disproportionate economic power and broadly shared political ideology go a long way toward explaining the G7's behaviour. The democratic systems of which G7 countries are so proud make their leaders hostages to a fast-moving electoral cycle that encourages short-term policy thinking. And the fact that nearly all G7 countries are reserve-currency issuers enables them to enact this short-termism with policies like large-scale quantitative easing. With so much in common – and with those who disagree getting shunned – it is little wonder that the G7 manages to agree on more than the G20, which was established after the Asian Financial

Crisis of the 1990s to engage the largest developing economies. Counting among its members 19 countries and the European Union, the G20 accounts for more than 80% of world GDP and nearly two-thirds of the global population.

The G20 countries are far more diverse, culturally and politically. They include a number of democracies, many of which are deeply flawed, as well as outright autocracies. They also have much younger populations. These factors help explain why many G20 countries operate on longer policy horizons. Meanwhile, escalating global crises have raised doubts about the neoliberal economic orthodoxy that the G7 countries have long pushed. The G20's host this year is a representative of this more diverse group of major economies. Indonesia understands that strategic patience is essential to build consensus among countries operating from different perspectives and stages of development. After all, it is a member of the highly diverse Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), which emphasises *musyawarah* (consultation) and *muafakat* (consensus).

The Asean approach can certainly be frustrating, but it has been vital to enable compromise – and progress. Asean is on track collectively to become the world's fourth-largest economy by 2030, surpassing both Germany and Japan. If this year's G20 summit is to produce

any progress, its members – especially the G7 countries – must embrace *musyawarah* and *muafakat*. Most developing and emerging-market economies view peace and stability as prerequisites to their continued development. They rightly worry that the G7's preoccupation with defeating Russia and containing China will impede this process, impeding the pandemic recovery and undermining climate action.

From a demographic perspective, the G20 is a much more legitimate grouping – in terms of representing a diverse, complex world – than the G7. The latter group must therefore do a much better job of listening to – and working with – its non-G7 partners. This means, for starters, considering the spillover effects of their efforts to deal with the food and energy crises that the Ukraine war has created. And, as difficult as it is, it means finding ways to work with “strategic rivals” like Russia and China. The “rest” cannot force the West to act in their interests. But nor can the West ignore the rest, and maintain economic and moral leadership. This year's G20 Leaders' Summit in Bali amounts to a critical opportunity for the West to decide what future it is working toward.

*The writers hail from the University of Hong Kong and The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen respectively. Courtesy GulfTimes*

## Falling Global food inflation

World grain prices have fallen sharply in recent weeks, raising the prospect of a sharp drop in annual CPI food inflation next year. Grain prices surged at the start of the Ukraine war on supply concerns but there is renewed optimism that other countries will step up production. This week's shipment by Ukraine could add some 20 million tons of grains to the global supply, a significant share of the 45mn tons of grain that Ukraine exported last year. Australia is forecast to produce another bumper wheat harvest this year.

Fitch Ratings in its latest Economics Dashboard notes that the global macro factors are also driving grain prices lower. Hawkish policy tightening moves by the Fed have raised fears of recession and a marked global economic slowdown next year. The Fed's stance has lifted the US dollar index to a two-decade high. Given the inverse relationship with commodities, a rise in the US dollar has contributed to a large fall in agricultural commodities. The slowdown in global industrial production is also consistent with softer commodity prices ahead.

However, report sees some upward risks to food prices. While prices of fertilizers have moderated, the surge in European natural gas prices (used in the making of fertilizers) to all-time highs could reverse that trend and affect crop yields. La Niña's return later this year could also disrupt harvests. Nevertheless, the UN's FAO food price index has already started to stabilize.

If we assume that the UN index remains unchanged at its June level and project this into next year, the resulting slowdown in UN food inflation would be consistent with a sharp fall back in annual food CPI in inflation in 2023. World food prices fell sharply in July, partly thanks to a deal between Ukraine and Russia lifting a sea blockade that had stopped Ukrainian grain shipments.

Food prices soared to a record high in March after Russia invaded Ukraine, raising fears that the conflict between two of the world's breadbaskets would spark hunger in countries relying on their exports. While prices remain high, they have now dropped for a fifth straight month, falling by 8.6 percent in July compared to June, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization's food price index.

The index, which measures the monthly change in international prices of a basket of food commodities, was still 13.1 percent higher than in July 2021. The biggest drop was for vegetable oil prices, which fell by 19.2 percent between June and July to hit a 10-month low. The cereal price index logged a monthly drop of 11.5 percent.

The decline for cereals was led by a fall in world wheat prices, “partly in reaction to the agreement reached between Ukraine and the Russian Federation to unblock Ukraine's main Black Sea ports. Shipments under last month's UN-brokered deal began this week, with a first vessel carrying corn leaving Ukraine for Lebanon on Monday. Three more ships loaded with grain set sail on Friday, on their way to Britain, Ireland and Turkey.

The decline in food commodity prices from very high levels is welcome, especially when seen from a food access viewpoint. However, many uncertainties remain, pointing to high fertilizer prices, a bleak global economic outlook and currency movements.

TIME IT TOOK  
ADAM LANZA  
TO MURDER  
26 PEOPLE IN  
SANDY HOOK

TIME IT  
WILL TAKE  
ALEX JONES  
TO RAISE  
\$45 MILLION



*Branhallzz NY/NJ*

## Arab League and Palestinian issue

**Ray Hanania**

In a little-noticed speech this week, Arab League Assistant Secretary-General Saeed Abu Ali said the group should strengthen its boycott of Israel as a tool to confront the Israeli occupation. He made his comments at an Arab League general secretariat meeting in Cairo. “This meeting comes as the Israeli occupation authorities are still continuing their systematic campaign of aggression against the Palestinian people, their sanctities and their property,” he said. “These ongoing crimes require the intervention of the international community, especially the (UN) Security Council and regional and international organizations, to assume their responsibilities and stop the policy of double standards,” Abu Ali added. “Hundreds of relevant international resolutions... calling for stopping the aggression against the Palestinian people and ending the Israeli occupation” have been issued but not implemented.

Abu Ali's comments were perhaps among the most important that have ever come from the Arab world, which has become less vocal on the issue of Palestine as it nears 75 years of subjugation and military oppression. Although it is unlikely that the Arab world will do much given the pressures it faces from both East and West, the statement serves as a grim reminder of its failure to defend its people. In contrast, Israel continues to redefine global morality to cater to its own self-serving agenda,

including framing legitimate criticism of its actions as a form of antisemitism and libeling governments and organizations such as the UN Human Rights Commission's inquiry into its war crimes against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip in 2021.

The weaponization of antisemitism is being used to fuel the growing number of anti-Arab policies, such as those being adopted in the US that compromise the country's constitutional protections of free speech by punishing anyone who criticizes Israel's illegal settlements that

**Its power and influence were built on the proven theory that, when Arab countries stick together, their voice has influence.**

are built on lands stolen from Christian and Muslim Palestinians in the West Bank. This is ironic considering it was the UN that created the international precedent for Israel to declare its statehood, over the objections of the Arab world, as ineffective as they might have been. Antisemitism – the hatred of Jews – is a blight on humanity. But so are the anti-Arab policies embraced by Israel as it tries to justify its rejection of peace and refusal to embrace the establishment of a Palestinian state.

You cannot fight antisemitism if you embrace anti-Arabism in Palestine and apply an apartheid-like series of

discriminatory laws against non-Jews in Israel. You cannot fight antisemitism when you close your eyes to a government's brutality against Christian and Muslim Palestinians. And you cannot fight antisemitism when you refuse to recognize the rights of Palestinians, continue to deny their existence and impose punishments on those who seek to champion those Israeli-oppressed rights. The divisions that have beset the Arab world over the past several decades certainly make it difficult to bring the Arab League back to its former strength. Its power and influence were built on the proven theory that, when Arab countries stick together, their voice has influence. However, as it is fractured, each country is weakened to different degrees.

Very few speak about the power of being Arab and instead turn to religion as a means to bring the Arab world together – an oxymoron that ridicules the region's identity. The governments separately are weaker than when they stand together and speak with one strong voice. This is probably why Abu Ali's clarion call for justice will go unanswered, picked up only by a few media outlets that continue to cling to professional journalism. Every Arab nation, whether they have signed so-called peace accords with Israel or not, should heed this call and pressure Israel to embrace policies that recognize the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

*The writer is an award-winning former Chicago City Hall political reporter and columnist. Courtesy Arab News*

## Africa's new psyche on the big powers

**Ramzy Baroud**

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's Africa tour was meant to be a game changer, not only in terms of Russia's relations with the continent, but in the global power struggle.

Africa's importance to the geostrategic tug of war is not a new phenomenon. Western governments, think tanks and media reports have, for long, allocated much attention to Africa due to China's and Russia's successes in altering the foreign policy map of many African countries. For years, the West has been playing catch up, but with limited success. The Economist discussed ‘the new scramble for Africa’ in a May 2019 article, which reported on “governments and businesses from all around the world” who are “rushing” to the continent in search of “vast opportunities” awaiting them there. Between 2010 and 2016, 320 foreign embassies were opened in Africa which, according to the magazine, is “probably the biggest embassy-building boom, anywhere, ever.”

Beijing's defence technology permeates almost the entire continent. In 2017, China established its a base in Djibouti in the Horn of Africa. Russia's military influence in Africa is also growing exponentially, and Moscow's power is challenging that of France, the US and others in various strategic spaces, mainly in the East Africa regions. But, unlike the US and other western states, countries like China, Russia and India attempt to strike the perfect balance between military engagement, economic development and political language. Quartz Africa reported that trade between Africa and China “rose to a record high” in 2021. The jump was massive: 35% between 2020 and 2021, reaching a total of \$254 billion. Now that Covid-19 restrictions have been largely lifted, trade between Africa and China is likely to soar at astronomical levels in the coming years. Keeping in mind the economic slump and potential recession in the West, Beijing's economic expansion is unlikely to slow down, despite the obvious frustration of Washington, London and Brussels. It ought to be said that China is already Africa's largest

trade partner, and by far.

Russia-China-Africa's strong ties are paying dividends on the international stage. Nearly half of the abstentions in the vote on United Nations Resolution ES-11/1 on March 2, condemning Russia's military action in Ukraine, came from Africa alone. Eritrea voted against it. This attests to Russia's ability to foster new alliances on the continent. It also demonstrates the influence of China as well. Yet, there is more to Africa's position than mere interest in military hardware and trade expansion. History is most critical. In the first ‘scramble for Africa’, Europe sliced up and divided the continent into colonies and areas of influence. The exploitation and brutalisation that followed remain one of the most sordid chapters in modern human history.

What the Economist refers to as the ‘second scramble for Africa’ during the Cold War era was the Soviet Union's attempt to demolish the existing colonial and neocolonial paradigms established by western countries throughout the centuries. The collapse of the Soviet Union over three decades ago changed this dynamic, resulting in an inevitable Russian retreat and the return to the uncontested western dominance. That status quo did not last for long, however, as China and, eventually, Russia, India, Turkey, Arab countries and others began challenging western supremacy.

Lavrov and his African counterparts fully understand this context. Lavrov was keen on referencing the Soviet era, thus the unique rapport Moscow has with Africa, in his speeches. For example, ahead of his visit to Congo, Lavrov said in an interview that Russia had “long-standing good relations with Africa since the days of the Soviet Union.” The statement is part of a complex discourse and rooted superstructure, indicating that Moscow – along with Beijing – is preparing for a long-term geopolitical engagement in Africa. Considering the West's harrowing colonial past, and Russia's historic association with various liberation movements on the continent, many African states, intelligentsia and ordinary people are gravitating away from western influence.

*The writer is a journalist and editor. Courtesy GulfNews*



# Israel continues bombing Gaza 2nd consecutive day

15 killed, 125 injured in Israeli airstrikes

GAZA: At least 15 Palestinians have been killed and 125 injured as Israeli warplanes are continuing to strike military targets throughout the Gaza Strip for the second day on Saturday.

A woman was killed in the afternoon when an Israeli warplane struck a car in Beit Hanoun in northern Gaza, bringing the total death toll in two days of Israeli airstrikes to 15, including a 5-year-old girl, according to the Palestinian health ministry in Gaza.

The ministry also warned that its medical services could stop within 72 hours because of the lack of fuel needed to operate the generators. During a press conference, Ashraf al-Qidra, the ministry spokesman, announced the suspension of outpatient services and scheduled surgeries in all hospitals to ensure emergency operations for the injured in the "aggression." The pharmaceutical situation in Gaza is going through its "worst" time in years, al-Qidra warned.

The Israeli military continued on Saturday its military operation against



the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), bombing dozens of targets belonging to the militant group in the Gaza Strip, while hundreds of rockets were launched from the Palestinian enclave toward Israel. Earlier in the day, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said at least 160 rockets have been fired toward Israel since Friday afternoon. A total of 130 crossed into Israel, most of which were intercepted by the Iron Dome missile

defense system and the rest fell in open areas and the sea, while 30 fell short in Gaza.

Most of the rockets fired on Saturday targeted southern Israeli towns, and sirens were reportedly blaring in the cities near the border with Gaza, including Sderot, Ashkelon, Ashdod and Yavne. A rocket hit a home in the southern city of Sderot, the closest Israeli city to the blockaded Gaza, caus-

ing no injuries, the municipality said. At around noon, rockets were fired at the central Israeli city of Modiin, only 30 km west of Jerusalem.

The central Israeli city of Tel Aviv has not been targeted, but sirens have sounded in its suburbs of Holon and Bat Yam. On Friday, the Tel Aviv municipality opened the city's bomb shelters.

The Israeli army continued to carry out airstrikes in the Gaza Strip throughout Friday night and on Saturday, targeting a rocket manufacturing site, mortar shell manufacturing workshops and rocket launchers, all allegedly belonging to the PIJ.

The heightened tension came after Israeli forces arrested a senior official of the PIJ in the West Bank city of Jenin on Monday. The PIJ vowed to take revenge, prompting the Israeli military to raise its alert along the border with Gaza. At least 15 people, including a 5-year-old girl, have been killed in Israeli airstrikes on Gaza since Friday afternoon, according to the Palestinian health ministry.

## N Korea condemns Pelosi for deterrence talks in Seoul

SEOUL: North Korea denounced US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi on Saturday for supporting deterrence against North Korea during her visit to South Korea this week. Pelosi and her South Korean counterpart, National Assembly Speaker Kim Jin-pyo, vowed on Thursday to achieve North Korean denuclearisation during her stop in South Korea after visiting Taiwan. North Korean state media KCNA said Mrs Pelosi's remarks were part of a US scheme to escalate tensions in the Korean peninsula. KCNA also said Mrs Pelosi was trying to justify hostile American policy against North Korea and support US arms buildup.

"Pelosi, the worst destroyer of international peace and stability, had... incurred the wrath of the Chinese people for her recent junket to Taiwan," the KCNA statement said, citing Jo Yong Sam, director general of the Department of Press and Information at North Korea's Foreign Ministry. "The US will have to pay dearly for all the sources of trouble spawned by her wherever she went." North Korea made preparations for a nuclear test during the first six months of this year, according to an excerpt of a confidential United Nations report seen by Reuters on Thursday.

## China of simulating invasion: Taiwan

TAIPEI: Taiwan accused the Chinese army of simulating an attack on its main island Saturday, as Beijing doubled down on its retaliation for US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taipei after announcing a suspension of cooperation with Washington on key issues. Relations between the two superpowers have nosedived in the wake of Pelosi's trip to China's self-ruled neighbour — which it claims as its territory — prompting calls from the UN for an urgent de-escalation of tensions.

And Friday saw the environment become the latest victim of the geopolitical jousting, as Beijing said it would withdraw from a series of talks and cooperation agreements with Washington — most notably on climate change and defence cooperation. The world's two largest polluters had pledged to work together to accelerate climate action this decade and vowed to meet regularly to tackle the crisis — a deal that now looks shaky. Beijing on Saturday continued some of its largest-ever military drills around Taiwan — exercises aimed at practising a blockade and ultimate invasion of the island, analysts say.

Taipei said it observed several units of Chinese planes and ships operating in the Taiwan Strait, believing them to be simulating an attack on the self-ruled democracy's main island. Its forces detected "multiple batches of Communist planes and ships conducting activities around the Taiwan Strait, some of which crossed the median line", its defence ministry said in a statement. The median line refers to a demarcation line that runs down the Taiwan Strait which Beijing does not recognise. In a bid to show just how close China's forces have been getting to Taiwan's shores, Beijing's military overnight released a video of an air force pilot filming the island's coastline and mountains from his cockpit.

## Sri Lanka seeks Chinese ship delay under Indian pressure

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka has asked China to indefinitely delay a visit by a ship reported by Indian media to be a spy vessel, following intense pressure by the island's northern neighbour, official sources said on Saturday. The Yuan Wang 5 is en route from the Chinese port of Jiangyin and due in the Chinese-run Sri Lankan port of Hambantota on Thursday, according to analytics website MarineTraffic. It is described as a research and survey vessel, but according to Indian broadcaster CNN-News18 is a dual-use spy ship, employed for space and satellite tracking and with specific usage in intercontinental ballistic missile launches.

Indian media reports said that New Delhi was worried the vessel would be used to spy on its activities and that it had lodged a complaint with Colombo. India remains suspicious of China's growing influence in its southern neighbour Sri Lanka. New Delhi's foreign ministry last week said that it will closely monitor "any bearing on India's security and economic interests and takes all necessary measures to safeguard them". In a written request, the Sri Lanka foreign ministry told the Chinese embassy in Colombo not to go ahead with the visit, an official involved in the process said on Saturday.

## Hiroshima fears new arms race Marks 77th anniversary of atomic bombing

TOKYO: Bells tolled in Hiroshima on Saturday as the city marked the 77th anniversary of the world's first atomic bombing, with officials including the United Nations chief warning of a new arms race following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb 24, and, shortly after, Russian President Vladimir Putin had obliquely raised the possibility of a nuclear strike. The conflict has also heightened concerns about the safety of Ukraine's nuclear plants.

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres joined the thousands packed into the Peace Park in the centre of the city to mark the anniversary of the bombing that killed 140,000 before the end of 1945, only the second time a US Secretary General has taken part in the annual ceremony. "Nuclear weapons are nonsense. They guarantee no safety—only death and destruction," Guterres said.

"Three quarters of a century later, we must ask what we've learned from the mushroom cloud that swelled above this city in 1945." Guterres sidestepped a direct mention of Russia, which calls its invasion of Ukraine a "special military operation". Hiroshima mayor Kazumi Matsui, whose city this year did not invite the Russian ambassador to the ceremony, was more pointed and critical of Moscow's military actions in Ukraine.

# War in Ukraine set to enter new phase: UK

KYIV says parts of nuclear plant 'seriously damaged' in strikes

LONDON/ KYIV: Russia's war in Ukraine is about to enter a new phase, with most fighting shifting to a nearly 350km front stretching south-west from near Zaporizhzhia to Kherson, parallel to the Dnieper River. British military intelligence said on Saturday Russian forces are almost certainly amassing in the south of Ukraine, anticipating a counteroffensive or in preparation for a possible assault.

Long convoys of Russian military trucks, tanks, towed artillery and other weapons continue to move away from Ukraine's Donbas region and are headed south-west. Battalion tactical groups, which comprise between 800 and 1,000 troops, have been deployed to Crimea and would almost certainly be used to support Russian troops in the Kherson region. Ukraine's forces are focusing their targeting on bridges, ammunition depots and rail

links with growing frequency in its southern regions, including the strategically important railroad spur that links Kherson to Russian-occupied Crimea.

Parts of Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant were "seriously damaged" by military strikes that forced one of its reactors to shut down, the plant's operator said on Saturday. The Friday strikes on the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant in south Ukraine—Europe's largest atomic power complex—"seriously damaged" station containing nitrogen and oxygen and an "auxiliary building," Energoatom said on the Telegram messaging service. Kyiv and Moscow blamed each other for the attacks. The strikes had damaged a power cable, forced one of the reactors to stop working and "there are still risks of leaking hydrogen and radioactive substances, and the risk of fire is also

high," it said.

The shelling "has caused a serious risk for the safe operation of the plant." Russian troops have occupied the Zaporizhzhia plant since the early days of their invasion and Kyiv has accused them of storing heavy weapons there. But Moscow, in turn, has accused Ukrainian forces of targeting the plant. The European Union hit out at Russia on Saturday over the shelling. "The EU condemns Russia's military activities around #Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant," the bloc's top diplomat, Josep Borrell, wrote on Twitter. "This is a serious and irresponsible breach of nuclear safety rules and another example of Russia's disregard for international norms."

Borrell insisted that the United Nations' nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, be given access to the plant. The IAEA has been trying

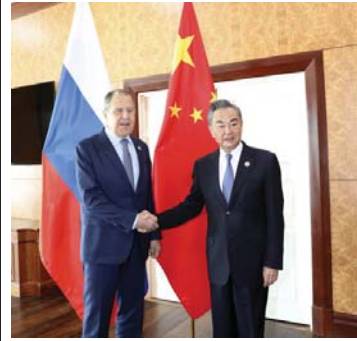
for weeks to send a team to inspect the plant. Ukraine has so far rejected the efforts, which it says would legitimise Russia's occupation of the site in the eyes of the international community.

It said employees of Russian nuclear operator Rosatom had left the plant shortly before the attacks but that Ukrainian personnel had stayed on and the plant was still generating electricity.

Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky had said on Friday that "any bombing of this site is a shameful crime, an act of terror."

And the Ukrainian foreign ministry had said that the "possible consequences of hitting a working reactor are equivalent to using an atomic bomb". Earlier in the week the IAEA said that the situation at the nuclear power plant was "volatile." "Every principle of safety has been violated one way or the other," IAEA chief Rafael Grossi said.

## Chinese, Russian FM's meet in Cambodia



PHNOM PENH: Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi met here on Friday with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at the latter's request on the sidelines of meetings of foreign ministers on East Asia cooperation, with both sides agreeing to maintain strategic coordination and deepen practical cooperation. Wang gave a comprehensive elaboration on China's legitimate position on the Taiwan question, and appreciated Russia's immediate reiteration of firm support for the one-China principle and opposition to any act that infringes on China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, which testifies to the high-level strategic coordination between the two sides.

China stands ready to work with Russia to safeguard in a more vigorous way the international system with the United Nations at its core and the international order underpinned by international law to achieve more effectively lasting security and sustainable development, Wang said. Wang said that under the current situation, China and Russia should jointly promote regional development, calling for boosting mutually beneficial cooperation with regional countries in the fields of fighting COVID-19, health, connectivity, digital economy, as well as green and low-carbon development and building stable and reliable regional industrial and supply chains.

China and Russia should support that the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific adheres to independence, ASEAN leadership and the ASEAN approach, Wang said.

# Biden to host White House Pacific island summit

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden will host Pacific island leaders at the White House in September, a senior American diplomat said Saturday, deepening a regional charm offensive to counter growing Chinese influence. Visiting Tonga, Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman said the leaders would be invited to Washington for a meeting and dinner late in the month. "This meeting will be a historic opportunity with the United States and

Pacific islands countries to hear and listen, the Pacific way," Sherman said.

The move comes amid a flurry of US shuttle diplomacy looking to bolster alliances in the Pacific against a more assertive Beijing. Washington has announced it will open a series of new diplomatic missions in the region, and has been more vocal and visible in recent months. Secretary of State Antony Blinken has visited and Vice President Kamala Harris recently made a land-

mark address to the Pacific Islands Forum.

On Saturday, Sherman will attend a series of events in the neighboring Solomon Islands, which is marking the 80th anniversary of World War II's Battle of Guadalcanal. The Solomon Islands are at the center of a renewed South Pacific rivalry between Beijing and Washington. China signed an undisclosed security pact with the island nation in April, alarming Western allies.

The deal, which critics fear could lead to China gaining a military foothold in the South Pacific, is likely high on the agenda for the US visit. A series of decisions by Solomons Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare that appear to echo China's authoritarian style of governance may also be up for discussion. Sogavare has moved to censor the public broadcaster, threatened other media and repeatedly floated delaying planned elections.

# Peculiarities of the Siab Bazaar in Samarkand, Uzbekistan

Visiting Samarkand and not paying attention to Siab market means missing one of the most interesting adventures. The oriental market is a special place where you can feel a live atmosphere of the ancient city. Many years ago, bazaars served as the main strategic points on the Great Silk Road trade development. Siab Bazaar in Samarkand is one of the most interesting and ancient must see sights.

Siab market is conveniently located, with the great mosque of Bibi-Khanim in only few minutes' walk away. There is another landmark not far from the bazaar – Hazrat Khizir Mosque. The area of the market impresses with its 5 ha of trade rows. The main entrance is done in the form of a lofty three-fold arch adorned with blue mosaic. Trading rows are under tents that protect the bazaar from a burning sun in summer and from wind and rain in winter.

When crossing the threshold of



the arch, you will find yourself in a different, rather magic atmos-

phere with lots of bright colors around you, hubbub of voices of

customers and merchants, and certainly abundance of fruits and vegetables. Siab Bazaar practically never sleeps. The purchase starts before the sunrise and ends late in the evening.

Siab Bazaar is a dekhkan (agricultural) market; there you will mainly find vegetables and fruits grown in Uzbekistan, as well as local hand-made products. Trading rows are conditionally divided according to types of goods. Local sellers say that Siab dried fruits, sweets and nuts are so tasty that make residents of the capital city travel there for their portion. It is also possible to meet huge number and kinds of spices at the bazaar, even the rare ones. Apart from the edible products, you can buy pieces of local artisans and masters.

Special attention should be given to a bread row, as Samarkand bread is a special sort of local flour product. You can see more than 17 kinds of bread at the Siab market. What is an oriental market without tasting?! there, as in any other bazaar, kind-hearted vendors will not only allow



you to taste the product before purchasing, but will also insist on it. Surely, the main subtlety of the oriental bazaar is a bargaining tradition. Each buyer has a duty to trade with the seller before a purchase. The point is not about reducing the price, rather a habit that Asian dwellers have formed from the childhood. The one who

shows the talent will gain in the end. Except fresh and various goods, Siab market in Samarkand has another feature – this is the place where you can find out the latest news and events happening in the city. Uzbek people are very sociable and people get involved in conversations even with strangers.

After visiting this bazaar, you will dive into the atmosphere of Samarkand festivity, mystery and will be able to understand the historical city on the Great Silk road. Along with ripen fruits and hot bread; you will take with yourself a piece of oriental atmosphere that will stay with you forever.



**MMBL, CBA partner to promote access to digital financial solutions**

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: August 06, 2022: Pakistan's largest digital bank, Mobilink Microfinance Bank Limited (MMBL), and CBA, a leading digital distribution platform working to promote micro-entrepreneurship in Pakistan, have joined hands to increase peoples' access to premium digital financial services across the nation. This partnership will strengthen access to financial products and services through digital platforms and improve financial literacy.

Chief Finance & Digital Officer MMBL, Sardar Mohammad Abubakr, and CEO CBA, Ghazanfar Ali Khan, inked this exciting agreement at the MMBL Head Office in Islamabad, in the presence of senior management from both organizations.

MMBL is one of the country's leading proponents of financial inclusion, wholly committed to serving marginalized and underserved people while bridging the digital divide in the country. The bank leverages its elaborate portfolio of innovative digital and financial services to consistently provide convenient access to banking products and services to entrepreneurs and Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises, specifically in remote and hard-to-access areas.

CBA, on the other hand, is the largest Digital Distribution Platform with more than 20,000 retailers in the country that provides one-stop retail solutions, including various financial services, telecom, utility bill payments, digital ticketing, e-vouchers, mobile handsets purchasing, digital courier services and loan repayments.

Addressing the gathering, CFDO MMBL, Sardar Mohammad Abubakr, stated, "We are excited to collaborate with CBA to reinforce our goal of providing easy and accessible financial services to entrepreneurs and small enterprises. MMBL and CBA share the same passion for spurring economic growth through improved access to finance, so we are thrilled to see where this collaboration leads. Furthermore, our shared digital infrastructure will come in handy in widening the banking net to areas that lack physical branches, enabling more entrepreneurs and SMEs to expand their businesses and journey further towards the path to sustainability."

CEO of CBA, Mr. Ghazanfar Ali Khan, stated, "CBA has been working to elevate micro-entrepreneurship by helping SMEs to scale upwards and attain financial sustainability. We continue to improve, innovate and collaborate to be able to play a much larger and impactful role in the industry."

MMBL is proud to forge alliances with like-minded organizations to further its mission of a financially included Pakistan. The bank focuses on financially empowering women in Pakistan's economic landscape so they can actively contribute to the sustainable growth and development of the nation's economy. Through its diversified financial services portfolio, MMBL

**Turkiye to pay for some Russian gas in rubles: Erdogan**

ISTANBUL: President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has confirmed that Turkiye will start paying for some of its Russian natural gas imports in rubles.

The announcement was initially made by Moscow late Friday after more than four hours of talks between Erdogan and Russian President Vladimir Putin in Sochi.

The United States is leading international efforts to impose economic sanctions on Russia in response to its February invasion of Ukraine.

But NATO member Turkiye has tried to remain neutral in the conflict because of its heavy dependence on Russian energy. Russia accounted for about a quarter of Turkiye's oil imports and 45 percent of its natural gas purchases last year.

"As Turkiye, our door is open to everyone," Erdogan was quoted Saturday as telling Turkish reporters on his flight home from Sochi. "One good thing about this Sochi visit is that we agreed on the ruble with Mr. Putin," Erdogan said.

"Since we will conduct this trade in rubles, it will of course bring money to Turkey and Russia." Neither Erdogan nor Russian officials have said what portion of the gas will be covered by ruble payments. Avoiding paying for the gas in dollars helps Turkiye protect its dwindling hard currency reserves.

The Turkish government is reported to have spent tens of billions of dollars in the past year trying to prop up the lira against steep declines during its latest economic crisis.

The lira has still lost 55 percent of its value against the dollar and consumer prices have soared by 80 percent in the past 12 months. The crisis has complicated Erdogan's path to a third decade in power in elections due by next July.

The United States and European Union are trying to pressure Russia's energy clients from switching to ruble payments to limit Moscow's ability to wage its war against Ukraine. Ruble payments help Russia avoid restrictions on dollar transactions with Moscow that the United States is trying to impose on global banks.

**President for expanding scope of insurance products by using digital tools**

*Urges insurance industry to timely settle insurance claims of the people*

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has urged the insurance industry to expand the scope of its products to include all sectors of the economy including agriculture, transportation, health, trade and commerce by providing insurance coverage to life, health, business, moveable and immovable properties.

He also called upon the insurance industry to timely settle insurance claims of the people, besides adopting modern risk assessment techniques through the use of emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence, Block Chain Computing and Data Analytics.

The President expressed these views while addressing a seminar on the "Importance of awareness and technology in the insurance industry", organized by the Federal Insurance Ombudsman (FIO), at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Saturday.

Addressing the seminar, the President said that the contribution of the insurance sector to Pakistan's GDP is 0.8% which is very low and needed to be brought at par with developed countries which was about 2% of the GDP. He urged the insurance sector to conduct a comprehensive survey and study to discover the reasons behind the low rate of insurance coverage in Pakistan and in the light of the findings



improve their products and customer care to expand their outreach.

He stressed the need for expanding the insurance network by taking meaningful and effective measures to build trust and confidence between the insurance companies and their clients through measures such as better customer care, timely settlement of insurance claims and adopting time-bound measures for dispute resolution and addressing the customers' complaints and grievance without resorting

to lengthy litigation process.

He said that misleading advertising and eager selling of insurance policies by the bank staff to customers was a source of discomfort for the bank customers which needed to be addressed amicably through a consultative process among the stakeholders.

The President stressed the need to create awareness among the people through conventional media and social media to educate and motivate the general public on the long and short-term benefits of insurance coverage. He added that expanded insurance coverage will benefit the policyholders, give a boost to the insurance industry and help in the country's growth and development.

He emphasized that Takaful which was a useful Islamic compliant insurance product offered by certain banks remained underutilized and there was a need to launch a well-thought-out awareness campaign by knitting in the support of religious scholars for its effective marketing.

He said that the Alternate Dispute Resolution mechanism adopted by the FIO was proving fruitful as it created reconciliation and understanding among the parties and did not result in appeal and review representations,

thus, reducing the burden on the justice system.

He further remarked that cases could now be settled in 45-60 days without the need for lengthy litigation. He expressed satisfaction that the FIO had provided monetary relief worth over Rs 2 billion to the complainants.

The President also highlighted the need to increase the number of complaints received by the five Ombudspersons, including the Banking Mohtasib, FIO, Wafaqi Mohtasib, Federal Ombudsperson Secretariat for Protection against Harassment, and the Federal Tax Ombudsman by motivating the aggrieved persons through effective awareness campaigns to lodge complaints before them, without fear and intimidation, personally or through digital communication means so that maximum aggrieved persons could seek redressal of their complaints and grievances.

He appreciated that Pakistani society had a concept of community insurance which was working well in many parts of the country, adding that in case of loss by any individual, the entire community contributed monetarily in covering his losses and shared burden collectively. He said that Pakistani people possessed a philanthropic spirit and this spirit needed to be formally channelized.

**'EMLAAK Financials' launch major stride towards expanding investor outreach**

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The SECP Chairman Aamir Khan has said that the launch of EMLAAK Financials, the country's first Mutual Fund Market Place, is a major stride towards expanding investor outreach, and improving customer experience.

The SECP Chairman was addressing to the launch ceremony of Emlaak Financials held at the CDC house.

Emlaak Financials is Pakistan's first investment platform allowing digital account opening and online investments in different mutual funds with centralized tracking. This digital platform will facilitate investors in making informed decisions by providing a convenient, consolidated and interactive dashboard of investments empowering them to invest with convenience without having to physically visit the AMCs.

Aamir Khan said the SECP has been implementing a series of reforms focusing on improving the weak linkage between the capital markets and the real economy of the country, reducing excessive regulatory layers and high costs of compliance, improving the access to private capital for large projects, and a less than perfect role in expanding financial inclusion.

It was evident that along with regulatory reform, Khan said, embracing digitalisation was a critical enabler for moving forward. Accordingly, SECP initiated an internal digitalisation transformation program, Leading Efficiency through Automated Process (LEAP), and simultane-



ously encouraging its regulated sectors to accelerate the use of technology within their operational and business areas.

Through careful planning, meticulous execution and overwhelming support of our regulated sectors and market infrastructure institutions like CDC, we have been able to achieve phenomenal successes.

Firstly, the SECP has introduced digital incorporation certificates, digital certified true copies and an exclusive portal for banks to get information on their corporate clients directly from SECP. The SECP have witnessed a significant jump in new incorporations, he said and added that out of the total registered companies in Pakistan,

40% have been incorporated in the past 3 years. Additionally, as a consequence, we printed 348,500 less papers in FY-2022 as compared to 2020, saving 43 trees.

Secondly, Aamir told participants, SECP has also introduced digital account opening and onboarding of investors in stock market and mutual funds, e-IPO process for both equity and debt issues and linkage with Roshan Digital Account were enabled. As a result, number of investors saw a 11% growth in FY 2021 and 6% growth in FY 2022. During the last IPO, 85% of retail investment was done through eIPO.

Thirdly, the SECP established Secured Transactions Registry, that has led to the registration of 109,779 charges on moveable assets of micro enterprises and individuals within 2 years, thereby providing them access to financing. In addition, digitally enabled lending platforms have disbursed over 33 billion of nano loans to more than 2.5 million individual borrowers in FY-2022 alone.

Fourthly, we introduces the concept of Regulatory Sandbox to spur innovation in SECP's regulated sectors, which has facilitated testing of solutions related to blockchain-use cases for capital markets, digital identity/AML/KYC solutions, and digitally-enabled peer-to-peer lending.

Khan said, SECP has been able to develop regulatory frameworks for online only brokers, digital insurance companies as well as enabling a digital regulatory environment for the asset management industry encompassing digital investment advisors, digital trustee and digital asset management companies.

**Finance Minister launches 'EMLAAK Financials'**

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: As a landmark and first of its kind initiative in Pakistan's capital market landscape, "Emlaak Financials" the first digital aggregator platform for mutual funds has been formally inaugurated by the Honorable Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue, Dr. Miftah Ismail at CDC House, Karachi. This platform has been successfully implemented as a digital distribution channel initially for Mutual Funds and later on for other asset classes also.

The Pilot project for Emlaak was initially launched in 2021 for the Sahulat account opening via the platform, after which CDC has continued to abide by its commitment to collaborate with the Mutual Fund Industry for enhancing the platform. The full-fledged account opening feature has now been launched via this online investment portal which is the first of its kind in Pakistan allowing multiple funds from different AMCs to be offered to investors through a single platform.

While officiating the event, Honorable Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue Dr. Miftah Ismail said, "Emlaak

Financials, which has been implemented as a digital aggregator of Mutual Funds, is a very important and timely initiative by SECP and very well executed by CDC. It is very important for our economy that we should introduce such novel concepts which will promote the investment culture in Pakistan and provide an easy and informative platform to the investors thus enabling them to make wise investment decisions while giving them the convenience to open their mutual fund accounts digitally from anywhere without having to visit the brick & mortar offices of Asset Management Companies."

While addressing the occasion, Mr. Aamir Khan—Chairman SECP said, "It is indeed a very important milestone for the Mutual Fund Industry as it embarks on this consolidated digital distribution channel launched for the first time in Pakistan. We, at SECP, are strong proponents of re-engineering processes for promoting efficiency and transparency through digitalization and will continue to support and encourage all such initiatives by providing all the required Regulatory assistance in this regard."

**Dollar's retreat will drastically reduce country's debt: Zahid Hussain**

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Saturday said the surprising stability of the rupee is a very positive development which will restore the confidence of local and foreign investors.

The retreat of the dollar will also give a relief to the public for which the government must initiate efforts, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that there has been a reduction of fifteen hundred billion rupees in the country's loans and the increase in the value of the rupee has

broken the backs of speculators and hoarders who lost billions of rupees in a few days. Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that due to the sharp increase in the value of the dollar, many people had started investing heavily in this currency.

A large number of importers and exporters had also collected millions of dollars which was like playing with the future of the country for profit. A few days back there were no lockers available with the bank to keep dollars but now no one is willing to buy dollars and capital is flowing back into the

market, he added. He observed that the stability of the rupee shows that the appreciation of the dollar was not natural but the work of profiteers and that the government has no control over these speculators which is unfortunate.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that in the month of July, the value of the rupee fell by 15 percent, which was a record since 1989, after which a joint statement by the Ministry of Finance and the Central Bank said that this fall is temporary and the situation will improve in a few months, but no one believed this claim. Now, not only the monitoring of foreign



exchange companies and banks has been started, but many banks involved in profiteering have also been fined billions of rupees, which was necessary to save the country's economy.

He said that imports have dropped to \$4.9 billion this year from \$7.9 billion in July a year ago due to government initiatives that have reduced current account and trade deficit and stabilized the rupee, for which Finance Minister Miftah Ismail deserves credit. He noted that sectors are still in crisis that must be supported and that one of the reasons for the crisis in Pakistan is the vehicle manufacturing companies, which if forced to manufacture parts in Pakistan will save five billion dollars annually.

**Record Bangladesh fuel hike triggers huge queues**

DHAKA: Thousands of Bangladeshis besieged fuel stations across the country after the government raised prices by as much as 52 percent, the largest jump on record, on the back of higher oil prices.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has seen global energy prices soar, though oil has fallen back in recent weeks as recession fears mount.

Dhaka announced Friday (Aug 5) that the price of petrol was going up by 51.7 per cent and diesel by 42.5 per cent from midnight.

Motorcycle riders raced to fuel stations nationwide to try and fill up before the price rise went into effect. Some stations paused sales, and sporadic protests broke out. Demonstrators said the increases will disproportionately hit the country's tens of

millions of poor people, who use diesel to power transport and farming irrigation pumps.

In Sylhet, retailers tried to impose higher prices immediately after the hike was announced, Police Commissioner Md Nisharul Arif told AFP. "People gathered and protested in front of all the fuel pumps in Sylhet city."

In recent weeks, electricity blackouts of up to 13 hours a day have resulted. Bangladesh's inflation rate has topped 6 per cent for nine consecutive months, with annual inflation in July hitting 7.48 per cent, putting pressure on poor and middle-income families to meet their daily expenses.

Dhaka has asked the International Monetary Fund for US\$4.5 billion, the Daily Star newspaper reported, after a visit by representatives of the Washington-based lender.

**Global recession fears stoking uncertainty: Atif Ikram**

ISLAMABAD: Presidential candidate for FPCCI's upcoming elections on Saturday said the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has once again cut its global growth outlook for 2022, to 3.2 percent from its April forecast of 3.6 percent.

The development shows how deeply high inflation and the Ukraine war are biting into the international economy, he said.

Talking to the business community, Atif Ikram Sheikh said that the world's GDP is already contracting in the second quarter which is not a piece of good news for the masses and the business community.



Downturns in China are adding fuel to the fire and high inflation mandates a hawkish policy which

will compromise the global economic growth, he added.

The leader of United Business Group (UBG) the prices will probably remain high to invite stagflation which will be very bad news for under-developed countries like Pakistan which is already suffering from many problems including record inflation and compromised growth.

He noted that the central banks worldwide are struggling to balance efforts to control inflation while minimizing the fallout for economies that were just beginning to recover from the coronavirus pandemic.

Higher interest rates increase

borrowing costs for businesses and consumers, which tends to reduce spending and ease rising prices. But such moves also slow economic growth. The inflation picture has worsened in recent months because of many factors including unprecedented increases in energy prices worldwide.

The Bank of England estimates that gas and electricity bills will eat up an additional 3.5% of household incomes in the period from 2021 to 2023. That's five times more than the increase British households experienced during the energy crisis of the 1970s.

Complete suspension of Russian gas to Europe by year-end and another 30 percent dip in Russian oil exports could push global growth down with no growth in the US and Europe which is bad news for countries depending on export earnings from these two continents, he observed.

The business leader said that the balance of payments crisis and unsustainable debt are fatal for the economy and can be tackled through unpopular decisions. IMF's bailout money must come before the situation becomes difficult, which will also allow loans from other institutions and countries.



# Inam wins silver, Inayatullah takes bronze in Commonwealth Games

Pakistan's medal tally mounts to five

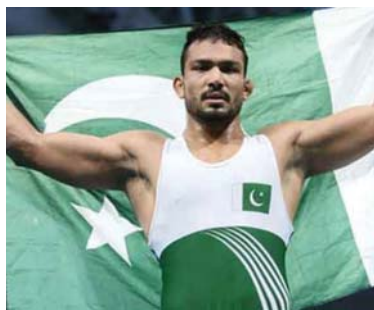
BIRMINGHAM: Pakistan's top grappler Muhammad Inam Butt claimed silver medal as he lost to India's Deepak Punia in the well-fought 86kg final of the Commonwealth Games wrestling event in Birmingham.

After a good clash between Inam and Punia, the Pakistani player couldn't score a point and was handed a 3-0 defeat by the Indian.

In his semi-final bout, Inam defeated South Africa's Edward Lessing by 5-3 to qualify for the Gold medal clash with Punia.

Inayat Ullah won a Bronze medal for Pakistan after beating his Scottish opponent in the Men's Free Style 65kg Wrestling event of the Commonwealth Games 2022.

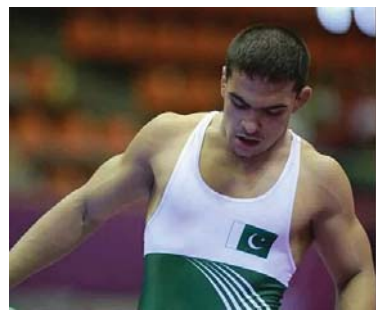
Inayat locked horns with Scotland's Ross Connelly for the Bronze medal, with the Pakistani player winning the match



based on technical superiority after three minutes and 59 seconds.

Earlier, Inayat fought hard to defeat Nigeria's Amas Daniel by 4-0 to qualify for the Men's Freestyle 65kg Wrestling event's semi-final. However, he couldn't beat his Canadian opponent Lachlan McNeil in a bid to qualify for the Gold medal contest.

On the other hand, Pakistan's sprinter Shajar Abbas created history for Paki-



stan on Friday by qualifying for the final of 200m race of Commonwealth Games.

Shajar clocked 20.89 and finished third in semi-final-1 race. After being unable to qualify directly from heat result, Shajar's qualification was depending on other athletes' timing.

According to rules, top two players from each of three semi-final races along with two best timers had to qualify for

the final race.

In race-2, no athlete other than the top two positions could beat Shajar's timing to keep Pakistani athlete's hopes alive. In race-3, Eswatini's Sibusiso Matsenjwa finished third with 20.81 and Kenya's Mike Mokamba Nyangau clocked 20.90 - 0.01 seconds behind Shajar Abbas.

Earlier this week, Pakistani weightlifter Nooh Dastagir Butt won the gold medal for the country with a historic lift of 405kg - a Commonwealth record. Butt received a lot of praise from his country's people including Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Pakistan's first medal came from judoka Shah Hussain Shah who bagged the Bronze medal earlier this week. He outperformed his South African opponent in the 90kg category - his first ever 90kg event as he always played in the 100kg category.

## Victor wins Commonwealth decathlon thriller

BIRMINGHAM: Grenada's Lindon Victor narrowly retained his Commonwealth decathlon crown on Friday as New Zealand shot putter Tom Walsh also held onto his title in Birmingham.

In a drama-filled session, 18-year-old Kenyan Jackline Chepkoech added Commonwealth gold in the 3000 metres steeplechase to last year's under-20 world title. She won in a Games record of 9min 15.68sec - her victory was assured when Uganda's Olympic champion Peruth Chemutai fell badly as she contested the lead. Although limping badly, she bravely carried on to take bronze but had to be taken off in a wheelchair.

There was no upset in the women's triple jump. Jamaica's Shanika Ricketts shed her bridesmaid's tag - having been silver medalist in the 2018 Games and last month's world championships - to post a Games record of 14.94 metres. The decathlon provided the edge-of-the-seat drama at Alexander Stadium. Victor held on by the skin of his teeth as Australia's Daniel Golubovic won the 1500m comfort-



ably, threatening to snatch the title away from him. The Grenadan fell to the ground as he awaited the final tally and to his relief he had done just enough to deny Golubovic, winning by just 36 points with a total of 8,233. "Ahead of the 1500m I just thought, 'Don't relinquish the lead. Run as hard as you need to win', and that's exactly what I did," said 29-year-old Victor.

Another Australian, Cedric Dubler, who had led Victor by 39 points coming into the final two events, took the bronze, as he did four years ago. Walsh, the 2017 world champion, won the shot put with a mark of 22.26 metres as New Zealand compatriot Jacko

ah faces silver medallist Christine Mboma in the women's 200m.

Thompson-Herah will fancy her chances of completing the sprint double - as she has done twice at the Olympics - with Mboma only having returned to training five weeks ago after recovering from a thigh injury. England's Victoria Ohuruogu is one win away from emulating her sister, Olympic and two-time world champion Christine, in winning Commonwealth Games 400m gold. But the 29-year-old faces a major threat from world bronze medallist Sada Williams of Barbados, who cruised through in her semi-final.

The English runner posted the fastest time of 51.00sec, while Williams ran 51.59. Ohuruogu's teammate, Matthew Hudson-Smith, will start as a warm favourite for the men's 400m, looking comfortable in posting the fastest time of the semi-finals. Hudson-Smith revealed after winning bronze at the recent world championships that he had tried to commit suicide last year.

## Badosa shuts down Gauff to reach San Jose semi-finals

SAN JOSE: Second-seeded Spaniard Paula Badosa swept into the semi-finals of the WTA hardcourt tournament in San Jose on Friday with a 7-6 (7/4), 6-2 victory over rising US star Coco Gauff.

Badosa, ranked fourth in the world, twice recovered from a break down in the opening set as she booked a final-four showdown with seventh-seeded Daria Kasatkina, a 4-6, 7-5, 6-0 winner over fourth-seeded Aryna Sabalenka. Gauff, the 18-year-old who reached her maiden Grand Slam final at the French Open this year, was coming off a lively victory over four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka on Thursday night.

The sixth-seeded American appeared to be riding

the momentum from that win as she emerged from an exchange of three breaks of serve with a 3-2 lead in the opening set on the way to a 5-3 advantage. After Badosa held serve, however, Gauff unravelled as she served for the set, firing three double faults to drop her serve as they went to tiebreaker, which Gauff surrendered with another pair of double faults.

She looked rattled as she dropped her opening service game of the second set, Badosa racing to a 5-1 lead and serving out the match with confidence two games later. "It's never easy to start against such an aggressive player with a big serve," Badosa said.

"I think I adapted pretty well in the (end) of the first set, and I played a pretty perfect

tiebreak, so I'm really happy about that." The Spaniard finished with 17 winners to 15 unforced errors, converting half of her eight break chances as Gauff's 29 unforced errors outpaced her 21 winners. Badosa, who reached her fourth semi-final of 2022, will be taking on Kasatkina for the third time, with both prior meetings coming earlier this year. Badosa beat Kasatkina in straight sets in Sydney in January, but Kasatkina triumphed in straight sets in the clay court tournament in Rome. "She's winning a lot of matches, she's winning against the best players in the world, she's doing an amazing year," Badosa said.

Ninth-seeded Veronika Kudermetova maintained her perfect record against Tuni-

sian Ons Jabeur, topping the third-seeded Wimbledon runner-up 7-6 (7/5), 6-2. Kudermetova has won all three of her meetings against Jabeur in straight sets. In their latest meeting, Kudermetova's 30 winners were almost double to fifth-ranked Jabeur's 17. That included half a dozen aces. Kudermetova will face Shelby Rogers, a 6-4, 6-4 winner over fellow American Amanda Anisimova. Rogers, ranked 45th in the world, toppled world No. 3 Maria Sakkari, the top seed, in straight sets to reach the quarter-finals. Rogers, who opened the tournament with a win over former US Open champion Bianca Andreescu, has yet to be broken this week and improved to 3-0 against Anisimova.

## Independence Day Wrestling Championship held



PESHAWAR: The thrill-packed Independence Day Mass Wrestling Championship held under the aegis of Directorate General Sports Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in a joint collaboration of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Wrestling Association in Peshawar Sports Complex has attracted large number of spectators here on Saturday.

Director Operation Sports Aziz Ullah Jan, Deputy Directors Sports Jamshed Baloch, Tariq Khan, Admin Officer Muhammad Irshad Khan, AD Aizaz, Shehryar and other important personalities were present.

In the Mass Wrestling Championship, Tufail Khan claimed gold medal in 60kg, Rehmat grabbed gold medal in 65 kg, Salman took gold in 70kg, Asim bagged silver, Farhan won silver in 75kg, Haseeb won gold in 80kg and Umar took silver medal, Hamad won gold in 85kg, Umar took silver medal, Yasir won gold in 90kg and Shabir won silver, Ahsan Fawad Siddiqui won gold in 105kg and Mehtab claimed silver medals respectively.

In connection with Independence Day celebration on Aug 14, the Directorate General Sports Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is going to arrange various sporting events and on August 13, Mixed Martial Arts competitions, Musical Night and fireworks in Mardan will be held, followed with another grand show with a last-year-like fireworks on August 14 at Peshawar Sports Complex including scores of sports and traditional events comprising Tanga Race, Vintage car Show, Tanga Show, Decorated Rickshaw Show will be organized in the morning at the same venue.

Besides the Traditional Games Football, cricket, Hockey, Squash, Badminton would also be organized at their respective venues inside Peshawar Sports Complex.

Talking to APP, Aziz Ullah Jan said that Sports Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Atif Khan has already approved the Games both on August 13 and August 14 in connection with the Independence Day celebration.

He said the joy of independence will be celebrated together with all the players and all possible opportunities will be provided to the upcoming players. He said that the provincial Sports Minister Muhammad Atif Khan has also given a special message to sportspersons on the occasion of Independence Day to participate with great enthusiasm and directed the officials to ensure due facilities to the players during the Independence Day Games. APP

## Bangladesh star ruled out of Zimbabwe series



DHAKA: Bangladesh will be without the services of their star batter during the tour of Zimbabwe, with his participation in the Asia Cup also in doubt.

Litton Das suffered a hamstring injury during the first ODI against Zimbabwe in Harare and has been ruled out for the remainder of the series. The injury also casts a doubt over his availability for the Asia Cup, which gets underway on 27 August.

Das was injured while trying to complete a run on 81. He then complained of pain and had to be stretched off the field. Bangladesh would post a scorer of 303/2 on the board, with Zimbabwe mounting an incredible chase to win the first ODI by five wickets.

After the match, Bangladesh team physio Muzadded Alpha Sany confirmed the nature of Das' injury. He said, "Litton Das hurt his hamstring while batting in the first ODI. We sent him for a scan during the match. 'He has a grade 2 muscle strain. It takes three to four weeks to recover from this type of injury. So we are not getting Litton [back] during this series.'"

**SAFF Women's Championship**

## Women's national team camp in full swing

**Spokesman Report**

LAHORE: As many as 36 women stars are vying for a place in the Pakistan women's national team (WNT) squad for the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Women's Championship, to be held in Kathmandu, Nepal, from September 7, 2022.

The camp is in full swing in Lahore with the selected 36 footballers picked after initial trials carried out by the PFF in Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad.

Pakistan has been placed in Group A alongside India, Bangladesh and Maldives. Hosts Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bhutan are placed in group B. Pakistan's first match will be against India on the opening day. The top two teams from each group will proceed to play the semi-finals on August 16. The final of the SAFF Women's Championship will be played on September 19.

Haroon Malik, chairman of the FIFA-appointed PFF Normalization Committee, has expressed hope that the resumption of national teams will energise the Pakistan football community. "There is determination to give players their due respect as well as the best-possible facilities in order for them to start excelling," said Malik.

## Medvedev downs Kecmanovic to reach Mexico final

LOS CABOS: World number one Daniil Medvedev continued the build-up to his US Open title defence with a 7-6 (7/0), 6-1 victory over Miomir Kecmanovic in the ATP hardcourt tournament in Los Cabos, Mexico, on Friday.

He booked a title showdown with defending champion and third seed Cameron Norrie, who beat second-seeded Canadian Felix Auger-Aliassime 6-4, 3-6, 6-3. By reaching Saturday's final, his fourth of the year, top-seeded Medvedev is assured of taking the top ranking into his title defence at Flushing Meadows later this month.

Kecmanovic, ranked 38th in the world and seeded fourth, got off to a strong start against Medvedev, who is playing his first tournament since bowing out of the quarter-finals at Mallorca in June. The Serbian, playing his third semi-final of the year, seized a 4-1 lead, but Medvedev found his range and relentlessly pounded his way back from the baseline. He regained a break and swept through the tiebreaker against the frustrated Kecmanovic, who could find no answer as Medvedev powered to a 3-0 second-set lead on the way to victory.

## China's first National Ultimate Frisbee League kicks off

XI'AN: China's first National Ultimate Frisbee League kicked off in Xi'an, capital of Northwest China's Shaanxi Province on Saturday, attracting some 400 players to participate in.

Featuring a total of 12 teams, the league is played in a mixed format with seven players in each team playing on the pitch.

Xi'an Physical Education University V7 smashed Xi'an Terra-Cotta Warriors-RJM 9-2 in the tournament's opener. 30 matches are scheduled for the two-day event, including group phase, knockout stage and the final.

"The national league will no doubt promote the sport in China," said Yang Jianshe, manager of Xi'an Physical Education University V7. Ultimate Frisbee is a fashionable, recreational and eco-friendly outdoor activity that meets the need of people, particularly youngsters, to communicate with others

## Rublev wins twice to reach Washington semis

WASHINGTON: Top seed Andrey Rublev won twice on Friday to reach the semi-finals of the ATP and WTA Washington Open, dispatching Americans Maxime Cressy and J.J. Wolf at the US Open tune-up.

World number eight Rublev defeated 32nd-ranked Cressy 4-4, 7-6 (10/8) in one hour and 42 minutes then eliminated 99th-ranked wildcard Wolf 6-2, 6-3 in 78 minutes. "I didn't spend much time on court," Rublev said of his three-hour total. "That was the main key today." Rain Thursday night forced double duty upon Rublev and several others but Friday storms provided everyone a timely rest break between matches.

Rublev, whose only other

two-win day was at Washington in 2018, rolled through the first set against Wolf in 28 minutes, then broke to lead 2-1 and cruised from there. Next in Rublev's path is Japan's 96th-ranked Yoshihito Nishioka, who outlasted British 16th seed Daniel Evans 7-6 (7/5), 4-6, 7-5 after three hours and 35 minutes. "Rather than to spend two matches like me than one match like him," Rublev said. Wimbledon runner-up Nick Kyrgios fired 35 aces on his way to beating hometown hero Frances Tiafoe 6-7 (5/7), 7-6 (14/12), 6-2 and reaching the other semi-final against Sweden's 115th-ranked Mikael Ymer.

Nishioka improved to 5-0 all-time against the 40th-ranked Englishman in the rain-interrupted

affair to reach his first ATP semi-final since 2020 at Delray Beach. His only ATP title came at Shenzhen in 2018. "I never gave up and that's the way I think I won," Nishioka said.

"I just focused on making a lot of balls and to play long rallies. I knew he didn't want to because he was getting tired." Rublev seeks his 12th career crown and fourth title of the season after Marseille, Dubai and Belgrade to match Spaniards Rafael Nadal and Carlos Alcaraz for the most ATP trophies this year. Australia's 63rd-ranked Kyrgios, who won the most recent of his six ATP titles at Washington in 2019, needed only 14 minutes to complete an early win over US fourth seed Reilly Opelka 7-6

(7/1), 6-2.

Kyrgios then outlasted 27th-ranked Tiafoe after two and a half hours, yelling, "I want to go to bed," in the third set of a match that ended at 1 in the morning. Tiafoe won the last five points of the first-set tiebreaker, the last on his sixth ace, and had four match points in the second-set tiebreaker. But Kyrgios answered with an ace, backhand winner, forehand volley winner and service return winner and forced a third set when Tiafoe sent a forehand long. Tiafoe, who won a third set earlier to defeat Dutch eighth seed Bottec van de Zandschulp, hit a cross-court forehand wide to hand Kyrgios a break to open the third set and missed a backhand to drop a break in the seventh before



Kyrgios held to advance. The Aussie hit 60 winners and saved five match points in all. Ymer, who lost his only ATP final last August at Winston-Salem, beat 54th-ranked American Sebastian Korda 6-2, 5-7, 6-3 after two hours and 27 minutes. Esto-

nia's Kaia Kanepi defeated Anna Kalinskaya 6-7 (4/7), 6-4, 6-3 to reach a semi-final against Aussie Daria Saville, who beat Canadian qualifier Rebecca Marino 6-1, 7-5. It's Saville's first semi-final since 2018 at Acapulco while Kanepi, her age and world rank at 37,

seeks her fifth career WTA title but first since the 2013 Brussels Open. World number 20 Victoria Azarenka, a two-time Australian Open champion, won her first match over Czech Tereza Martincova 7-6 (9/7), 6-2, but her double bid was spoiled by 21-year-old Chinese lucky loser Wang Xiyu.

Wang, seeking her first WTA title, rolled over 33-year-old Azarenka 6-1, 6-3. The 95th-ranked lefthander reached her first WTA semi-final in June at Valencia. Wang next plays 60th-ranked Liudmila Samsonova, who upset 10th-ranked reigning US Open champion Emma Raducanu 7-6 (8/6), 6-1. The 19-year-old British second seed was seeking her first semi-final since her Grand Slam triumph.