



President PML-Q for showing support to Pak Army

President of Pakistan Muslim League (Q) Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain has said that politicians should show full solidarity with the Pakistan army by ignoring expediency. He said that Pakistan Army helped and served the nation in every calamity and difficult time. The army, he said, had been playing an important role and made sacrifices in the restoration of law & order and in elimination of terrorism.



Kashmiris raising voice against Modi's fascism: Mushaal

Chairperson Peace and Culture Organisation Mushaal Husain Mullick has said Kashmiris at every forum are raising voice against fascism of Modi and BJP being carried out in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). She said people of held valley were forced to live under such a condition where they could not even breathe freely. Mushaal said that the UN resolution gave Kashmiris right to their self-determination.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

High alert

KARACHI: Security personnel stand alert in front of 8th Muharram-ul-Haram procession, in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Campaign against sacrifices of martyrs, horrifying: PM



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday while expressing his displeasure said that the social media campaign, aimed at belittling and ridiculing the sacrifices of martyrs, was horrifying. On his Twitter handle, he observed that the self-righteous political narratives were poisoning the minds of the youth and spurring the hate speech. Expressing his worry, the prime minister questioned

"Which way are we headed?" and stressed that the moment called for a deep reflection and retrospection.

After the army copter crash on August 1, certain political zealots and a section of social media activists, launched an abhorring and unacceptable campaign on popular social media platforms to advance their personal and political malice, which drew a strong reaction from the people belonging to all walks of life, political leadership and the state institutions.

Condemnation

Pakistan rejects Indian MEA's ludicrous comments

Pakistan asks India to honour commitment to Kashmiris in interest of justice, durable peace and security in South Asia

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Sunday categorically rejected the ludicrous comments and fallacious claims made by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson, regarding a statement of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

The Foreign Office Spokesperson in a press release said "India's hubris in this regard is deplorable."

The spokesperson said, "OIC is the largest multilateral forum of Islamic countries representing more than 1.7 billion Muslims and have always been vocal in

support of the legitimate rights of the Kashmiri people, who had suffered unspeakably from India's over seven-decades long illegal occupation and unabated oppression."

The OIC Secretariat, in a statement on August 5, reiterated its stance over India's illegal and unilateral actions of August 5, 2019 in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

The spokesperson further said it was indeed astounding to see an unabashed practitioner of 'Hindutva' to accuse others of 'bigotry' or 'communal agenda.'

"Equally appalling is the audacity of an established seri-

al violator of human rights and purveyor of state-terrorism, pointing accusing fingers

It was astounding to see an unabashed practitioner of 'Hindutva' accuse others of 'bigotry' or 'communal agenda'

towards others," the spokesperson said.

Jammu and Kashmir was never a part of India, and never would be. It is an internationally recognized "disputed" territory between Pakistan and India that has been under forcible and illegal Indian occupation since 1947.

The dispute remained on the agenda of the United Nations Security Council for nearly 75 years. The relevant UNSC resolutions pledged to the Kashmiris their inalienable right to self-determination, to be exercised through a free and impartial plebiscite under the auspices of the United Nations, it was added.

While perpetuating its tyran-

ny and injustice, the spokesperson said India would not succeed in misleading the international community by claiming "socio-economic growth and development" in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). No amount of repetition would turn a falsehood into truth.

In the interest of justice as well as durable peace and security in South Asia, India must honour its commitment to the Kashmiris and to the world community by faithfully implementing the UNSC resolutions on Jammu and Kashmir dispute, the spokesperson maintained.

Under PPO 2002

PTI declared a 'foreign aided' party: Marriyum

Says ECP's verdict against PTI's prohibited funding being implemented as per law



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb Sunday said implementation on the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) verdict in the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) prohibited funding case was underway.

"The decision in the PTI's foreign funding case has been given, which is being implemented as per law," she said in a news statement while reacting to PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry's comments on social media.

She said the PTI had been declared a "foreign aided" party under the Political

Parties Order 2002. Imran Khan had submitted false affidavit with ECP five times as per the decision.

The PTI sought 51 adjournments, changed nine lawyers, and filed 11 petitions with the court regarding the foreign funding case, the minister observed.

She said, "all doors are closed for a foreign agent and foreign aided party in the law."

The minister said the PTI was needed to submit reply in the ECP where it failed to justify a single rupee of the funds received in the bank account. There was no need of any response now, she added.

With PTI 'power show'
Imran trying to divert attention: Sanaullah

ISLAMABAD: Lashing out at the PTI, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah on Sunday claimed that Imran Khan will suffer defeat during the upcoming by-elections in all the nine National Assembly constituencies that fell vacant after the NA speaker accepted the resignations of the concerned PTI MNAs.

Terming PTI's back-to-back public gatherings across the country "political stunts", Rana Sanaullah said that Imran Khan was trying to divert attention from his theft.

It is pertinent to mention here that the PTI is preparing to stage a 'grand power show' at Islamabad's Parade Ground to decide its strategy with party supporters on the eve of Independence Day.

In a statement, the interior minister said that the PTI is allowed to stage a public gathering at the Parade Ground, adding that it will be a political stunt. Agencies

In 'what capacity' ECP issuing notice to IK? asks Fawad



ISLAMABAD: In a rebuke of the Election Commission of Pakistan, PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry on Sunday asked in what capacity it is issuing a notice to party chairman Imran Khan.

The ECP on Friday issued a notice to the ousted prime minister, summoning him for a hearing in compliance with the body's judgment on the prohibited funding case.

According to the ECP website, a "Notice to Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf in terms of Rule 6 of Political Parties Rule 2006, in compliance of judgment by the commission dated August 2 in case title Akbar Sher Babar" was issued. It has been fixed for a hearing at 10am on August 23.

The PTI leader's response to the

notice came during a press conference in Islamabad.

Reacting to the ECP's ruling in the prohibited funding case against the party, whereby PTI was found to have obtained illegal funds, Chaudhry said that the party received Rs20 million in 13 accounts.

"This amount was released to party officials for office operations. In what capacity is the FIA (Federal Investigation Agency) issuing notices to party leaders?" he asked. The FIA kickstarted its probe into the party's accounts on Saturday and summoned notices to various PTI leaders.

Speaking of another case fixed for hearing by the ECP, which pertains to the question of disqualification of Imran Khan, Chaudhry remarked:

"Who has the guts to disqualify Imran Khan?"

"Do you want to create a one-party system in Pakistan?" he asked.

Chaudhry said that the party has made preparations for the "final stage" of its ongoing anti-government campaign. "A historic rally will be held on August 13," he said, adding: "We will not let them run away from [holding] elections."

Turning his guns on rival party PPP, he said that the PPP's "account auditors are nowhere to be found" and that it wasn't the PPP, but rather the PPP parliamentarians that fought the election.

He further said that instead of the party leader, it was the general secretary that submitted the certificate to declare expenses of Rs232 million. "Money coming from America came directly to Zardari's account," he alleged.

"There is no proof of the LLC created by the PPP," he alleged further. For the PML-N, he said, "there is no information at all regarding the sources of its funds." "Why is ECP saving PML-N and PPP?"

The PTI leader recalled that the Islamabad High Court had directed the Election Commission to decide on the case of the funding of all parties, but it only issued a verdict on PTI's funding. Agencies

Funding case

FIA summons PTI's Imran Ismail

KARACHI: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on Sunday summoned senior PTI leader and former Sindh governor Imran Ismail in a case related to prohibited funding against his party.

According to media reports, following the ECP's judgment that ruled PTI received funding from prohibited sources, the FIA launched a country-wide inquiry into the case.

Earlier, the FIA summoned PTI leaders Asad Qaisar, Mian Mahmood-ur-Rashid, and 11 others to address questions during the probe with a total of six inquiries opened concurrently in major cities across the country, including federal capital Islamabad, Lahore, Peshawar, Quetta, and Karachi. Imran Ismail has been summoned by the agency on August 15, MPA Seema Zia on August 10, and officers of two private banks on the 10th of this month. Agencies

After dollar depreciation

Economic situation to further improve: Nawaz

LONDON: After the dollar's depreciation against the rupee, PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif shared with reporters in London that Pakistan's economic situation would further improve in the coming days.

"This is Allah's blessing. We are sinners, but Insha Allah, the country's situation will improve," said Nawaz when he was informed of the decrease in the price of the rupee.

The PML-N supremo was talking to reporters after meeting former Punjab chief minister Hamza Shahbaz.

After holding a meeting with Nawaz, Hamza told journalists that all coalition government parties have unanimously decided to take PTI's prohibited funding case to its "logical conclusion".

"The nation will hold the

so-called Sadiq and Ameen [Imran Khan] accountable for calling others thieves and robbers," said Hamza.

"If Nawaz was disqualified for not taking a salary from his son then Khan is immersed in prohibited funding from head to toe," he added.

Regarding the PTI's demand for snap polls, Hamza stated that elections will be held as per schedule in 2023, adding that he is hopeful that his uncle will lead the election campaign of his party.

The PML-N leader, while commenting on Punjab CM's election, said that his party will not leave this matter like this and will seek justice from the court.

"When a full court will be formed in this matter, then the case will be crystal clear," he added.

Muharram procession

ISLAMABAD: People attending 8th Muharram-ul-Haram procession at Karachi Company in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Pakistan firmly supports one-China principle: Amb. Haque

The Ambassador emphasizes importance of upholding principles of UN charter, int'l law and bilateral agreements

BELJING: Pakistan firmly believes in the one-China principle, supports China's sovereignty and territorial integrity and will continue to extend full support to its iron brother-China, on issues concerning its core national interest, Pakistan Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque said.

Responding to question of US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's provocative visit to Taiwan and regarding China's countermeasures, he told Global Times in an interview that within the bounds of international law, every country has the right to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

In the same vein, Paki-

stan supports all efforts of the Chinese government in safeguarding its national sovereignty and territorial integrity, he said.

He also emphasized the importance of upholding the principles of the UN charter, international law and bilateral agreements.

Inter-state relations should be based on mutual respect and non-interference in internal affairs, he said.

Pelosi arrived in China's Taiwan island on Tuesday night in disregard of China's strong opposition and serious representations. The visit is seen as a serious violation of the one-China principle. On

Friday, Chinese Foreign Ministry announced eight countermeasures in response.

The ambassador said, As 'iron brothers' and 'All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partners,'

Inter-state relations should be based on mutual respect

Pakistan and China have always stood shoulder-to-shoulder with each other through many challenges.

I would like to emphasize here that Pakistan would

continue to extend full support to its 'iron brother' China on the issues of its core national interest, he said.

According to the ambassador, the current global geo-political situation remains tense as the world is already grappling with multi-faceted challenges.

The regional situation in Taiwan Straits was indeed complicated with the visit. We believe that the world cannot afford another crisis with far-reaching implications for regional and global peace and security, he said.

The 'one-China' policy outlines that there is only one China in the world; the

Government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legal government representing the whole China; and Taiwan is an inalienable part of China.

This concept is about China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, which needs to be respected. Therefore, Pakistan opposes any attempt to create 'two Chinas' or 'one China, one Taiwan' or 'Taiwan independence, he said.

During the interview, Ambassador Haque once again reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering support to China on the issues of its core interest including Taiwan, Xinjiang, Tibet, Hong Kong and South China Sea. APP

MQM-P leader hints at leaving coalition govt's side

KARACHI: After witnessing no progress on the political deal, the Muttahida Qaumi Movement Pakistan (MQM-P) leader Waseem Akhtar hinted at leaving the coalition government's side and asked the ruling parties to review their policies, a private TV channel reported on Sunday.

Waseem Akhtar was talking to journalists during an event to welcome nearly 250 political activists who have joined back the MQM-P. The members of the MQM-P Rabita Committee were also present at the press conference.

He gave a clear message to the coalition government, saying that MQM-P will be independent in making decisions if political agreements are not implemented. He added that MQM-P Rabita Committee will take a big deci-



sion on any option whether to leave the government's side or continue to support it.

"MQM is struggling for the rights of the urban Sindh and highlighting the atrocities before the current rulers.

These atrocities continued to hit the MQM vote bank. Delimitation, flawed voter lists and other tactics are being used against MQM. Hurdles are being created for us via artificial religious and political parties."

Akhtar asked the federal and provincial governments to review their policies. He said that MQM-P wants the elimination of a 40 per cent quota as government jobs are being distributed through fake domiciles.

He criticised that whoever chooses to leave MQM-P lost political weight. He invited all MQM-P dissidents to return to the political party to work for the future.

"We had signed an agreement with the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) at the advice of Shehbaz Sharif and Fazlur Rehman. We signed the political agreements with Asif Ali Zardari and Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. We had ended the support to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) after deliberation. We are not fond of any minus formula." Agencies

PR continues its operation in flood-hit areas: Saad

LAHORE: Pakistan Railway will continue its operation for transportation of essential commodities and medicines in flood-affected areas of Balochistan.

This was stated by Minister for Railways Khawaja Saad Rafique while presiding over a meeting in Lahore. The Minister directed to prepare future plans for trains during flood situation and up-gradation of infrastructure. He also directed to operationalize 119 coaches after repair besides improvement in schedule of trains.

He said Cart Bazars should be established at Railway land and interest free loans be arranged for cart owners with the cooperation of Akhuwat organization. Agencies

Nuclear-free world is possible, test-ban treaty: UN chief

UNITED NATIONS: Nuclear weapons will continue to pose a risk to humanity unless countries fully adhere to the treaty that prohibits their testing, a senior UN official has said.

At a news briefing at UN Headquarters in New York, Robert Floyd, Executive Secretary of the body that oversees the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), said that the treaty which opened for signature 25 years ago, has yet to enter into force because it requires ratification by a "handful" of key countries that have nuclear capabilities.

"Once in force, the CTBT will serve as an essential element of a nuclear weapons-free world. In order to achieve this world, we all aspire to, a universal and effectively verifiable prohibition on nuclear testing is a fundamental necessity," he said.

Floyd was speaking against the backdrop of the latest nuclear non-proliferation conference, which began last week at UN Headquarters after two years of pandemic-related delays.



Countries are reviewing progress towards implementing the 50-year-old Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

At the opening on Monday, UN Secretary-General António Guterres warned that the world was "just one misunderstanding, one miscalculation, away from nuclear annihilation".

"Until we have full adherence to the CTBT, nuclear testing and the proliferation of nuclear weapons will continue to pose unacceptable risk to humanity," Floyd said.

The CTBT complements the non-proliferation treaty, Floyd said, adding it has

already made a difference in the world. "We've gone from over 2,000 nuclear tests conducted between 1945 and 1996, to fewer than 12 tests since the treaty opened for signature," he said. "Only one country has tested this millennium."

The treaty has also received near-universal support. So far, 186 countries have signed the CTBT, and 174 have ratified it, four in the last six months alone.

However, entry into force requires that the treaty must be signed and ratified by 44 specific nuclear technology holder countries, eight of which have yet to ratify it: Pakistan, India, Israel, China, Egypt, Iran, South Korea and the United States.

Asked about these countries, Floyd said, "they have their own calculus and strategic objectives and geopolitical considerations as to whether they feel free to move forward", adding that they all support the CTBT and its objectives.

Floyd also reported on the activities of the organization that promotes the treaty, which he heads.

Maladministration

President calls explanation from FBR over miscarriage of justice

Dr Arif Alvi directs FBR to send a report within 45 days of implementation of his order

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has called for explanation from Federal board of Revenue (FBR) over unnecessarily contesting the decision of the Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) before him without sound legal justification in a financially insignificant case and wasting the time and efforts of the highest office of the country.

While expressing his dismay, he said that chasing the small and financially insignificant taxpayers unnecessarily and without cogent and lawful reasons impinged negatively on the image of FBR and also created public resentment against it, said a press release issued here on Sunday.

The president gave these remarks while upholding FTO's decision in a case where a shop owner from Abbotabad had been registered by FBR as "Tier 1 Retailer" even though he did not fulfill the criteria required for this purpose.

The citizen approached FTO over this injustice which passed the orders in his favour. FBR, however, didn't comply with the decision and preferred a representation with the president.

The president rejected FBR's representation and directed it to deregister the shop and report compliance within 45 days on the ground that FBR had unjustifiably registered a cloth shop as "Tier-1



Retailer" even though the shop was found lacking lawful criteria and was qualified for deregistration under relevant existing provisions of Sales Tax laws.

The president observed that since the complainant's shop was consisting of 594 sq. ft only, therefore, the compulsory registration of complainant by FBR under the Sales Tax Rules, 2006 was contrary to law, rules, arbitrary/unjust and was based on irrelevant grounds and tantamount to maladministration.

He stated that the order of FTO was based on sound footings and, therefore, there was no valid justification to interfere with its original order, thus, the representation was being rejected.

He further directed FBR to send a report within 45 days of implementation of his order and explain the reasons as to why this miscarriage had happened, justice was delayed and why efforts and time of highest forum was wasted. APP

PM, Qatar Amir discuss bilateral ties

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif held a telephonic conversation with the Amir of the State of Qatar, His Highness Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani, on Sunday.

The two leaders exchanged views

on issues of mutual interest.

According to a press release issued by the Prime Minister's office, Qatar and Pakistan enjoy close and cordial relations. Qatar is home to over 200,000 Pakistani diaspora that is playing a pivotal role in the development of Qatar and Pakistan.

Imran to unveil plan over countering 'fascism' on 13th

ISLAMABAD: PTI Chairman Imran Khan on Sunday announced that he would unveil his plan of action to counter 'fascism' at his party's power show in Islamabad "six days from now" on Saturday.

Sharing his thoughts on Twitter, the former prime minister lashed out at the coalition government, saying that a group of thieves have been brought into power through US conspiracy.

He penned, "People of Kufa, despite knowing our beloved Prophet (PBUH)'s Grandson was on the path of truth, did not come to help out of fear of Yazid & allowed the greatest tragedy of Islam to happen."

PTI Chairman also penned, "Every era has its Yazids. Pakistan is facing Yazidiyat (fascism) today in the form of rule by a cabal of crooks and their



handlers brought to power through US regime change conspiracy."

The former premier posed the question and said, Will our ppl bow down before this conspiracy in fear or, as a nation, face up to the challenge? On 13 Aug at our Haqqeeqi Azadi jalsa I will announce our plan to counter this fascism. Agencies

Azma Bukhari says Imran to be held accountable

As threats to institutions doom to fail

ISLAMABAD: PTI Chairman Imran Khan and his accomplices would have to surrender themselves before the law of the land as their threats to institutions were doomed to fail.

Azma Bukhari, a senior leader of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) said this while speaking to media on Sunday.

She said Imran Khan should be held accountable for embezzling donation's funds.

She also urged the government to take immediate action as Pakistani political parties were not ready to tolerate Imran Khan, who devoured the money received from prohibited sources and used that money for destabilising the country, sabotaging China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project and harming Kashmir cause.

She said Imran had also deceived overseas Pakistanis as he was caught red handed in utilising donation money for creating chaos and anarchy in the country.

"Imran must be ashamed of himself when his provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa accepted American aid, including 34 trucks of donated vehicles from the US ambassador in Pakistan the other day. Like-



wise, a burn centre and over 20 more projects were being executed by the US government in PTI ruled province.

Several new projects were also being launched in the province in collaboration with the US. "This has exposed Imran Khan's so called anti American narrative, who feels no qualm in saying 'Absolutely Not' to receiving dollars by brazenly ignoring his misleading regime change narrative," she added.

She said despite extraneous efforts, Imran had failed to bring proof against PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and PMLN's Vice President Maryam Nawaz.

Thrice elected premier Nawaz Sharif was disqualified on clumsy grounds to pave way for Imran who was launched to lead the country under a well orchestrated conspiracy. APP

Mother Child Block at Gangaram Hospital soon: Yasmin

Says ongoing progress would be reviewed time to time

LAHORE: Punjab Health Minister Dr. Yasmin Rashid has said that a state-of-the-art mother and child block at Sir Gangaram Hospital would be completed on time.

She paid surprise visit to under construction the Mother and Child Block on Sunday.

The minister hoped the under-construction child block in Gangaram Hospital would soon be completed



and opened to the public. All officers

concerned have been instructed to complete the under-construction block as soon as possible. She warned that delay would not be tolerated.

She said the ongoing progress would be reviewed time to time, adding that thousands of mothers and children lost their lives during childbirth every year in the country and they would be saved through state-of-the-art hospitals in the province.

Health Secretary Ali Jan Khan, Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal and related officers apprised the minister about the progress in construction.

Special Secretary Health Muhammad Usman, MS Gangaram Hospital Dr Athar, Chief Planning Officer Abdul Haq Bhatti, Sheikh Ijaz, officers of relevant departments were also present.

8th Muharram Procession

KARACHI: People take part in 8th Muharram-ul-Haram processions at M.A. Jinnah Road, in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

Event highlights importance of breastfeeding babies

Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, with the support of UNICEF, arranged a grand ceremony regarding "breastfeeding" in the DHO office of South Waziristan tribal district, Wana, and a walk was also arranged.

In addition to health staff, local body representatives, scholars and tribal elders participated in large numbers.

Speaking on the occasion, Senior Medical Officer Dr. Zainul Abidin Wazir, Focal Person DHO Sijjad, MS Dr. Sadiq, VC Chairman Maulana Naik Muhammad Wazir and District Nutrition Manager SWTD Waris Wazir said, "That a child must be exclusively breastfeeding up to the age of six, breastfeeding develops self-confidence and the child's personality."

The speakers said that breastfeeding for 2 years is permissible in Islam, so all people should inform the women



in their homes about this.

From the event, Dr. Zainul Abidin Wazir and Dr. Sadiq explained in detail about the benefits of (Breastfeeding) "mother's milk". On this occasion, the doctors emphasized on breastfeeding the child exclusively for up to six months and feeding the child with soft foods

along with breast milk from six months to two years.

The speakers further said that by breastfeeding the child can be protected from various diseases and proper development. At the end of the event, a walk was also held regarding the benefits of breastfeeding.

Security arrangements being reviewed on daily basis: DC

SIALKOT: Deputy Commissioner Sialkot Maisam Abbas and District Police Officer (DPO) Zeeshan Raza said on Sunday that meetings with members of the district peace committee was being held daily, in which people belonging to all schools of thought, administrative officers and representatives of the law-enforcement agencies were participating.

On the night of the 7th of Muharram, they paid a

detailed visit to Imambargah Adda Pasruriyan, Mistri Abdullah Imambargah and Badhan Shah to review the security and administrative matters.

The deputy commissioner appreciated the officials of Municipal Corporation Sialkot (MCS) for arranging additional lighting system for the procession routes through generators. He said the police and administrative officers were performing

their duties with sincerity, while the members of the peace committee were playing their role for establishing peace.

DPO Zeeshan Raza said that foolproof security was being provided to Muharram processions and gatherings and warned that no negligence would be tolerated. He said that 2,000 police personnel, along with 100 civil defence volunteers, rescue wardens, were also

performing security duty in the district, while the alternative traffic plan had been implemented by the traffic police. He said a control room had also been established at the DPO office in this regard.

Vice Chairman District Peace Committee Hafiz Asghar Ali Cheema and Assistant Commissioner (AC) Sialkot Osama Sharon Niazi were also present. Agencies

Man killed over domestic dispute

SARGODHA: A man was killed in firing by his friend on some domestic issues at Mustafa Colony Sahiwal, under the jurisdiction of Sahiwal police on Sunday.

According to Police sources, Mohsin Ali (34) had been running a domestic dispute with his friend Hassan. On the day of incident, Hassan Ali shot dead Mohsin after exchange of harsh words.

Police and Rescue-1122 team reached the incident site and shifted the body to THQ Hospital Sahiwal for legal requirements.

Security arrangements reviewed

SARGODHA: Provincial Transport Minister Chaudhry Muneeb Sultan Cheema on Sunday reviewed the administrative and security measures taken by the departments concerned in Sargodha division during Muharram days.

Commissioner Dr. Irshad Ahmed, Regional Police Officer Muhammad Azhar Akram, Deputy Commissioner Imran Qureshi and DPO Bilal Zafar Shiekh, ADCR Hussain Ahmad Raza, Assistant Commissioner Azim Shaukat Awan, COMC Tariq Paroya and Chief Warden Civil Defense Dr. Haroon-ur-Rashid Tabassum and other police and administrative officers were also present on the occasion.

The provincial minister directed the officials on duty to remain alert, adding that strict implementation of the plan should be ensured for the peaceful conduct of processions.

Participants should be allowed to enter the majalis and processions after physical search, he said and added that the organizers of the processions should cooperate with police. The minister also met the organizers of the processions including Khan Shabbir Khan, Tahir Kirmani and others and inquired about the facilities.

Commissioner Dr. Irshad Ahmed said that the best arrangements for all the processions and majalis have been ensured throughout the division. RPO Muhammad Azhar Akram said that police and other law enforcement agencies are cooperating in the four districts to maintain peace.

Provincial Transport Minister Chaudhry Muneeb Sultan Cheema along with Commissioner Dr. Irshad Ahmed and RPO Muhammad Azhar Akram inspected the Divisional Control Room set up for monitoring the security arrangements of processions.

Social activist Muhammad Afzal passes away

FAISALABAD: Renowned political and social personality Muhammad Afzal has passed away.

The Punjab Teachers' Union has expressed grief over demise of Afzal. District Faisalabad and the Senior Vice President of Nankana Sahib Hafiz Muhammad Ashraf Qadri, National Peace Committee for Interfaith Harmony District Information Secretary Shabir Hussain Naz Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Haji Arshad Nazir and other political and social figures have also expressed deep grief and sorrow.

CEO MWMC orders cleanliness of graveyards

MULTAN: Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Multan Waste Management Company (MWMC) Ameer Hassan directed officers concerned to ensure comprehensive cleanliness at graveyards.

In a statement issued here on Sunday, the CEO MWMC said that most of the citizens used to visit graveyards on 10th Muharram.

He said that cleanliness of graveyards was need of hour and directed officers concerned to lift garbage and other waste from the graveyards. He also ordered cleanliness at the routes of the graveyards and said that he himself would monitor the cleanliness operation.

Funeral prayer of soldier held in Lal Qila

LOWER DIR: The funeral prayer of martyred Levies Force Soldier Bacha Rehman was offered with official honor at Uoch Stadium here on Sunday.

Deputy Commissioner/Commandant Levies Mohammad Zubair Niazi accompanied by Assistant Commissioner Adanzai Sadiq Mohmand, officials of levies, and heirs of martyred soldier and large number of locals participated. The well-armed contingent of police saluted to the martyr and placed flowers on his coffin.

Speaking at the occasion, Commandant Zubair Niazi said that sacrifices of the martyred Sepoy Bacha Rehman and Police Constable Naseer Muhammad will not go in vain and their killers would be arrested soon.

He said that Levies and police forces would never leave the families of the martyrs alone and they would be provided all possible help.

All set to celebrate Independence Day with traditional zeal, fervour

HYDERABAD: The people of Hyderabad are finalizing all preparations to celebrate the 75th Independence Day with traditional zeal, enthusiasm and renewed pledge to make the country more prosperous and strong among the world community.

The sale of national flags, banners and portraits of heroes of the Pakistan Movement has begun. At some places, people have started displaying banners inscribed with slogans about Independence Day.

Various political and social welfare organizations would also stage rallies, seminars and symposia on Independence Day (August 14) where the speakers will highlight the importance of the day and the historic sacrifices rendered by the Muslims of the sub-continent for creation of a separate homeland.

Stalls have been set up at many places in the city, including Hyder Chowk, Latifabad, Qasimabad and Taluka rural, where purchase of the national flags, pictures of national heroes and green colored clothes was going on for celebrating 75th Independence Day of Pakistan. APP

PDMA issues alert about more torrential rains

PESHAWAR: The Provincial Disaster Management Authority Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has issued an alert about monsoon torrential rains in different parts of the province.

According to details, PDMA has advised all the Deputy Commissioners to take precautionary measures to avoid any human and material losses.

The rains can cause urban flooding in Nowshera, Mardan, Swabi and land sliding in hilly areas. The PDMA control room is operational round the clock and people can contact on its helpline 1700 in case of emergency.

Police arrest six for possessing illegal weapons

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi district police on the directives of City Police Officer, Rawalpindi conducted raids in different areas and netted six accused for possessing illegal weapons.

According to a police spokesman, Chakri, City and Wah Cantt police held Waheed Ullah, Muhammad Husnain, Muhammad Zahid, Attique, Muhammad Usman and Usama Ali on recovery of a Kalashnikov, two 30 bore pistols, ammunition and a dagger.

Condolence reference held at IUB

Spokesman Report

BAHAWALPUR: A condolence reference was held at the Department of Economics, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan, to commemorate the incredible contributions of two distinguished economists, teachers, and Ex-faculty members of the Department of Economics, IUB, Prof. Dr. Imran Sharif Chaudhry and Prof. Dr. Karamat Ali.



Chairperson, Department of Economics, IUB, arranged this sitting to pay tribute to and pray for the eternal peace of departing souls. All faculty members of the Department of Economics, IUB, and honorable professors Dr. Zahir Faridi, Director of School Economics BZU, Dr. Ramzan, BZU, and Dr. Khaleel Mudasar,

S.E. College joined the session. They shared their rich experiences being students, colleagues, and fellows of such great academicians. All the participants admired the great intellect and personalities of both honorable professors.

They recognized their unique and incomparable role in the Development

of the field of Economics in the South region. It was admitted collectively that their demise had created a massive gap in the domain that may not be covered. After reciting Quranic verses, all participants prayed for absolution, eternal peace, and the highest ranks for the departed souls by the mercy of Allah.

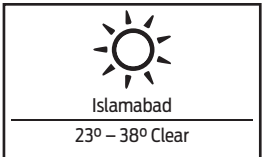
Spokesman Report

BAHAWALPUR: Research activities at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur are a reflection of national aspirations and priorities. Research on cotton crop and development of new seeds at university is a milestone in agricultural development.

This was expressed by the Vice Chancellor, Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob during a meeting with the delegation of Better Cotton Initiative Pakistan in his office. The Vice Chancellor said that a National Cotton Breeding Institute has been established in the University for Research on cotton crop and production of high yielding cotton seeds.

The institute has developed cotton varieties that have excellent performance in local climatic conditions, various diseases and other problems. The Vice Chancellor said that the focus on cotton research is to restore its importance in the country's economy, especially the textile sector.

On this occasion, Director National Cotton Breeding Institute Prof. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Bandesha briefed the members of the delegation regarding the newly discovered varieties during the field visit. Prof. Dr. Anjum Aqeel, Dr. Muhammad Naeem, Dr. Maqshoof Ahmed, Mr. Muhammad Latif and Mr. Abdul Rehman were present on this occasion.



SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr 3:51 am
Zohr 12:14 pm
Asr 5:03 pm
Maghrib 7:03 pm
Isha 8:36 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

COMPLAINTS

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

All arrangements finalized for Ashura

CCTV cameras have been installed at all routes

RAWALPINDI: All the arrangements have been finalized to observe 'Ashura' with religious fervor and reverence to commemorate the supreme sacrifices rendered by Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) and his companions for the cause of Islam while over 6000 cops would guard 64 mourning processions and 113 majalis of the district.

The district administration and law enforcers have finalized all necessary arrangements to facilitate the mourners. Rawalpindi District Police, City Traffic Police (CTP), Rescue-1122 Rawalpindi and other departments concerned have finalized all the arrangements for 'Youme-e-Ashura', to be observed on Tuesday.

Six main processions of Zuljanah, Alam and Tazia would be taken out on Ashura from different areas of the city. All the processions would culminate at 10:00 p.m. at Imambargah Qadimi. Clerics and religious scholars would highlight the teachings of Imam Hussain (RA) and various aspects of the tragedy. According to City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Shehzad Nadeem Bukhari, the Police had finalized elaborate security arrangements for peaceful passage of 'Ashura' and avoid any untoward incident.

Special security arrangements were finalized for Muharram ul Haram in the district as it's a sensitive area, he said adding, three-layer security cover would be provided particularly to the main Muharram processions with special arrangements ensuring rooftop duty and deployment of Quick Response Force (QRF).

The foolproof security arrangements had been finalized for main 10th Muharram procession of city which starts from Satellite Town and culminates at Imam Bargah Qadeemi. Over 2500 security personnel would be deployed to guard the main procession while 3500 cops would provide security cover to other processions and majalis of the district. According to a police spokesman, no person would be allowed to carry weapon in Muharram procession except designated police officers.

Police would not allow anybody to organize a new Muharram procession and on SOPs violation strict action would be taken against the violators, he added. A special 24/7 control room had also been set up in his office, he said. He informed that

strict monitoring of Ashura processions would be conducted as Close Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras had been installed at routes of main Zuljinnah processions and places where majalis would be held.

According to the security plan formulated in this regard, aerial surveillance of 'Ashura' processions would also be conducted to ensure security of the mourners. Additional force of Special Branch Police, Elite Force, Punjab Constabulary, Women Police along with district police would be deployed to ensure security on 10th of Muharram.

Special checking of the routes would be carried out before start of the processions and bomb disposal squad would clear the routes. The mourners would be checked with metal detectors and walk through gates would be installed at the entry points of the processions. The route of the main procession of 'Ashura' would be sealed completely and streets on the route would be barricaded. Vehicles and motorcycles would not be allowed to move with the mourning processions.

The spokesman informed that Rawalpindi district police had finalized securi-

Security arrangement

ISLAMABAD: A traffic warden carrying containers with the help of lifter to block the road of Sector G-6 due to 9th Muharram-ul-Haram procession, in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Independence Day

Preparations in full swing

RAWALPINDI/ISLAMABAD: Preparations are underway in the twin cities like other parts of the country to mark the Independence Day of Pakistan in a befitting manner on August 14.

As the Independence Day gets nearer, the buildings are being illuminated and a number of colourful activities have also been planned to mark this occasion with great enthusiasm.

Different public and private departments will hold special functions and activities including seminars, discussion programmes, photographic exhibitions, painting, poetry, national songs and debate competitions with the focus on acknowledging the contribution of leaders of Pakistan movement and sacrifices of national heroes.

Nowadays, printers and makers of buntings, flags,

banners and badges are fully engaged in their business.

Jashan-e-Azadi preparations are at its peak as few days left and the citizens are getting ready to celebrate the Independence Day with great enthusiasm and national zeal. The most enthusiastic are children who are busy collecting stickers, badges and also beautifying their bicycles with special stickers inscribed with messages of Independence Day.

The makers of buntings, flags, banners and badges are working round the clock to meet demand as well as supplying to other adjoining areas of the cities.

A number of stalls carrying bunting, flags, badges, Azadi dresses, toys and other accessories are set up in all commercial areas of the twin cities to attract youth and children.

Wheat smuggling bid foiled

RAWALPINDI: The Food Department Rawalpindi and district police foiled four bids to smuggle wheat and flour besides seizing 2780 bags.

According to a district administration spokesman, the authorities of the food department along with Taxila police conducted raids and confiscated four vehicles loaded with 1940 wheat, 740 flour and 100 bags of fine flour. Four drivers namely Mehtab, Riasat, Shujaat and Latif were also sent behind the bars while police impounded four vehicles, he added.

The authorities concerned had been directed to strictly monitor district exit points to control wheat smuggling, he said adding, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi Tahir Farooq had instructed the authorities to strictly monitor the movement of wheat and flour and take strict action in accordance with the law against the rules violators.

Kashmir is in a state of war: Experts

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: A round table conference titled "Military occupation & Delimitation process: A nefarious design of Indian Settlements in Kashmir" was organized by Legal Forum for Kashmir (LFK), observing August 5 as Youme-e-Istehsal (day of exploitation) marking the third year of Indian military siege, illegal and unconstitutional revocation of Indian Occupied Jammu Kashmir-IOJK's special status.

The session was moderated by Advocate Nasir Qadri, Executive Director of LFK. The panellists included Dr. Arshad Ali, Director of India Study Centre at the Institute of strategic studies, Islamabad; Ms. Farzana Yaqoob, former Minister for Social Welfare & Women's Development in the State of Azad Jammu and Kashmir; Lt Gen Farooq Ramay; Ms Sabah Aslam, Executive Director ICRC; Mr Mukhtar Ahmad Baba, Spokesperson Chairman APHC, Masarat Alam Bhat.

Advocate Nasir Qadri, Executive director LFK, while delivering the opening remarks said that Kashmir is in a state of war, and the August 5, 2019 actions taken by India shall not be misconstrued as the initiation of Kashmir's annexation or occupation.

Dr Arshad Ali, DG India Study Centre, ISSI, while addressing the panel said the need of the hour is to stay vigilant about Narendra Modi's



Hindutva agenda in Kashmir. He further asserted that the tactics like farcical delimitation and demographic engineering are being employed by BJP government in the occupied territory. Dr Ali accentuated that India's August 5, 2019 decisions are not just an assault on Kashmir, but rather an assault on the UNSC resolutions pertaining to Jammu Kashmir.

Farzana Yaqoob, former Minister AJK, said that the focus should be on what should be done, and what can practically be done. While highlighting the highhandedness and tyranny encountered by Kashmiris at the hands of Indian Occupying Forces (IOF), she

said that people in occupied Kashmir are being forced to leave their homeland or are threatened and pressurized so as to break their grit and will to keep on the freedom struggle. She further added that the

Kashmiris have legitimate rights to take up arms against the colonizer as a means of self-defense to safeguard their land, property, and rights.

Lt Gen Farooq Ramay emphasized that the occupied territories are freed through force, and freedom is snatched and not begged for. He condemned the demographic changes being employed by the occupying forces in IOJK.

Sabah Aslam, Executive Director of

ICRC, while speaking to the panel said that the Kashmir issue seems to be on the back burner. The collective efforts from the Government of Pakistan and the Pakistani people are the need of the hour. Each Pakistani is an advocate of the suffering Kashmiri brethren.

Mukhtar Ahmad Baba, Spokesperson Masarat Alam Bhat, apprised the panel of the post-August 2019 situation in the occupied territory. He expounded how the Modi-led BJP government along with the 900,000 occupying forces, and more than two dozen law enforcement agencies have waged an all-out extermination operation against the indigenous Kashmiri populace.

Health Corner

Deep nerve stimulation consistently reduces blood pressure

ISLAMABAD: A University of Houston biomedical engineer is expanding the study of wireless electrodes to treat hypertension and is reporting that blood pressure and renal sympathetic nerve activity (RSNA) is controlled by bioelectronic treatment. RSNA is often increased in hypertension and renal disease.

Using a custom-wired electrode, Mario Romero-Ortega, Cullen Endowed Professor of biomedical engineering, previously reported that deep peroneal nerve stimulation (DPNS) elicits an acute reduction in blood pressure. The current study, published in *Frontiers in Neuroscience*, advances that work, focusing on his development of a small implantable wireless neural stimulation system and exploration of different stimulation parameters to achieve a maximum lowered response.

Romero-Ortega integrated a sub-millimeter nerve stimulation circuit with a novel nerve attachment microchannel electrode that facilitates implantation into small nerves and allows external power and DPNS modulation control.

Using this implantable device, his team demonstrated that systolic blood pressure can be lowered 10% in one hour and 16% two hours after nerve stimulation.

"Our results indicate that DPNS consistently induces an immediate and reproducible arterial depressor effect in response to electrical stimulation of the deep peroneal nerve," reports Romero-Ortega.

Hypertension, often called the 'silent killer' speaks loudly in statistics. In the United States, it is the number one cause of death. Globally it is the number one risk factor for death, impacting more than 1 billion people and is to blame for about half of all stroke and heart related deaths. The American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association 2018 guidelines classified average systolic blood pressure as greater than 130 mmHg and diastolic BP greater than 80 mmHg, on at least two separate occasions, as hypertension.

While pharmacological treatments are effective, blood pressure remains uncontrolled in 50-60% of resistant hypertensive subjects. Unfortunately, despite the use of multiple antihypertensive drugs in combination, blood pressure remains poorly controlled in 50-60% of the hypertensive population and approximately 12-18% of them develop resistant hypertension, defined as blood pressure greater than 140/90 mmHg despite the use of antihypertensive drugs.

"In this study, DPNS induced an initial increase in RSNA during the first 2-3 seconds, followed by a reduction in renal activity and mean arterial pressure, despite the increase in heart rate," said Romero-Ortega. The observed activation of the RSNA during the DPNS was not expected since its activity is associated with hypertension." Courtesy Science Daily



Mere Humsafar

Farhan Saeed pens down heartfelt gratitude



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Actor & singer Farhan Saeed, who plays Hamza Raees on the show *Mere Humsafar* took to his Instagram with an earnest letter of thanks to all his viewers whose love and dedication helped the show become an international success since the airing of its first episode on ARY Digital on 30th of December.

Farhan Saeed said that the audiences "made it (*Mere Humsafar*) special," further adding that "all the love, success it has is because of the love you guys gave it." He also thanked his "partner in crime", and director for the drama series *Mere Humsafar*, Qasim Ali Mureed; "the captain, who can touch anything and make it gold."-and for inspiring him to be passionate about what he does and seeing his potential. The star went on to thank the entire team including his co-star Hania Amir, who plays Hala, "whose energy on set is contagious."

Talking about his character, Hamza, Saeed said that "... I never thought (Hamza) would get so much praise from around the globe" and the actor "just did what he felt was right." Farhan Saeed's character, Hamza, has been the viewers' favourite-with the actor getting rave accolades from critics and fans worldwide, while trending on Twitter in Pakistan and India on a weekly basis, and the serial topping the ratings charts, and episodes trending on YouTube every week. *Mere Humsafar* airs on ARY Digital every Thursday at 8pm Pakistan time.

PAC organizes Mehfil-e-Musalama

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: Punjab Arts Council organized a Mehfil-e-Musalama in the memory of great sacrifice of Hazrat Imam Hussain (A.S.).

Mehfil-e-Musalama was presided over by Muhammad Izharul Haq, while Nasir Ali Nasir performed the duties of host. Speaking at Mehfil-e-Musalama, Muhammad Izhar-ul-Haq said that the incident of Karbala drew a boundary between right and wrong, oppressor and oppressed, which cannot be erased for the rest of the world.

Karbala is the story of Imam Hussain and his Ahl al-Bayt's truthfulness, bravery, principledness and self-sacrifice, which was written with their own blood. This story is completely free from any worldly interest and greed.

Therefore, its brilliance increases with every passing moment, he added. Director of Arts Council Waqar Ahmad said that the incident of Karbala teaches us that instead of bowing down in front of tyranny, we should stand against it because supporting oppressors is a crime in itself. The incident of Karbala is a story of human pride and exaltation.

This is the story of honorable humanity. Ahmad Farooq, Saleem Shehzad, Ahmad Raza Raja, Imran Aami, Aqeel Shah, Hafeezullah Badal, Ijaz Khan Sahar, Husam Hur, Saddam Fida, Tasoor Hussain Fanwat, Rukhsana Thaman, Maria Naqvi, Ahsan Saim, Fayyaz Hussain Shah, Prof. Atiqur Rahman, Naushaba Hashmi, Saeed Raja, Colonel Shahab Ahmad Qureshi, Rukhsana Sehar, Mudassar Abbas paid tribute to Imam Hussain and martyrs of Karbala.

Mehfil-e-Musalama was attended by a large number of people from twin cities.

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Ashura a symbol of faith, fraternity and coexistence

Faisal Bin Abdulrahman Bin Muaammar

Muslims celebrate the day of Ashura each year, following the teachings (Sunnah) of Prophet Muhammad to glorify and venerate the day on which Allah rescued Prophet Moses, along with his people, from drowning. It is such a great day that we need to commemorate and recall it as a day honored by Allah.

Emphasizing the interconnections across the religions, the cohesion of the prophets and the integration of their messages, the Prophet's Hadith states that "prophets are sons of one man with many women and one faith." This means that prophets are brothers in their prophecy and not in blood, in that they have one single father in prophecy; their father is Adam, and their laws are different.

What is more indicative of such interconnections across the faiths and their prophets is when Prophet Muhammad arrived in Madinah while the Jews were fasting in appreciation of Moses being rescued. This is clear in the ever-lasting statement made by Prophet Muhammad: "We are closer to Moses than they are."

Accordingly, Prophet Muhammad fasted that day and ordered that the day be for fasting.

Promoting methods of coexistence in peace, security and safety to enhance life and to leverage and consecrate the religious fraternity in particular and the human fraternity in general. Wanting to avoid overshadowing and marginalizing the other and aiming to coexist with the other with their own beliefs regardless of their harmony or disharmony with Islam, it is a basic grounded fact and the basis for coexistence with the other in the Muslim community.

Islam has given great importance to the day of Ashura and it is characterized by worshiping practices, such as fasting. Most Friday service mosques in Saudi Arabia, most notably the Two Holy Mosques, and the rest of the Muslim community are devoted every year to offering preaching ceremonies for this month to recall the inspiring story of Ashura and Muslim fasting. Hardly any home in the Kingdom or the wider Islamic world witnesses this day without fasting. This gives important evidence on the strength and development of the relations between Muslims and their connection with the prophets and messengers on the one hand and followers of other religions and cultures on the other.

The jurisdictional documents spared no efforts to bring

into focus the inalienable rights of non-Muslims in the Islamic world, which embodies the inspiration of the Constitution of Madinah. This was the first constitution of the civil state, which framed the emerging state of Islam that does not distinguish between its citizens in terms of religion, race, gender or color. It is based on the relationship between Islam, nations and peoples and followers of other religions and cultures, as well as on acquaintance, dialogue and convergence, not differences, conflict and division.

Considering this acquaintance as a cause of creating peoples and making them into nations and tribes, Allah commanded it as a goal of this diversity in creation. As the Qur'an states (49:13): "O mankind, indeed, We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another," while the opposite makes up a deviation from its right track or path; based on the foundations of compassion of common humanity among them. So, this historic day comes along with its fasting within the framework of methods of religious fraternity in practice, indicating that Muslims appreciate peace, coexistence, respect for religions and the inviolability and sacredness of prophets.

If Muslims are as such, this divine belief in the love of Moses and Jesus, together with all the

prophets and messengers, due to the fact that faith is associated with them, means full reverence is due for their messages and their books.

When Islam protects people and their private lives, it does not make it a monopoly of Muslims alone; rather, it is for them and for others alike because peace is the right of all citizens, even if it is contrary to faith.

Inasmuch as the prophets bring human beings together and the demons of humanity drive them apart, I call — during the celebration of this day, which brings together the followers of these two religions and spreads justice, tolerance, peace and coexistence — to rid the occupiers of their injustice and the use of religion to satisfy their own interest. Likewise, I call for the extremists on the other side who use religion to justify terrorism and commit crimes, while religion is totally innocent of such perpetration, to give up the apparent contradiction between the adoption of the principle of violence in form and theme of the origin and significance of the divine message.

Therefore, it is better for the followers of these two religions — those who love peace, coexistence and compassion — to invest in the atmosphere of this blessed day and to draw inspiration from the lessons and lofty meanings of our noble messenger.

Alongside it, there is more than

a clear indication of the promotion of the values of coexistence and the establishment of the principles of coexistence on stable religious, political, economic, social and cultural bases. Such a list is made to deepen the human partnership and take into account the building of positive relations and the consolidation of ties, as well as the affirmation of mutual benevolence in general where fasting (Ashura) was not an accusation or a violation of the doctrine of monotheism. Rather, it is a true practice of fasting on the basis of consent to the cause, an appreciation to Allah, who confers the blessings, for his generosity, benevolence and munificence to the people of credit and goodness and humanity on this blessed day.

I pray to Allah to make this great day an opportunity to inspire the spirit of Ashura in the light of what we have learned from Prophet Muhammad in inviting us to the love of Moses, being the role model and example for mankind. Do the wise and good people listen to the call for peace and coexistence across the world so that justice and peace burgeon to replace injustice, occupation, violence, extremism and terrorism?

(Courtesy: Arab News)
Faisal bin Abdulrahman bin Muaammar is Supervisor General of Salam for Cultural Communications.

HR violations increasing in IIOJK

In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, the Indian authorities have imposed curfew-like restrictions in Srinagar and adjoining areas and suspended internet services to prevent traditional 8th and 10 Muharram processions. The restrictions were particularly imposed in Ram Munshi Bagh, Kothibagh, Maisuma, Kralkud, Shaheed Gunj, Shergari, Batamalo, Khanyar and Karan Nagar areas of the city. The Muharram procession from Guru Bazaar to Dal Gate in Srinagar was not allowed.

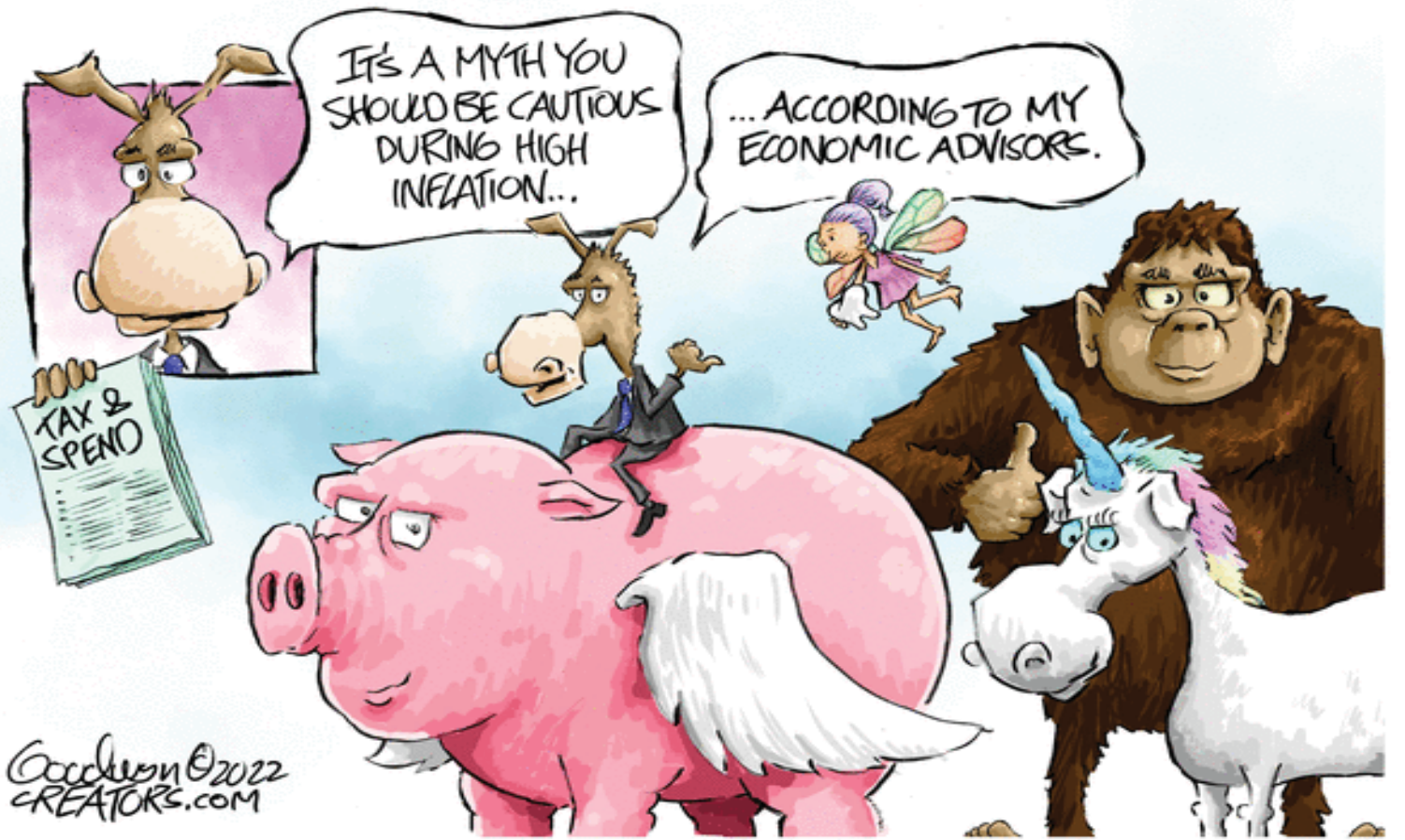
The fact is, Muharram processions have been disallowed along traditional routes in Srinagar, mainly on the 8th and 10th of Muharram Since 1989, by the administration fearing these may turn into big anti-India demonstrations.

On the other hand, Foreign Office Spokesperson on Sunday categorically rejected the ludicrous comments and fallacious claims made by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson, regarding a statement of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The FO said "India's hubris in this regard is deplorable." The spokesperson said, "OIC is the largest multilateral forum of Islamic countries representing more than 1.7 billion Muslims and have always been vocal in support of the legitimate rights of the Kashmiri people, who had suffered unspeakably from India's over seven-decades long illegal occupation and unabated oppression."

The OIC Secretariat, in a statement on August 5, reiterated its stance over India's illegal and unilateral actions of August 5, 2019 in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). The FO further said it was indeed astounding to see an unabashed practitioner of 'Hindutva' to accuse others of 'bigotry' or 'communal agenda.' "Equally appalling is the audacity of an established serial violator of human rights and purveyor of state-terrorism, pointing accusing fingers towards others," the spokesperson said.

It is pertinent to mention that Jammu and Kashmir was never a part of India, and never would be. It is an internationally recognized "disputed" territory between Pakistan and India that has been under forcible and illegal Indian occupation since 1947. The dispute remained on the agenda of the United Nations Security Council for nearly 75 years. The relevant UNSC resolutions pledged to the Kashmiris their inalienable right to self-determination, to be exercised through a free and impartial plebiscite under the auspices of the United Nations.

There is a dire need that India must honour its commitment to the Kashmiris and to the world community by faithfully implementing the UNSC resolutions on Jammu and Kashmir dispute. The world community must act with just as the political and human rights situation is deteriorating rapidly in Indian Illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The world must understand that there will be no peace in the region until the Kashmir issue is resolved. India must show respect to human rights and religious rights as well.



Education is a form of art, but technology could become a major equalizer

Yossi Mekelberg

In a long career in teaching, I have learned to treat it with professionalism, but not as a mere profession. Education is, after all, a form of art in which every single class requires creative adjustment to the needs of students and the unique dynamic that emerges in it.

While global perceptions have changed, and now acknowledge that it is socially necessary and morally right to expand education to every single child worldwide, preparing them for a life of learning and personal development, resources have proven to fall short of what is required to meet this objective, as articulated by Goal 4 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, of ensuring that by 2030 all girls and boys complete an inclusive, equitable and high-quality secondary education "leading to relevant and effective learning, while promoting lifelong learning opportunities."

In more recent times, much of the discussion has revolved around the role of new technologies in education, and whether these can be a game-changer in closing the gap between the "haves and have nots" in the sphere of education.

This notion was first introduced by the World Bank, and was defined as being unable to read and understand a simple text by age 10.

All major international organizations that deal with education were warning that the world was facing learning poverty even before COVID-19 hit, and two-and-a-half years of the pandemic have only exacerbated the phenomenon. Almost 60 percent of 10-year-olds in low and middle-income countries, according to UNICEF, are left

lagging as a result of their education. School closures and disruptions have worsened this situation, with adverse long-term effects on economic and social equality globally. It is estimated that the loss of more than two years of schooling might result in an "estimated loss of \$17 trillion in lifetime earnings for those affected," a cost that spells more misery for individuals, families and societies, and a situation that might also become politically disruptive.

The introduction of technology could serve as a catalyst for closing the gaps in access to education, but so far the opposite has happened almost everywhere, and has greatly accelerated during the pandemic. This has underlined just how disadvantaged some children are without access to technology. There is also evidence that girls in low-income communities have suffered more from inadequate schooling. Unless girls have equal access to educational opportunities, which includes access to technology, gender inequalities are bound to increase.

Technology in the classroom is changing the nature of teaching, and how the adult world interacts with children and young adults in an educational environment. It empowers educators through access to information and methods of teaching they did not have before, but without proper training, it leads them to over-concentrate on technical issues, and also to have to compete with alternative and dubious sources of information that could be damaging.

Furthermore, at times of economic crisis, as in many other segments of the economy, there is a temptation to cut education expenses by first reducing its human resources. However, teaching is a profession like no other, and this temptation should be resisted at any cost, especially with young

children who require not virtual but real, physical human interaction with adults and peers, both as learners and for their healthy development as human beings.

Currently many of those involved in education find it hard to keep up with the constant developments in technology, while working to ensure that students concentrate less on the wizardry of the equipment and more on the content that will make a difference during and beyond their years in formal education.

There is no reason for these challenges not to be resolved if those who develop technology for education work together with educators. Priority should be given to a well-coordinated and adequately funded international mechanism to ensure that all girls and boys, wherever they are in the world, will have access to high-performance learning platforms, and geography and income should not be a hindrance. This will be central to achieving not only Goal 4, but also most of the other sustainable development goals that are heavily dependent on high levels of educational attainment.

Technology in education is not an aim in itself; it is not a panacea for inadequate education, but without it being widely available, we will see elements in various societies and parts of the world condemned to much lower levels of development. The Tony Blair Institute report rightly calls for an international body to ensure free access to the best digital tools for every child. It is up to governments and international organizations to live up to this challenge. (Courtesy: Arab News)

Yossi Mekelberg is professor of international relations and an associate fellow of the MENA Program at Chatham House. He is a regular contributor to the international written and electronic media.

New era of cooperation

Gert Grobler

The Global Development Initiative offers a fresh perspective and further support for Africa's development.

We are living in an uncertain and troubled world, facing numerous global challenges as a result of a lack of leadership, introspective policies, unilateralism, lingering economic recovery and the fueling of geopolitical tensions. But sadly, the response from the international community remains totally inadequate and fragmented. It is in this context that President Xi Jinping's words at the Communist Party of China and World Political Parties Summit in July 2021 hold special significance: "In the face of common challenges, no person or country can remain insulated. The only way out is to work together in harmony with one accord."

The COVID-19 pandemic has not only put health systems in African countries increasingly under pressure, but also had far-reaching ramifications for the continent, leading to the slowing down of the commendable political, economic and social progress that Africa has made over the last few decades.

Amid the global crisis, African countries are experiencing increasing economic and development challenges. In fact, many African countries need enhanced economic cooperation and financial assistance to implement policies and programs to deal with these crisis. According to the African Development Bank, African nations need \$424 billion this year to manage the devastation caused by the pandemic, further compounded by the current crisis in Ukraine. After decades of progress in the continent's fight against poverty, the COVID-19 pandemic and other challenges dragged about 30 million Africans into "extreme poverty" in 2020.

Since its inception about nine years ago, the Belt and Road Initiative with the support and participation of 149 countries, including more than 40 African nations, and 32 international organizations, is indeed becoming a belt of growing prosperity, contributing to global economic development and benefiting people in many regions.

The joint establishment of the China-African Union Coordination Mechanism for Implementing the Belt and Road Initiative is an important step to inject further momentum into the implementation of the initiative. It will contribute to the institutionalization and standardization of China-AU cooperation on the Belt and Road Initiative by enabling the effective coordination by stakeholders of both sides and strengthening channels and mechanisms for exchange, communication, and consultations.

President Xi's commendable and significant proposals, under the banner of peace, development and win-win cooperation to build a community with a shared future for mankind, as well as the Global Development Initiative and the Global Security Initiative, have been warmly welcomed by Africa. This has already led to a growing consensus between China and its African and international partners on expanding cooperation on all these constructive Chinese initiatives which will lead to win-win cooperation, deepen South-South cooperation, synergize economic development and security strategies, and contribute to improved global governance and ultimately a better world.

The Global Development Initiative complements the Belt and Road Initiative as a support and cooperation mechanism toward the implementation of the AU's Agenda 2063, the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and global economic development. It furthermore represents an exciting new perspective for international cooperation in a multipolar international order with encouraging new concepts for development and security.

Africa stands ready to join hands with China and all parties to advance the Global Development Initiative, which goes hand in hand with the Belt and Road Initiative, and inject new momentum into Africa-China cooperation as well as global development partnerships at the dawn of a new era of enhanced cooperation. (Courtesy: China Daily)

The author is a senior research fellow at the Institute of African Studies at Zhejiang Normal University and a former senior diplomat in the South African Department of International Relations and Cooperation. The author contributed this article to China Watch, a think tank powered by China Daily.

Gaza death toll from Israeli attacks rises to 32

Gaza faces medical supply shortages

GAZA CITY: The death toll from violence in Gaza rose to 32, including six children, on Sunday according to Palestinian health officials as Israel continued its assault on the territory for the third consecutive day.

An Israeli airstrike also killed a second senior commander of a Palestinian armed group, the fighters said today. The Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement (PIJ) retaliated with barrages of rockets fired at Israel as the country pressed on with its assault on Gaza.

The killing late Saturday of Khaled Mansour, who led the Islamic Jihad's operations in the southern Gaza Strip, came a day after another Israeli strike killed the militant's commander in the north.

The death toll from violence in Gaza since Israel launched its latest strikes Friday rose to 32, including six children, the health ministry in the Palestinian enclave said on Sunday. More than 215 others were wounded in the attacks.

Meanwhile, in the West Bank, Israel pressed on with its operation against the Islamic Jihad group, arresting 20 suspects in overnight raids, the army

announced on Sunday.

Palestinian militants retaliated with rockets fired toward Israel, triggering air raid sirens in Jerusalem, the Israel army said Sunday. The Islamic Jihad later confirmed the group had fired rockets at Jerusalem.

The hundreds of rockets fired by Islamic Jihad in response is why the operation continues, said Israeli Justice Minister Gideon Saar, a member of the decision-making security cabinet.

Another potential flashpoint loomed on Sunday as Jews commemorating two ancient temples visited a major Jerusalem mosque compound that they revere as vestige of those shrines. Palestinians deem such visits a religious and political affront.

The Al-Quds Brigades of Islamic Jihad confirmed Sunday that an Israeli airstrike in the southern Gaza city of Rafah killed Mansour and two fellow fighters. The armed wing of PIJ said the strike also killed five civilians, including a child and three women, as it flattened several homes.

The fighting began with Israel's killing of a senior Islamic Jihad command-

er in a wave of strikes Friday that Israel said were meant to prevent an imminent attack.

Hamas, the larger armed group that rules Gaza, appeared to remain on the sidelines of the conflict for now, keeping its response limited. Israel and Hamas fought a war barely a year ago, one of four major conflicts and several smaller battles over the last 15 years that exacted a staggering toll on the impoverished territory's two million Palestinian residents.

Daily life in the strip has come to a standstill, while the electricity distributor said the sole power station shut down due to a lack of fuel after Israel closed its border crossings.

Gaza's health ministry said the next few hours will be "crucial and difficult", warning it risked suspending vital services within 72 hours as a result of the lack of electricity.

In Gaza City, resident Dounia Ismail said Palestinians had become accustomed to preparing a "survival bag" of items such as money and medicine.

"This latest escalation brings back images of fear, anxiety, and the feel-

ing that we are all alone," she told AFP. Civilians in southern and central Israel, meanwhile, have been forced into air raid shelters since Friday. The Magen David Adom emergency service said two people were hospitalized with shrapnel wounds and 13 others were lightly hurt while running for safety. Islamic Jihad is aligned with Hamas, but often acts independently. Both are blacklisted as terrorist organizations by much of the West.

Hamas has fought four wars with Israel since seizing control of Gaza in 2007, including the conflict last May. A flare-up with Islamic Jihad came in 2019, following Israel's killing of Baha Abu al-Ata, Jabari's predecessor. Hamas did not join the fray in that conflict.

Hamas's moves now could prove crucial, with the group facing pressure from some to restore calm in order to improve economic conditions in Gaza. The focus will in part turn to Jerusalem on Sunday, where some Jews will mark the Tisha Be'av remembrance day by visiting the holy city's most sensitive religious site, the Al Aqsa mosque compound, known in Judaism as the Temple Mount.

Putin, Erdogan hold talks in Sochi

Samir Humbatov



SOCHI: During the meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in the Russian city of Sochi, discussions were held in several areas. One of the issues that attracted more attention in the discussions was the issue of the export of Ukrainian grain to the world markets under the guarantee of the UN and Turkey.

Speaking about the export of Ukrainian grain to the world markets, the Russian president spoke with satisfaction about the export of Russian grain and fertilizer to the world markets. From this speech of Putin, it was understood that in the Istanbul agreement, not only the agreement was reached for the export of Ukrainian grain to the world markets, but also the agreement was reached for the export of Russian grain and fertilizer to the world markets. This means that with the Istanbul agreement, not only Ukraine, but also Russia is profitable. Another important aspect of the matter is the importance and role played by Turkey in this agreement.

Turkey achieves three important points with this agreement. 1. With this agreement, it has shown that it has high possibilities of becoming a guarantor country, and both Russia and Ukraine can demonstrate their trust in Turkey in a comfortable way. 2. Russia was forced to accept dependence on Turkey in a serious sense in the face of the difficulties caused by the sanctions against it. 3. Even in the most difficult moment, Turkey has the opportunity to think about food security not only for itself, but also for other countries.

Considering all these mentioned, both Russia and Ukraine may remain dependent on Turkey for a long time in some matters, especially in the formation of foreign trade relations. Turkey's main profit here is to further strengthen its influence in the region and the world, increase its economic opportunities and ensure its internal and external security.

Samir Humbatov, head of Center for International Relations and Diplomatic Studies.

US warns Pacific isles of 'struggle' against coercive regimes

HONIARA: Solomon Islands: A top US diplomat on Sunday (Aug 7) warned Pacific Islands of a new struggle against violent power-hungry regimes, as she visited the Solomon Islands to mark the 80th anniversary of World War II's Battle of Guadalcanal.

With China's military carrying out war drills around Taiwan and Russia bombarding Ukraine, Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman hit out at a new crop of world leaders reviving "bankrupt" ideas about the use of force.

Attending a dawn memorial service in the Solomon Islands, Sherman said "some around the world" had forgotten the cost of war, or were ignoring the lessons of the past.

She hit out at "leaders who believe that coercion, pressure, and violence are tools to be used with impunity", without citing any leader by name. Sherman is leading a US delegation to the Solomon Islands to mark the anniversary of the Battle of Guadalcanal.

The brutal seven-month land, sea and air fight between Allied and Japanese forces killed tens of thousands of troops—mostly Japanese—and was a turning point in the war. Painting the situation today as carrying faint echoes of the fight against Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan in the 1930-40s, the State Department number two urged the region to push back.

"We remember how bankrupt, how empty, such views were then, and remain today," she said. "Today we are once again engaged in a different kind of struggle—a struggle that will go on for some time to come."

Thousands join 7th Muharram procession in Srinagar

SRINAGAR: In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, thousands of people joined traditional 7th Muharram procession in old city of Srinagar with mourners marching with Alam Sharif in expression of solidarity with the ideals of Imam Hussain who sacrificed his life along with his kith and kin in the deserts of Karbala to uphold the banner of truth and justice.

The procession started from Bot Raj Mohalla after noon prayers from foothills of Koh-e-Maaran and culminated at Imambargah in Hassanabad in the late evening. The procession preceded a majlis at Bot Raj Mohalla, which was addressed by Maulana Masroor Abbas Ansari, head of Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen. With thousands of black-clad mourners waving black and red flags, symbolising mourning and resistance, formed a massive procession which passed through Kathi Darwaza and Rainawari before culminating at Hassanabad.

Mourners reciting nohas and chanting slogans like Labayk Ya Hussain and Hai Hamari Darsgah, Karbala, Karbala were served with refreshments on the way by members of Sunni community who had set up a number of sabels along the route. A large number of Police and paramilitary personnel were deployed on the occasion.

On the other hand, several mourners were arrested by Indian police when they tried to defy the restrictions and carry out Muharram processions in some Srinagar areas.

The mourners in small groups gathered at Jehangir Chowk and Batmaloo areas of Srinagar city but police swung into action and arrested many of them. The authorities have imposed curfew-like restrictions in Srinagar and adjoining areas and suspended internet services to prevent traditional 8th and 10 Muharram processions.

China keeps up pressure on Taiwan with 4th day of drills

Taiwan's army to conduct live-fire artillery drills in southern Pingtung County

BEIJING: China said Sunday it carried out its fourth consecutive day of military drills in the air and sea around Taiwan in the wake of U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to the self-ruled island, despite international calls to calm the tensions.

The People's Liberation Army said the exercises focused on testing its long-range air and ground strikes. It did not say if it will continue the drills after Sunday.

Taiwan said that it continued to detect several batches of Chinese aircraft, ships and drones operating around the Taiwan Strait, which separates the island and mainland China, and "simulating attacks on the island of Taiwan and our ships at sea."

Taiwan's official Central News Agency meanwhile reported that Taiwan's army will conduct live-fire artillery drills in southern Pingtung County on Tuesday and Thursday, in response to the



Chinese exercises.

The drills will include snipers, combat vehicles, armored vehicles as well as attack helicopters, said the report, which cited an anonymous source.

China set up no-go areas around Taiwan for the four-day drills it announced immediately after Pelosi's trip to Taipei on Tuesday and Wednesday that infuriated Beijing, which saw it as a violation of the "one-China" policy. China claims Taiwan and has threatened to annex it by force if necessary. The two sides split in 1949 after a civil war, but Beijing considers visits to Taiwan by foreign officials as recognizing its sovereignty.

Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense emphasized that its military was surveilling the situation and had dispatched aircraft and ships to respond accordingly.

Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen has called on the international community to "support democratic Taiwan" and "halt any escalation of the regional security situation."

China has so far conducted missile strikes on targets in the seas around Taiwan, and sent warships across the Taiwan Straits median line. It has also cut off defense and climate talks with the U.S. and imposed sanctions on Pelosi in retaliation for her visit.

The Biden administration and Pelosi say the U.S. remains committed to the "one-China" policy that recognizes Beijing as the legitimate government but allows informal relations and defense ties with Taipei.

The U.S. however criticized Beijing's actions in the Taiwan Strait, with White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre calling them "fundamentally irresponsible." "There's no need and no reason for this escalation," Jean-Pierre said.

Singapore's coordinating minister for national security Teo Chee Hean said in a Facebook post Saturday that the U.S.-China tensions over Taiwan is "an issue that can lead to conflict and war to the detriment of all parties involved, especially the people in Taiwan."

The tensions have a negative impact on Southeast Asia, Teo said, adding: "We hope that wisdom will prevail."

Iran minister urges 'realistic' US response to revive nuclear deal

TEHRAN: Iran's foreign minister called on Saturday for a "realistic response" from the US to Iranian proposals at indirect talks in Vienna aimed at reviving Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, state media reported.

The comments came as talks continued for a third day on Saturday with few expecting a breakthrough compromise while Tehran's disputed uranium enrichment program surges forward.

"Hossein Amirabdollahian... stressed the need for a realistic US response to Iran's constructive proposals on various issues to make the deal work," state media reported, without providing details on the proposals.

Little remains of the 2015 pact between Iran and the US, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China, which lifted sanctions against Tehran in exchange for curbs on Iranian enrichment activity the West fears could yield



atomic bombs — which says its nuclear program is for power generation and other peaceful purposes — breached the agreement in several ways including rebuilding stocks of enriched uranium.

Iranian media suggested a sticking point in the talks to revive the pact may be over Iran's refusal to address alleged unexplained uranium traces as demanded by the UN nuclear watchdog, with Tehran insisting that the nuclear deal had cleared its nuclear program of alleged possible military dimensions.

In June, the International Atomic Energy Agency's Board of Governors

passed a resolution criticizing Iran for failing to explain uranium traces found at undeclared sites. But a senior Iranian presidential aide said Tehran demanded the issue be closed before it would agree to resume compliance with the pact.

"In all of (President Ebrahim) Raisi's telephone calls with the presidents of France, Russia and China, his firm position has been that a final agreement could be reached only when safeguards claims were resolved and closed," state media on Saturday quoted the deputy head of Raisi's office as saying.

The European parties to the deal on Friday urged Iran "not to make unrealistic demands outside the scope of the JCPoA (nuclear deal), including on IAEA safeguards."

"The text is on the table. There will be no re-opening of negotiations. Iran must now decide to conclude the deal while this is still possible," a European statement said.

Ex-rebel sworn in as Colombia's president

BOGOTA: Colombia's first left-wing president will be sworn into office Sunday, promising to fight inequality and heralding a turning point in the history of a country haunted by a long war between the government and guerrilla groups.

Sen. Gustavo Petro, a former member of Colombia's M-19 guerrilla group, won the presidential election in June by beating conservative parties that offered moderate changes to the market-friendly economy, but failed to connect with voters frustrated by rising poverty and violence against human rights leaders and environmental groups in rural areas.

Petro is part of a growing group of leftist politicians and political outsiders who have been winning elections in Latin America since the pandemic broke out and hurt incumbents who struggled with its economic aftershocks.

The ex-rebel's victory was also exceptional for Colombia, where voters had been historically reluctant to back leftist politicians who were often accused of being soft on crime or allied with guerrillas.

A 2016 peace deal between Colombia's government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia turned much of the focus of voters away from the violent conflicts playing out in rural areas and gave prominence to problems like poverty

and corruption, fueling the popularity of leftist parties in national elections.

Petro, 62, has promised to tackle Colombia's social and economic inequalities by boosting spending on anti-poverty programs and increasing investment in rural areas. He has described U.S.-led antinarcotics policies, such as the forced eradication of illegal coca crops, as a "big failure." But he has said he would like to work with Washington "as equals," building schemes to combat climate change or bring infrastructure to rural areas where many farmers say coca leaves are the only viable crop.

Petro also formed alliances

with environmentalists during his presidential campaign and has promised to turn Colombia into a "global powerhouse for life" by slowing deforestation and taking steps to reduce the country's reliance on fossil fuels.

The incoming president has said Colombia will stop granting new licenses for oil exploration and will ban fracking projects, even though the oil industry makes up almost 50% of the nation's legal exports. He plans to finance social spending with a \$10 billion a year tax reform that would boost taxes on the rich and do away with corporate tax breaks.

Petro has also said he wants to start peace talks with remaining



rebel groups that are currently fighting over drug routes, gold mines and other resources abandoned by the FARC after their peace deal with the government.

"He's got a very ambitious agenda," said Yan Basset, a political scientist at Bogota's Rosario

University. "But he will have to prioritize. The risk Petro faces is that he goes after too many reforms at once and gets nothing" through Colombia's congress.

At least 10 heads of state are expected to attend Petro's inauguration, which will take place

at a large colonial-era square in front of Colombia's Congress. Stages with live music and big screens will also be placed in parks across Bogota's city center so that tens of thousands of citizens without invitations to the main event can also join in the festivities. That's a big change for Colombia where previous presidential inaugurations were more somber events limited to a few hundred VIP guests.

"We want the Colombian people to be the protagonists," Petro's press chief, Marisol Rojas, said in a statement. "This inauguration will be the first taste of a new form of governing, where all forms of life are respected, and where everyone fits in."

ASEAN regional integration to contribute for global economic uplift

Nguyen Tien Phong says ASEAN's economic growth could further accelerate to 5.0% in 2022

ISLAMABAD: Chairman ASEAN Committee Islamabad (ACI) Ambassador Nguyen Tien Phong on Sunday said that regional integration of ASEAN countries is not only essential for the economic prosperity of the ASEAN region but also important for global economic linkages and connectivity.

In the same month, the foundation of ASEAN was laid on August 8, 1967, he said.

The 55th anniversary of this month will be made with the determination that ASEAN will play its full role for economic prosperity, trade integration to promote peace and harmony with the other regions of the world, Chairman Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEANs) Committee Islamabad (ACI) and Ambassador of Vietnam to Pakistan, Nguyen Tien Phong on Sunday told APP here.

The Ambassador said economic and trade liberalization, multilateralism, credibility, global connectivity, economic stability, youth empowerment, mari-

time security, political stability, and regional to regional connectivity are part of ASEAN's regional economic vision.

While in interview on 55th Anniversary of ASEAN was established in August 8, 1967, he said that ASEAN reaffirmed its belief that regionalism and multilateralism are important principles and frameworks of cooperation, and that their strength and value lie in their inclusivity, rules-based nature, and emphasis on mutual benefit and respect.

Meanwhile, he informed that the 55th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AMM) was held on August 3, 2022 in Phnom Penh, Kingdom of Cambodia.

The Meeting was chaired by Cambodia under the theme "ASEAN A.C.T.: Addressing Challenges Together." He said that in the meeting ASEAN reaffirmed commitment to address its common challenges and to sustain the momentum of ASEAN's communi-



ty-building efforts with a strong sense of togetherness.

ASEAN also discussed the need to further strengthen engagement and cooperation with Dialogue Partners and external partners, including through existing ASEAN-led mechanisms, and the importance of ASEAN Centrality, credibility and relevance in maintaining peace, stability, and prosperity in the regional and global endeavours amidst uncertainty and rapid changes in Southeast Asia and beyond.

The ASEAN underscored the importance of maintaining ASEAN's unity and Centrality in its community-building efforts and engagement with external partners, in promoting peace, security and stability as well as in enhanc-

ing regional resilience in response to common and emerging challenges, he said.

The ASEAN countries also shown its shared commitment to maintaining and promoting peace, security and stability in the region, as well as to the peaceful resolution of disputes, including full respect for legal and diplomatic processes, without resorting to the threat or use of force, in accordance with the universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

ASEAN underscored the importance of seizing the opportunities of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) with the COVID-19 pandemic having accentuated the urgency for digital transformation. Mother Child Block at Gangaram Hospital soon: Yasmin

Says ongoing progress would be reviewed time to time

LAHORE: Punjab Health Minister Dr. Yasmin Rashid has said that a state-

of-the-art mother and child block at Sir Gangaram Hospital would be completed on time.

She said surprise visit to under construction the Mother and Child Block on Sunday.

The minister hoped the under-construction child block in Gangaram Hospital would soon be completed and opened to the public. All officers concerned have been instructed to complete the under-construction block as soon as possible. She warned that delay would not be tolerated.

She said the ongoing progress would be reviewed time to time, adding that thousands of mothers and children lost their lives during childbirth every year in the country and they would be saved through state-of-the-art hospitals in the province.

Health Secretary Ali Jan Khan, Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal and related officers appraised the minister about the progress in construction.

Special Secretary Health Muhammad Usman, MS Gangaram Hospital Dr Athar, Chief Planning Officer Abdul Haq Bhatti, Sheikh Ijaz, officers of relevant departments were also present.

Must with Pic Event highlights importance of breastfeeding babies

Adam Khan Wazir WANA: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, with the support of UNICEF, arranged a grand ceremony regarding "breast-feeding" in the DHO office of South Waziristan tribal district, Wana, and a walk was also arranged.

In addition to health staff, local body representatives, scholars and tribal elders participated in large numbers.

Speaking on the occasion, Senior Medical Officer Dr. Zainul Abidin Wazir, Focal Person DHO Sijjad, MS Dr. Sadiq, VC Chairman Maulana Naik Muhammad Wazir and District Nutrition Manager SWTD Waris Wazir said.

Sialkot important economic hub of Pakistan: SCCI

SIALKOT: Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) senior vice president Sheikh Zohaib Rafique Sethi said on Sunday that Sialkot was an important economic hub, from where 99 percent products were exported to various parts of the globe.

Talking to APP, he said that currently, around 20,000 active member firms were registered with Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI).

He said the district was contributing over US \$3 billion dollars yearly to the national exchequer through exports and was playing a pivotal role in promoting business and trade activities in the region.

He said that Sialkot exporters were the "Roaming Ambassadors of Pakistan", which were not only travelling for fetching the highly valuable foreign exchange for the country but also making efforts to introduce Pakistan through their products.

He said thousands of small and medium sized industries were functioning in and around Sialkot and was globally known for its quality products, unique export culture and for manufacturing value-added goods like leather products, sports goods, surgical instruments, gloves of all sorts, textiles items, sports wear, martial arts uniforms & accessories, musical instruments, kitchenware, hollow ware, knives, cutlery items and military uniform badges etc.

He said that Sialkot made footballs, field hockey sticks, cricket gear and boxing gloves were used in international games including the Olympics and World Cups.

It may be mentioned that surgical and sports goods industries were the oldest industries which were playing tremendous role not only in strengthening the national economy but also in providing employment opportunities to hundreds industrial workers.

SCCI SVP Sheikh Zohaib Rafique Sethi said that Sialkot exporters had set unique examples of self-help by completing several mega projects.

Sialkot exporters had written a golden history after establishing two mega projects of Sialkot International Airport Limited (SIAL) and own private airline namely AirSial Airline on self-help basis, he added.

KATI sends relief goods to 1,000 families affected by floods

We will not leave the victims alone, KATI is the first association to provide relief, says SM Muneer

Our Correspondent

KARACHI: Korangi Association of Trade and Industry (KATI) sent the first batch of relief goods to 1,000 families affected by rains and floods in Balochistan under the leadership of President KATI Salman Aslam, head of the relief committee, to Khuzdar district of Balochistan.

On the occasion of the departure of the relief materials, Patron-in-Chief SM Muneer said that KATI is the first association to send relief materials to the flood victims. We share the suffering of the victims equally and will not leave the victims alone in this difficult time. He said that pledged 1 million rupees in the relief fund of KATI, Zubair Tufail deposited 5 lakh rupees in the fund, similarly other members of KATI have also contributed to the fund. He appealed that the business community should actively participate in this relief fund. SM Muneer said that the team under the leader-



KARACHI: Group photo of KATI Patron-in-Chief SM Muneer, President Salman Aslam, Zubair Chhaya, Hamud-ur-Rahman and other members of the relief committee on the departure of the first convoy to Balochistan.

ship of President KATI Salman Aslam is carrying the first batch, we pray that he will return successful and similarly useful to our countrymen if needed. He further said that hundreds of people died in Balochistan due to the

recent rains, while the Pakistan Army helicopter also met with an accident during the relief in which 6 people including Corps Commander Quetta were martyred. KATI President Salman Aslam, KITE Limited CEO

Zubair Chhaya, Senior Vice President Maheen Salman, Afghan Refugees Repatriation Cell Sindh Commissioner Hamud-ur-Rehman and others were also present in the aid delivery ceremony.

KATI President Salman Aslam said that in the first batch of 5 trucks, rations for 1000 families, 200 tents, and more than 300 water coolers for affected families, besides medicines, food items, drinking water, and other essential items will be immediately distributed to the victims. He said that the team under his leadership includes Hamud-ur-Rahman, Junaid Naqi, Umar Saeed, Junaid Khan, Nauman Aslam, Muhammad Tauseef, Mir Muhammad and Rahmatullah. President KATI said that we aim to immediately deliver relief goods to disaster-stricken and remote areas where access is not possible. A target of 10 million rupees has been set to be collected in KATI's relief fund. Initially, the

first consignment is going to Tehsil Wadh of Khuzdar district, where about 70 to 80 thousand people were affected by the flood or whose houses were washed away. President KATI said that currently there is a severe shortage of tents, medicine and clean drinking water in Balochistan, which efforts are being made to fulfill. Salman Aslam said that with the support of the business community, he will continue the work of delivering more relief goods.

Afghan Repatriation Cell Sindh Commissioner Hamud-ur-Rahman said that there is a lack of housing, medicine and clean drinking water in the flood-affected areas, while cholera is spreading rapidly and the communication system has been completely disrupted. He thanked Kati for immediately helping the disaster victims in this hour of need. Hamud-ur-Rehman said that like KATI, other associations should also come forward in this cause.

Army lauded for bailing out economy

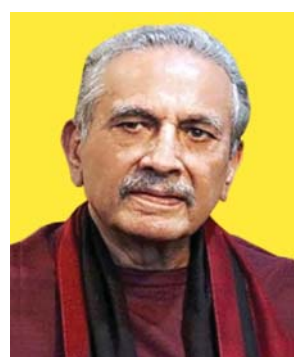
Business community is grateful to the Pakistan Army for its efforts to revive the economy, says Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Former President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt on Sunday lauded the leadership of the army for bailing out the bankrupting economy at this critical juncture.

He said that the business community is grateful to the Pakistan Army for its efforts to revive the economy.

Shahid Rasheed Butt said that the Army has helped the government overcome economic diffi-



Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt said that the Army has helped the government overcome economic difficulties in the past and it has done the same now in the national interest.

The countries and international institutions have accepted the request of the army because of its credibility.

During the previous government, Pakistan received billions of dollars from various sources because of the efforts of the COAS and now the army chief is doing the same to recover the economy.

He noted it is good that the government and the army are on the same page and an ideal harmony can be seen which is being felt both in the country and outside the country.

The military leadership realiz-

es that if the economy is weak, the country's defence cannot remain strong, and it is in the country's interest to put the economy back on track as soon as possible.

The economy cannot perform if the nation is divided instead of being united and the country cannot enjoy independence unless there is economic independence.

He said that as long as the government continues to be afraid of long-term projects and making difficult decisions, the economy will not be blessed with stability.

CAMON Summer TECNO brings exciting gifts for fans

Staff Reporter

LAHORE: TECNO is doing a fun activity for photography lovers this month. Fans can share their summer activity pictures and win exciting prizes from TECNO.

As summer brings vacation time for most people, TECNO urges you to have fun with friends and family and share your pictures using the Camon series phone. The camera phones are equipped with the best technology to accompany you while trav-

eling, on long drives, eating out or any other fun activities with the fam. Make travelogues, best landscape, and portraits, and enjoy your time.

The activity will be live till August 15, 2022. All participants need to do the following: 1. Like the TECNO Mobile Pakistan page. 2. Use the proper hashtags #CAMONSummer #ShotOnCAMON 3. Participants must use the CAMON Watermark to be eligible to win. 4. TECNO has the right to use all the photos.

BRI paves way for shared future via common development

'BRI is like a bridge. It connects what China can offer with what the rest of the world needs'

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

Opening for traffic earlier this week, the 2.4-km-long bridge finally connects two parts of the nation facing each other across the blue waves. Now it just takes a breezy three-minute drive for local residents and travelers to cross the strait for their trips to Dubrovnik, a medieval city known as the "Pearl of the Adriatic."

Connectivity matters, not only for tourism, but also for the movement of goods and access to services. A much smoother flow of trade is expected to create thousands of local jobs. Another piece of good news for people living in the southernmost part of Croatia is that they now can enjoy easier access to educational and health facilities on the country's mainland.

In the long run, this flagship project of Belt and Road cooperation, along with others of its kind, is expected to help revive growth in the region and spark new possibilities for common development in other parts of the world. This is precious against the backdrop of the lingering COVID-19 pandemic, a tottering global economy and mounting geopolitical uncertainties.

Initiated by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) envisions trade and infrastructure networks connecting Asia with Europe and Africa along the ancient Silk Road routes.

Over the past 10 years or so, the BRI has followed the guiding principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits. It has made impressive headway in delivering tangible benefits to local residents through such connectivity projects as the Peljesac Bridge, the Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway in Africa, and the new Haifa port in Israel, among others.

"We are seeing connectivity, and we are seeing ports remodeling, and we are seeing ports remodeling," said Charles Onunaju, director of the Nigeria-based Center for China Studies, when speaking of China's infrastructure investment in Africa.

When describing the economic benefits of Belt and Road cooperation, Onunaju invoked Lekki Deep Sea Port, Nigeria's first deep seaport under construction by China Harbour Engineering Company in Lagos.

Official data show the project will create up to 170,000 jobs and bring revenues totaling 201 billion U.S. dollars to the state and federal government through taxes, royalties and duties.

"What is really happening is that this connectivity is aiding the future and long-term growth of Africa, so that Africa can begin to participate in global supply chains," said Beatrice Matiri-Maisori, a senior economics lecturer at Kenya's Riara University, who shares similar views with Onunaju on Africa's infrastructure development.

Besides high expectations for growth, connectivity brings certainty to a world of uncertainties. Connectivity is at the heart of supply chain



resilience, said Josephine Teo, Singapore's minister for communications and information and second minister for home affairs.

When logistic woes caused by the pandemic frustrated businesses worldwide, the China-Europe Railway Express managed to help sustain supply chains, and maintain trade transactions across the Eurasian landmass. In 2021, the total number of China-Europe freight train trips reached 15,183, and registered a yearly increase of 55 percent on average from 2016 to last year. The railway service has also yielded gains for all countries involved. In the last year alone, trade in goods with countries along the Belt and Road stood at 11.6 trillion yuan (about 1.84 trillion dollars).

At a symposium marking the fifth anniversary of the BRI back in 2018, Xi called for high-quality development of the initiative, and compared such an endeavor to a "meticulous painting," a traditional Chinese drawing technique that pays great attention to details.

He understood that after years of efforts to

finish its general layout, the BRI should aim for high-standard, sustainable and people-centered progress.

The BRI's high-quality development is branching out and bearing fruits. The construction of the Peljesac Bridge has illustrated the economic, social and environmental benefits the BRI can bring its partners.

"When building the bridge, Chinese engineers and workers applied the highest environmental standards," said Kreso Beljak, member of the Croatian Parliament and president of the Croatian Peasant Party.

Local oyster producers at the nearby Ston Bay once worried that the project might have a possible negative impact on the quality and the volume of their oyster production.

However, this didn't happen thanks to the highest environmental protection standards. On the contrary, the bridge has opened up new sales routes.

The Peljesac Bridge is a miniature of the Belt and Road construction in a new stage. Under the BRI framework, the building of a health Silk Road, a digital Silk Road and a green Silk Road have added new dimensions to the initiative.

To push for green and low-carbon development, China has promised last year not to build new coal-fired power projects abroad, and it has helped construct hydro, solar, and wind power stations in Pakistan, Laos and Argentina, among others.

In terms of innovation-driven programs, China is helping its BRI partners, many in Africa like Mozambique, to develop modern and

smart agriculture with the help of the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System; it is also joining forces with others in boosting cooperation in e-commerce, outer-space and deep ocean. For example, China and Portugal have set up late last year the STARLab under the BRI, which is a joint laboratory focusing on integrated scientific and technological cooperation in space and sea.

Highlighting openness and inclusiveness is also how China seeks to work with its partners worldwide for high-quality achievements. The BRI family has some 180 members so far, and more are welcome to join.

In his speech at the opening ceremony of Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2021, Xi said "the BRI is a public road open to all, not a private path owned by one single party. All interested countries are welcome aboard to take part in the cooperation and share in its benefits."

Having proposed the BRI, China is thinking how to facilitate global development for all mankind, and through these years, the BRI has brought people closer as well as boosted international trade, said Stephen Perry, chairman of Britain's 48 Group Club.

"It's transnational," he said. "It's not thinking of the single country of China. It's thinking of the whole area of the world, maybe more focused at the moment on Asia and Africa and Latin America, but it's a world project."

According to a World Bank report, BRI transport projects could, by 2030, help lift 7.6 million people out of extreme poverty and 32 million people out of moderate poverty globally. Trade will grow from between 2.8 and 9.7 percent

Commonwealth Games

Pakistan secures two more medals in wrestling

Shajar Abbas misses out on 200m sprint

BIRMINGHAM: Pakistani wrestlers Mohammad Sharif Tahir and Ali Asad bagged silver and bronze medals for Pakistan in Commonwealth Games 2022.

Tahir lost to India's Naveen Naveen in Men's Freestyle 74kg wrestling event to finish with a silver medal, while Asad defeated New Zealand's Suraj Singh within 55 seconds to win a bronze medal in the Men's Freestyle 57kg category.

Sharif fell short of Naveen's counter-attacks as his arch-rival bagged nine straight technical points to bag gold. He joined his compatriots Inam Butt and Zaman Anwar to bag a silver medal for Pakistan in Commonwealth Games 2022.

Meanwhile, Asad was brilliant with his grip as he rattled Singh by gripping him from his legs and rolled him out of the mat to gain 10 points. Asad got his hands on a bronze medal as the final score read 11-0.

The Pakistani wrestler lost his



semi-final to Indian counterpart Kumar Ravi. This was Pakistan's third bronze in ongoing Commonwealth Games 2022. The wrestler Inayatullah (62kg) and Judoka Hussain Shah previously

bagged bronze medals in the multi-sports event.

Pakistani sprinter Shajar Abbas finished last in the 200m event of the Commonwealth Games 2022 currently

under in the UK city of Birmingham.

Thus, Pakistan's emerging sprint sensation could not bag a medal in Men's 200m final. He clocked 21.16 which was not enough for him to win a medal in the sprint.

The gold medal was bagged by Jereem Richards of Trinidad and Tobago, while the Silver and Bronze went to England's Zharnel Hughes and Ghana's Joseph Paul Amoah, respectively.

Earlier on Friday, the Pakistani athlete covered the distance in 20.89 seconds and he qualified for the final after finishing third in his heat. He was among the top eight athletes who qualified for the final.

Though Shajar lost the race, it was an honour for the country that he was the only Asian athlete who participated in the 200-metre sprint in the CWG. Earlier on Tuesday [August 2], Shajar could not qualify for the 100-metre semifinals just by a whisker here at the Alexander Stadium.

SSUET to host hockey event under PM Youth Programme

Spokesman Report

KARACHI: Higher Education Commission's Director Sports Javed Ali Memon has said that Sir Syed University of Engineering and Technology (SSUET) will host the hockey event of Prime Minister's Youth Programme-Talent Hunt Youth Sports League for Girls and Boys. Director Sports Sir Syed University Mubbashir Mukhtar will be the National Coordinator for this event. In this connection, Javed Ali Memon recently chaired a meeting at SSUET with directors sports of different universities and Director Physical Education of Colleges.

Hockey Olympian Hanif Khan and Convener Sports SSUET Qazi Nasar also attended the meeting, besides them Basit Ansari and Rashid Qureshi



from University of Karachi, Azmat Pasha of Tabani College, Shaheen Fatima, Rafat Jahan and Majida Hameed, Junaid Khan of Lasbela University and representatives of 36 universities and colleges also attended the meeting physically while Director Sports of several universities from other cities joined online.

Javed Memon said that the purpose of Prime Minister Talent Hunt Youth Sports League is to promote national sports and to highlight the importance of sport in educational institutions. The trials will be held in Karachi, Hyderabad, Larkana, Shaheed Benazirabad and Sukkur from August 15.

Javed said that players

from 15-25 years of age will be eligible to participate in the trials. There will be 25 different regions of the country where the trials will be conducted. Registrar SSUET Sarfraz Ali thanked all the guests, especially Memon, on behalf of Chancellor Javed Anwar and assured him of full cooperation from the university.

Tuchel wants Chelsea to improve despite Everton win

LIVERPOOL: Chelsea put a troubled pre-season behind them to start their Premier League campaign with a 1-0 win at Everton on Saturday thanks to Jorginho's penalty. Blues boss Thomas Tuchel warned last week that Chelsea were "not ready" for the new season after a gruelling tour of the United States, which included a 4-0 thrashing at the hands of Arsenal, left his squad drained.

However, a new era at Stamford Bridge is picking up pace off the field with the signings of Marc Cucurella and Carney Chukwuemeka in recent days joining new arrivals Raheem Sterling and Kalidou Koulibaly. Sterling, Koulibaly and Cucurella made their debuts as Chelsea ended a run of four consecutive defeats at Goodison Park despite a patchy performance.

"We have struggled in the last seasons to get points here and we have the points," said Tuchel. "A win is a win, it's the most important thing, but we



have to get better. "We are maybe not at the highest level. We have brought players in but they came in late, pre-season was a bit turbulent but the last week of training was promising."

Everton's pre-season preparations were rocked this week by an injury that ruled England striker Dominic Calvert-Lewin out for the first six weeks of the season. The Toffees suffered another injury blow early on when Ben Godfrey suffered a suspected broken leg after coming off worse in a challenge with Kai Havertz, while Yerry Mina limped off in the second half. "When it rains, it pours," said Ever-

ton boss Frank Lampard.

"Ben Godfrey's injury feels like it is a small fracture of his leg. "We are assessing that. He will be out for a while, Mina is an ankle injury and could be out for a while." Everton have been predicted to struggle again after just staving off relegation last season. But they could easily have taken at least a point from a spirited display. Chelsea goalkeeper Edouard Mendy made a fine save to prevent James Tarkowski heading Everton in front on his debut. Sterling was also denied a debut goal by the offside flag after he swept home after Jordan Pickford spilled Mason Mount's shot. Everton's good work before the break was undone in the eighth minute of added on time for the lengthy stoppage for Godfrey's injury.

Ben Chilwell was bundled over inside the box by Abdoulaye Doucoure and, unlike in the Euro 2020 final, Jorginho sent Pickford the wrong way from the spot for the decisive goal.

Medvedev downs Norrie to end title drought

LOS CABOS: World number one Daniil Medvedev won his first ATP title of 2022 on Saturday, roaring past defending champion Cameron Norrie 7-5, 6-0 in the final of the hardcourt tournament in Los Cabos, Mexico. Medvedev snapped a five-match losing streak in finals – a stretch that included his agonizing, five-set loss to Rafael Nadal in the Australian Open final in February. He also came up short this year in 's-Hertogenbosch and Halle.

He didn't get a chance at Wimbledon, where Russian and Belarusian players were banned because of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. His first trophy since he won the US Open last year – denying Novak Djokovic a calendar Grand Slam – comes just as Medvedev launches the final build up to his title defense in the final Grand Slam of 2022. Next he'll defend his Canadian Open title before tackling the Cincinnati Masters. Defending Los Cabos champion Norrie did what he could in the opening set, but Medvedev gained a decisive break to lead 6-5 and once he'd served out the opening set there was simply no stopping him. "It was not easy," Medvedev said in his on-court interview. "Cam is an amazing player, so it was really intense," he added.

"When you play against him, you know that you have to fight for every point." Medvedev had two set points on his serve at 5-4, but was broken. In the next game he scraped his hand on the court reaching for a shot on the opening point and needed treatment because of the blood. "I didn't play bad in that game at 5-4," Medvedev said. "So I knew I just had to stay there. Actually bleeding helped me I think a little bit so I could hold my nerve a little bit more."

Medvedev was playing his first tournament since a quarter-final exit at Mallorca in June. With each match he looked more assured, and he ended the week without dropping a set against a modest array of opponents starting with 224th-ranked Australian Rinky Hijikata followed by 98th-ranked Lithuanian Ricardas Berankis and 38th-ranked Serb Miomir Kecmanovic.

Norrie was a tougher proposition. Ranked 12th, he has taken his tally of ATP titles to four since winning his first at Los Cabos last year. He had reached his 10th final since the start of 2021 by beating second-seeded Canadian Felix Auger-Aliassime in the semi-finals. Once Medvedev found his groove, however, Norrie had no answer. "Every match was very good, but the final is always special," Medvedev said. "In the final, you play the best player of this week, so it's always a high-level match and I'm really happy that I managed to show some good level, some good shots in such an important match."

PBG hosts reception in honor of table tennis team

Our Correspondent

KARACHI: Pakistan Business Group hosted a reception in honor of the Pakistan Table Tennis Team that left to participate in the 5th Islamic Solidarity Games.

The reception was organized at the residence of President Pakistan Business Group, renowned businessman Farazur Rehman, in which team coach and secretary of Pakistan Table Tennis Federation Ejaz Ali, manager Yashrab Shah, player Taimur Khan, national women's champion Haiqa Hasan and Hur Fawad, Chairman of Pakistan Business Forum Sports Committee Fawadur Rehman, Former International Table Tennis Player Arif Khan, Farhan Ur Rehman, Khalid Shamsi, Raheel Imtiaz, Ali Arsh, Roma Altaf and others participated.

On this occasion, Fawad-ur-Rehman delivered the welcome speech. Speaking at the event, the team expressed its determination to win a medal at the games. Meanwhile, kits and gifts were distributed to the team. Later, the national table tennis team left for Turkey to participate in the Games, which will be held from 9th to 18th August.

Dominant New Zealand clinch Bronze in Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM: New Zealand registered a comprehensive eight-wicket win against England to win the Bronze medal at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham.

Opting to bat first, England had less than an ideal start as they aimed to post a big total. Danni Wyatt and Alice Capsey were back in the pavilion, with the scorecard reading 10/2. They embarked on a rebuild job for the remainder of the Powerplay, but would then lose wickets in quick succession in the middle overs. Nat Sciver (27) and Sophia Dunkley (8) would be the next to depart. Marie Bouchier (4) and Katherine Brunt (4) too couldn't contribute much, with the England batters all at sea against New Zealand's terrific bowling display.

Amy Jones and Sophie Ecclestone would then chip in with some invaluable runs for England, ensuring that they had a total of over 100 on the board. Jones scored 26, while Ecclestone chipped in with 18 as England posted a total of 110/9 on the board in 20 overs. Despite their efforts, England were still way below the mark in terms of the target they would have aimed for and now needed a heroic performance from the bowlers.

For New Zealand, the whole bowling unit performed sensationally well, with Hayley Jensen (3/24) being the pick of the bowlers, scalping the wickets of Danny Wyatt, Amy Jones and Issy Wong.

Ten Sri Lankans vanish from Commonwealth Games: official

COLOMBO: Ten members of crisis-hit Sri Lanka's Commonwealth Games contingent in Birmingham have disappeared in a suspected attempt to remain in Britain, a top sports official from the island nation told AFP on Sunday.

The nine athletes and a manager vanished after completing their events, the official said, requesting anonymity. Three of them — judoka Chamila Dilani, her manager Asela de Silva, and wrestler Shanith Chathuranga — had disappeared last week.

"That prompted a police complaint by the Sri Lankan officials. "Since then, another seven have vanished," the official said, without identifying them.

"We suspect they want to remain in the UK, possibly to get employment." The 160-strong Sri Lankan contingent's management possessed the passports of all members to ensure they returned home. That failed to deter some from leaving. British police located the first three that disappeared, but as they had not violated local laws and held visas valid for six months, no action was taken, the Sri Lankan official told AFP. "In fact, the police got us to return the passports that we were holding as a deterrent against defections," the official said. "The police have not told us about their whereabouts." Sri Lankan athletes have been reported missing from international events in the past. In October last year, Sri Lanka's wrestling manager abandoned his team and disappeared in Oslo during a world championship tournament. During the 2014 Asian Games in South Korea, two Sri Lankan athletes made a run for it and were not found. And in 2004, when Sri Lanka did not even have a national handball team, a 23-member group pretending to represent the country conned their way to a tournament in Germany and disappeared.

Let Ronaldo leave: Rooney tell United

LONDON: Former Manchester United forward Wayne Rooney believes that the club must let Cristiano Ronaldo leave if they are to build a successful team for the future under new manager Erik ten Hag.

The 37-year-old Ronaldo, who re-signed for United from Juventus last season, reportedly wants a move away from Old Trafford after the team's failure to qualify for the Champions League. "I think United should let Cristiano Ronaldo go."

It's not that Ronaldo can't play in a Ten Hag team. He can play in any team," Rooney, who now manages Major League Soccer side DC United, wrote in a column for the Times newspaper. "Ronny will always score you goals. But my personal view is that United aren't ready to challenge for the title now, so the aim has to be to build a team that can win the league in the next three to four years, and you have to plan for that."

Ronaldo netted 24 times in all competitions last season, emerging as one of the few bright sparks in an otherwise forgettable campaign for United that saw them finish sixth.

Thompson-Herah seals Commonwealth double

BIRMINGHAM: Olympic champion Elaine Thompson-Herah rocketed to a sprint double at the Commonwealth Games on Saturday as Australia pulled clear of England at the top of the medals table.

The Jamaican sprint star, 30, was the headline act on the penultimate night of track and field competition in Birmingham and did not disappoint the capacity crowd, destroying the field to win the women's 200m in a Games record of 22.02sec. "I was going for a Games record in the 100 and it didn't work so I said, 'I must get it in the 200,'" said Thompson-Herah.

"I'm grateful to claim that gold today, the day we celebrate Independence Day in Jamaica." Thompson-Herah topped the podium at last year's Tokyo

Olympics in both the 100m and 200m, retaining the titles she had won in Rio four years earlier. But she only took bronze in the 100m behind compatriots Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce and Shericka Jackson at last month's world championships and finished seventh in the 200m final. "I knew I had more races to come."

"I'm not a quitter," said Thompson-Herah of her disappointing world championships results. "It's a motivation for me to continue to learn and just keep going." Thompson-Herah, who won the 100m earlier in the Games, faced a tough task on paper in the 200m final despite the absence of her Jamaican rivals. But she finished nearly half a second ahead of Nigeria's Favour Ofoli, with Namibia's Olympic silver medallist Christine Mboma

taking bronze. Trinidad and Tobago's Jereem Richards won the men's 200m in a Games record time of 19.80sec. World bronze medallist Mary Moraa produced an astonishing late burst to come out on top in a high-class women's 800m field, timing 1min 57.07sec.

The Kenyan faded after a quick start but found a second wind to pip England's Olympic silver medallist Keely Hodgkinson to gold. Scotland's Laura Muir won bronze – her first Commonwealth medal. "I tried to run 57 or 58 seconds for the first 400 but I think I was 56-something (56.8)," said Moraa. "When I reached the 500m, I think everybody went past me. "But with 200 to go, I closed the gap and then I knew I had to push myself right until the end."

Uganda's Jacob Kiplimo outbatted Kenyan pair Nicholas Kipkorir Kimeli and Jacob Krop down the home straight to win the 5,000m in a season's best time of 13min 8.08sec, completing a distance double in Birmingham after his earlier 10,000m win. "It was a wonderful performance for me (at the Games)," he said. "I have two (gold medals) and I'm so happy about it." Alastair Chalmers won Guernsey's first ever track and field medal when he took bronze in the men's 400m hurdles.

In the morning session, Australia's Oliver Hoare shocked world champion Jake Wightman and Kenya's Timothy Cheruiyot to win 1500m gold. The 25-year-old produced a storming late finish to cross the line in 3:30.12, breaking a 48-year-old Games



record. Australia's Jemima Montag took gold in the women's 10,000m race walk but the country's recently crowned high jump world champion Eleanor Patterson was pushed into second place by Jamaica's Lamara Distin.

Australia won two golds on the last night of action in the diving pool, in the women's synchro-

nised 3m springboard and the synchronised 10m platform. England swept the podium in the men's 3m springboard but Jack Laugher missed out on a third gold in Birmingham after a disappointing penultimate dive, being forced to settle for bronze. Hot favourites Australia beat New Zealand by five wickets in their women's Twenty20 semi-final cricket clash at Edgbaston to set up a gold medal match against India, who edged England by four runs in a thriller. England were also beaten in the netball semi-finals by Australia, who will meet Jamaica in the final. India beat South Africa 3-2 in the men's hockey semi-finals and will play Australia in Monday's gold medal match after the six-time defending champions beat England by the same scoreline. The bowls competition wrapped up on Saturday, with Australia taking two of the final three golds on offer, in the women's pairs and the men's singles.

With just two days of competition to go, Australia top the overall medals table in Birmingham with 59 golds, nine ahead of hosts England.