

Diversifying diplomacy

ISLAMABAD: MOS Hina Rabbani Khar received the outgoing Dutch Ambassador for a farewell call here on Wednesday.



Photo: MOFA

IS Delimitation

SC accepts PTI's plea



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan (SCP) on Wednesday accepted the plea of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to file a petition against the new delimitation of constituencies. A three-member bench headed by Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan remarked that the petition was about these constituencies, which have been notified. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has also issued the notification of new constituencies, he also said.

PTI's lawyer Faisal Chaudhary said they will file a petition again against the new constituencies, adding that the party will also challenge the ECP notification issued on August 3. The Supreme Court has adjourned the hearing of the case indefinitely.

Talks with banned TTP to be held as per law: Sana

Hints at arrest of Imran Khan over controversial statement

Raja Furqan Ahmed

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah has said that the talks with banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) will be held as per the constitution of the country. Rana Sanaullah, in a statement, clarified that Pakistan did not play any role in the killing of Al-Qaeda chief Ayman Al-Zawahiri, who was killed by a US drone strike in Kabul. The minister also stressed that Pakistan Army is fully capable to deal with the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) but said that government is ready to hold talks if these elements are ready to lay down their arms. Rana Sanaullah further said that attacks on police and Pakistan Army personnel are an attempt to exert pressure.

Following the controversial statement of Dr Shahbaz Gill, the federal government on Wednesday hinted that former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan could be arrested.

In a statement on Wednesday, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah alleged that it was decided to give controversial statement in a meeting presided over by Imran Khan. He said that a case will be registered

against all the participants and if necessary, Imran Khan will also be arrested. The minister said that the Shahbaz Gill and Fawad Chaudhary have been assigned duties to give statement, adding that it is important to see if there was a party policy behind this statement. "They have made a big mistake and will not be able to cover it now," he added

Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah has

Interior minister summons key JIC meeting over anti-army propaganda

summoned the session of the Joint Inquiry Team on the Anti-Army propaganda case, and major decisions are expected. According to details, Rana Sanaullah has summoned the JIC session for a briefing on the case's progress and issued directions for further investigations. The Cyber Crime wing of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) would inform regarding the case's progress. The Interior Minister

reconstituted the Joint Inquiry committee (JIC) on Sunday. The team now includes representatives of the Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) and Intelligence Bureau (IB) along with the FIA. Secretary Interior Ministry, Director General FIA and other team members would attend the session.

Sources say the team would make important decisions regarding the anti-Army Propaganda after the Lasbela attack. A statement issued by ISPR said that the propaganda hurt the sentiments of the families of the martyrs. Pakistan Army's ranks and files have expressed severe displeasure over the negative propaganda, ISPR said. They added that the nation stands with the Pakistan Army in this difficult time. The negative callous propaganda is unbearable and condemnable, they added.

The wreckage of an unfortunate Army helicopter that went missing during a relief and rescue operation in the flood-hit Balochistan area has been found in Musa Goth, Winder. DG ISPR, Major General Babar Iftikhar confirmed the news that all the six officers and soldiers including Corps Commander Southern Command, Lt General Sarfraz Ali embraced martyrdom.

LHC rejects PML-Q plea against ECP decision

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Wednesday has directed PML-Q leader Kamil Agha to reach out to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) against the latter's decision to retain Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain as president of the party. The LHC asked the PML-Q leader to reach out to the ECP as they have enough powers to deal with the issue. "Looking into election related issues is not the prerogative of the courts," Justice Shahid Karim said.

The court wrapped up the case after the petitioner agreed to reach out to the commission. It is pertinent to mention here that Pakistan Muslim League (PML-Q) leader Kamil Ali Agha has moved a petition before the Lahore High Court (LHC), seeking a stay on a decision from the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to halt intra-party polls to elect the new president and general secretary. He filed the petition before the LHC through his counsel Safdar Shahen.

He said in his plea that party head Chaudhry Shujaat wrote a letter to deputy speaker during election for CM Punjab which was based on illegal directives. "The working committee termed the directives from Chaudhry Shujaat as non-democratic act and decided to remove him from the slot," he said. The plea stated that the ECP suspended the decision to hold intra-party polls citing no meeting of the central executive committee. "If their argument is accepted then how Shujaat could remain party head?" he asked.

The plea stated that the ECP's decision to bar intra-party election was illegal and therefore should be halted immediately. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Friday retained Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain as Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) chief. Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) President Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain filed an application with the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to stop intra-party elections.

PTI should distance from Gill's statement: CM Elahi



LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Pervaiz Elahi Wednesday advised the PTI leadership, including party chairperson Imran Khan, to distance itself

from Shahbaz Gill's statement, which allegedly attempted to incite hatred within the Pakistan Army's ranks. A key ally of the PTI, Elahi, said that Khan's directives are clear: a person who speaks against the army is not a Pakistani. "Tehreek-e-Insaf's leadership should definitely distance itself from Shahbaz Gill's statement. Even I issued a statement against it," the chief minister said.

Today, a court in Islamabad granted a two-day physical remand of the PTI leader to the federal capital's police. Ahead of being presented before the court, Gill told journalists that he is not "ashamed" of his statements. Further, Elahi said that he berated Gill over his statement, asking in what capacity he thought he could dictate PTI's narrative. "These are our institutions. You gave a statement against the Pakistan Army, are you dumb?" Elahi said, sharing his conversation with Gill. The Punjab CM noted that Gill's statement did more harm than good to the PTI and its allies.

FIA to approach LHC against Moonis's bail



LAHORE: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on Wednesday decided to approach the Lahore High Court (LHC) against the decision to grant bail to the son of Punjab Chief Minister Pervaiz Elahi and former federal minister Moonis Elahi in the money laundering case of Rs24 billion.

The Federal Investigation Agency prepared the text of the application and submitted it to the office of Deputy Attorney General Asad Bajwa. In the application, the FIA said that the banking court confirmed the interim bail of Moonis Elahi is contrary to the facts.

According to the FIA's application, Moonis Elahi needs to be arrested over the charge of money laundering of Rs24 billion, then the case can be fully investigated and the report submitted to the court. In the petition, the LHC has been requested to cancel the bail of Moonis Elahi. The Deputy Attorney General will refer to the LHC after reviewing the text of the FIA's request in a legal manner.

IHC reserves verdict over FIA notices to PTI staffers

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday reserved its decision over a petition against FIA notices to the staffers of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) secretariat in connection with the prohibited funding case. Acting chief justice of the IHC, Justice Aamer Farooq heard the case. PTI counsel Shah Khawar argued before the bench that the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) in its summon didn't describe the reason.

"FIA issued notices against its own circular," Justice Aamer Farooq remarked. "FIA cyber crimes wing has issued notices," Federal Investigation

Agency counsel told the court. "What you want to say, if every wing of the agency have its separate procedure of inquiry," Justice Farooq asked.

"What is wrong in describing reason of the FIA notice," the bench asked. "It is the duty of the FIA to describe the reason why a person being summoned by it," the Judge said. "The FIA, by not disclosing the reason failed to fulfill its duty," Justice Farooq remarked.

"The court should make bound the Federal Investigation Agency to follow the procedure," petitioners counsel Shah Khawar said. In an earlier hearing, the high court had issued notice to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) over carrying out action against the staffers of the PTI in connection

with the prohibited funding case.

The court issued notice to the Federal Investigation Agency following the petition filed by Shah Khawar Advocate, who was representing the PTI staffers. In the petition, the employees said that Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah asked for action against the PTI secretariat employees in his press conference and the FIA served notices to the staffers late Thursday night via WhatsApp. It stated that the Federal Investigation Agency notices were 'malicious' and that the federal institution should be stopped from harassing the PTI workers. The lawyer pleaded to the high court to declare the FIA notices null and void.

Govt puts economy on positive trajectory: Dastgir

Says we won't let Imran to use 'treason' card

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Power Khurram Dastgir Khan says the government has put the economy of the country on a positive trajectory. Addressing a news conference in Islamabad on Wednesday, the situation will further improve in next two months. Referring to the speeches of PTI leaders, the Minister said freedom of speech and expression is a constitutional right but has to be exercised within the contours of the constitution. He said freedom of speech and expression does not mean hideous

social media campaigns against state institutions.

He said that the government will not allow Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan to use the 'treason' card. Khurram Dastgir took a dig at Imran Khan and said that the PTI Chairman has spread hatred in the field of politics. It is not right to criticize the state institutions as they are performing professional responsibility.

Khurram Dastgir claimed that the PTI chairman had incited the public to engage in civil disobedience and also tried to play his part in spoiling rela-

tions with friendly countries. Khurram Dastgir said that the smear campaign was started after the helicopter crash incident. He further said that there is a dire need to save the country from the mischief of the former prime minister. There is a difference between freedom of expression and targeting the state institutions.

Dastgir said that there will be a huge reduction in inflation in the coming days. He said that the May fuel price adjustment has been included in the July bills. If necessary, the bill payment date will be extended, said the Federal Minister.

Parliament; the real icon of people's aspirations: NA Speaker

Inaugurates Diamond Jubilee Celebrations of 1st Constituent Assembly

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf has said that Parliament being the representative of more than twenty two million people of the country always strives to fulfill the desires of common people. He emphasized for maintaining the sanctity and supremacy of Parliament as it is the real icon of people's aspiration. He said that Parliament is the platform where people's representatives have always been struggling to resolve the socio-economic challenges faced by country. He expressed these views while talking to Media Representatives after inaugurating 3 days Diamond Jubilee celebrations of 1st Constituent Assembly in Parliament House today.

While felicitating the Nation on the Diamond Jubilee of 1st Constitu-

ent Assembly of Pakistan, the Speaker said that this day reminded us the struggle of Muslim of the subcontinent and their leaders for achieving the goal of independence of Pakistan. He said that this day also marks the Foundation Day of the Parliament. He said that celebrations of 1st Constituent Assembly of Pakistan under the theme "Mera-Parliman-Rahbar-i-Taraqqi-o-Kamal" is beginning from today and this theme reflects development, progress and bright future of the country is interlinked with the supremacy of Parliament.

Later on, he inaugurated 3-day Photographs Exhibition with the theme "Tarjuman-i-mazi shan-i-Hal" where the Photographs of all leaders of House, leaders of opposition and distinguished international leaders who addressed Parliament were

displayed. He also inaugurated 3-Day Art and Painting Exhibition with the theme "Pak Sarzamin shad Baad". He applauded the diligence and skill of Artists to portray their ideas in beautiful paintings.

While inaugurating the 3-day Book Exhibition with the theme "Qaum, Mulk, Saltanat" in the Library of Parliament House, he examined the original copy of 1973 constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan signed by members of Parliaments including then Prime Minister Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. He paid tribute to Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and other members of that Parliament for making the 1973 constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan. He said that these celebrations would link the present generation to past and ultimately would prove beacon of light for their bright future.



Pakistan signs inter-governmental framework agreement with Denmark

For the interest free loans in renewable energy, energy efficiency, water supply and wastewater treatment sectors

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Humair Karim, Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Ms. Lis Rosenholm, Ambassador of Denmark to Pakistan, signed an Inter-Governmental Framework Agreement between the Governments of Pakistan and Denmark.

Ms. Lis Rosenholm, the Ambassador of Denmark to Pakistan also had a brief meeting with the Minister for Economic Affairs, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq in his office. He apprised the Ambassador that Pakistan and Denmark enjoy a friendly and cordial relationship and a lot of potential exist to enhance the relationship between both nations.

He further stated that the efforts to revive bilateral economic and development cooperation between the two countries paid off with Denmark agreeing to provide on-budget



support to the Government of Pakistan through this Inter-Governmental Framework Agreement and the focus on Waste Water Treatment Projects in Faisalabad and Lahore is immensely appreciated. The Federal Cabinet accorded approval to the signing of the framework agreement with Denmark

on August 4th, 2022.

This framework agreement is a breakthrough in the bilateral and economic relations between Pakistan and Denmark, who have been partners in successful development cooperation since 1969, however, there had been no active on-budget financial support

extended by Denmark since 2017.

The efforts to revive bilateral economic and development cooperation between the two countries paid off with Denmark agreeing to provide on-budget support to Government of Pakistan through this Inter-Governmental Framework Agreement. This Framework Agreement would act as an umbrella agreement for potential development sector projects emanating from it mainly in the sectors of renewable energy, energy efficiency, water supply and wastewater treatment sectors. Each project will have its separate financing agreement, which will be negotiated with the Danish side case by case in consultation with all the stakeholders.

Currently, waste water treatment projects in Faisalabad and Lahore are in the pipeline, which are to be negotiated under the ambit of this framework agreement.

Punjab announces lifting of restrictions on market timings

LAHORE: The Punjab government on Wednesday announced relaxing timing restrictions imposed on markets across the province.

The decision was made by Punjab Chief Minister Pervez Elahi, according to which, business centres, markets, and shops will remain open on Sundays as well.

Moreover, markets, shops and businesses will remain open after 9pm, said the chief minister.

Earlier in June, former chief minister Punjab Hamza Shahbaz had announced that markets across the province would close at 9pm as the government seeks to conserve energy following a power crisis hitting the country.

The timings for the markets, shops, and businesses to shut down were 9pm, marriage halls 10pm, and restaurants 11pm.

The traders were given special exemption on Saturdays and the limitations did not apply to medical stores.

Protest

LAHORE: Activists of Riwadari Tehreek shouting slogans during hunger strike protest in favour of their demands in front of Punjab Assembly, in Provincial Capital.



Photo: Online

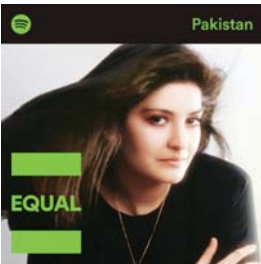
Spotify honors music legend Nazia Hassan

Nazia is the EQUAL Pakistan Ambassador for this month, in commemoration of her 22nd death anniversary

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: EQUAL Pakistan continues to celebrate women artists and recognize their contribution to the music industry by promoting aspiring artists and legends that have shaped Pakistan's music industry. The latest addition to the list is the music icon, the Queen of South Asian Pop, Nazia Hassan. Embossing an everlasting mark in the nation's hearts and revered for redefining Pakistan's pop music landscape forever during the golden era of the 80s and 90s, Nazia is the first Ambassador to be honoured posthumously. Her inclusion in the program is a tribute to the legend on the 22nd anniversary of her death. Later this month, she will light up Times Square, NYC, by being featured on a digital billboard in one of the world's most recognized locations.

Launched earlier this year, the music program EQUAL Pakistan raises the volume for women artists' voices and recognizes their impact on



the music scene. This month, fans worldwide can see Nazia on the cover of Spotify's global EQUAL playlist and discover her renowned track, "Boom Boom", on both the local and global EQUAL playlists.

Nazia Hassan is a name synonymous with finesse and soulful rhymes. Her influence on the subcontinent continues to be emulated and admired until this day, even after her passing. Making her debut with the song "Aap Jaisa Koi" in 1980, she and her brother Zohab Hassan have sold more than 65 million records worldwide. Having won the Filmfare Award for Best Female Playback Singer at 15 in 1981, she remains the first Pakistani and the youngest recipient of the accolade to date.

As the world celebrates the 22nd anniversary of her passing on Aug 13, EQUAL Pakistan remembers her profound impact on Pakistan's music ecosystem. With her brother Zohab Hassan, Nazia holds enormous respect and affection for her music and her contributions to social causes.

Commenting on the inclusion of his sister in the program, Zohab Hassan said: "I'd like to thank Spotify for nominating my sister Nazia Hassan as the EQUAL Ambassador for Pakistan and Global. As kids we've been sincere to our art and music. When we started, we filled the void for pop music for youngsters at the time when folk and traditional music dominated the music scene across South Asia. Our music eventually transcended across the world, proving that music does not have any boundaries. It is also important for artists to use their popularity for social changes as we tried when we were young, from looking after the environment to advocating peace."

Ashura observed with religious solemnity

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Ashura observed throughout the district with religious solemnity and peace to commemorate with the splendid martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Hussain (A.S) and his companions in the desert of Karbala for the glory of Islam. About, 49-Ashura processions of Alam-o-Zuljanah were taken out from the different areas of the district amid tight security and ended peacefully at its respective points. The main Ashura procession was taken out from Imambargah Hussainia Kamalpur Syedan, Attock cantonment with the participation of a large number of mourners.

They also performed Janjeer zani, more than 500 mourners have also been provided medical treatment by 1122 Rescue mobile medical team on the spot. Police and other law enforcement agencies kept strict vigil on the entry routes of these processions.

The main zuljannah procession was carried out from Imam Bargah Kamalpur Syedan in Attock Cant, more over zuhran prayer was offered in front of the residence of EX MPA Syed Ejaz Hussain Bukhari, Zulfi Bukhari MPA Yawar Abbas Bukhari were also present on this occasion, the procession was ended peacefully at Karbala Haleem Shah. Several small processions were merged in it during its journey.

Commander Iraqi Navy calls on Air Chief

ISLAMABAD: Lieutenant General Ahmed Jasim Maarij Abdullah Al Zayid, Commander Iraqi Navy called on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force here on Wednesday. During the meeting, both the dignitaries discussed matters of professional and mutual interest.

While appreciating professionalism of Pakistan Air Force, Lieutenant General Ahmed Jasim Maarij Abdullah Al Zayid acknowledged PAF's rising indigenous capacity in aviation industry. The Air Chief said that Pakistan and Iraq have longstanding religious, cultural and historical bonds which were manifested through strong military ties between the two countries.

The Air Chief further said, "Pakistan values its deep-rooted relations with Iraq, which are based on convergence on all important issues relating to operations & training, evolving paradigm of warfare, emerging technological challenges, counter security measures and regional peace & stability".

KE teams continue to conduct anti-kunda drives

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: K-Electric teams continue to conduct anti-kunda drives in different parts of the city in an effort to combat electricity theft.

One such operation was carried out in Lyari in which field teams removed illegal connections from KE's power infrastructure which were also creating safety hazards for the citizens living in the vicinity.



Governor Punjab says climate change affecting the planet

Our Correspondent

BAHAWALPUR: Governor Punjab and Chancellor Engr. Baligh-ur-Rahman has said that climate change is affecting the planet. Actions to maintain ecological balance in the region are a top priority. In this regard, experts from all over the world, including the universities will be invited to Governor Punjab House in the month of September for consultative session. The Governor of Punjab expressed these views in an online conference on environment protection and social responsibilities at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur on Wednesday.

He congratulated the Islamia University of Bahawalpur for highlighting this important issue and taking various steps for it. Establishment of Consortium on Climate Change by the Islamia University of Bahawalpur; installation of solar energy project in Jamia Islamia is a very important step in promoting environment friendly energy.

Ombudsman Punjab orders to resolve expats grievances

Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The Office of the Ombudsman Punjab has received over 17,624 complaints this year to help resolve the problems being faced by people in provincial departments. The advisors and consultants working in regional offices should proactively work to play their role in the solution of public issues in their districts.

This was stated by Ombudsman Punjab Major (R) Azam Suleman Khan while presiding over the meeting of advisors and consultants of 14 districts. The performance of advisors and consultants regarding the resolution of public complaints was reviewed and they were instructed to dispose of complaints within a fixed time frame.

The Ombudsman Azam Suleman further directed that the complaints of the expatriate Pakistanis about provincial government departments should be resolved on a priority basis. Alongside this, advisors and consultants should submit the monthly reports of their office by the 5th of every month to the head office for review of their performance.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, Mst. Jamila Sultana wd/o Shaheed Muhammad Afsar of plot No. 18-D Block "B" Area Development Scheme-II Guljar Khan has appointed General Power of Attorney to Mr. Raja Nasir Mehmood Kiani son of Raja Fazal Hussain Kiani vide deed No. 2428/4 dated 27/10/1992 from Sub Registrar Rawalpindi further the General power of attorney has appointed the special power of attorney to Mst. Kausar Perveen wife of Abdul Qayyum vide deed No. 1114/4 dated 09/03/1999 & 290/4 dated 31/05/2003 from sub registrar Gujjar Khan. Now the special power of attorney wish to transfer his plot in the name of Mr. Abdul Qayyum son of Haji Muhammad Aslam.

If anyone have objection of above advertisement submit their objection within fifteen days of this advertisement otherwise objection will not be entertained.

Deputy Director
Punjab Housing & Town Planning Agency
Sub Region Rawalpindi

PUBLIC NOTICE

We, M/s (i), Farkhanda Malik d/o Malik Abdul Rehman (ii), Raqia Begum w/o Malik Abdul Rahim (iii), Shahid Jabeen Zulfikar d/o Malik Abdul Rahim co.allottees / share holders of plot No. 863-B, Satellite Town Scheme Rawalpindi have appointed General Power of Attorney to Mr. Nasreen Akhtar d/o Malik Abdul Rahim vide registered deeds at Nos. 426/4, 427/4 & 428/4 dated 19-02-2022 from Sub Registrar Rawalpindi. The General Power of attorney wish to transfer shares alongwith own share of said plot to 3rd party.

If anyone have objection of above advertisement submit their objection within fifteen days of this advertisement otherwise objection will not be entertained.

Deputy Director
Punjab Housing & Town Planning Agency
Sub Region Rawalpindi

PMPKL announces financial results for half year

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Philip Morris (Pakistan) Limited (PMPKL) posted a Profit after Tax of PKR 1,533 million for the half year ended June 2022 showing a decline of 11% from the corresponding period last year due to higher taxation reflecting recording of super tax imposed at 10% during Jun'22 Finance Bill for the Financial Year ended Dec 31, 2021 (The tax Year 2022).

For the six months ended June 30, 2022, PMPKL recorded a Net Turnover of PKR 10,166 million, reflect-

ing an increase of 10.2% vs. the same period last year (SPLY), this includes a Domestic Net Turnover of PKR 9,175 million, an increase of 1.5% vs. SPLY, coupled with Exports Turnover of PKR 991 million, an increase of over 100% vs. SPLY, reflecting the delayed exports at the end of 2021 on account of external supply chain constraints and were materialized in the first quarter of 2022. PMPKL's contribution to the National Exchequer, in the form of excise duty, sales tax, and other government levies, during the fiscal year ended June 30, 2022,

(July 2021 to June 2022) stood at PKR 26,492 million, reflecting an increase of 5.22% vs. prior fiscal year.

Expressing his views on PMPKL's financial performance, Roman Yazbeck, Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director at PMPKL said, "Pakistan's economy is going through an unprecedented economic downturn due to the global and local economic crisis, coupled with the political instability in the country. The historical rupee devaluation, inflation and record hike in the policy rate is making the operating envi-

ronment extremely difficult for all businesses"

"However, we would like to thank and congratulate the Government of Pakistan on the implementation of the Track & Trace System for the tobacco industry. With the effective enforcement and across-the-board implementation, we are hopeful that this initiative will go a long way in combatting the illicit cigarette trade (i.e., 38% of the total market as per Oxford Economics) which is causing an estimated annual loss of PKR 80 billion (approx.) to the National Exchequer" he added.

RBS, Top Performers of Smart Cities, Presidential award received by President

KARACHI: Royal Business Solutions (RBS) real estate and builders is Pakistan's one of the leading real estate corporation, which is providing the most excellent and efficient facilities to their clients since 2014. RBS has revolutionized the real estate sector of Pakistan with their constant efforts and hard work. Moreover, RBS has been standing out in front of the other real estate corporations for their usage of advance technology and keeping up with the international standards.

In addition, RBS is also the proud Platinum Sales partner of Capital Smart City due to their excellent commitment and performance in the real estate sector. Capital Smart City, which is one of the most hyped and well-known project of Pakistan has been consecutively awarding RBS with the title of best performer of the year since 2018.

These are not the only awards

which have been received by RBS. In fact, RBS has been honored with the "Best Growing Investment Company" award by the President of Pakistan. This is one of the highest and most prestigious award for the RBS group. The award ceremony for this title was held at Aiwan-e-Sadar. RBS was awarded with this title in the presence of many other real estate corporation. Additionally, multiple other honorable authorities were also present at the venue.

The award ceremony was hosted very efficiently by ICCI (Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industries). In the ceremony, President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi himself presented the award to the CEO of RBS Mr. Adeel Riaz. This award has increased the moral of corporation and provided the reason to RBS for keeping their consistency of hard work in the real estate sector. PR

FCCI, R&D Dept organise training on Quality Management

Mian Rashid Asghar

FAISALABAD: The Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, R&D Department has organised hands on training on "Advanced Quality Management & Planning". The training was imparted by Dr. Muhammad Arif, an international trainer in this field.

Professionals from various local industries participated in the training.

The FCCI R&D Department is committed in enhancing the performance of local industry by providing training in cutting edge technologies.

The R&D Department headed by Engr Ahmad Hassan is also in

the process of developing collaboration with LUMS aimed at providing advanced training to local professionals.

Engr Ahmad Hassan and Dr Muhammad Arif are striving to extend the collaboration to prestigious institutes of professional education within the country and also abroad, with a vision to revive the status of Faisalabad as a major industrial hub of the country.

The flagging industry of Faisalabad is in dire need of adopting the latest tools and technologies to transform itself into a world-class sector for surviving in the globally competitive market.



Islamabad

23° – 38° Clear

SERVICES

Namaz Timings

Fajr	3:54 am
Zohr	12:13 pm
Asr	5:02 pm
Maghrib	7:00 pm
Isha	8:32 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

CMH	561111
MH	561116
MH	561116
Cantt Hospital	9270907-11
DHQ	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7

Steps being taken to revive book reading habit: Shahera Shahid

Secretary Information was addressing launching ceremony of Book Fair held in connection with 75th year celebrations of Pakistan's creation

ISLAMABAD: Secretary Information and Broadcasting Shahera Shahid said on Wednesday that the government was taking steps for revival of the habit of book reading among the general public as it was not only part of the heritage but also the best possible way to build connection with the past.

Addressing the launching ceremony of Book Fair being held in connection with 75th year celebrations of Pakistan's creation here she said that unfortunately the educated people had almost given up the book reading habit. The Book Mela was organized by Directorate of Electronic Media and Publications.

The secretary Information said there was a need to inculcate this habit among the young generation so that they could learn about the glorious past of their investors.

She appreciated the management of a leading book shop chain for sponsorship of the event and expressed the hope that the visitors would not only enjoy the book fair but they would not return empty handed from here.

Shahera announced that tomorrow a digital exhibition would be organ-



ised by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in which Pakistan's 75 years would be depicted digitally.

She said that Pakistan Television Corporation and Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation would arrange special events to pay tributes to legendary actors and performers.

Moreover, she said that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting had arranged re-recording of the national

anthem which would be unveiled by the Prime Minister on August 14.

She clarified that there was no change in lyrics and tune of the anthem but it has been recorded with the latest equipment.

She said that the new recording of the national anthem was a gift to the nation on the occasion of platinum jubilee celebrations of Pakistan's creation and her ministry was proud of it.

AIOU inks MoU with Indonesian University



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) including faculty members led by the Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Professor Dr. Zia Ul-Qayyum is on a visit to Indonesia to evaluate the possibilities of cooperation in the field of education and research. Yesterday, an extension of the MoU was signed between Indonesia's Darunnajah University and Allama Iqbal Open University.

According to the details of MoU, the two institutions will continue to cooperate in terms of increasing the quality of education, exchange of faculty and students, and online educational programs. Director, International Collaboration and Exchange Office, Dr. Zahid Majeed,

on behalf of AIOU, while Director of International Collaboration, Dr. Hasan Darajat, on behalf of Darunnajah, signed the MoU.

Briefing the details, Dr. Zahid said that an MoU was signed between the two institutions in 2017, faculty and students of Darunnajah used to come to AIOU for training in English and Arabic languages, but it was discontinued due to covid-19. This extension of MoU is signed to restart that program.

He further said that we will introduce AIOU's educational programs in Darunnajah including BA/BBA/BS/Teachers training programs, especially in Arabic and Islamic Studies to introduce principles of jurisprudence, and Quran and Tafsir in Indonesia.

Book launching ceremony

Experts highlight evolving situation in Afghanistan

Edited book, titled, "Evolving Situation in Afghanistan: International and Regional Perspectives" launched

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East and Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies (ISSI) organized the launch of its second edited book, titled, "Evolving Situation in Afghanistan: International and Regional Perspectives" on Wednesday.

Speakers on the occasion included, Ambassador Mohammad Sadiq, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM), and Pakistan's Special Representative for Afghanistan, who was the Chief Guest at the occasion and the Keynote address was given by Ambassador Mansoor Ahmed Khan, Pakistan's Ambassador to Afghanistan. Other speakers included Ms. Amina Khan, Director CAMEA, Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Director General ISSI, Ambassador Riaz Mohammad Khan, Former Foreign Secretary, Ambassador Jawed Ludin, President and Co-Founder, Heart of Asia Society, Dr. Niels Hegeswisch, Country Director Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Pakistan, Ambassador Abrar Hussain, Pakistan's Former Ambassador to Afghanistan, and Ms. Elizabeth Threlkeld, Senior Fellow and Deputy Director of the South Asia Programme at the Stimson Centre, USA.

Ms. Amina Khan, while giving her introductory remarks about the book, stated that Afghanistan is being viewed as a regional issue, particularly in terms of the ongoing crises in different parts of the world; this is a very myopic view of the situation and that history has always shown developments in Afghanistan to have global ramifications. She went on to say that Afghanistan cannot be abandoned or ignored; rather, it is a global issue that warrants a collective response.

Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, while giving his remarks stated that the book on Afghanistan is a timely contribution with a perspective from every country. He said that it is reflected in every book chapter that every country wants a stable Afghanistan and that every country is wary about terrorist forces. Afghanistan, if stable, can become a transit corridor. He went on to say that the situation in Afghanistan is very grim, with a de facto government in place, and with political and economic instability prevalent presently. It is time we should realize that all countries should play a role in Afghanistan.

Ambassador Mohammad Sadiq, in his address stated that Afghanistan has transformed in the last many decades. He said that presently, three matters are

very important, which includes human rights issues and women's right to education and work, inclusive government that meaningfully accommodates all nationalities and economic viability and development without which no society can progress. He said that the Afghan society has transformed in many ways since 2001, notwithstanding the momentous changes of the last one year, some of these transformations are irreversible, such as enthusiasm for girls education and women employment.

He also spoke about some positives and went on to explain that after four decades, for the first time, the entire Afghan territory is under the control of Kabul and that there has been commendable progress in the defeat of the ISKP. There has also been a positive facilitation of trade activity. Talking about Pak-Afghan trade, he said that Pakistan has allowed duty free import of Afghan goods and for the first time ever, Afghan exports to Pakistan surpass Pakistan's exports to Afghanistan. Furthermore, he said that the international community must cooperate and foreign exchange reserves must be unfrozen as well as the revival of credible banking channels. He said that 90 percent of Afghans are at a risk of poverty and Pakistan has provided assistance in every way, including the facilitation of third coun-

try travel, assistance during natural calamities as well. Pakistan has offered training and capacity building to Afghan personnel as well, he concluded.

Ambassador Mansoor Ahmed Khan, while giving his keynote address, stated that August 15 will mark a year since the Taliban dispensation came to power. He shed light on a number of factors like current developments and what next is expected. He went on to say that Afghanistan has suffered for four decades through direct and indirect interference and that there are five key areas which are notable. He further explained that peace and security have significantly improved since the Taliban takeover and that there is much better accessibility in various parts of the country. This, he went on to explain, has been also confirmed by the UN presence over there. While shedding light on Pak-Afghan bilateral relations, he said that there should be a model for free movement of trade and people between the two countries. Ambassador Khan concluded by saying that engagement with the international community and recognition are very important factors.

Ambassador Jawed Ludin, while giving his views stated that the book is a wonderful contribution, with an insightful set of



perspectives from the region. He went on to say that the Taliban ascension has been a turning point for Afghanistan. He said that the region has a shared vision and a common platform for active engagement is required.

Dr. Niels Hegeswisch, while expressing his views on the book stated the importance of the political discourse on Afghanistan, defying expectations and the reality of the once ousted Taliban now being in control of Afghanistan. He further explained the merits and demerits of the US nation building efforts in Afghanistan and the abrupt abandoning of the two decades long project, which would be debated in the months and years to come, regardless of the rationale for withdrawal existing for some time. He further said that despite the news capturing media headlines and policy discussion in the first two weeks post withdrawal,

the bitter reality is that Afghanistan soon became the side story in the Western media and policy discussion. Dr. Hegeswisch called the book a timely literary contribution that discusses the domestic occurrences in Afghanistan and regional and extra regional dynamics influenced by events within Afghanistan.

Ms. Elizabeth Threlkeld, while expressing her views about the book stated that it is a valuable contribution which adds food for thought as we reflect back to the Taliban one year anniversary of takeover in Afghanistan. She further said that this volume remarkably does offer a set of perspectives on how the situation has evolved in Afghanistan. Remarkably there were convergences between different perspectives however there were some areas of disagreement, however, there have been really a quite

number of convergences in the analysis.

Ambassador Abrar Hussain, while expressing his views stated that this book indicates that there are number of commonalities among the regional countries with reference to Afghanistan and that they are in favor of inclusive government and expect that Taliban should fulfill their commitments of reforms and all regional states share a deep concern about terrorism in Afghanistan. There needs to be a focus on stabilizing the socio economic condition of the country. All countries should realize that UN and US sanctions should be removed for socio economic prosperity.

Ambassador Riaz Mohammad Khan, while rounding up the discussion, stated that the book project deserves appreciation as the book had 3 features of a quality book, as a good book should be; it is reasonably comprehensive, whether the information or data analysis is credible, thirdly whether the reader is able to draw conclusions relating to the understanding of the issues discussed. He further said that this book is very thoughtfully written and organized and by inviting scholars from neighbors and around the world it has provided a unique perspective of all the capitals which are important to Afghanistan.

Coordinator General COMSTECH calls on ED INTROM, Director IMR



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD/KUALA LUMPUR: Coordinator General COMSTECH, Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary invited the head of Inter-Islamic Network on Tropical Medicine (INTROM), Dr. Murizal Zainol, and Director Institute of Medical Research (IMR), Dr. Tahir Aris, at a breakfast meeting on August 10, 2022 at Concorde Hotel, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Dr. Ahmad Faudzi Yusoff of International Collaboration Secretariat, IMR, National Institute of Health, Ministry of Health, Malaysia also attended the meeting.

The issues related to the activation of INTROM and potential collaboration with the IMR were discussed in detail. It was agreed that INTROM will submit the Act for establishment of its secretariat to the Malaysian parliament again to support

and establish the permanent secretariat and provide regular annual funding from the government of Malaysia. It was decided that further discussions on the collaboration between COMSTECH, IMR and INTROM will remain continued.

COMSTECH will help IMR/INTROM to disseminate information about their activities including seminars, webinars, and online lecture series, and the Director IMR, Dr. Tahir Aris will identify some tropical medicine experts from different OIC member states as COMSTECH distinguished scholars, agreed in the meeting.

COMSTECH will provide travel support to scientists from Cote d'Ivoire and African least developed countries for participation in IMR/INTROM short training courses, and COMSTECH will also help INTROM to expand its membership.

The Whole Nation Salutes You

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Amjad Hanif Shaheed

Brigadier
Muhammad Khalid Shaheed

Major
Saeed Ahmed Shaheed

Major
M. Talha Manan Shaheed

Naik
Mudassar Fayyaz Shaheed

The nation pays tribute to the brave sons of the soil who sacrificed their lives while helping fellow countrymen devastated by floods.

#OurMartyrsOurHeroes

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Indian war crimes in Kashmir

India has been rampantly abusing and violating the international law in IIOJK. Pakistan, through universal jurisdiction – a part of customary international law – can counter India’s war crimes in Kashmir using its legal prowess. Ask a common man and he will tell you this: international law lacks teeth. Reasons cited include the following: international law is hardly ever seen in action; it is hostage to geopolitics; and its enforcement is selective. Other criticisms include the sovereign equality claim under international law, namely that all countries of the world are equal.

There is indeed truth in this criticism. The record of international law, in particular international criminal justice, is patchy. Success stories are few and far in between. It is common to see countries violate international law and get away with it. Violators of human rights can be seen roaming around with impunity. The selective application of international law makes one wonder if searching for answers in the international legal order is equivalent to flogging a dead horse.

But, like any other law, international law isn’t without its failures and, importantly, inbuilt complexities.

International law, which has evolved over the years, is an ocean of specialized knowledge. It consists of many moving parts, some of which are pliable due to changing state practice. The true challenge for any country knows how to put together those parts and to set the wheel of international law in motion. This requires some tact and out-of-the-box thinking. Take the case of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Despite that Pakistan’s legal case in respect of IIOJK is firmly anchored in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions, due to India’s unilateral declaration at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) which prevents the world court from adjudicating the Kashmir dispute, Pakistan has its hands tied. Moreover, Indian war crimes in IIOJK cannot be tried at the International Criminal Court (ICC) because neither India nor Pakistan are a party to the ICC’s founding treaty, i.e., the Rome Statute.

In addition, due to India’s strong geopolitical muscle, countries of the world haven’t come forward in support of the Kashmiris’ right of self-determination. On the face of it, therefore, it looks like Pakistan, or Kashmiris for that matter, aren’t left with any viable legal option against Indian state aggression. In a 40-page report titled “India’s War Crimes in Kashmir”, Stoke White seeks the commencement of legal proceedings against India’s Army Chief and Home Affairs Minister on the basis of the principle of “universal jurisdiction”.

But this is only partly true. There is more to it than meets the eye. Hidden underneath the rubble of international law’s failures are some potent rules that merit consideration. Knowing how those rules work and how they fit within the overall framework of international law is both revealing and promising. If used properly, these rules can be a shot in the arm for the Kashmiris’ struggle against Indian state oppression and set in motion the slowly but surely moving wheel of international criminal justice.

Take the case of universal jurisdiction, an international law concept that has recently come in the global limelight. On January 20, a London-based law firm, Stoke White, filed an application with the UK Metropolitan Police for the investigation and arrest of India’s Army Chief, Manoj Naravane, and Home Affairs Minister, Amit Shah, for the torture, kidnapping, and killing of activists and civilians in IIOJK. In a 40-page report titled “India’s War Crimes in Kashmir”, Stoke White seeks the commencement of legal proceedings against India’s Army Chief and Home Affairs Minister on the basis of the principle of universal jurisdiction.

Asian powers & Rising US interest rates

Hoe Ee Khor & Kimi Xu Jiang

Hawkish shifts in the US Federal Reserve’s monetary policy have often led to heightened financial and economic stress in emerging economies. In the early 1990s, the Fed raised interest rates preemptively to curb inflation, precipitating the 1994 Mexican crisis. In 2013, the Fed signalled its intention to tighten monetary policy, resulting in the major emerging-markets sell-off known as the “taper tantrum.” Given the region’s history, one might expect that policymakers in the Asean+3 countries – the ten members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, together with China (including Hong Kong), Japan, and South Korea – would be particularly anxious about the Fed’s increasing hawkishness. Indeed, the Fed’s recent efforts to curb high and persistent inflation have prompted fears of a regional financial crisis, similar to the Asian financial crisis of 1997.

But the Fed’s actions will not have as much impact on the region as they did in the late 1990s. Today, the Asean+3 economies are stronger and more durable, making a 1997-style financial meltdown improbable. The 1997 crisis was mainly caused by a combination of macroeconomic imbalances and sharp capital-flow reversals, triggered by speculative attacks on the Thai baht and other regional currencies. East Asian economies had enjoyed a period of rapid growth before the crisis – funded by surging capital inflows and excessive foreign lending – but without sound regulation and policy. Most Asian currencies were still pegged to the US dollar, bank regulatory frameworks were simpler, and capital buffers were low.

Painful structural reforms have helped Asean+3 economies rebuild balance sheets, strengthen economic fundamentals, and establish robust regulatory frameworks. The region’s policymakers, more skilful in navigating uncertainties and managing shocks, have assembled a formidable, multi-layered \$8.8tn financial safety net. In addition to their foreign reserves – \$7tn in total – the Asean+3 economies can now rely on multi-lateral swap arrangements like the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation agreement, and the International Monetary Fund. Most of the emerging Asean+3 economies have run current-account surpluses in recent years. In contrast, crisis-hit economies ran persistent current-account deficits and relied on external funding in the years before the 1997 financial crisis.

The Asean-4 (Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand) have run current-account surpluses for most of the past two decades – except for Indonesia, which ran a small current-account deficit over the same period. Moreover, banks in the region are much sounder and more resilient. They are generally well-capitalised and have sufficient liquidity buffers since adopting the Basel regulations after the 2008 global financial crisis. As a result, banks were generally on a sound financial footing going into the Covid-19 pandemic, allowing them to dip into their regulatory and countercyclical capital buffers when necessary. Furthermore, the size of the local-currency bond market in the Asean+3 region has increased to 123% of GDP this year, compared to 74% of GDP in 2000. With the ability to borrow in local currency, debts are no longer as exposed to currency mismatch as they were during the Asian financial crisis.

Likewise, capital flows have not been surging into the region in recent years as they did in the run-up to the last two financial crises. In Asean-4 markets, net capital outflows

have been relatively mild so far, and capital inflows consist mainly of relatively stable direct investments. In South Korea, portfolio inflows increased during the pandemic as investors saw Korean bonds as relatively safe assets. Lastly, East Asia’s economies – especially the crisis-affected Asean-4 economies and South Korea – no longer operate tightly pegged exchange-rate regimes, allowing their currencies to fluctuate and adjust to market forces as a buffer against shocks. The few economies that still peg their currencies to the US dollar or a currency basket have managed to fend off speculative attacks through strong foreign-exchange buffers and prudent fiscal policies.

Admittedly, there could be pockets of weakness across the region. The Covid-19 pandemic is not over yet, and each economy’s recovery trajectory will depend on its ability to adapt and seize new opportunities. US monetary tightening could adversely and unevenly affect financial markets in Asean+3 countries, and these developments might trigger portfolio outflows similar to the taper tantrum of 2013. In recent months, investors sold stocks in South Korea and the Philippines and reduced their positions in Indonesian and Malaysian bonds. So far, however, these outflows have been relatively insignificant and do not threaten financial stability.

China’s expected economic rebound will also contribute to the region’s recovery, as it did after the 1997 and 2008 crises. China’s economy is forecast to bottom out and regain momentum during the second half of 2022, with full-year growth expected to come in at around 4.8%, despite significant downside risks. Rising US interest rates will probably lead to some capital outflows and higher borrowing costs for the Asean+3 economies. But a full-blown 1997-style financial crisis remains unlikely. The region has moved on.

The writers hail from the Asean+3 Macroeconomic Research Office.

Taiwan Straits Crisis

Andrey Kortunov

The distance from Russia to Taiwan island amounts to more than 7,000 kilometers – not exactly what you would call a nearby neighborhood. Still, the recent US-China crisis over the Taiwan question has inspired a lot of passionate discussions in the Russian capital, like in many other capitals around the world. What might happen to the volatile security environment in the Taiwan Straits? Should we continue to consider a large-scale military conflict in East Asia only a hypothetical scenario or has it already become a visible possibility looming on the horizon?

There is no apparent consensus in Moscow on what would serve Russia’s interests better – further escalation, or rather de-escalation of the crisis. The arguments of many champions of escalation can be condensed to three major points: First, since the US is perceived as the main challenge to Russia’s security and even to its mere existence, it is nice to see the US getting into trouble elsewhere. The crisis around Taiwan Straits speaks volumes about the inability of Washington to conduct a coherent foreign policy. The longer the crisis lasts, the more damage it is likely to inflict upon US positions in the region and the more it will erode the global American leadership.

Second, if the China-US relations continue to sour, the value of Moscow in Beijing’s eyes is likely to increase. More than ever before, China will need a reliable strategic partner in Eurasia in order to focus on Washington, which views China as a strategic adversary. That implies more political, military, economic and technological China-Russia cooperation. Third, with the current crisis in East Asia unraveling, the international community might shift its attention from Ukraine to the Taiwan question. Not that this will necessarily change the Western attitudes toward the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, but this conflict will no longer remain the only game in town.

We are likely to see permanent instability and even chaos in world politics, which will serve no one’s interests, including Russia’s. Third, a prolonged stalemate between Beijing and Washington might sooner or later slide into a direct military confrontation. Though Russia is not close to Taiwan Straits, any conflict in East Asia will have a spillover impact on people in the rest of the world.

I personally tend to believe that the logic of those who stand for de-escalation is more compelling than the logic of escalation supporters. The last thing that all of us need now is a new cycle of escalation between two great powers. As an Englishman would say, “A lean peace is better than a fat victory.” I wish China

has a lot of strategic patience, stamina and state wisdom in dealing with increasingly inconsistent and unpredictable US.

The basic pillar of the unipolar world order led by the US has been shaken in a significant way. The neo-liberal ideological vision to shape the political-social restructuring and reshaping of power relations in “Great Middle East” has spectacularly failed. The shift of the US strategic center from Europe and the Middle East to the Pacific Ocean and the South China Sea, as well as the search for new alliances to contain China’s influence, are causing many tensions and breeding hostilities in this region.

The provocative trip of Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the US House of Representatives, to Taiwan, took place in this context. There has been an international consensus, including an endorsement by the UN Security Council on the principle of “One China” and that the People’s Republic of China is the only lawful representative of China. In fact, the starting point for normalization of diplomatic relations between China and the US was also this principle.

The People’s Republic of China has never made a secret of the fact that it never recognizes or accepts the island of Taiwan as a separately independent sovereign state under international law. The debate in this regard has nothing to do with democratic theoretical discourses. Rather,

it is about recognized norms and rules of international law and rules. Now to suggest that besides the People’s Republic of China there is another sovereign state of China as a subject of international law is without a doubt a blatant violation of international law and violation of the principles of peaceful coexistence.

The trip of Pelosi has exacerbated tensions in the region. The peoples of the world and Asia in particular are gravely concerned about peace and stability in our region. Afghanistan recognized the People’s Republic of China in 1950 and diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in 1955. Through this decision, the millenniums-old intensive contacts between the two peoples were conceived on the basis of modern international law and good neighborhood. Since that time, the “One China” principle and the right of the People’s Republic of China as the sole representative of the Chinese people has been one of the pillars of Afghanistan’s China policy. This principle has always continued regardless of which government was in power in Kabul and will undoubtedly remain so.

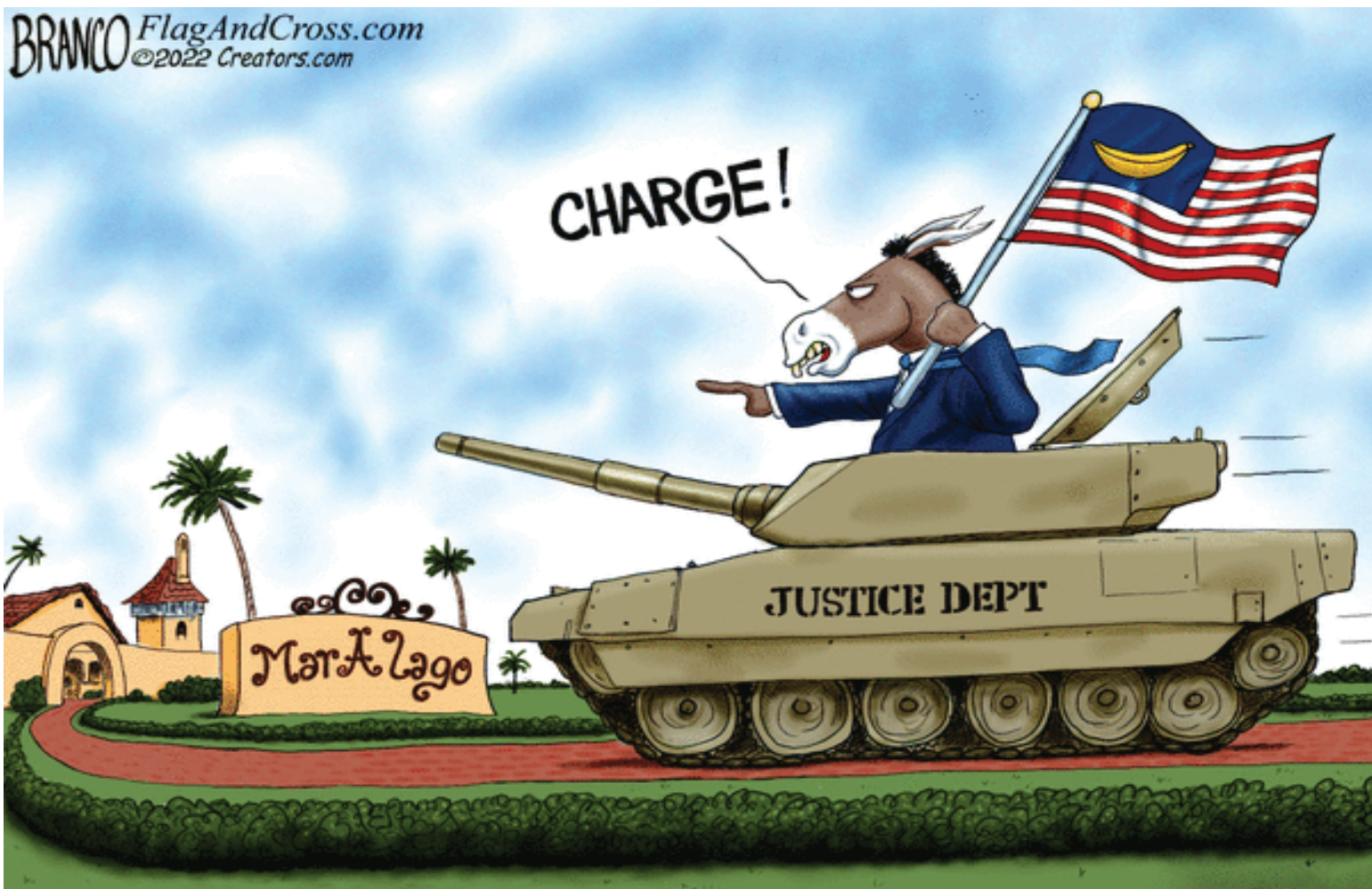
In this turbulent era, peace and stability are not only the longings and desires of mankind, but also the central moral category for thought and action of the exponents of international politics. After the end of the Cold War, we witnessed a hope-

ful and lively debate on how to create and ensure sustainable world peace and stability on the basis of international understanding and strengthening the role of international organizations, and how to peacefully resolve tensions and conflicts between states. This dream was destroyed by military invasions in Iraq, Libya and Syria in violation of international law.

The US, after three years of negotiations with the Taliban without the presence of the Afghan government, withdrew its soldiers and irresponsibly drew the country in chaos and thereby accelerated the collapse of state institutions. As a consequence of this policy, hundreds of thousands of our educated men and women fled, the national economy collapsed and Afghanistan became a failed state again.

Our experiences in Afghanistan are very instructive. One should not rely on alleged commitments of other countries. Taiwan residents should solve their problems peacefully with their brothers and sisters in the mainland. A common future for torn peoples, who have and should have the right to shape and determine their own political order, is much better than relying on the empty words of others, which have never been reliable.

The author is a director general of the Russian International Affairs Council. Courtesy Global Times



Denuclearization of the World

Last week, I proudly stood with Japan’s Prime Minister, Fumio Kishida, and the people of Hiroshima in memory of an unprecedented catastrophe. Seventy-seven years ago, nuclear weapons were dropped on the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Tens of thousands of women, children and men were killed in the blink of an eye, incinerated in a hellish fire. Buildings turned to dust. The cities’ beautiful rivers ran with blood. Those who survived were cursed with a radioactive legacy, stalked by health problems, and subjected to lifelong stigma because of the nuclear bombing. The dignity & resilience of the atomic bomb survivors I met in Hiroshima today, are an example for all of humanity.

I had the great honour of meeting with a group of those survivors – the hibakusha, whose numbers grow smaller each year. They told me with unflinching bravery what they witnessed on that terrifying day in 1945. It is time for world leaders to be as clear-eyed as the hibakusha and see nuclear weapons for what they are. Nuclear weapons make no sense. They cannot deliver safety, protection or security. By design, they deliver only death and destruction.

Three-quarters of a century have passed since mushroom clouds swelled above Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Since then, humanity has endured a Cold War, decades of absurd brinkmanship, and several terrifying near-misses that placed humanity within minutes of annihilation. But even during the depths of the Cold War, nuclear powers made significant reductions in their nuclear arsenals. There was widespread acceptance of the principles against the use, proliferation and testing of nuclear arms. Today, we are in danger of forgetting the lessons of 1945.

A new arms race is picking up speed, with governments spending hundreds of billions of dollars to upgrade their stockpiles of nuclear arms. Almost 13,000 nuclear weapons are now held in arsenals around the world. Geopolitical crises with grave nuclear undertones are spreading fast. Once again,

humanity is playing with a loaded gun. We are one mistake, one misunderstanding, one miscalculation away from Armageddon. Leaders must stop knocking on doomsday’s door and take the nuclear option off the table for good. It is unacceptable for states in possession of nuclear weapons to admit the possibility of nuclear war, which would spell the end of humanity.

By the same token, countries with nuclear weapons must commit to the “no first use” of those weapons. They must also assure States that do not have nuclear weapons that they will not use – or threaten to use – nuclear weapons against them, and be transparent throughout. Nuclear sabre-rattling must stop. In the end, there is only one solution to the nuclear threat: not to have nuclear weapons at all.

This means opening every avenue of dialogue, diplomacy and negotiation to ease tensions and eliminate these deadly weapons of mass destruction.

We are seeing fresh signs of hope in New York, where the world has come together for the Tenth Review Conference on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The Treaty is one of the main reasons why nuclear weapons have

not been used since 1945. It contains legally binding commitments to achieve nuclear disarmament, and can be a powerful catalyst for disarmament – the only way to eliminate these horrendous weapons once and for all.

And in June, members of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons met for the first time to develop a road map towards a world free of these doomsday devices. We can no longer accept the presence of weapons that hang by a slender thread over humanity’s future. It is time to heed the timeless message of the hibakusha: “No more Hiroshimas! No more Nagasakis!” It is time to proliferate peace. Together, step by step, let’s wipe these weapons off the face of the earth.

The writer is the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Courtesy Gulf News

China releases white paper on Taiwan question, reunification

White paper released to reiterate the fact that Taiwan is part of China

BEIJING: The Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council and the State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China published a white paper titled "The Taiwan Question and China's Reunification in the New Era" on Wednesday.

The white paper was released to reiterate the fact that Taiwan is part of China, to demonstrate the resolve of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Chinese people and their commitment to national reunification, and to emphasize the position and policies of the CPC and the Chinese government in the new era.

Taiwan has belonged to China since ancient times. This statement has a sound basis in history and jurisprudence, according to the white paper. The UN General Assembly Resolution 2758 is a political document encapsulating the one-China principle whose legal authority leaves no room for doubt and has been acknowledged worldwide, says the white paper.

The one-China principle represents the universal consensus of the international community; it is consistent with the basic norms of international relations, says the white paper.

"We are one China, and Taiwan is



part of China. This is an indisputable fact supported by history and the law. Taiwan has never been a state; its status as part of China is unalterable," says the white paper.

The CPC is committed to the historic mission of resolving the Taiwan question and realizing China's complete reunification. Under its resolute leadership, people on both sides of the Taiwan Straits have worked together to de-escalate tension across the Straits. They have set out on a path of peaceful devel-

opment and made many breakthroughs in improving cross-Straits relations, according to the white paper.

Under the guidance of the CPC, great progress has been made in cross-Straits relations over the past seven decades, especially since the estrangement between the two sides was ended. Increased exchanges, broader cooperation and closer interactions have brought tangible benefits to people across the Straits, especially of Taiwan. This fully demonstrates

that cross-Straits amity and cooperation are mutually beneficial, says the white paper.

"The realization of complete national reunification is driven by the history and culture of the Chinese nation and determined by the momentum towards and circumstances surrounding our national rejuvenation. Never before have we been so close to, confident in, and capable of achieving the goal of national rejuvenation. The same is true when it comes to our goal of complete national reunification," says the white paper.

China's development and progress — in particular, the great achievements over four decades of reform, opening up and modernization — have had a profound impact on the historical process of resolving the Taiwan question and realizing complete national reunification, according to the white paper.

The actions of the Democratic Progressive Party authorities have resulted in tension in cross-Straits relations, endangering peace and stability in the Taiwan Straits, and undermining the prospects and restricting the space for peaceful reunification. These are obstacles that must be removed in advancing the process of peaceful reunification, says the white paper.

Ukraine says 9 Russian warplanes destroyed in Crimea blasts

KYIV: Ukraine's air force said Wednesday that nine Russian warplanes were destroyed in a deadly string of explosions at an air base in Crimea, amid speculation the blasts were the result of a Ukrainian attack that would represent a significant escalation in the war.

Russia denied any aircraft were damaged in Tuesday's blasts — or that any attack took place.

Ukrainian officials stopped short of publicly claiming responsibility for the explosions, while mocking Russia's explanation that a careless smoker might have caused ammunition at the Saki air base to catch fire and blow up. Analysts also said that explanation doesn't make sense and that the Ukrainians could have used anti-ship missiles to strike the base.

If Ukrainian forces were,



in fact, responsible for the blasts, it would be the first known major attack on a Russian military site on the Crimean Peninsula, which was seized from Ukraine by the Kremlin in 2014. Russian warplanes have used Saki to strike areas in Ukraine's south.

Crimea holds huge strategic and symbolic significance for both sides. The Kremlin's demand that Ukraine recog-

nize Crimea as part of Russia has been one of its key conditions for ending the fighting, while Ukraine has vowed to drive the Russians from the peninsula and all other occupied territories.

Hours after the blasts, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy promised again to do just that. "This Russian war against Ukraine and against all of free Europe began with Crimea and must

end with Crimea — its liberation," he said in his nightly address.

The explosions, which killed one person and wounded 14, sent tourists fleeing in panic as plumes of smoke rose over the coastline nearby. Video showed shattered windows and holes in the brickwork of some buildings. One tourist, Natalia Lipovaya, said that "the earth was gone from under my feet" after the powerful blasts. "I was so scared," she said.

Sergey Milochinsky, a local resident, recalled hearing a roar and seeing a mushroom cloud from his window. "Everything began to fall around, collapse," he said. Crimea's regional leader, Sergei Aksyonov, said some 250 residents were moved to temporary housing after dozens of apartment buildings were damaged.

Sri Lanka introduces bill to clip presidential powers

COLOMBO: A Sri Lankan government minister on Wednesday submitted to Parliament a constitutional amendment bill that would clip the powers of the president, a key demand of protesters calling for political reforms and solutions to the country's worst economic crisis.

Justice Minister Wijayadasa Rajapaksa presented the bill, which would transfer some presidential powers — including those to appoint independent election commission members, police and public service officials, and bribery and corruption investigators — into the hands of a consti-

tutional council comprising lawmakers and respected non-political persons. The council would then recommend candidates for these appointments that the president could choose from.

Under the proposed amendments, the president also would only be able to appoint a chief justice, other senior judges, an attorney general and a central bank governor on the recommendation of the council. The prime minister would recommend appointments to the Cabinet and the president would not be allowed to hold any ministry positions except defense.

The bill, which will under-

go debate, must be approved by two-thirds of Sri Lanka's 225-member Parliament to become law.

If passed into law, the amendments would reinstate democratic reforms made in 2015. Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who was ousted as president by angry protesters last month, reversed those reforms and concentrated power in himself after being elected to office in 2019.

President Ranil Wickremesinghe, who succeeded Rajapaksa, has promised to limit the powers of the presidency and strengthen Parliament in response to the protesters' demands.

Sri Lankans have staged massive street protests for the past four months demanding democratic reforms and solutions to the country's economic collapse.

Protesters blame the Rajapaksa family's alleged mismanagement and corruption for the economic crisis that has led to serious shortages of essentials like medicines, food and fuel. The island nation is negotiating with the International Monetary Fund for a bailout program.

The protests have largely dismantled the Rajapaksa political dynasty that ruled Sri Lanka for most of the past two decades.

Philippines cancels Russia helicopter deal over US sanctions

MANILA: The Philippines has scrapped an order for 16 Russian military helicopters, an official confirmed Wednesday, following reports former president Rodrigo Duterte decided to cancel it due to US sanctions on Moscow.

Manila — a longtime Washington ally — agreed in November to pay \$228 million (12.7 billion pesos) for the Mi-17 helicopters, as it seeks to modernize its military hardware. The United States and its allies imposed wide-ranging sanctions on Moscow in the wake of its assault on Ukraine in February.

They are aimed at cutting off Russia from the global financial system and choking off funds available to Moscow to finance the war. The Philippine defense department was "formalizing the termination" of the contract, spokesman Arsenio Andolong said Wednesday.

Without mentioning US sanctions on Moscow, Andolong said "changes in priorities necessitated by global political developments resulted in the cancellation of the project by the previous administration." Delfin Lorenzana, who served as defense secretary under Duterte, said in March that the Philippines had paid a deposit for the transport helicopters before war erupted in Ukraine and the deal was "on track."

But last week Lorenzana, who now heads a different government agency, told local media that Duterte himself decided to cancel the deal in the waning days of his administration over the sanctions threat.

"I don't know if we can still get back the money since we were the ones who terminated the contract," Lorenzana told reporters.

Russian embassy officials in Manila could not be reached for comment Wednesday. Philippine ambassador to Washington Jose Romualdez recently told AFP the decision to cancel was triggered by "the Ukrainian war." Romualdez said Manila was also wary of falling foul of a US law passed in 2017 that sanctions anyone doing business with Russia's intelligence or defense sectors.

IS Highlighting Tourism

Pakistan Embassy Beijing launches documentaries

Spokesman Report

BEIJING: Embassy of Pakistan Beijing on Wednesday launched two documentaries to showcase the cuisine and art & crafts of Pakistan. As part of the Embassy's Public Diplomacy Initiative, these documentaries are the first two among a set of seven special documentaries projecting the tourism potential of Pakistan being launched on the occasion of 75th anniversary of the Independence of Pakistan.

The seven documentaries are based on different themes namely Islamabad; Mughal heritage; Gilgit-Baltistan; Gandhara civilization; Festivals; Cuisine; and Arts & Crafts. The documentaries aim to create awareness among the people of China about the tourism potential of Pakistan, as well as to enhance cultural exchanges and people-to-people contact.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Moin ul Haque spoke about the rich history, breathtaking natural landscape and cultural heritage of Pakistan. He noted that Pakistan offers diverse experiences to meet the tastes of all tourists, providing opportunity for mountain, cultural, coastal, adventure and heritage tourism. He invited Chinese tourists to visit Pakistan in the 'Year of Tourism Exchanges' to be observed by the two countries in 2023.

The remaining five documentaries will be launched in the upcoming days.

North Korea's UN mission lambasts US over criticism of its nuke program

Spokesman Report

PYONGYANG: The Permanent Mission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations released the following press statement regarding the anti-DPRK confrontational clamor by the United States and some servile States Parties with unwarranted accusations against the DPRK at the 10th Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT):

A long time ago, the DPRK pulled out of the NPT through the legitimate procedure under the relevant article stipulated in the NPT. Accordingly, nobody has the right or justification to accuse the DPRK, a nuclear possessing state outside the NPT, of its exercise of the right to self-defense.

Today, the mastermind that undermines the foundation of the non-proliferation regime is none other than the United States which is hell-bent on nuclear threats and blackmail against sovereign states and even does not hesitate nuclear proliferation with a view to realizing its strategy of hegemony in flagrant infringement upon and violation of the treaty anchored on the main pillars of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful use of atomic power.

The United States itself would not deny the fact that it has transferred the technology of a nuclear-powered submarine to Australia and connived at and patronized Israel's possession of nuclear weapons.

It is the peak of busy blaming that the United States alleges somebody's "nuclear threats" given the fact that it is the kingpin of nuclear proliferation which has historically and systematically violated its obligations under the treaty one article after another and disrupted international peace and regional security.

In order to genuinely ensure international peace and security, it is imperative to put in the dock of an international court and bring to justice the United States hell-bent on high-handedness and arbitrary practice by wielding a nuclear club.

We will never tolerate any attempt by the U.S. and its servile forces to groundlessly accuse our State and encroach upon our sovereign rights and national interests

Deadly anti-government protests erupt in Sierra Leone

FREETOWN: Anti-government protesters in Sierra Leone clashed with police in the streets of the capital on Wednesday, as tensions over the rising cost of living turned deadly in the West African nation.

In a national broadcast, Vice President Mohamed Juleh Jalloh said that "lives of both policemen and civilians were lost," without giving further details. He announced a nationwide curfew from 3 p.m. local time in a bid to stem the violence.

The protesters on Wednesday were calling for the departure of President Julius Maada Bio, who was elected in 2018 and still has 10 months left in his term. The demonstrators chanted "Bio must go" as they made their way through the capital, Freetown.

The government has criticized the unidentified organizers of the protest, warning that the country already has suffered enough through more than a decade of civil war that ended in 2002.

"Sierra Leone has gone through a lot so let us change the trajectory and not allow people to divide us," Abdul Karim Will, spokesman for the Office of National Security, told the national radio broadcaster earlier in the day.

Early signs show tight Kenyan presidential election

NAIROBI/ELDORET: Preliminary results from Kenya's presidential election showed a tight race between the two main candidates vying to replace President Uhuru Kenyatta, with citizens praying an announcement of a winner would not unleash violence as in years past.

The Tuesday election is an important test for stability in East Africa's biggest economy, where two of the last three elections led to bloodshed and disputes over accusations of rigging.

Tuesday's polls were largely peaceful, although police said they were hunting a legislator who shot dead a rival's aide outside a polling station. In the northern town of Eldas, where clashes prevented elections on Tuesday, polling stations opened peacefully on Wednesday, election officials said.

Indian troops martyr three Kashmiri youth in Budgam

SRINAGAR/JAMMU: In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, Indian troops in their fresh act of state terrorism martyred three Kashmiri youth in Budgam district, on Wednesday.

The troops and paramilitary forces martyred the youth during cordon and search operation in Waterhail area of the district on Wednesday. The operation was going on till last reports came in.

On the other hand, an Indian soldier has committed suicide in Jammu city.

The soldier identified as Yogesh Kumar was on guard duty at Indian Army's Kullian camp in Miran Sahib area on the outskirts of the city when he shot himself in the head with his service rifle.

Kumar, a resident of Himachal Pradesh, died on the spot and later

his body was taken to the hospital by police for postmortem. This incident raised the number of such deaths amongst Indian troops and police personnel to 551 since January 2007.

All Parties Hurriyat Conference leaders have paid glowing tributes to prominent Kashmiri leader, Shaheed-e-Azeemat Sheikh Abdul Aziz, on the eve of his 14th martyrdom anniversary.

Sheikh Abdul Aziz was shot dead by Indian troops on 11th August in 2008 while he was leading a procession from Srinagar to the Line of Control against the economic blockade of the Kashmir Valley by Hindu extremists of Jammu.

Illegally detained APHC Vice Chairman, Shabbir Ahmad Shah, in a message sent from New

Delhi's infamous Tihar jail and released in Srinagar highlighting the contribution and sacrifices of the martyred leader for the ongoing Kashmiri freedom movement said that Sheikh Abdul Aziz was truly a man of honesty and integrity who devoted his entire life for the Kashmir cause.

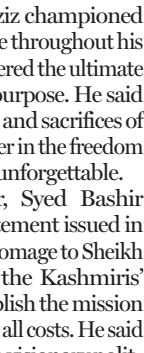
He maintained that Sheikh Aziz went through trials and tribulations for his role in the Kashmiri's ongoing struggle for right to self-determination. He said that the martyred leader would be remembered for a long time in the annals of Kashmir history for his indomitable role and peerless contribution in the freedom movement.

Incarcerated senior APHC leader, Nayeem Ahmed Khan, in his message from Tihar Jail said that

Sheikh Abdul Aziz championed the Kashmir cause throughout his life and even rendered the ultimate sacrifice for this purpose. He said that contribution and sacrifices of the martyred leader in the freedom movement were unforgettable.

APHC leader, Syed Bashir Andrabi, in a statement issued in Srinagar paying homage to Sheikh Aziz reaffirmed the Kashmiris' resolve to accomplish the mission of their martyrs at all costs. He said Sheikh Aziz was a visionary political leader who faced bullets on his chest instead of surrendering before the Indian military might. He also condemned the continued unlawful detention of Hurriyat leaders and activists.

APHC leaders, Chaudhry Shaheen Iqbal and Ghulam Nabi War, in their statements in Srin-



gar said that the martyrdom of Sheikh Aziz gave a new spark to the Kashmiris' ongoing movement for the right to self-determination. They said that the Kashmiri people would not allow the sacrifices of their martyrs to go in vain and would accomplish

their mission, come what may. They said that the best tribute to Sheikh Aziz and other Kashmiri martyrs is to carry forward the sacred cause for which they have laid down their lives.

Other APHC leaders including Ghulam Muhammad Khan

Sopori, Abdul Ahad Parra, Zamruda Habib, Yasmeen Raja, Dr Musaab and Aaqib Wani in their separate statements said that martyred Sheikh Aziz devoted his whole life for the freedom of Kashmir. They described Sheikh Aziz as a bold, brave and sincere leader and said that he preferred martyrdom but never bowed before oppressor India.

Meanwhile, an Indian parliamentarian and Sikh leader, Simranjit Singh Mann, has called for boycott of 'Har Ghar Tiranga' (hoisting of Indian flag on every house) campaign in the Indian state of Punjab.

The Sikh leader in a video message asked the people to hoist Kesari flags atop their houses on the Indian Independence Day on August 15.

 **Bull & Bears**
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
42,494.85	42,096.24
Day's High	Day's Low:
42,776.47	42,096.24
Index Value	Change
10,073,302,421	+398.61
Percentage	Time
+0.95%	10 Aug, 2022 5:00 pm
Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,507.11	+18.96
Percentage	Time
+0.25%	10 Aug, 4:35 pm GMT+1
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
33,305.27	+530.86
Percentage	Time
+1.62%	10 Aug, 12:02 pm GMT-4
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
27,819.33	−180.63
Percentage	Time
−0.65%	10 Aug, 3:15 pm GMT+9
Open Market Forex Rates	

KFC's Mitao Bhook, TCF partner



 **Our Correspondent**

KARACHI: KFC Pakistan's Mitao Bhook Foundation (MBF) and The Citizens Foundation (TCF) have come together to further the cause of education for the less privileged children in Pakistan. Under the partnership, KFC's Mitao Bhook has made a donation towards the operational support of four TCF schools across Pakistan for the academic year 2022-23.

The agreement was signed on 3rd of August at The Citizens Foundation (TCF) Head Office between team members from KFC Pakistan and TCF. The four campuses for which KFC's Mitao Bhook has donated include KFC Pakistan Campus in Saifal Goth, Gadap West - Sindh, Super Gas Campus in Baseera, Muzaffargarh-KPK, Mercat Campus I in Jail Road, Quetta-Balochistan, DCD Campus-III in Chak, Faisalabad-Punjab.

Raza Pirbhai, CEO of KFC Pakistan commented, "Today, we are very excited to renew our partnership with TCF. It is the first organisation that comes to our mind when we think of partnering with a credible institution. They are doing a fantastic job in providing education to the Pakistani community. Education is the most important tool for any nation that wants to change its future. I have seen the impact created through TCF first hand. There are so many great stories of TCF alumni who have made it to top universities. We are really humbled to partner with TCF."

On this occasion, Syed Asaad Ayub Ahmad, CEO of The Citizens Foundation (TCF) remarked: "KFC has been a long-standing supporter of TCF. We deeply value this partnership that enables us to create greater impact together for the children of Pakistan. There is no doubt that education is an immensely powerful tool that can enable our children to create a better future for themselves, their families and their country. This partnership will help set up many children on that path."

 **Women Entrepreneurship**

IWCCI partners with start-up to lift women-led businesses

Affordable accounting to boost women-owned businesses

 **Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: Samina Fazil, founder President, Islamabad Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IWCCI) on Friday said with the economic situation improving, the government should focus on start-ups to boost the economy.

Start-ups boost the economy with revolutionary technology and create new industries over time. When these start-ups go public, they become money-making engines for not just the owners but also for the employees and shareholders, she said.

This she said while signing an MoU with a newly established FinTech (financial technology) start-up, with an aim to digitize the financial needs of small businesses.

Samina Fazil said that start-ups need access to overseas markets, which means supporting cross-border data flows, limiting trade barriers and clearing away regulatory obstacles that hamper their growth.



We want to financially empower women-led and other businesses by providing a

simple and powerful accounting tool, she added.

Naima Ansari, former president of IWCCI said that start-up-friendly policies do not require large amounts of money or incentives.

She said that we will support women entrepreneurs who don't have access to expensive accounting resources as we want to play our part in digitising the country for a better tomorrow.

We will unlock the female entrepreneurial potential by providing them with this easy-to-use product to solve all their accounting needs, said Ansari.

Meenah Tariq, CEO of a newly established start-up Metric, said that start-ups also contribute to changing the image of the country.

We will be directly helping thousands of businesses with IWCCI and similar affiliations as accounting literacy is an important step for businesswomen to move closer to their goals, she said.

Record rice production advantageous for country: Atif Ikram

Fears of reduced wheat production are worrisome, says FPCCI's Presidential candidate

 **Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: FPCCI's Presidential candidate Atif Ikram Sheikh on Wednesday said record rice production is expected which would be beneficial for the country.

There is a fear of a sharp decline in wheat production which can put food security at stake therefore immediate measures should be taken, he said.

Talking to businessmen, he said that rice production in the country is expected to be more



than 90 lakh tons which will be a record.

He said that there are many reasons behind the augmented production including increased

area under cultivation.

The increase in rice production will bring benefits to farmers, exporters and the country will earn foreign exchange while consumers will suffer if the prices jumped as expected.

He said that this year's rice exports may exceed five million tonnes because the crop in India, China and Vietnam has been damaged by rains and excessive heat and their production has fallen.

The business leader noted that the global rice production is expected to decrease by

40 million tons, due to which its price will remain higher than last year, while Pakistani exports will increase.

He said that due to rising prices of urea and DAP and other problems, there is a fear of a reduction in wheat production up to 550,000 tonnes while wheat worth billions of dollars will have to be imported to meet the shortfall.

The government should arrange cheap fertilizers for the farmers to avoid deterioration of the food security situation, demanded Atif Ikram Sheikh.

PTCL, Nokia successfully trial 1-Terabit Live Optical Network

 **Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD, AUG 10, 2022: Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) has successfully conducted country's first trial of 1-Terabit transport capacity per wavelength, in collaboration with Nokia.

The trial was conducted in a live network environment, where PTCL Metro Transport Network was upgraded to 1-Terabit per channel, extending its capacity to extreme speeds of 32-Terabit per fiber. The trial was based on Nokia's Photonic Service Engine Transport Technology, designed to maximize network capacity and provide better customer experience, with faster and higher bandwidth.

This pilot transformation will lead to transport network enablement for future technologies, while creating new opportunities for industries as well as individuals. This is yet another step on PTCL's road-

map and resolve to prepare its network infrastructure for embracing the growing data traffic demands of high-speed services and bandwidth intensive applications, including Ultra HD Video Streaming, Industrial Automation, Smart Cities and e-learning platforms for its subscribers and enterprise customers.

From a consumer point of view, 1 Terabit-per-second capacity is enough bandwidth to download the entire Game of Thrones video series in HD in less than 2 seconds, and can support 300,000 HD video zoom calls simultaneously.

Jafar Khalid, Chief Technology Officer, PTCL Group, said, "We are committed to digitizing our customer experience by providing state-of-the-art solutions. Keeping this in view, we tested the scalability and evolution of our optical transport network by enhancing the existing capacity to 1-Terabit per channel, to facilitate the ever-growing data traffic demand

of our corporate and consumer segments. Nokia's modern technology and expertise has helped us to test bandwidths up-to 1-Terabit, that will help provide a superior customer experience and enable seamless future expansion of our transport network capacity across Pakistan."

Imran Durrani, Customer Team Head for PTCL Group at Nokia, said, "This new trial with PTCL is yet another testimony to further strengthening long-term partnership between us. Our industry-leading optical solutions including Photonic Service Switch and Photonic Service Engine are empowering PTCL to cost-effectively enhance network capacity as data consumption continues to rapidly increase.

Our pathbreaking Flexgrid architecture allows PTCL to modernize and upgrade its optical network to provide individuals and enterprises with a fast and reliable network connectivity."

Fall of dollar a big relief to govt: PEW President

Dr. Murtaza Mughal says commoners are not getting any relief

 **Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Wednesday said the government has gotten a big relief from the fall of the dollar, but the people did not get any relief yet, which is surprising.

The improved exchange rate has reduced the debt as well as interest payments while relief can be seen in the overall imports including that of petroleum products, it said. Oil has become cheaper in the international market, but the people were given small relief which is meaningless, said Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President of PEW.

The government should not celebrate the stability of the value of the rupee, but take full advantage of it, he added.

He said that as soon as the dollar becomes expensive, the traders increase the price of

everything including items stocked before the dollar became expensive. However, the business community would never reduce prices to provide some relief to the masses if the value of the dollar is reduced, he observed.

Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that traders would give various baseless excuses to keep the prices of different items unchanged and the government has never tried to stop this profiteering.

Dr. Mughal said that 220 million people were affected by the depreciation of the rupee, while exporters kept benefitting for years but after the appreciation of the rupee, they started demanding subsidies, rebates, cheap energy and other incentives.

Exporters should not get undue relaxations as they have made unbelievable profits for the last four years due to the depreciation of the rupee.



RCCI President Nadeem Rauf presenting bouquet to Muhammad Shoaib Khan Jadoon, Director General, Punjab Food Authority (PFA) during his visit to chamber house.

Scrapping fixed tax on shopkeepers a wrong move: Dr. Shahid

 **Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: Former President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt on Wednesday said scrapping fixed tax on shopkeepers is a wrong move and is against the national interests. How can the government run the country if taxes are not collected from the third largest sector of the economy, he said.

The country will continue to depend on borrowing and eventually go bankrupt if the tax revenue does not increase, he said. Shahid Rashid Butt said that the withdrawal of tax on retailers shows that the government is not serious about increasing tax revenue as the priority is being given to politics over the economy.

He said that the situation shows that the govern-

ment will take only those steps for reforms which the IMF will force. He added that the government will have to put an additional burden on existing taxpayers and masses to meet the target given by the IMF and a mini-budget can also be introduced.

He said that more than 80 percent of the country's wealth is invested in the property sector, due to which the productive sector has been paralyzed, but despite this sector is enjoying undue tax relaxations.

Similarly, like agriculture, influential stockbrokers are also given exemptions which are against the interests of the country.

The government is left to collect taxes from the salaried class, industrialists and the service sector because it is as difficult to collect taxes from large industrialists as it is from landlords.



Finance Minister launches 'EMLAAK Financials'

Pakistan's first digital Mutual Fund aggregator developed by CDC

 **Spokesman Report**

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

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



a single platform.

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

While addressing the occasion, Mr. Aamir Khan—Chairman SECP said, "It is indeed a very important milestone for the Mutual Fund Industry as it embarks on this consolidated digital distribution channel launched for the first time in Pakistan. We, at SECP, are

strong proponents of re-engineering processes for promoting efficiency and transparency through digitalization and will continue to support and encourage all such initiatives by providing all the required Regulatory assistance in this regard.

Moin Fudda, Chairman of CDC's Board of Directors, welcomed the Finance Minister and others guests after which CEO MUFAP Ms. Mashmooma Majeed addressed the audience.

At the occasion, describing the objectives of the platform, Badiuddin Akber—CEO CDC said, "Emlaak Financials has been envisioned to pave the way for the growth of the Mutual Fund Industry and promote the savings culture in Pakistan at the grass-root level. CDC is committed towards providing innovative tech-based platforms to Capital Market entities through which they can leverage CDC's technological edge to enhance their investor outreach in a convenient, informative and interactive manner."

IS T20I Rankings

Indian dream of dethroning Babar Azam as top batter shattered

Yadav remains in 2nd place on T20I rankings, with Babar holding lead of 13 rating points

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan captain Babar Azam has managed to hang on to his mantle as the No.1 ranked T20I batter despite the fact a host of India stars made giant strides on the latest ICC Men's Player Rankings.

India cruised to a 4-1 series triumph in the recently-completed T20I series against the West Indies and a bevy of their best performers cut into Babar's lead at the top of the batter rankings.

The ICC released the latest set of rankings on Wednesday and Shreyas Iyer and Rishabh Pant were among the biggest movers as the race for the top ranking hots up ahead of the ICC T20 World Cup in Australia later this year.

Iyer hit an impressive half-century during the fifth and final match of the series in Florida and was duly rewarded by jumping six places to 19th overall



on the batter rankings.

Pant finished the series as the equal second leading run-scorer on 115 runs, with his quickfire 44 in the fourth match seeing the left-hander jump seven places to 59th.

Emerging opener Suryakumar Yadav was the leading run-scorer during the series with 135 runs, but the decision to rest him for the final match meant

he missed out on the chance to overtake Babar at the head of proceedings.

Yadav remains in second place on the T20I rankings, with Babar now holding a lead of 13 rating points ahead of the eagerly awaited meeting between India and Pakistan at the Asia Cup in Dubai later this month.

The series against West Indies also saw a group of India's bowl-

ers rewarded with big moves up the latest T20I rankings for bowlers.

Young spinner Ravi Bishnoi was India's leading wicket-taker during the series with eight scalps and that helped the 21-year-old jump 50 places to 44th overall on the most recent list for bowlers.

Team-mates Avesh Khan, Axar Patel, and Kuldeep Yadav were also big movers, while veteran quick Bhuvneshwar Kumar dropped one place to ninth after just three wickets during the West Indies series.

South Africa's recent 2-0 series triumph over Ireland away from home also saw a host of their players rewarded on the latest set of T20I rankings, with in-form opener Reeza Hendricks moving up two spots to 13th on the list for batters.

Spinner Keshav Maharaj

moves up 10 spots to 18th overall on the bowler rankings, while South Africa team-mate Dwaine Pretorius jumps seven places to 26th on the list for all-rounders.

There were no changes to the Test rankings with no red-ball matches held over the last week, while there were some minor movements in the ODI ranks following the opening two matches of the series between Zimbabwe and Bangladesh.

In-form all-rounder Sikandar Raza has been a shining light for Zimbabwe in recent times and the experienced 36-year-old has made some eye-catching moves on the latest ODI rankings.

Raza has scored consecutive unbeaten centuries against Bangladesh and that has seen the right-hander jump 10 spots to 29th on the batter rankings and an impressive seven places to fourth on the list of all-rounders.

IS Across Punjab

Minister orders immediate start of sports activities

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Taimoor Masood visited Sports Board Punjab office and presided over an important meeting here on Wednesday.

Vice-Chairman Sports Board Punjab Rao Zahid Qayyum, Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Asadullah Faiz, Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi, Director Admin Syed Omair Hasan, Deputy Director Rauf Bajwa, Assistant Director Zahoor Ahmed and other officials also participated in the meeting. Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Asadullah Faiz and Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi gave a detailed briefing to Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Taimoor Masood about departmental affairs,



development projects and sports activities of the province.

Addressing the meeting, Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Taimoor Masood directed that sports activities should be started immediately across the province. "A awareness campaign will be started for the youth in the province to enhance the interest of the young generation in sports activities. The youth of the province will be connected through sports

and positive activities," he added.

Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Taimoor Masood further said that the capacity building of Sports and Youth Affairs Department Punjab officers will be enhanced and this step will play a key role in performing the tasks of Sports Department in a more professional manner.

"Youth and Sports Committees will also be restored at tehsil and district level in the province and

the Punjab province will be transformed into a true sports nursery". Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Taimoor Masood further said that it is a matter of pride that talented players belonging to Punjab province are achieving great success for the country in international sports competitions. He said that all the players will be given top standard sports facilities for their preparation and participation in international sports events.

Teams, pools announced for FIH Hockey Indoor WC 2023

ISLAMABAD: The International Hockey



ey Federation (FIH) on Tuesday named the participating teams and pools for the FIH Hockey Indoor World Cup South Africa 2023, to be staged in Pretoria, at the Heartfelt Arena from February 5 to 11, 2023.

Women's Pools include A: Netherlands, Austria, Australia, United States, South Africa and New Zealand; Pool B: Ukraine, Czech Republic, Namibia, Kazakhstan, Belgium and Canada.

Men's Pool comprise A: Austria, Netherlands, Belgium, Kazakhstan, Namibia and New Zealand; Pool B: Iran, Czech Republic, Australia, South Africa, United States and Argentina.

The pools were established on the basis of the current FIH Indoor World Rankings, said a press release. All 24 teams except Australia and New Zealand were in the line-up of participating teams for the event which was scheduled to be played in February 2022 but was postponed due to COVID-related issues.

For the 2023 edition, Australia would replace Russia (Men) and Belarus (Women) since, based on the current guidance from the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the participation of these two teams has been denied by FIH. New Zealand would replace Germany (for both genders) who, despite having qualified, have decided not to take part.

South African Hockey Association Acting CEO Shaune Baaitjies said, "The South African Hockey family are so excited about another first for SA Hockey and we cannot wait to welcome our visitors to our beautiful country where we promise to deliver a spectacular event. As a country with a proud heritage of hosting historic international events we can't wait to add the FIH Hockey Indoor World Cup to this incredible catalogue!"

FIH CEO Thierry Weil said, "All teams and all hockey fans are eagerly waiting for the FIH Hockey Indoor World Cup to be back! We're really glad to have again participating teams from every continent, making it an impressive line up."

Germany (Women) and Austria (Men) were crowned the Champions in 2018, at the last edition of the FIH Hockey Indoor World Cup. Agencies

New Zealand pacer turns back on central contract

WELLINGTON: New Zealand Cricket have agreed to release Trent Boult from his central contract to allow the experienced pacer to spend more time with his family and be available to play in domestic leagues around the world.

While the decision does not mean an end to Boult's glittering international career, New Zealand Cricket (NZC) have made it clear that they will give priority at selection to players that are currently contracted.

Boult, a veteran of 78 Test matches and more than 130 white-ball games, said the ability to spend more time with his family over the coming years was influential in coming to his decision. "This has been a really tough decision for me and I'd like to thank NZC for their support in getting to this point," he said. "Playing cricket for my country was a childhood dream and I'm so proud of everything I've been able to achieve with the Black Caps over the past 12 years. "Ultimately this decision is about my wife Gert and our three young boys. Family has always been the biggest motivator for me and I feel comfortable with putting it first and preparing ourselves for life after cricket."

Boult is currently the No.1 ranked ODI bowler, with the left-arm having taken an impressive 169 wickets for New Zealand from a 93-match 50-over career that commenced more than 10 years ago. Whether he gets to add to that games tally remains to be seen, but Boult knows his decision will diminish his chances of being selected for international matches in the future.

"I still have a big desire to represent my country and feel I have the skills to deliver at international level," Boult said. "However, I respect the fact that not having a national contract will affect my chances of selection. "Having said that, as a fast bowler I know I have a limited career span, and I feel the time is right to move into this next phase."



IS KPL

Hafeez for giving maximum chances to Kashmiri cricketers

ISLAMABAD: Muzaffarabad Tigers captain Muhammad Hafeez wants to see maximum chances given to Kashmiri cricketers in the Kashmir Premier League (KPL) Season 2, saying that this is their tournament and they should get maximal exposure.

"I am happy to see the talent coming out of the league. Like last year, we will play better cricket in season 2," he said here on Wednesday. Hafeez, who was nicknamed as 'Professor' said: "This league was of Kashmiris and we have to give maximum chances to them. "Kashmiri boys are learning under the supervision of the best coaches."

Speaking about the team's practice, he said the players practiced well for the last five days. "All the boys got the opportunity to bowl, bat and field in the practice session. Many of the boys are new and it is important to guide them," he said.

KPL 2 would run from August 13 to 26 at the Muzaffarabad Cricket Stadium. Reigning champions Rawalakot Hawks would play newly-introduced Jammu Janbaz in the opening match on August 13. As many as seven teams including Muzaffarabad Tigers, Hawks, Janbaz, Mirpur Royals, Stallions, Kotli Lions, and Overseas Warriors would feature in the season 2 of the league. APP

Tributes flow for Rudi Koertzen following shock death

PRETORIA: Tributes arrived quickly for Rudi Koertzen after the well-respected international umpire died in a car crash in South Africa on Tuesday.

One of only three umpires around the world to have officiated in more than 100 Test matches, the South African was a universally respected figure around cricketing circles. Koertzen was much loved in his home country of South Africa, with ICC Hall of Fame member Jacques Kallis and star batter Herschelle Gibbs leading the tributes.

Kallis wasn't the only ICC Hall of Fame member that took to social media to express their sadness, with a host of other former players already in the Hall of Fame also sharing their sentiments.



Fury wants to complete trilogy with Chisora

LONDON: Heavyweight world champion Tyson Fury says he is coming back to boxing with a new trainer and wants to complete a trilogy against fellow-Briton Derek Chisora.

The WBC champion said in April, after beating compatriot Dillian Whyte at Wembley stadium, that he had promised his wife he would retire. His promoter Frank Warren told Talksport radio at the weekend, however, that Fury had 'itchy feet' and wanted to get back in the ring. "I've decided to come back to boxing because I can be the first heavyweight champion in history to have two trilogies, one with Deontay Wilder and a second one with Derek Chisora," Fury said on Instagram.

"I always said I'd fight Derek Chisora at the end of my career and here we are breaking all records again and setting precedents." Undeclared Fury drew his first fight with Wilder for the WBC title in 2018 but beat the American in rematches in 2020 and 2021. He beat Chisora in 2011 and 2014. Chisora is now 38 and had looked to be in the twilight of his career until he beat Bulgarian Kubrat Pulev on a split decision in London last month for the vacant WBA International title, a belt well below a world title. Fury, 33, will also be waiting on the outcome of a rematch between compatriot Anthony Joshua and Ukraine's WBA, WBO, IBF and IBO champion Oleksandr Usyk in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia next week.

Serena rose from mean streets to Slam queen

NEW YORK: Serena Williams went from learning tennis on public courts in a notorious American gangland neighborhood to becoming a superstar for a generation and perhaps the greatest player in history.

The 40-year-old legend declared Tuesday on Instagram the "countdown has begun" to her retirement after a Vogue magazine story talking about how bad she is at saying goodbye.

Serena became an African-American icon in a white-dominated sport, winning 23 Grand Slam titles and smashing aside milestones with a determination as powerful as the raw energy that defines her

shotmaking magic.

Serena and sister Venus, a seven-time Grand Slam winner, were executive producers on the movie "King Richard" that told the Hollywood fairy-tale of them being taught tennis by father Richard Williams while growing up on the tough streets of Compton, California. "I am still just that girl with the racquet and a dream and I'm just playing for that," Williams said after a 2013 US Open title.

She wound up living the dream as Serena has won seven Australian Open titles, three French Opens, seven Wimbledon crowns and six US Opens and stands one shy of matching the all-time record for Slam

singles titles set by Margaret Court.

She won her first Grand Slam title at the 1999 US Open at age 17 and in 2017 captured her 23rd and most recent major title at the Australian Open while pregnant with daughter Alexis Olympia Ohanian. She gave birth to Olympia in September 2017 and spent six weeks bedridden after a pulmonary embolism, but battled back to make her return to competition five months later in Fed Cup doubles alongside Venus.

Williams, whose husband is Reddit founder Alexis Ohanian, has twice completed a "Serena Slam" by winning all four major titles in a row. She did it

in 2002-2003 starting with the 2002 French Open and again in 2014-15 starting with the 2014 US Open. She had a chance to complete a calendar-year Grand Slam in 2015 but was upset by Italy's Roberta Vinci in the US Open semi-finals.

"I never really want to focus on the numbers," Williams said. "I started playing tennis not to be the greatest but just because I had a racquet and a dream. Now people are saying I could be (the greatest), but for me, I'm just not there yet."

"People like Chris Evert and Martina Navratilova and Steffi Graf, they are just, to me, the ultimate icons in the history of women's tennis." Williams



brought a style and power to her game, at times her fashion designs distracting from her dazzling on-court efforts.

She won the most recent of her 73 career WTA titles in January 2020 at the Auckland Open, her only crown as a moth-

er. Four times Williams had a chance to equal Court's all-time record but lost in the 2018 and 2019 finals at both Wimbledon and the US Open. She battled through struggles as well. Serena's half-sister, Yetunde Price, was fatally shot in 2003 at age 31 by a gang member in their hometown of Compton. She had been Serena's personal assistant.

After Williams cut her foot at a German restaurant days following her 2010 Wimbledon triumph, she needed two surgeries and spent 20 weeks in a walking cast, a situation she blamed for causing blood clots in her lungs in 2011 that threatened her life. She missed three major events and was out almost a year.