



# Daily The Spokesman

## Govt to cut power tariff by Oct: Khurram Dastagir

Minister for Energy Khurram Dastagir Khan says the government is making efforts to reduce power tariff and boost economy. Measures are being taken to cut electricity prices in next two months.

A Leading National Daily

ABC Certified

فرمان رسوں ﷺ  
رسول اللہ صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم فرمایا کہ  
میں اور میری کمپنی پر مشکل نہ والی بات میں  
اس طرح جوں گے اور آپ نے شہزاد  
کی اونار پرچھ کی تو آپ نے شہزاد کیا اور ان  
دفون کنگیوں کے درمیان خوبی کی جگہ  
کھلکھل کر کیا۔  
(جگہ خان: صفحہ نمبر 5304)

RAWALPINDI

Barkat Rice Mills  
(Pvt) Limited



## Economic crisis is due to incompetent govt: Hammad Azhar

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Hammad Azhar says recent economic crisis in Pakistan is because of the incumbent government. Many countries in the world have been benefitting from the cheap Russian oil but the incumbent government refused the offer causing skyrocketing inflation. The way they have been steering the country would lead to nowhere but only loss. The interest rate and inflation.

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Muharram 18, Wednesday, August 17, 2022

[www.dailyspokesman.net](http://www.dailyspokesman.net)

@daily\_spokesman

Daily Spokesman Vol: 15, Issue: 137

Price Rs. 25.00 Pages 8

Nawaz strongly opposes petrol price hike:  
Maryam

LAHORE: PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif has expressed his opposition to the federal government's decision to ramp up the prices of petroleum products, said PML-N Vice President Maryam Nawaz on Tuesday.

On Monday, the government cranked up the price of petrol by Rs6.72 per litre for the next fortnight. "In the wake of fluctuations in petroleum prices in the international market and exchange rate variations, the government has decided to revise the existing prices of petroleum products to pass on the impact to the consumers," the statement released by the Finance Division read.

The government's decision invited a lot of criticism from the public. Citizens are of the view that the prices of petroleum products are on a downward slope all over the world but their prices are being increased in Pakistan. As people vented out their views on the government's decision, a user on Twitter tagged Maryam Nawaz and requested her to "speak to Mian Nawaz Sharif to take notice of the increase in the price of petrol."

Replies to the user, Maryam wrote: "Mian Sahib strongly opposed this decision. He even said that I cannot burden the people with one more penny." She said her father stressed that he was not on board and that if the government was bound by some constraint, it should go ahead with the increase. Maryam said the PML-N supremo disowned the PML increase decision and left the meeting. Earlier, after the government issued the notification of the new PML prices, Maryam, too, rejected the federal government's decision. Reacting to a Twitter user, Maryam noted: "I stand by the people of Pakistan. I cannot support this decision."

## Health sector matters

A delegation from office of H.H Sheikh Ahmed Dalmoor Al Maktoum & Hayat Bio-Tech calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad on Tuesday.



Photo: PID

### Global role

## Pakistan willing to iron out US, China differences: PM

Says Pakistan and UAE enjoy decades long brotherly relations,

### Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said on Tuesday that the world cannot afford another era of Cold War or bloc politics. "I believe that the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the major crisis of Ukraine's war with Russia will have serious consequences on the global economy," he said and added developing countries like Pakistan are already facing global impacts for socio-economic well-being and we do not want to add to the challenges posed by global antagonism.

"Pakistan wants friendly relations with all major powers of the world including Russia," Shehbaz Sharif further said that former PM Imran Khan was removed constitutionally through a no-confidence motion and took over the

this should be the main driving force of international relations. The world cannot afford another era of Cold War or bloc politics. "I believe that the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the major crisis of Ukraine's war with Russia will have serious consequences on the global economy," he said and added developing countries like Pakistan are already facing global impacts for socio-economic well-being and we do not want to add to the challenges posed by global antagonism.

"Pakistan wants friendly relations with all major powers of the world including Russia," Shehbaz Sharif further said that former PM Imran Khan was removed constitutionally through a no-confidence motion and took over the

reins of the country, adding that all the political parties of the country agreed on minus Imran Khan and wanted to form a coalition government and solve the urgent problems faced by the people.

He also spoke about the regional problems since the departure of international forces from Afghanistan in August last year, saying the world community should continue to engage with the war-torn country and unfreeze its financial assets in view of Afghanistan's precarious humanitarian and economic situation.

"We will continue to impress upon the Interim Afghan Government the importance of taking demonstrable actions on its commitments including those relating to inclusivity, respect

for human rights of all Afghans, including girls' education, and effective counter-terrorism action," he added.

The Gulf Observer: UAE always extended support to Pakistan in difficult times and I am obliged to Excellency Shaikh Ahmed Dalmoor al Maktoum for taking keen interest in promoting cooperation with Pakistan in health sector.

Pakistan Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif said this during a meeting with a Bio Tech and Sinopharm delegation under the command of Sabour Karamat General Council of Excellency Shaikh Ahmed Dalmoor al Maktoum. Federal Minister for Health Services Abdul Qadir Petail was also present on the occasion.

## Zardari displeased over petrol price hike

Says we formed this govt to provide relief to the people

### Bureau Report

KARACHI: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari has expressed his displeasure over the hike in the prices of petroleum products by the government. In a statement, former president Zardari said that Peoples Party is part of the government and such decisions must be taken with the consultation of the coalition parties. He went on to say that we have made this government to provide relief to the masses. Zardari said that he is behind Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and "soon I will be meeting him".

Asif Ali Zardari said that PPP is an ally of the government, they are with the government but consultation should have been done before taking the decision to raise fuel prices.

Advocate Azhar Siddique filed a plea in the LHC pertaining to fuel prices. He stated that the federal government has jacked up the prices of petroleum products, despite price fall in the international market.

### Prohibited funding

## IHC forms larger bench to hear PTI's plea

Hearing under larger bench to take place tomorrow

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday constituted a larger bench to hear the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) plea against the Election Commission of Pakistan's decision in the PTI prohibited funding case.

Acting Chief Justice of Islamabad High Court Aamir Farooq heard the petition and Anwar Mansoor appeared in the court on behalf of PTI. Anwar Mansoor said that PTI has also challenged the fact-finding report of the Election Commission and the Supreme Court in the Hanif Abbasi case has made it clear that disclosure of accounts was not necessary for various reasons.

Acting Chief Justice Amir Farooq remarked that "As per his memory, this is the first case of its kind after the Wali Khan case."

A reference was sent in the Wali Khan case. Was the reference not sent in this case? Anwar Mansoor requested that the court should bound the Election Commission not to take any action to the extent of the issued show cause notices.

Acting Chief Justice further remarked that the issue of stay order including show cause will be heard by the larger bench. The court adjourned the hearing till August 18, directing the case to be fixed before a larger bench.

### Copter crash

## All involved in anti Pak army campaign to be arrested

Campaign was launched against Pakistan Army by workers of a political party

### Staff reporter

ISLAMABAD: The government has decided to arrest all the people behind the negative propaganda against Lasbela helicopter crash on social media, sources privy to the investigation told Geo News on the condition of anonymity. Sources said that the people who led the campaign will also be arrested after investigating the individuals involved in the propaganda. They added that the investigations have shown that Indian accounts were also involved in the social media campaign.

They added that a campaign was launched against the Pakistan Army by the workers of a political party and Indian social media accounts actively participated in it. The investigations show that at least 17 Indian accounts were linked to the campaign. Last week,

Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Cyber Crime Wing registered a case and launched an investigation into the malicious social media propaganda following the martyrdom of army officers in the Balochistan helicopter crash.

A joint investigation team headed by Additional Director General Cyber-crimes Muhammad Jafar is carrying out the probe. The investigation team includes Director Operations Waqar Chauhan, Additional Director Ayaz, and Assistant Director Imran Haider. The development follows after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif characterised the campaign as "horrifying". "The social media campaign belittling and ridiculing the sacrifices of our martyrs was horrifying," he wrote in a message on Twitter.

The prime minister attributed such vitriol to "self-righteous politi-

cal narratives". "They poison the minds of the youth and weaponise hate speech. Which way are we headed?" he asked. Meanwhile, in a conversation on Geo News programme "Naya Pakistan", the Director-General of Inter-Services Public Relations Major General Babar Iftikhar condemned the negative social media propaganda.

"The way this happens on social media, we have to look into this and reject such elements involved in it," he said.

"We can do this collectively. That's why we issued a press release as it was important to highlight this matter. This has to be condemned at every level."

The press release issued by the ISPR stated: "We have been distressed since the accident on August 1. The propaganda has caused immense pain, particularly to the families of the martyrs," he said.

The prime minister attributed such vitriol to "self-righteous politi-

### 8% m-o-m cut

July remittances stay above \$2b

### Bureau Report

KARACHI: In line with the trend over the past many months, workers' remittances stayed above \$2 billion in July 2022 despite a decline of over 8%

on a month-on-month basis.

According to data released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Tuesday, the remittances sent home by overseas Pakistanis declined by 8.6%

(month-on-month) and 7.8%

(year-on-year) to \$2.5 billion in July.

This was the 26th successive month in which receipts remained above the \$2 billion threshold, SBP reported.

The central bank attributed the decline to fewer working days during the first month of the fiscal year 2022-23. "This decrease largely reflected the lower number of working days in July as a result of Eidul Adha, at 17 working days compared to 22 last month and 18 in July 2021," it noted.

Cumulatively, in the fiscal year 2021-22, remittances clocked in at \$31.2 billion compared to \$29.4 billion received in FY21.

In this regard, a committee has been formed under the chairmanship of Riaz Fatiana for the selection and initial scrutiny of PTI

## PTI top brass discusses strategy for by-polls

Former ruling party begins preparations for general elections

### Senior Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Tuesday started consultations to formulate a strategy for the by-election campaign in 9 constituencies of the National Assembly. In this regard, a consultative meeting was held in Bani Gala under the chairmanship of PTI supremo Imran Khan while the party's top leadership including Asad Umar, and Fawad Chaudhary participated in the meeting.

Sources privy to the development said that the strategy of the election campaign for the by-elections in 9 constituencies was discussed in the meeting, and Babar Awan gave a briefing on the court proceedings related to the Shahbaz Gill case. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Tuesday formally started preparations for the upcoming general elections.

In this regard, a committee has been formed under the chairmanship of Riaz Fatiana for the selection and initial scrutiny of PTI



candidates. Sources privy to the matter said that the committee headed by Riaz Fatiana held informal meetings with the candidates, the committee started evaluating constituencies and candidates from across the country, and made recommendations based on surveys, interviews and opinions of party officials in the constituencies.

Sources further stated that the committee will present the report to the Central Parliamentary Board. The committee will take final decisions regarding the tickets in the light of the report.

**Charter of Economy**

Islamabad: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Mr. Miftah Ismail addressing All Parties Conference for revival of economy in Islamabad on Tuesday.



**PML-N picks Hamza for PA Opposition Leader slot**



LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has picked Hamza Shahbaz for slot of Punjab Assembly Opposition Leader. According to sources familiar with the development, PML-N parliamentary party unanimously decided to nominate Hamza Shahbaz for the position and the party's allies have also been taken into confidence.

Hamza Shahbaz was removed from the post of CM Punjab after the Supreme Court of Pakistan declared Deputy Speaker Dost Muhammad Mazari's ruling in the Punjab Chief Minister election "illegal" and ruled that Pervaiz Elahi will be the new Punjab Chief Minister.

Deputy Speaker's ruling is illegal. There is no legal justification for the Deputy Speaker's ruling," said the Supreme Court.

Meanwhile, the former chief minister is currently in London on a private visit. Presently, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz is the largest opposition party in Punjab Assembly. Hamza Shahbaz left for London via private airline, days after he was removed as chief minister of the Punjab province through a Supreme Court's order.

A three-member bench of the Supreme Court declared Deputy Speaker Dost Muhammad Mazari's ruling in the Punjab Chief Minister election "illegal" and ruled that Pervaiz Elahi will be the new CM of the province.

## IMF tranche due by August end: Miftah

*Assures trust me fuel prices will also go down*

**Our Correspondent**

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance, Miftah Ismail said here on Tuesday that loan disbursements under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) would start by the end of this month as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) board is expected to meet on August 29. Addressing a press conference, the minister said that Islamabad had received Letter of Intent (LoI) from the fund requiring some edits by State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and Finance Ministry, which were done after holding meetings with IMF. The minister said new LoI has been received today (Tuesday) which he would send back after signing adding "We expect the board meeting would be held in August, hopefully 29 August then the disbursement would start."

The minister said that rupee has been performing as best currency of the world following continuous appreciation against dollar for first 15 days of August. Earlier, US Dollar had gone out of control after July 17 and reached to Rs239 exchange rate. He said, at that time when rupee was depreciating in July he had argued that there was need to control imports and bring it to the level of exports plus remittances to strike balance. The minister said that the imports were recorded at \$80 billion during the fiscal year 2021-22 whereas the exports stood at \$31.7 billion, bringing trade deficit to \$48.3 billion. During the year, the remittances were recorded at \$30 billion. Consequently, the current account deficit (CAD), he said, was recorded at \$17.5 last year despite

every decision of the government with "full responsibility".

He further said that the issue of petrol is automatic and comes from Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA). "We do not increase or decrease the tax, we sent it to the prime minister which he approved," he added. Miftah Ismail noted that he respects the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) leadership and would address their reservations over the decision related to the prices of petroleum products.

The minister said that rupee has been performing as best currency of the world following continuous appreciation against dollar for first 15 days of August. Earlier, US Dollar had gone out of control after July 17 and reached to Rs239 exchange rate. He said, at that time when rupee was depreciating in July he had argued that there was need to control imports and bring it to the level of exports plus remittances to strike balance. The minister said that the imports were recorded at \$80 billion during the fiscal year 2021-22 whereas the exports stood at \$31.7 billion, bringing trade deficit to \$48.3 billion. During the year, the remittances were recorded at \$30 billion. Consequently, the current account deficit (CAD), he said, was recorded at \$17.5 last year despite

the fact had PTI was specially focusing to bring it down.

He said, PTI had singularly focused on CAD and was not realizing the measures taken by Pakistan Muslim League government for improving growth rate, infrastructure improvements, building energy and communication. He deplored that during its 4 years turn, PTI government took around Rs19,300 billion debt which is around 79 percent of total debt taken in 71 years. He said, PTI gave \$17.5 billion CAD, 1500 billion electricity circular debt, Rs1400 gas circular debt, Rs200 billion losses in Sui Northern gas and left just 10.3 reserves at a time when the country was liable to pay \$21 billion debt in 2022-23, \$3 billion in June-July.

He question what real freedom the PTI has been talking about when there is \$48 billion trade deficit while the PTI government was providing subsidy on fuel, giving amnesty to friends and bring defaults. He said, it was not only PTI, last government did the same citing 8.1 percent deficit in Musharraf regime. He said, the incumbent government curbed imports including non-essential and luxury goods and then vehicles, air-conditioners, fridges, and locally assembly products that needed 90 percent imports.

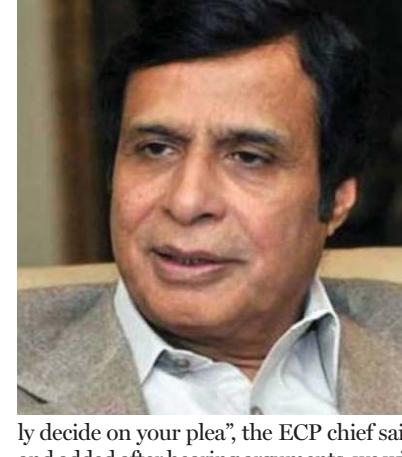
**PML-Q election**

## ECP's jurisdiction challenged

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) leader and Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi on Tuesday challenged the jurisdiction of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in PML-Q intra-party elections case. A five-member bench of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) heard Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain's plea, challenging PML-Q's intra-party elections.

At the outset of the hearing, the counsel of Pervaiz Elahi challenging the ambit of ECP said, the electoral body cannot hear the case. He said the LHC directed ECP to reconsider the issue of its jurisdiction in the case, to which Justice Ikrumullah, a member of ECP, said LHC has not made ECP bound in the case.

Chief Election Commissioner, Sikandar Sultan Raja directed Pervaiz Elahi's counsel to submit reservations with the ECP in writing. "We are not bound to immediately



ly decide on your plea", the ECP chief said and added after hearing arguments, we will decide how to take up the case further.

Meanwhile, the further hearing on the case has been adjourned until August 18.

## Pak-US to optimize military to military ties

*USAmbassador, Air Chief discuss bilateral, regional issues*

**Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: US Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome called on Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu here on Tuesday. During the meeting, matters of regional security situation, enhanced bilateral and defence cooperation were discussed. Both sides agreed to further optimize military to military ties particularly in training and operational domains.

The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's efforts in promoting regional peace and vowed to enhance cooperation in various fields. He also lauded the professionalism of Pakistan Air

Force and exceptional progress made by it over the years, especially through indigenization. On the occasion, the Air Chief highlighted that both countries enjoy cordial relations and reiterated his resolve to further enhance the existing bilateral cooperation between the two strategic partners.

He said Pakistan values its strong diplomatic, economic and defence relations with the United States which are based on convergence on all important issues relating to regional peace, security and stability. Earlier, the US Envoy to Pakistan Donald Blome has said his country stands with the communities in Pakistan recovering from the devastation caused by severe

flooding.

In a series of Tweets this morning, he said that this disaster has resulted in a catastrophic loss of life, with many losing their loved ones, their livelihoods and their homes. Donald Blome said we will work closely in coordination with partners on the ground to support these crucial humanitarian assistance efforts. Ambassador Donald Blome announced a humanitarian assistance and said that United States Agency for International Development will provide 100,000 US Dollars to the affected people. He said this assistance will help purchase urgent supplies to save lives and reduce sufferings among the most affected communities.

**Healthcare**

## Federal Cabinet rejects 35 medicines' price increase

*Gives nod to place Shahzad Akhbar; nine others on ECL*

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Cabinet has declined to increase prices of 35 medicines and directed that no raise will be made in medicines' rates without its prior permission. The cabinet, which met in Islamabad on Tuesday with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in the chair, also approved the placement of 10 names including Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Shahzad Akbar on the Exit Control List (ECL). Shahzad Akbar and Barrister Ziaul Mustafa Nasim were among 10 persons who have been placed on the ECL by the federal cabinet, whereas, the government approved striking off 22 names from the no-fly-list. Eight more names were also included in the list on the advice of the respective institutions.

The cabinet, on the recommendation of the

Interior ministry, approved placing ten people on the Exit Control List and exclusion of 22 people from the ECL. One time permission to three people was also accorded. The meeting was given a detailed briefing about the impact of the climate change on Pakistan. It was told that there is an immediate need to implement the mitigation and adaptation strategy regarding the climate change. It was proposed that a detailed documentary regarding awareness about climate change challenges confronting Pakistan and various steps taken by the government to prevent negative impact of this challenge should be presented at international forums. Besides, emphasis was laid on adopting modern and scientific means to overcome this issue.

The cabinet agreed to effectively utilize the duration of public service messages on TV channels regarding these issues. It was stressed that climate change should be included to the curriculum of schools and colleges. It also called for ensuring implementation of policies evolved for the prevention of negative impact of the climate change. The cabinet stressed the need for planning rain harvesting and it also considered a proposal regarding launching a pilot project in Islamabad.

It approved constituting a cabinet committee to be headed by Minister for Climate Change Sherry Rehman and comprising concerned ministers that will present its recommendations regarding the short, medi-

um and long term projects in this regard. Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister said climate change, food and water security are inter-related challenges, which require immediate measures to protect the future generations from their negative impacts.

He said the government is fully cognizant of the possible problems because of the climate change and resolution of this issue is amongst the top priorities of the current dispensation.

Moreover, the cabinet members approved fixing the minimum Diyat [financial compensation paid to the heirs of the victims in murder cases] up to 30,630 grams of silver. The recently approved worth of the minimum blood money was nearly Rs4.3 million. A briefing was given to the cabinet

members regarding the climate change effects on the country by the concerned ministry. The cabinet members expressed concerns over the rising effects of climate change on Pakistan which are also affecting the resources.

It was urged to include climate change education in the school and college curriculums besides ensuring the enforcement of the climate change policies. It was also urged to devise a plan for rainwater harvesting on the war footing. It was recommended to launch a pilot project for rainwater harvesting in Islamabad. The federal cabinet constituted a committee headed by Federal Minister Sherry Rehman. The committee will prepare its recommendations for short-term and long-term projects regarding climate change.

## IHC hears PTI petition on MNAs' resignations

**Staff Reporter**



ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday heard a Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) petition against the 'phase-wise' acceptance of resignations of its members of the National Assembly (MNAs). The National Assembly Speaker's Secretariat expressed ignorance over the petition as an official denied having a copy of the application. "Everyone knows about the application except the Speaker's Secretariat," the court remarked.

"Deputy Speaker, who was acting speaker at that time, had attached his order with the petition," the bench remarked. "The verification process with regard to resignation was completed earlier," PTI counsel Faisal Chaudhry said. "An order was given either accept it or refuse," Justice Aamer Farooq said. "My decisions will not be declared void when I will not be a judge," he said.

"An order has been given, you have to hold election," the bench observed. "Why you come to court to halt the election in nine constituencies," Justice Farooq asked the PTI's lawyer. "We want the election not in only nine constituencies but in 123 constituencies," Justice Farooq said. "My constituency should remain without representation," the bench observed.

The court adjourned further hearing of the case till Monday. In an early hearing PTI counsel said that "deputy speaker Qasim Suri had already accepted resignations of 123 PTI members." It is pertinent to mention here that NA Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf had accepted the resignations of 11 Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Members of the National Assembly. All the PTI lawmakers had earlier resigned en masse on April 11, two days after former prime minister Imran Khan was ousted from the top office after the no-confidence motion moved by the joint opposition in the parliament against him succeeded.

**Prohibited**

**FIA summons PTI leaders in funding case**

PESHAWAR: Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Peshawar on Tuesday has summoned Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders in prohibited funding case for probe. Former NA speaker Asad Qaiser, former KP governor, Shah Farman, Muhammad Imran and Muhammad Hassan Daud have been summoned. The PTI office-bearers have been asked to appear before the FIA on August 18 for probe.

FIA started investigating the PTI prohibited funding case after the verdict of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). A six-member probe team has been formed by the intelligence agency.

The concerned authorities have expanded the scope of the probe against PTI in the prohibited funding case. A five-member special monitoring team was formed by the intelligence agency.

The monitoring team will coordinate with the zonal inquiry team in Lahore, Peshawar, Karachi, Islamabad, Quetta and Faisalabad. The zonal committees will collect records of the assets owned by Imran Khan-led PTI, whereas, the inquiries will be conducted under the Political Parties Act 2002. The monitoring teams will be comprised of five members. APP

**Govt hikes dealers' margin on diesel**

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has increased the dealers' margin to Rs7 per litre on the High-Speed Diesel (HSD) from the current Rs4.13. According to details, the federal government has approved an increase of 69 percent in profit margin on High-Speed Diesel (HSD). The increase in dealers' margin became effective from Tuesday. The fixed profit was increased from Rs4.13 per litre to Rs7 per litre. After the increase, the citizens were deprived of Rs2.87 relief on diesel.

However, the government reduced the price of high speed diesel by Rs0.51 per litre after increasing the dealers' margin. It is pertinent to mention here that the government had previously increased dealers' margin on petrol by Rs2.10 per litre. Earlier, the federal cabinet had approved an increase in dealers' margin. A day earlier, the federal government announced a hike of Rs6.72 per litre in the price of petrol for the remaining days of August 2022.

According to a notification issued by the Finance Division, petrol will now be priced at Rs233.91 after the latest hike, followed by high speed diesel at Rs244.44, kerosene oil at Rs199.40 and light diesel at Rs191.75. The price of diesel saw a decrease of Rs0.51 while the per litre rate of light diesel jacked up by Rs0.43 per litre. APP



ly decide on your plea", the ECP chief said and added after hearing arguments, we will decide how to take up the case further.

Meanwhile, the further hearing on the case has been adjourned until August 18.

**Pak-US to optimize military to military ties**

*USAmbassador, Air Chief discuss bilateral, regional issues*

**Staff Reporter**

ISLAMABAD: US Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome called on Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu here on Tuesday. During the meeting, matters of regional security situation, enhanced bilateral and defence cooperation were discussed. Both sides agreed to further optimize military to military ties particularly in training and operational domains.

The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's efforts in promoting regional peace and vowed to enhance cooperation in various fields. He also lauded the professionalism of Pakistan Air

Force and exceptional progress made by it over the years, especially through indigenization. On the occasion, the Air Chief highlighted that both countries enjoy cordial relations and reiterated his resolve to further enhance the existing bilateral cooperation between the two strategic partners.

He said Pakistan values its strong diplomatic, economic and defence relations with the United States which are based on convergence on all important issues relating to regional peace, security and stability. Earlier, the US Envoy to Pakistan Donald Blome has said his country stands with the communities in Pakistan recovering from the devastation caused by severe

flooding.

In a series of Tweets this morning, he said that this disaster has resulted in a catastrophic loss of life, with many losing their loved ones, their livelihoods and their homes. Donald Blome said we will work closely in coordination with partners on the ground to support these crucial humanitarian assistance efforts. Ambassador Donald Blome announced a humanitarian assistance and said that United States Agency for International Development will provide 100,000 US Dollars to the affected people. He said this assistance will help purchase urgent supplies to save lives and reduce sufferings among the most affected communities.

# Govt takes corrective measures to stabilize economy: Shazia Marri

*Says economy is the start and end of everything and you cannot bring any reform unless you have a strong economy*

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Shazia Marri on Tuesday said that the government was taking correct measures to stabilize the economy.

Addressing a conference on economy, the federal minister said that despite several interventions in the political system of Pakistan and the war against terrorism and extremism, we as a nation were strong enough to stand for our country and put it on the path of progress and stability.

Quoting the famous sayings, Shazia Marri said someone rightly said that "strong economy is a source of national strength". "Economy is the start and end of everything and you cannot bring any reform unless you have a strong economy", she said.

She said, "We are member of global comity, I am very happy to express



gratitude to our international friends who always extended help to us in difficult times like disasters or calamities".

Briefing about her ministry, Shazia

Marri said that her ministry is working diligently to improve the socio-economic status of the poor. "All the shocks that economy has to face ultimately affect the living conditions of poor segments of the country the most".

Mentioning the alarming indicators faced by the country, the minister said that Pakistan is ranked among 43 countries which are most exposed to poverty while 54 percent of its population is vulnerable to poverty due to health shocks.

She mentioned that around 52 million people in the country are living below poverty line while 30 percent of the households experience food insecurity so the whole state of economy impact the population of the country as well as poverty ratio.

The minister elaborated that Benazir Income Support Program, initiated in

2008, was the brain child of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto.

The program provides financial support and other facilities to the eight million families. The basic criterion of this program is to register the women member of the household for extending the benefits.

She said that since the country inherited a destabilized economy from the previous government and recorded 38.2 billion dollar trade deficit when came into power, we have to take correct measures to ensure stability of economy and ensure the poor people graduate out of poverty.

Shazia Marri observed that IMF study estimates that Pakistan's GDP can increase nearly 33 percent if women contribution towards the labour force is close towards the men participation.

**Hamdard Pakistan celebrates 75th Independence Day with national fervor**



KARACHI: Ms. Sadia Rashid, Chief Mutawallia of Hamdard Pakistan cutting the cake on the occasion of 75th Independence Day at Hamdard Corporate Head Office. Managing Director and CEO Fatima Munir Ahmed, Chief Operating Officer Dr. Arshad Saleem, Hamdard University Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Syed Shabibul Hasan, Prof. Dr. Hakim Abdul Hanan and others are also present in this picture.

**Spokesman Report**

KARACHI: Hamdard Pakistan celebrated Pakistan's 75th Independence Day with a lot of national fervour and enthusiasm yesterday in a 14th August Independence Day celebratory cake-cutting event held at Hamdard's Corporate Head Office. Ms. Sadia Rashid, Chief Mutawallia attended the event as chief guest. She was accompanied by Managing Director & CEO Fatima Munir Ahmed, Chief Operating Officer Dr. Arshad Saleem, Vice Chancellor Hamdard University, Prof. Dr. Syed Shabib-ul-Hassan, Directors and senior staff members.

On the occasion, Hamdard Pakistan's founder Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said's dream of a prosperous Pakistan, vision of enlightening the young minds, philanthropy and iconic contributions in the health sector of the country were remembered and honoured by the gathering.

The team members in large numbers attended the festivities and prayed for the bright future and prosperity of the country.

According to the statement released by Hamdard Pakistan, it was said: "14th of August is a day where Pakistanis come together to honour the struggles and sacrifices made by millions of Muslims, including our forefathers who stood firm to achieve independence for us.

14th of August is a day to reaffirm our commitment to serve our beloved country with the best of our abilities.

Hamdard Pakistan's continuous struggle to shape the way forward of our nation in the fields of health and education has been a demonstration of the organization's patriotism, compassion and resilience towards the betterment of our society.

As an organization that was founded with the sole objective to serve the country, Hamdard Pakistan celebrates every national day including 10th of Ramazan (Youn e Babul Islam) and 27th of Ramazan, as Pakistan was founded on the same day, with fervour and patriotism.

## Independence Day celebration

### Flag hoisting, cake cutting ceremony held at Shangrila Hotels and Resorts

**Staff Reporter**

MURREE: A flag hoisting and cake cutting ceremony was organized by Shangrila Hotels and Resorts on the occasion of Independence Day. The ceremony was attended by senior officers of the Pakistan Army, political and social personalities and civil society.

According to the details, a flag hoisting ceremony was organized by Shangrila Hotels and Resorts on the occasion of Independence Day on August 14, in which high-ranking officers of the Pakistan Army participated. Chief guest Colonel Javed Rao hoisted the green crescent flag and saluted. Lieutenant Colonel Adeel Yousuf was also present on this occasion. After the flag hoisting ceremony, the National Anthem was played and the formal ceremony started with the recitation of Holy Quran. Colonel Javed Rao, Sohail Irfan Abbasi President PTI Murree, Raja Khurram Zaman Secretary Good Governance PTI Murree, Mr. Ansar Mumtaz



Information Secretary PTI Murree, Mr. Adnan Murtaza Abbasi Coordinator Youth Wing PTI North Punjab and Senior Journalist Mr. Nisar Ahmad expressed their views on the occasion of Independence Day and paid tribute to Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

At the end of the ceremony, the honorable guests cut the cake and

distributed gifts among the children. Qamar Ranjha Head of Business Development Shangrila Group and Nadeem Satti Resident Manager Shangrila Resort Murree thanked the distinguished guests on behalf of Chairman Shangrila Group Mr. Muhammad Khan, Vice Chairman Mr. Muhammad Syab Khan and CEO Mr. Muhammad Shahbaz Khan.

The Office of the Ombudsman Punjab is fully committed to ensuring that no official or provincial government institution could be negligent in upholding public rights, the spokesman concluded.

## Over 6.2m people visit website of Office of Ombudsman Punjab

**Staff Reporter**

LAHORE: The official website of the Office of Ombudsman Punjab www.ombudsmanpunjab.gov.pk has been visited by 6229153 people from Pakistan and other parts of the world to date.

In a statement issued on Tuesday, the spokesman said that the official website of the Office of Ombudsman Punjab has provided the necessary information, statistics and guidance to the people so that the applicants could get the required information and guidance from their homes instead of going to the respective offices.

The Office of the Ombudsman Punjab is fully committed to ensuring that no official or provincial government institution could be negligent in upholding public rights, the spokesman concluded.

### Attack on polio team, two policemen martyred

**Adam Khanbwazir**

TANK: As a result of the attack on the polio team in Tank district, two policemen have been martyred, Constable Nisar and Pir Rehman are among the martyred officers.

The attack on the police personnel responsible for the security of the polio team has been carried out in the village near Kot Azam. Immediately after the attack, DPO Waqar Ahmed reached the spot along with a heavy contingent of police and security forces,



launched in Tank from August 15, unknown armed men have targeted two policemen assigned to the security of the polio team in Kucha Graha near Kot Azam area of Gomal police station, both officials Nisar and Pir Rehman have passed away.

As soon as the incident was reported, District Police Officer Waqar Ahmad Khan reached the spot along with a heavy

contingent of police and security forces and shifted the dead bodies of the officers to the district headquarters hospital tank for post-mortem and conducted a search operation.

The DPO continued to lead the search operation, but the accused escaped. On this occasion, the DPO said that the search operation process for the attackers will continue and they will be arrested soon.

A large number of citizens including civil and military officials participated in the funeral at DPO Office Tank. It should be noted that 273 teams have been formed throughout the district for the current 10-day polio campaign, during which 74,848 children up to 5 years of age will be administered polio drops while 1031 policemen have been deployed for their security.

### BreakThru recognized as one of Best Places to Work in Pakistan

**Our Correspondent**

"This achievement is a result of our continued commitment to building a healthy workplace culture that is transparent, fair, and where all employees feel respected and heard. At BreakThru we believe that if we take care of our employees then our employees will take care of our customers. We are proud of our employees and are committed to their personal and professional growth.

Best Places to Work is the most definitive 'Employer of Choice' certification that organizations aspire to achieve. Our Best Places to Work Assessment model is built on over 30 years of research in workplace excellence along with the best practices collected annually from over 5000 certified companies worldwide.

Every year, the program partners with many organizations in Pakistan, across different industries, to help them measure, benchmark, improve their HR practices and have access to the tools and expertise they need to deliver effective and sustainable change in their organizations.

### Bach Malanga tells the story of Malanga

**Unsa Kiani**

**B**ach Malanga tells the story of Malanga: a private driver who picks up passengers when he's out without his boss' knowledge, to earn some cash on the side. This harmless little scam gets him into a lot of trouble when he picks up some people he probably shouldn't have.

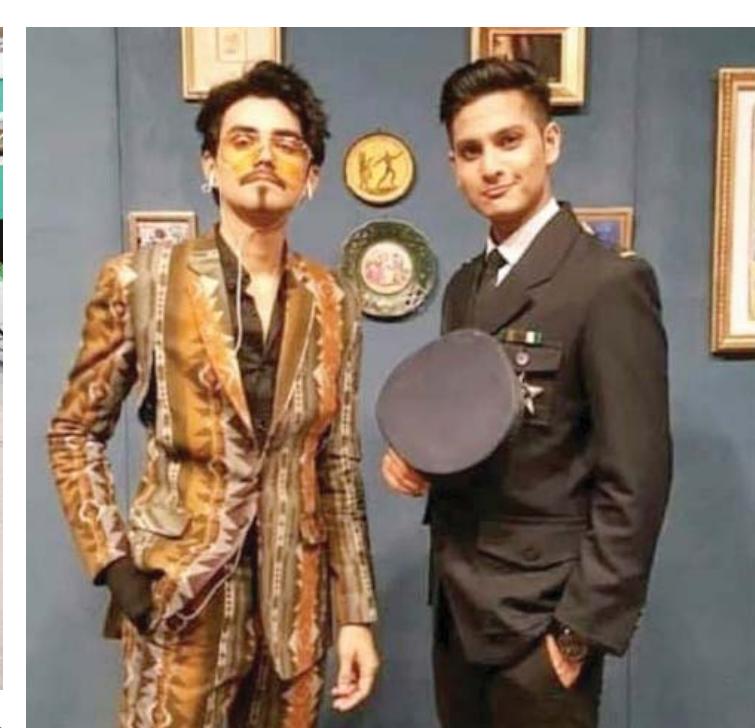


Bach Malanga was screened in National College of Arts, Lahore in the degree show of 2022 and landed its director Sheryar Ali a distinction. Not only was it appreciated academically, it also gained a fair amount of popularity with the audience that came to watch the shows. Giving the film 6 consecutive house full shows, the viewers would often come back for another round the next day and would even bring friends to enjoy the show!

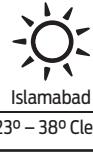
Bach Malanga is Sheryar's 8th short film. Long before graduating from NCA with a distinction, he made his first short film back in 2016 and hasn't stopped since. He has since also directed some commercially successful music videos for some big names in the Pakistani music industry like Agha Ali and Asim Azhar in Kalakar Sessions season 1, gathering millions of views online. His music video for Haider Ali's Nade Ali became widely popular and became a trendsetter for "Qaseeda videos". Other than directing, he has done the cine-

matography for many short films and music videos, and has shot and edited fashion films for some major Pakistani brands such as Maria B, Sapphire, Ideas by Gul Ahmed and SoKamal to name a few. He co-founded his production company: MatchCut Studios while still in college with some passionate people who share the same goals, and through this venture, this group of young artists plans on expanding, and producing content on a larger scale. Filmmaking is the closest thing to his heart, and he doesn't plan on slowing down any time soon. He wants to soon make his mark on the big screen and dreams of reuniting the public with cinema and wishes to be an active part of the revival of Pakistani cinema.

Sheryar Ali is a fresh graduate from NCA, where he took part in the theatre society Alif Adab and performed in the play "Mix Sabzi". During his time there, he starred in thesis films and other student films such as "Censory Khaiz", "Sonu" and "Tomato Tomato" to name a few. Other than that he starred in the award-winning short film "Safarnama"



that bagged first place in the fiction category at ISPR's NASFF Film festival. He has also acted in music videos for some known artists such as 21 band and Abbas Raza, not to mention his own music videos as well, that's right! He's quite the singer too! And just because he studied at NCA doesn't mean he starred in just NCA films. He's acted in films made by students at BNU, NUST and SZABIST as well, and recently played the lead in PTV's independence day telefilm "Rang e Baryab" alongside the legendary Salman Shahid. He's known for his natural and relatable performances, and depictions of everyday characters in a way that leaves a mark on the audiences that watch his films.



Islamabad

23° - 38° Clear

**SERVICES****Namaz Timings**

Fajr .....	4:00 am
Zohr .....	12:12 pm
Asr .....	4:57 pm
Magrib .....	6:53 pm
Isha .....	8:24 pm

**EMERGENCY**

Rescue (Police) .....	15
Bomb Disposal .....	15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad .....	1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance .....	1122 &
& Rescue Services .....	451122
Motorway Police .....	9266044
Motorway Police .....	9270601-20

**Women Police****Stations**

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

**ENQUIRY**

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

**HOSPITALS**

CMH .....	561111
MH .....	561116
MH .....	561116
Cantt Hospital .....	9270907-11
DHQ .....	5556311-4
RGH .....	9290301-7
Holy Family .....	9290322-7
PIMS .....	926110-79
Policlinic .....	9218300-99
Shifa International .....	460366

**DEPARTMENTS**

CDA .....	9212334-43
CDA .....	9208301-04
Met Office .....	9250360-6
RDA .....	5555864
TMA .....	5770886
Cantonment Board .....	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation .....	9209224
Potohar Town .....	9209224
Rawal Town .....	5773343

**COMPLAINTS**

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

**Poor agriculture resulting in economic depression:**  
Mian Zahid

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on the poor state of the country's most important sector is resulting in the economic downturn. Despite the world's best canal system and fertile land, agricultural imports are increasing at an alarming rate which is a drain on the exchequer he said.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that during the last financial year, food items worth ten billion dollars, tea worth one billion dollars, cotton worth two billion dollars and palm oil worth four billion dollars were imported, which is worth Rs3400 billion. Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that Pakistan would not only become fully self-sufficient in agriculture but would also become a notable exporter of agricultural products if investments are made along with favourable policies.

Police investigation takes a painfully long time because of a lack of motivation and supervision by superiors, they said, adding that the want of human resources to confront a large number of cases is also a serious problem.

The prosecution is also highly frustrating, there are long delays, and repeated adjournments caused either by the absence of lawyers, parties or the non-availability of the presiding officers, resulting in frustration, they said.

The speakers noted that the judicial processes take years, sometimes generations, because of the broken system that does not meet the criteria of quick justice and that the weak dispute resolution mechanism hampering economy.

The accountability of courts in cases of long delays or the incorrect interpretation of law hardly exists and there is hardly any supervision over the conduct of judicial officers. An institution that deals

with the cases of millions of people every day must have built-in mechanisms to ensure that delays don't occur and cases are disposed of on merit

A ruler dismantled the institution of District Magistrate and Sub-divisional Magistrates, which were suited to the conditions of South Asia. That system operates with success in neighbouring India and Bangladesh even today.

The lack of timely completion of criminal cases causes anger as it benefits the culprits. The rate of convictions in criminal cases is one of the lowest in the world, which is hardly four percent and the rest get the benefit of the doubt, said Group Country Head of United International Group Dr. Murtaza Mughal.

ISLAMABAD: Speakers at a seminar have said the alarming situation in the country has once again highlighted the need for long-awaited police and judicial reforms which are necessary for a healthy society.

The present system has failed to deliver and a complete overhaul has become necessary to ensure a responsive, robust and quick strategy for a just and less expensive mechanism.

Speaking at a seminar organized by Alpha Think Tank (ATT) Pakistan, titled, "Police and Judicial Reforms," they said that many people have lost faith in the police's ability to help the victims of crimes.

Police investigation takes a

painfully long time because of a lack of motivation and supervision by superiors, they said, adding that the want of human resources to confront a large number of cases is also a serious problem.

The prosecution is also highly frustrating, there are long delays, and repeated adjournments caused either by the absence of lawyers, parties or the non-availability of the presiding officers, resulting in frustration, they said.

The speakers noted that the judicial processes take years, sometimes generations, because of the broken system that does not meet the criteria of quick justice and that the weak dispute resolution mechanism hampering economy.

The accountability of courts in cases of long delays or the incorrect interpretation of law hardly exists and there is hardly any supervision over the conduct of judicial officers. An institution that deals

wastewater management etc. She said that energy efficient constructions, sensitizing the public on responsible consumption of energy and other resources are critical to prevent climate change from further exacerbating.

She further said that ground water abstractions are an adding pressure and after years of deliberation no groundwater regulatory framework or water tariff regime has been accomplished. She said that the system of surface water drainage and mass transit must be enhanced to meet the urban expansion rate while rainwater catchment remains a neglected aspect of urban planning. She expressed that as a transit city to tourist areas in Pakistan, the pres-

sure on the health infrastructure in Islamabad has increased manifold and no capacity enhancement has been planned or executed. She further said that Islamabad as the capital and planned city should have been developed as a model solarized city, but it has not.

Mubashar Hussain, Manager, Disaster Risk Reduction, National Disaster Risk Management Fund said that NDRMF is working on disaster resilience and disaster risk management throughout Pakistan by issuing call for proposals, funding and executing disaster resilience projects in collaboration with public and private sector. The organization also works on building risk management capacity at community level for

the most vulnerable cities to develop these systems. He called for research and development, technology-based solutions and re-evaluation of master plans every 3 years for climate smart resilient infrastructure.

Nabeel Siddiqui, CEO Modulus Tech said that climate smart housing is affordable, resource efficient, low carbon footprint and adheres to the SDGs agenda. He said that while the previous government presented policy plans for affordable housing for low-income groups, they did not address the issue of energy consumption and subsequent emissions. He pointed out that 40% of emissions from housing is generated due to energy consumption. He said that the technology serv-

# Ahsan terms education, enterprises key for reviving economy

*Says all political parties should agree on a common agenda to turn around economy*

**Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) in collaboration with National Press Club (NPC) organized an "All Parties Conference for Revival of Economy".

Ahsan Iqbal Federal Minister for Planning & Development, Miftah Ismail Federal Minister for Finance, Qamar Zaman Kaira Advisor to Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit Baltistan, Shazia Marri Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation & Social Safety, Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed, Senator Maulana Abdul Ghaffor Haideri of JUI(F), Himayat Ullah Mayar of ANP, Mian Muhammad Aslam, Jamaat e Islami, Presidents of Karachi, Quetta, Faisalabad and Islamabad Women Chamber Chambers of Commerce and a large number of business attended the Conference.

Addressing the Conference, Ahsan

Iqbal, Federal Minister for Planning & Development appreciated ICCI for organizing APC and termed three Es, education, enterprises and exports as key for reviving Pakistan's economy. He said that all political parties should agree on a common agenda to turn around the economy of Pakistan.

Miftah Ismail, Federal Minister for Finance said that diverting domestic manufacturing to exports, improving agricultural productivity, providing education to the out of school children, focus on science & technology and living within our own means was very important to revive the economy.

Qamar Zaman Kaira, Advisor to PM on Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit Baltistan said that improving agro productivity, encouraging investment in productive sectors, promoting industrial exports and enhancing manpower exports should be the way forward to revive the economy.

## Al-Shifa Trust to build eye hospital in Quetta

*Army allocated land, the facility will be completed by 2024*

**Spokesman Report**

RAWALPINDI: Al-Shifa Trust is to set up a full-fledged hospital in Baluchistan. The facility with a capacity of 400 patients per day will be built at Quetta.

Army has allocated a suitable land to the Al-Shifa Trust on which a state-of-the-art eye hospital will be built to improve the delivery of care in the city and rural areas.

The site is adjacent to the Quetta Cantt, it is a site for education and health city where NUST, cancer and cardiology hospitals are also located and public will have an easy approach to the facility.

## PAC holds musical night "Azadi Ke Rang Suron Ke Sung"

**Spokesman Report**

RAWALPINDI: A musical night "Azadi Ke Rang Suron Ke Sung" was organized in Punjab Arts Council to celebrate Pakistan Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

Naheed Manzoor and Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmed were the chief guests of the musical night. Naheed Manzoor said on this occasion that the folk songs of Punjab have their unique place in the culture of the whole country, in which the traditions, simplicity and sincere love of the people of Punjab are hidden.

The artists of Punjab have preserved their folk songs, their tunes and unique tone in a rich way and today's young generation is also benefiting from this. Punjab Arts Council is also playing a significant role in promoting the culture of other provinces and federal units.

## Health Corner

*Bioengineered cornea can restore sight*

ISLAMABAD: Researchers and entrepreneurs have developed an implant made of collagen protein from pig's skin, which resembles the human cornea. In a pilot study, the implant restored vision to 20 people with diseased corneas, most of whom were blind prior to receiving the implant. The study jointly led by researchers at Linköping University (LiU) and LinkoCare Life Sciences AB has been published in Nature Biotechnology. The promising results bring hope to those suffering from corneal blindness and low vision by providing a bioengineered implant as an alternative to the transplantation of donated human corneas, which are scarce in countries where the need for them is greatest.

"The results show that it is possible to develop a biomaterial that meets all the criteria for being used as human implants, which can be mass-produced and stored up to two years and thereby reach even more people with vision problems. This gets us around the problem of shortage of donated corneal tissue and access to other treatments for eye diseases," says Neil Lagali, professor at the Department of Biomedical and Clinical Sciences at LiU, one of the researchers behind the study.

An estimated 12.7 million people around the world are blind due to their corneas, which is the outermost transparent layer of the eye, being damaged or diseased. Their only way of regaining vision is to receive a transplanted cornea from a human donor. But just one in 70 patients receives a cornea transplant. Furthermore, most of those who need cornea transplants live in low and middle-income countries in which access to treatments is very limited.

"Safety and effectiveness of the bioengineered implants have been the core of our work, says Mehrdad Rafat, the researcher and entrepreneur behind the design and development of the implants. He is an adjunct associate professor (senior lecturer) at LiU's Department of Biomedical Engineering and founder and CEO of the company LinkoCare Life Sciences AB, which manufactures the bioengineered corneas used in the study.

"We've made significant efforts to ensure that our invention will be widely available and affordable by all and not just by the wealthy. That's why this technology can be used in all parts of the world," he says.

The cornea consists mainly of the protein collagen. To create an alternative to human cornea, the researchers used collagen molecules derived from pig skin that were highly purified and produced under strict conditions for human use. The pig skin used is a byproduct of the food industry, making it easy to access and economically advantageous. In the process of constructing the implant, the researchers stabilized the loose collagen molecules forming a robust and transparent material that could withstand handling and implantation in the eye. While donated corneas must be used within two weeks, the bioengineered corneas can be stored for up to two years before use. Courtesy Science Daily

## Japanese Envoy, SAPM on Youth Affairs discuss bilateral ties



ISLAMABAD: Japanese Ambassador Wada Mitsuhiro called on the Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Youth Affairs Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Tuesday and discussed the bilateral ties.</p

Group Chairman/Chief Editor: Almas Ayoub Sabir  
 Vice Chairman: Asim Nazir Ahmad  
 Managing Editor: Naveed Ahmad Khan  
 Head Editorial Advisory Board: Amjad Mehmood  
 Bureau Chief Karachi: Saleem Zaman Khan.  
 (mszk78@gmail.com)  
 Bureau Chief Lahore: Syed Afraz Ali Nazish  
 (afrazalishah@gmail.com)  
 Islamabad Office: Rose Plaza, I-8 Markaz.  
 Karachi office: Flat No.C.3.A.One Comfort, Block No 11.  
 Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Main Rashid Minhas Road.  
 Lahore Office: 7-E,Samanberg, Johar Town.  
 Email: spokemanislamabad@gmail.com  
 Whatsapp: 0346-5008408

## Warming up – on hyper speed

If the accelerated melting of the East Antarctic ice sheet, the world's biggest, was discussed in these columns the same day last week, this week it is the turn of the Arctic. The latest alarming finding is that the pace of the temperature increase around the North Pole has been nearly four times faster than the globe since 1979. Researchers at the Finnish Meteorological Institute cited a phenomenon known as Arctic amplification, caused by the heat-trapping emissions from burning fossil.

Numerous studies have reported that the Arctic is warming either twice, more than twice, or even three times as fast as the globe on average. In the study in question, by using several observational datasets which cover the Arctic region, the researchers show that during the last 43 years, the Arctic has been warming nearly four times faster than the globe, which is a higher ratio than generally reported in literature.

They compared the observed Arctic amplification ratio with the ratio simulated by state-of-the-art climate models, and found that the observed four-fold warming ratio over 1979–2021 is an extremely rare occasion in the climate model simulations. The observed and simulated amplification ratios are more consistent with each other if calculated over a longer period; however the comparison is obscured by observational uncertainties before 1979. The results indicate that the recent four-fold Arctic warming ratio is either an extremely unlikely event, or the climate models systematically tend to underestimate the amplification.

Climate models, which scientists used to predict long-term change, are not capturing this high rate of warming. By analysing temperature trends in the Arctic Circle between 1979 and 2021, the researchers found the rate of warming is particularly high in the Eurasian region of the Arctic, especially the Barents Sea, which has warmed seven times faster than the global average. Recent data revealed that the annual average temperature in the Barents region climbed by as much as 2.7 degrees Celsius each decade in the past 20 to 40 years, making the Barents Sea and its islands the fastest warming location on the planet.

Vanishing snow and ice, particularly sea ice, are one big reason why Arctic warming is on hyperspeed. The bright white snow and ice create a reflective shield that bounces incoming radiation from the sun back into space. But open ocean waters or bare rocks absorb that heat, raising the temperature. Last year's annual Arctic Report Card, published by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, US, found that the Arctic region is warming faster than the rest of the Earth and is rapidly losing ice cover, transforming the typically frozen landscape to a greener and browner one than it was just roughly a decade ago.

All these findings also reflect the most recent UN state-of-the-science report on the climate crisis, which found the Arctic will continue to warm faster than the rest of the planet as long as humans continue to burn fossil fuels and release greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. The Arctic is really more sensitive to global warming than previously thought. Only time will tell. Let's see how this will evolve in the future.

# Taiwan tensions & the dangerous sound of silence

William Choong

The Taiwan Strait crisis in 1995–1996 saw China and the United States draw closer to the brink of conflict after the latter granted a visa to then Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui to visit his alma mater Cornell University in June 1995. In July and August 1995, China launched missile "tests" and live-firing exercises in the waters surrounding Taiwan. The US responded by deploying naval assets such as an amphibious assault ship and an aircraft carrier near Taiwan in the second half of 1995. In March 1996, China conducted more military exercises and lobbed missiles; the US responded by sending two carrier battle groups into the area.

After the crisis, Lieutenant-General Zhang Wannian, then senior vice-chairman of China's Central Military Commission, asked US Admiral Joseph Prueher what the latter was thinking during the tense episode. Admiral Prueher's answer: "I remember wishing I had your telephone number." History appears to be repeating itself. This month, China staged

a series of military exercises and live firings near Taiwan after Mrs Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the US House of Representatives, visited the island. On Aug 6, Beijing announced that it had suspended military-to-military talks with Washington.

Then, bilateral meetings were held at all levels, from the presidential (Mr Bill Clinton and Mr Jiang Zemin) down to the working level. A key meeting between then US National Security Adviser Anthony Lake, then Secretary of State Warren Christopher, and then Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister Liu Huaiqu established the boundaries of anticipated actions and, by doing so, minimised misunderstanding. Essentially, both sides mapped out a modus operandi: no escalation by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) against Taiwan in return for no show of support by the US for Taiwanese independence. The risk of force-on-force contact was minimised. The Americans laid out clear boundaries for their forces: US naval ships and military aircraft were instructed not to enter the Taiwan Strait nor interfere with PLA exercises.

The Chinese took care to avoid hostilities with the Americans, undertaking not to fill the skies

with air-superiority fighters, not to approach US ships in the area, nor to employ electronic countermeasures against US and allied surveillance activities. The current Taiwan crisis has some shades of the restraint of 1996. The Chinese conducted their military exercises around Taiwan only after Mrs Pelosi's visit and did not intercept her incoming flight (which the Americans had anyway rerouted to prevent such a scenario). In turn, the Americans refrained from transiting the strait during the PLA drills and postponed a long-planned test of an air force intercontinental ballistic missile.

Ms Bonnie Glaser, director of the Asia Programme at the US German Marshall Fund, noted in a recent podcast that distrust between the two great powers is at an "all-time high". While there are dialogues, they have been superficial "exchange of lists and talking points" rather than attempts at solving problems. Mr Bill Klein, former charge d'affaires at the US Embassy in Beijing, noted in the same podcast that communications can lead to a deeper understanding of the other's intentions and red lines, and facilitate better responses. Granted, there are limits to what crisis communications

can achieve. As Rand analyst Lyle Morris notes, China uses crisis communications such as hotlines to signal resolve and assign blame, while the US sees them as means to deconflict and de-escalate.

Mr Morris cites Dr Kurt Campbell, the US National Security Council Coordinator for the Indo-Pacific, who has noted that hotlines tend to "ring endlessly in empty rooms". In the eyes of the Chinese, Mr Biden's statement that he would defend Taiwan indicates that the US intends to sever Taiwan from the mainland. This time, the Chinese pushed the envelope by launching missiles over Taiwan. The six "closure zones" around Taiwan (against just two in March 1996) indicate that the Chinese could be laying the ground for a future blockade of the island.

The danger is that, with dialogue closed between Beijing and Washington, the two sides have no way of communicating their true intentions to each other. Where does this leave ASEAN and other concerned regional states?

The truth of the matter is that the centrality of ASEAN-led regional architecture such as the East Asia Summit (EAS)—which includes all 10 ASEAN members, China, Russia and the US—was

already experiencing challenges prior to this latest crisis. ASEAN managed to put out its first-ever statement on the Taiwan Strait issue, expressing concern about "regional volatility" and calling for "maximum restraint". However, that does little to change how the grouping is increasingly a hostage to great power politics. During a recent EAS event in Phnom Penh, Mr Wang and his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov walked out when it was Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi's turn to speak, apparently because of Tokyo's criticism of the PLA's exercises near Taiwan.

There was no Wang-Blinken bilateral meeting. To cap it all, Mr Wang abruptly left the gala dinner—ASEAN's traditional social event for all ASEAN and dialogue partners' ministers—right before it started. ASEAN has pulled out all the stops to get the US and China to restart their dialogue. The two great powers need to play ball in the interest of regional stability. To rephrase the pithy aphorism by Winston Churchill: The lack of jaw-jaw might raise the possibility of war.

The writer is a senior fellow at ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute. Courtesy The Straits Times



## Pakistan: Non-Traditional Security Threats & Institutions' Role



Barkat Ullah

Although the contemporary world has become a global village due to advanced technologies, increased cooperation and interconnectedness, yet it faces several serious security challenges.

In the beginning, these security challenges were traditional in nature; but nowadays, non-traditional security threats have gained tremendous importance as well. There are several countries in particular, which are facing non-traditional security threats in various aspects. Pakistan is among such countries, which is directly exposed to such security challenges; and faces catastrophic implications in this regard.

It is a security state which comes across both traditional and non-traditional security issues. For instance, on one side, Pakistan has to deal with Indian hostility on the line of control, insurgency on Afghanistan and Iran border, on the other; there are terrorism, pandemic, food insecurity, drug trafficking and environmental issues etc. Such issues

The society was drastically

always present devastating hazards to Pakistan; which not only impact its economy but social and political fabric as well. Environmental issues such as climate change, flooding, drought and natural disasters are some of the major ones which have victimized Pakistan from the beginning. Pakistan, being a developing country have economic limitations, struggling governance system and weak communication and transportation mechanism.

Keeping the mentioned facts in mind, it becomes very tough for Pakistan to tackle such emergency situations of environmental issues, pandemic and terrorism etc. For instance, most recently in the Baluchistan province of the country, more than 120 people are killed and thousands others are displaced as a result of heavy raining and urban flooding. However, on one side, if there are administrative and technical shortcomings to the government bodies in dealing such unpleasant situations during environmental emergencies; yet on the other side, the security forces play a major role in order to counter such unwanted situations. The armed forces of the country not only provide comprehensive security measures to the traditional security threats on the various forums, but present a broad roadmap towards non-traditional security threats as well.

For instance, during the corona pandemic, like other countries Pakistan was also badly impacted.

They shifted hundreds of families from the affected areas to the safe places and gave them shelters, food and other basic items of necessity. The Writer currently works as a Research Associate at the International Parliamentarians' Congress Islamabad and can be reached at barkatullahbarakaat@gmail.com.

## Afghans & Afghanistan's failure

Ajmal Shams

On the occasion of the first anniversary of the Afghan government's collapse on Aug. 15, 2021, as the Taliban and their supporters celebrate their takeover, millions of Afghans both inside the country and abroad are shocked and dismayed as they reflect upon what happened that fateful day.

Afghans would have been happier with a political settlement and orderly transfer of power to an inclusive interim government as a transitional mechanism. Since the government's collapse last August, life has fundamentally changed for millions of Afghans. Hundreds of thousands have left for neighboring countries such as Pakistan and Iran and thousands have been flown out to safer locations by the US and some European nations.

The level of despair was so high on the day of the collapse that virtually everyone rushed to Kabul Airport in the hope that they might be taken on board a flight destined for the US or another Western nation.

The US government later disclosed that it undertook one of the largest evacuations in its history in Afghanistan, with the effort concluding on Aug. 31. While thousands of Afghans have already been relocated to the US, thousands more remain in camps in Qatar and the UAE as their paperwork is reviewed by the State Department.

However, regardless of all the difficulties, the US has been generous in welcoming eligible Afghans in the aftermath of the events of Aug. 15 last year. On the political side, such activism by the US was important in order to show it was a trustworthy and committed partner.

Meanwhile, many political analysts, commentators, journalists and former Afghan government officials have been speaking their minds as to why and how the country's entire security forces

crumbled in little more than a week after the first province fell to the Taliban in early August 2021. Many blame it on the international community's lack of commitment to Afghan security.

The common Afghan narrative of the fall of the government is very typical of the traditional mindset in the country to blame others for our own mistakes. Afghans have never learnt from history, despite the turbulent events of the past 40-plus years. The last two decades offered Afghanistan a golden opportunity to build its state and the nation with the international community offering all-out support, yet we failed. Whose fault was this? Certainly, ours first and ours last.

Our leaders, instead of building institutions, focused more on building their own political careers. The victims are the silent majority of Afghans. Those in the upper echelons of power in Afghanistan over the past 20 years have betrayed not only their own people but also those nations that generously supported our development and reconstruction efforts. With the new rulers in Kabul, the country remains in significant economic trouble, as the banking system has virtually collapsed and most economic activities have stopped. Thousands working in the public sector have either been fired or quit, as their salaries were not paid. In the wake of all these developments, aid agencies have started to pour millions of dollars into the economy to help those in need. In the months and years ahead, it will be extremely important for donor nations to ensure their aid money reaches the most vulnerable segments of the population in a more efficient manner.

As a resilient nation, Afghans have a long and tough road ahead to retake their freedoms, including the right to education for both boys and girls.

The writer is vice president of the Afghanistan Social Democratic Party and former deputy minister. Courtesy Arab News

Wednesday, August 17, 2022

# Putin blasts US 'hegemony,' predicts end to 'unipolar' world

Says western globalist elites trying to shift blame for their own failures to Russia, China



MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin accused the United States of trying to encourage extended hostilities in Ukraine as part of what he described Tuesday as Washington's alleged efforts to maintain its global hegemony.

Addressing a security conference attended by military officials from Africa, Asia and Latin America, Putin reaffirmed his long-held claim that he sent troops into Ukraine in response to Washington turning the country into an "anti-Russia" bulwark.

"They need conflicts to retain their hegemony," Putin charged. "That's why they have turned the Ukrainian people into cannon fodder. The situation in Ukraine shows that the United States is trying to drag the conflict out, and it acts in exactly the same way trying to fuel conflicts in Asia, Africa and Latin America."

The speech represented the latest attempt by the Russian leader to rally support amid bruising Western sanctions that targeted the Russian economy and finance along with its government structures, top officials and businesses for Moscow's action in Ukraine.

Putin also drew parallels between the U.S. backing Ukraine and a recent visit to Taiwan by U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, charging that both were part of an alleged American attempt to foment global instability.

"The American adventure in Taiwan wasn't just a trip by an irresponsible

politician. It was part of a deliberate and conscious U.S. strategy intended to destabilize the situation and create chaos in the region and the entire world, a blatant demonstration of disrespect for another country's sovereignty and its own international obligations," Putin said.

The Russian leader claimed that "Western globalist elites" were trying "to shift the blame for their own failures to Russia and China," adding that "no matter how hard the beneficiaries of the current globalist model try to cling to it, it's doomed."

"The era of the unipolar world order is nearing its end," he added. Speaking at the same conference, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu charged that along with supplies of weapons to Ukraine, Western allies also have provided detailed intelligence information and deployed instructors to help the Ukrainian military operate

the weapons systems.

"Western intelligence agencies not only have provided target coordinates for launching strikes, but Western specialists also have overseen the input of those data into weapons systems," Shoigu said.

He dismissed allegations that Russia could potentially use nuclear or chemical weapons in the conflict as an "absolute lie." "From the military viewpoint, there is no need for using nuclear weapons in Ukraine to achieve the stated goals," Shoigu said. "The main mission of the Russian nuclear forces is providing a deterrent against a nuclear attack."

Shoigu added that the claims of a possible chemical attack by Russia were equally "absurd," saying that Moscow fully liquidated its chemical weapons stockpiles in compliance with an international treaty banning chemical weapons.

## Kenya's Odinga says he'll challenge close election loss

NAIROBI: Kenyan opposition figure Raila Odinga said Tuesday he'll challenge the results of the close presidential election with "all legal options" after Deputy President William Ruto was declared the winner, bringing new uncertainty to a country where the vote was widely considered to be its most peaceful.

Now East Africa's most stable democracy faces weeks of disputes and the possibility that the Supreme Court will order a fresh election. Already, religious and other leaders have pleaded for calm in a country with a history of deadly post-election violence. "Let no one take the law into their own hands," Odinga said to his supporters.

This was his first appearance since Kenya's electoral commission chairman on Monday declared Ruto the winner with almost 50.5% of the votes. Four of the seven commissioners abruptly announced they

couldn't support the results, and Odinga supporters scuffled with the remaining commissioners at the declaration venue.

Shortly before Odinga spoke, the four commissioners asserted to journalists that the chairman's final math added up to 100.01% and that the excess votes would have made a "significant difference." They also said he didn't give them a chance to discuss the results before his declaration.

"What we saw yesterday was a travesty and blatant disregard of the constitution," Odinga said, calling the election results "null and void."

The 77-year-old Odinga has pursued the presidency for a quarter-century. His campaign has seven days after Monday's declaration to file a petition with the Supreme Court, which would then have 14 days to make a ruling.

The electoral commission had been widely seen

as improving its transparency in this election, practically inviting Kenyans to do the tallying themselves by posting online the more than 46,000 results forms from around the country.

On Tuesday, the local Elections Observers Group announced that its highly regarded parallel voting tally "corroborates the official results" in an important check on the process.

But Odinga asserted that only the electoral commission chairman could see the final results before the declaration. "The law does not vest in the chair the powers of a dictator," he said, and insisted that decisions by the commission must be taken by consensus.

Odinga's campaign had expected victory after outgoing President Uhuru Kenyatta in a political twist backed his former rival Odinga instead of his own deputy president.

The 55-year-old Ruto

appealed to Kenyans by making the election about economic differences and not the ethnic ones that have long marked the country's politics with sometimes deadly results.

He portrayed himself as an outsider from humble beginnings defying the political dynasties of Kenyatta and Odinga, whose fathers were Kenya's first president and vice president.

Still, the turnout in last Tuesday's vote dipped to 65% as Kenyans across the country of 56 million expressed frustration and lack of confidence that the candidates would address the problems of rising prices, high unemployment and widespread corruption. The now-wealthy Ruto himself has faced and denied multiple allegations of land grabs and other graft.

As a growing number of African leaders issued statements congratulating Ruto, Kenya's outgoing president remained silent.

## Iran submits a 'written response' in nuclear deal talks



DUBAI: Iran said Tuesday it submitted a "written response" to what has been described as a final roadmap to restore its tattered nuclear deal with world powers.

Iran's state-run IRNA news agency offered no details on the substance of its response, but suggested that Tehran still wouldn't take the European Union-mediated proposal, despite warnings there would be no more negotiations.

"The differences are on three issues, in which the United States has expressed its verbal flexibility in two cases, but it should be included in the text," the IRNA report said. "The third issue is related to guaranteeing the continuation of (the deal), which depends on the realism of the United States."

Nabila Massrali, a spokesperson for the EU on foreign affairs and security policy, told The Associated Press that the EU received Iran's response on Monday night.

"We are studying it and are consulting with the other JCPOA participants and the U.S. on the way ahead," she said, using an acronym for the formal name for the nuclear deal, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

The EU has been the go-between in the indirect talks as Iran refused to negotiate directly with America since then-President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew the U.S. from the accord in 2018.

From Washington, State Department spokesman Ned Price said the U.S. would share its own response to the EU. "We do agree, however, with (the EU's) fundamental point, and that is that what could be negotiated has been negotiated," Price said.

He added that Iran had been making "unacceptable demands" going beyond the text of the 2015 nuclear deal, which saw Iran drastically limit its enrichment of uranium in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions.

## US, South Korea to begin military drills next week

SEOUL: The United States and South Korea will begin their biggest combined military training in years next week in the face of an increasingly aggressive North Korea, which has been ramping up weapons tests and threats of nuclear conflict against Seoul and Washington, the South Korean military said Tuesday.

The allies' summertime drills, named Ulchi Freedom Shield, will take place from Aug. 22 to Sept. 1 in South Korea and include field exercises involving aircraft, warships, tanks and potentially tens of thousands of troops.

The drills underscore Washington and Seoul's commitment to restore large-scale training after they canceled some of their regular drills and downsized others to computer simulations in recent years to create space for

diplomacy with North Korea and because of COVID-19 concerns.

The U.S. Department of Defense also said the U.S., South Korean and Japanese navies took part in missile warning and ballistic missile search and tracking exercises off the coast of Hawaii from Aug. 8 to 14, which it said were aimed at furthering three-way cooperation in the face of North Korean challenges.

While the United States and South Korea describe their exercises as defensive, Ulchi Freedom Shield will almost surely draw an angry reaction from North Korea, which describes all allied training as invasion rehearsals and has used them to justify its nuclear weapons and missiles development.

China, North Korea's main

ally, expressed concern over the expansion of U.S. military exercises with its Asian allies, saying they could worsen tensions with the North. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin didn't offer a specific answer when asked whether Beijing believes the trilateral drills in Hawaii were in some way directed at China.

"North Korea has repeatedly expressed its concern" over the joint drills, Wang said in a briefing in Beijing on Tuesday.

"The negative impact of the military exercises on the situation on the Korean Peninsula is worth paying attention to. All parties should act prudently and stop any actions that may increase tension and confrontation and damage the mutual trust," he said.

Officials at Seoul's Defense Ministry and its Joint Chiefs of Staff did not comment on the number of U.S. and South Korean troops that will participate in Ulchi Freedom Shield.

Before being shelved or

downsized, the U.S. and South Korea held major joint exercises every spring and summer in South Korea. The spring ones had been highlighted by live-fire drills involving a broad range of land, air and sea assets and usually involved around 10,000 American and 200,000 Korean troops.

Tens of thousands of allied troops participated in the summertime drills, which mainly consisted of computer simulations to hone joint decision making and planning, although South Korea's military has emphasized the revival of large-scale field training this time.

Officials at Seoul's Defense Ministry and its Joint Chiefs of Staff did not comment on the number of U.S. and South Korean troops that will participate in Ulchi Freedom Shield.

downsized, the U.S. and South Korea held major joint exercises every spring and summer in South Korea. The spring ones had been highlighted by live-fire drills involving a broad range of land, air and sea assets and usually involved around 10,000 American and 200,000 Korean troops.

Before being shelved or

## Explosions rock Crimea in suspected Ukrainian attack

KYIV: Explosions and fires ripped through an ammunition depot in Russia-annexed Crimea on Tuesday in the second suspected Ukrainian attack on the peninsula in just over a week, forcing the evacuation of more than 3,000 people.

Russia blamed the blasts in the village of Mayskoye on an "act of sabotage" without naming the perpetrators.

Separately, the Russian business newspaper Kommersant quoted local residents as saying plumes of black smoke also rose over an air base in Crimea's Gvardeskoye.

Ukraine stopped short of publicly claiming responsibility for any of the blasts, including those that destroyed nine Russian planes at another Crimean air base last week. Russia

seized Crimea from Ukraine in 2014 and has used it to launch attacks against the country in the war that began nearly six months ago.

In another reported act of sabotage, Russia's Tass news agency quoted the FSB security agency as saying Ukrainian operatives blew up six high-voltage transmission towers earlier this month in Russia's Kursk region, close to Ukraine.

The incidents raise further questions about Russia's ability to defend itself. Britain's Defense Ministry said in an intelligence update that vessels in Russia's Black Sea Fleet are in an "extremely defensive posture" in the waters off Crimea, with ships barely venturing out of sight of the coastline. Russia's flagship Moskva went

down in the Black Sea in April, and last month Ukrainian forces retook strategic Snake Island.

The Russian fleet's "limited effectiveness undermines Russia's overall invasion strategy," the British said. "This means Ukraine can divert resources to press Russian ground forces elsewhere."

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu charged that in addition to supplying arms to Ukraine, Western allies have provided detailed intelligence and instructors to help Ukraine operate weapons that can hit deep in occupied territory. Western intelligence agencies not only have provided target coordinates for launching strikes, but Western specialists also have overseen the input of those data into weapons systems," Shoigu said.

If Ukrainian forces were behind the explosions in Crimea, that would represent a significant escalation in the war. The Kremlin has demanded that Kyiv recognize Crimea as part of Russia as a condition for ending the fighting, while Ukraine has vowed to drive Moscow's forces from the peninsula on the Black Sea.

Videos posted on social media showed thick columns of smoke rising over raging flames in Mayskoye, and a series of explosions could be heard. The Russian Defense Ministry said the fires damaged a power plant, power lines, railroad tracks and apartment buildings.

Crimea's regional leader, Sergei Aksyonov, said two people were injured and more than 3,000 evacuated from two villages.

Crimea is a popular summer destination for Russian tourists, and last week's explosions at Crimea's Saki air base sent sunbathers on beaches fleeing as flames and pillars of smoke rose over the horizon.

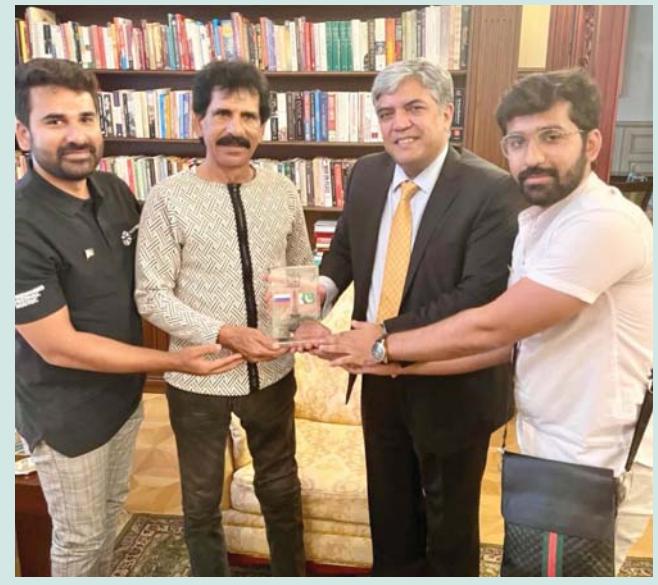
Ukrainian officials warned on Tuesday that Crimea would not



explosions on an accidental detonation of munitions, but satellite photos and other evidence — including the dispersed blast sites — pointed to a Ukrainian attack, perhaps with anti-ship missiles, according to military analysts.

Meanwhile, in the Donbas, the industrial expanse in the east that has been the focus of the fighting in recent months, one civilian was killed in Russian shelling, and two others were wounded, according to the Ukrainian regional governor, Pavlo Kyrylenko. In Kharkiv in northeastern Ukraine, one civilian was killed and nine others were wounded by Russian shelling, regional Gov. Oleh Syniehubov said. He said the overnight attack was "one of the most massive shellings of Kharkiv in recent days."

*People-to-people contacts build strongest links: Envoy*



Spokesman Report

MOSCOW: Pakistan Ambassador to the Russian Federation, Shafqat Ali Khan has received on Tuesday Shahid Mehmood Butt, CEO of the Allied Fireworks Company Pakistan, which won first place in the Rosotec International Firework Festival, held in Moscow on 14th August.

The Ambassador congratulated Shahid Mehmood Butt on the remarkable success. He said that Pakistani company's first position in the international competition had proven their talent and competence.

The Ambassador noted that people-to-people contacts build the strongest links between the two countries. He further added that participation in such events provides an excellent opportunity to present Pakistani culture on the world stage.

Shahid Mehmood Butt apprised the Ambassador of the technologies used in the fireworks. He added that high technology mixed with Pakistani classical songs won the hearts of the audience at the event.

Ambassador Shafqat Ali Khan presented a souvenir to the CEO of Allied Fireworks on behalf of the Embassy of Pakistan in Moscow.

## China sanctions seven Taiwanese officials

BEIJING: China imposed sanctions on Tuesday on seven Taiwanese officials and lawmakers it accused of being "independence diehards," including banning them from entering, in its latest angry reproach of the democratically governed island.

The sanctions come after US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taiwan this month, a trip that China said had sent a wrong signal to what it views as pro-independence forces.

China considers Taiwan its own territory and not a separate country. Taiwan's government disputes China's claim.

China's Taiwan Affairs Office said among those sanctioned were Taiwan's de facto ambassador to the United States, Hsiao Bi-khim, Secretary-General of Taiwan's National Security Council Wellington Koo, and politicians from Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party.

A Taiwan Affairs Office spokesperson said that those sanctioned would not be able to visit China, Hong Kong and Macau. Firms and investors related to them will also not be allowed to profit in China.

"For some time, a few diehard separatist elements, out of their own interests, have gone to lengths to collude with external forces in provocations advocating Taiwan independence," state news agency Xinhua cited the spokesperson as saying.

"They have deliberately instigated confrontations across the Taiwan Strait, and recklessly undermined peace and stability in the region."

Taiwan's foreign ministry said in response that the island was a democracy that "could not be interfered with by China."

"Even more, we cannot accept threats and menace from authoritarian and totalitarian systems," ministry spokesperson Joanne Ou told reporters in Taipei. The sanctions will have little practical impact as senior Taiwanese officials do not visit China.

## Seven Indian troops killed in IOK accident

SRINAGAR: In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, at least seven Indian troops died while dozens others were injured in an accident in south Kashmir Islamabad district.

Seven personnel were killed and 33 others were critically injured when a bus, they were travelling in, fell into a deep gorge in Pahalgam area of the district, an official said.

The bus was on its way from Chandanwari to police control room Srinagar.

## UN envoy travels to Myanmar for first time

UNITED NATIONS: The UN special envoy for Myanmar traveled to the Southeast Asian nation Monday for the first time since she was appointed to the post last October.

The trip by Noeleen Heyzer followed the UN Security Council's latest call for an immediate end to all forms of violence and unimpeded humanitarian access in the strife-torn country.

Heyzer "will focus on addressing the deteriorating situation and immediate concerns as well as other priority areas of her mandate," UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

He gave no details on whether Heyzer would meet with Myanmar's military rulers or the country's imprisoned former leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, a longtime UN demand. Suu Kyi was convicted earlier Monday on more corruption charges, adding six years to her earlier 11-year prison sentence.



# Pakistan beat Netherlands by 16 runs in first ODI

Fakhar Zaman carves out a run-a-ball 109 while Babar Azam hits 74

ROTTERDAM: Pakistan defeated Netherlands by 16 runs in first ODI here on Tuesday.

Pakistan restricted Netherlands to 298/8 in allotted 50 overs. Pakistan got off to a slow start before posting a commanding 314-6. Left-hand opener Fakhar Zaman carved out a run-a-ball 109 – his seventh ODI century – while captain Babar Azam hit 74 before being caught after mistiming a delivery from Dutch paceman Logan van Beek.

Pakistan won the toss and elected to bat on a hot and muggy day at the VOC cricket ground outside the Dutch harbour city in the first of a three-match series.

The home bowlers initially contained Pakistan's batting, with the visitors losing their first wicket, that of危险人 Imamul Haq, lbw to paceman Vivian Kingma in the sixth over for a painstaking two off 19 balls.

But Zaman and Azam eventually let loose and put on a partnership of 168 off 170 balls before Azam was caught in a soft dismissal when he mistimed a shot into the waiting hands of Tom Coop-



er at mid-off. Zaman was dismissed two overs later when he was brilliantly run out by Dutch captain and wicket-keeper Scott Edwards off a pin-point

accurate throw by Bas de Leede at deep mid-wicket.

Pakistan looked set for a larger total but the Dutch bowlers did well to

restrict them on a sluggish pitch, with the spin bowling of youngsters Aryan Dutt and Tim Pringle causing problems.

The Dutch let themselves down in the field though and dropped several catches, Kingma notably fumbling a high ball to hand Zaman a lifeline when he was on 43.

The three-match series is part of ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Super League where the visiting side occupies fifth spot with 90 points.

Babar Azam has been on a spree of breaking records and has done the same during the first ODI against the Netherlands.

Babar has overtaken legendary South African batter Hashim Amla for most aggregate runs after 88 ODI innings. Amla, who held the record for a long while, managed to score 4,473 runs after 88 ODIs whereas the current number one batsman has surpassed him after managing 4,516 runs.

It is worth mentioning that no batsman in the world has ever achieved this feat and Babar Azam is the first player to do so.

## Afghanistan name 17-member squad for Asia Cup

KABUL: Afghanistan named a 17-strong squad for the 2022 edition of the Asia Cup on Tuesday, August 16.

The side will be led by all-rounder Mohammad Nabi and sees one change from the 16-member squad in the ongoing tour of Ireland. Samiullah Shinwari has replaced Sharafuddin Ashraf, who is now a part of the reserves. Spinner Noor Ahmed has also been added to the side.

Shinwari last represented Afghanistan in a T20I in March 2020, in a match against Ireland.

Alongside Ashraf, Qais Ahmed and Nijad Masood are the other two players on standby. The squad also features other regulars like



Rashid Khan, Hazratullah Zazai, Najibullah Zadran and Mujeeb Ur Rahman.

On the squad, chief selector Noor Malikzai said, "The Asia Cup is an important event for us and, as such, we have picked our best available players for the event.

Samiullah Shinwari has been added to the side for the Asia Cup. He is in very good form and can give further impetus to the batting department, which already boasts Ibrahim Zadran, Hashmatullah Shahidi, Najibullah Zadran and Mohammad Nabi."

Afghanistan are currently on an away assignment against Ireland. After losing the first two encounters, the

visitors bounced back brilliantly in the next two matches, levelling the series 2-2. The decider will be played on Wednesday, August 17.

The Mohammad Nabi-led side will open their Asia Cup campaign against Sri Lanka on August 27 at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium in Dubai.

**Squad:** Mohammad Nabi (captain), Najibullah Zadran, Afzar Zazai, Azmatullah Omarzai, Farid Ahmad Malik, Fazalhaq Farooqi, Hashmatullah Shahidi, Hazratullah Zazai, Ibrahim Zadran, Karim Janat, Mujeeb ur Rahman, Najibullah Zadran, Naveen ul Haq, Noor Ahmad, Rahamanullah Gurbaz, Rashid Khan, Samiullah Shinwari.

## FIFA suspends Indian football federation



NEW DELHI: FIFA has suspended the All India Football Federation (AIFF) with immediate effect due to "undue influence from third parties," according to an announcement by world soccer's governing body.

FIFA recently warned India's football association that it may face a ban and also be stripped of its right to host the Under-17 Women's World Cup in October due to "deviations" from an earlier agreed roadmap that was aimed at addressing the governance issues.

"The Bureau of the FIFA Council has unanimously decided to suspend the All India Football Federation (AIFF) with immediate effect due to undue influence from third parties, which constitutes a serious violation of the FIEA Statutes," a FIFA statement said Tuesday.

It said the suspension will be lifted "once an order to set up a committee of administrators to assume the powers of the AIFF Executive Committee has been repealed and the AIFF administration regains full control of the AIFF's daily affairs."

The elections of the AIFF were to be held by December 2020. They were delayed, however, owing to an impasse in finalising its constitution.

India's Supreme Court disbanded the AIFF in May and appointed a three-member committee to govern the sport, amend the AIFF's constitution, and conduct elections that have been pending for 18 months.

According to FIFA statutes, members must manage the affairs independently and ensure that its own affairs are not "influenced by third parties." The Supreme Court recently ordered that the elections to the executive committee of the AIFF be held on Aug. 28. FIFA also said that India won't be able to host the U-17 Women's World Cup this year in October.

"The suspension means that the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup 2022™, scheduled to take place in India on 11-30 October 2022, cannot currently be held in India as planned," it said. "FIFA is assessing the next steps with regard to the tournament and will refer the matter to the Bureau of the Council if and when necessary."

The world body also said that it is in constant constructive contact with the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in India and is "hopeful that a positive outcome to the case may still be achieved."

## Ireland stalwart calls time on international career

DUBLIN: Ireland legend Kevin O'Brien has announced his retirement from international cricket, leaving a lasting legacy on the game.

Making his debut for Ireland in 2006, O'Brien was a central figure in his team's rise from Associate Membership to Test match status across a career that spanned close to two decades.

O'Brien bows out with a number of batting records, and as Ireland's leading wicket taker in the ODI format, claiming 114 scalps at an average of 32.68 and an economy rate of 5.20.

Among a range of records for Ireland with the blade, O'Brien still holds the record for the fastest ICC Men's Cricket World Cup century, thanks to his incredible match-winning knock in 2011 against England in Bangalore.

O'Brien belted 13 fours



and six sixes during his breath-taking knock of 113, bringing up three figures in just 50 balls as the unfancied side chased down 328 in sweltering conditions. The all-rounder had a knack of performing on the biggest stage, claiming a crucial wicket in a dramatic 2007 Cricket World Cup tie with Zimbabwe, and nursing home a tricky run chase alongside Trent Johnston

against Pakistan at the same tournament.

In the middle during Ireland's win over UAE at the 2015 Cricket World Cup, O'Brien was equally vital in Ireland's T20 World Cup campaigns, blazing 39 not out from just 17 balls against Bangladesh in 2009, capping off the performance by hitting the winning runs.

O'Brien was a pillar

of Ireland's push for Full Membership, and the team were granted Test status in 2017 after the team's continued success in global tournaments and World Cricket League events.

Ireland played their first Test match against Pakistan in May 2018, and O'Brien was again the key man. After making 40 in the opening innings, O'Brien walked out at 95/4, with his side needing 85 to make Pakistans bat again.

Batting with the lower order, O'Brien was resolute. In spite of the movement in the air and off the seam, he did enough against a Mohammad Amir delivery, squeezing into the off-side to register Ireland's first ever Test century. His 118 forced Pakistan in a tricky fourth innings chase, with the visitors recovering from a precarious 14/3 to eventually win by five wickets. O'Brien's efforts were enough to claim Player of the Match honours.

and sixes during his breath-taking knock of 113, bringing up three figures in just 50 balls as the unfancied side chased down 328 in sweltering conditions. The all-rounder had a knack of performing on the biggest stage, claiming a crucial wicket in a dramatic 2007 Cricket World Cup tie with Zimbabwe, and nursing home a tricky run chase alongside Trent Johnston

against Pakistan at the same tournament.

O'Brien was a pillar

of Ireland's push for Full Membership, and the team were granted Test status in 2017 after the team's continued success in global tournaments and World Cricket League events.

Ireland played their first Test match against Pakistan in May 2018, and O'Brien was again the key man. After making 40 in the opening innings, O'Brien walked out at 95/4, with his side needing 85 to make Pakistans bat again.

Batting with the lower order, O'Brien was resolute. In spite of the movement in the air and off the seam, he did enough against a Mohammad Amir delivery, squeezing into the off-side to register Ireland's first ever Test century. His 118 forced Pakistan in a tricky fourth innings chase, with the visitors recovering from a precarious 14/3 to eventually win by five wickets. O'Brien's efforts were enough to claim Player of the Match honours.

The suspension means that the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup 2022™, scheduled to take place in India on 11-30 October 2022, cannot currently be held in India as planned," it said. "FIFA is assessing the next steps with regard to the tournament and will refer the matter to the Bureau of the Council if and when necessary."

The world body also said that it is in constant constructive contact with the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in India and is "hopeful that a positive outcome to the case may still be achieved."

## Turkey's Can wins second European 10,000m title

MUNICH: Turkey's Kenyan-born Yasemin Can won her second European 10,000m title in Munich on Monday as a trio of world-class heavyweights guaranteed their spots in respective finals.

Fresh from sealing the Commonwealth title, Britain's Eilish McColgan forced the pace in the 25-lap race, but Can hit the front with just under 3km to go. Can, who previously won the 10,000m title in Amsterdam in 2016, was merciless as she turned the screw at Munich's Olympic Stadium, clocking a winning time of 30min 32.57sec.

McColgan claimed silver more than 8sec behind while a second Kenyan-born athlete, Israel's defending champion and world

marathon bronze medallist Lona Chemtai Salpeter, took bronze. In the first field medal of the Euros, world bronze medallist Jessica Schilder of the Netherlands won the women's shot put with a best of 20.24m on the second of her six attempts.

Portugal's Auriol Dongmo took silver with a national record of 19.82m, Schilder's teammate Jorinde Van Klinken claiming bronze (18.94).

That was closely followed by Croatia's Filip Mihaljevic claiming victory in the men's shot with a best of 21.53m, Serbia's Armin Sinanovic taking silver with 21.39m and Czech Tomas Stanek bronze (21.24). Norway's Jakob Ingebrigtsen kept his bid for a repeat double gold on course

after winning his 1,500m heat in 3:38.48. The Norwegian was one of the stars of the Berlin Euros in 2018 when he went home with golds in both the 1,500 and 5,000m. It will be a quick turnaround for Ingebrigtsen, who had to settle for silver behind surprise British winner Jake Wightman in the 1,500m at the world champs.

The 5,000m final is scheduled for 1908 GMT on Tuesday, with the 1500m final to be held on Thursday. "Today was a first test for me and the test result is: very good," Ingebrigtsen said. "The Olympic stadium is a beautiful arena and the track is really good and fast."

Croatia's Sandra Perkovic, bidding for a record sixth conti-

nental title, also qualified for the final of the women's discus throw. "The European championships are always very special to me because my first major medal was a European gold medal in Barcelona in 2010," said the two-time Olympic and world champion.

"I am proud to be the number one in Europe and to represent Europe around the world. They all know who the discus girl is, and I think I want to stay in this position for a long time," Cuban-born Portuguese triple jumper Pedro Pichardo, the reigning world and Olympic champion, also sailed through qualifying for Wednesday's final with a best of 17.36m.

"I know I am in very good shape, and my only goal today was to get the big Q to the final—it was

easy and relaxed," Pichardo said. Poland's Aleksandra Lisowska claimed the first title at the European championships, winning the

women's marathon on the streets of Munich.

The men's marathon title went the way of host nation Germany

as Richard Ringer produced an extraordinarily well-judged final burst past Ethiopian-born Israeili Maru Teferi for gold. The opening day had kicked off in dramatic style as world decathlon champion Kevin Mayer's bid for a first European title came to a shuddering halt as he pulled up in the opening 100m.

World record holder Mayer, twice world champion and a two-time Olympic silver medallist, said he had made the decision to ease up "before injury". In the Frenchman's absence, Switzerland's Simon Ehamer goes into Tuesday's second day of action in pole position on the back of a massive 8.31m in the long jump, an event in which he won world bronze in Oregon.



women's marathon on the streets of Munich.

The men's marathon title went

the way of host nation Germany