



# Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



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سید بن جبریل نے بیان کیا کہ جن سورتوں کو تم مفضل کہتے ہو وہ سب حکم ہیں۔ انہوں نے بیان کیا کہ ان میں سے بعضی اللہ نے تمہارے لیے بھیجی ہیں اور بعضی اللہ نے تمہاری طرف سے بھیجی ہیں۔  
(صحیح بخاری، صفحہ نمبر 5035)  
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## PM's Qatar visit to open new vistas: Ashrafi

Prime Minister's aide Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi says Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit to Qatar would open new vistas of opportunities. This visit will further strengthen the bilateral relations between the two countries. The prime minister is touring Qatar on the invitation of Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani adding Pakistan had a long history of brotherly relations with Qatar based on love and brotherhood.



## Govt taking steps to facilitate flood-hit people: Ahsan

Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal says the federal government is making all-out efforts, in collaboration with the provinces, to support the flood-affected people. The National Disaster Management Authority is distributing food items amongst the affected people. 25,000 rupees cash assistance is being given to every flood affected family through the Benazir Income Support Programme. The NDMA is extending its services round the clock.

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### FI 2022

## Pakistan earns \$809m from transport services' exports

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan earned US \$809.740 million by providing different transport services in various countries during the twelve months of fiscal year (2021-22) as compared to the corresponding period last year. This shows growth of 48.84 percent as compared to US \$544.040 million earned through provision of services during the corresponding period of last fiscal year (2020-21), Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. During the period under review, the exports of sea transport services witnessed an increase of 53.57 percent, by going up from US \$ 81.760 million last year to US \$ 125.560 million during the period under review.

Among the sea transport services, the exports of freight services surge by 137.28 percent from US \$34.170 million last year to US \$81.080 million whereas the exports of other sea transport services however decreased by 6.53 percent from US \$47.590 million to US \$44.480 million during the period under review, the PBS data revealed. The exports of air transport services increased by 51.79 percent by going up from US \$ 435.480 million last year to US \$661.010 million during July-June (2021-22).

Among the air transport services, the exports of passengers services rose by 55.09 percent, from US \$ 286.040 million to US \$ 443.620 million, whereas the exports of freight services surge by 8.24 percent, from US \$29.110 million to US \$ 31.510 million, in addition the export of other air transport services increased surge by 54.48 percent from US \$ 120.330 million to US \$ 185.880 million. Meanwhile, the exports

## Industrialization

Ms Ulla-Maija Rantapuska, Investment Manager, Finnfun, Finland, accompanied by Wille Eerola, Honorary Consul General of Pakistan for Finland called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad on Monday.



Photo: PID

# Pakistan an attractive hub for foreign investment: PM

## Seeks urgent report on inflated electricity bills

### Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said Pakistan attached great importance to its relations with Finland and desired cooperation in diverse fields. The prime minister expressed these views in a meeting with Ulla-Maija Rantapuska, Investment Manager, Finnfun, Finland, accompanied by Wille Eerola, Honorary Consul General of Pakistan for Finland.

Mentioning the business-friendly policies adopted by the current government, the prime minister said Pakistan had great opportunities for investment in information technology, energy, agriculture, industries and e-commerce sector. Ulla-Maija Rantapuska informed the prime minister about the interest Finnfun

had in investing in the areas of renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, financial institutions and digital infrastructure solutions in Pakistan.

She also mentioned that Finnfun has already invested US\$3 million equity of 17.59 percent shareholding in TPL Insurance Limited, Pakistan's first direct insurance company. The prime minister appreciated the proposals of Finnfun and assured that the government would facilitate the Finnfun in the said ventures.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif while taking strict notice of public complaints about inflated electricity bills, directed the authorities concerned to submit an urgent report and recommendations on the matter. The prime minister, chairing an urgent meeting to discuss the complaints on the inflated

bills, resolved not to sit idle until the public complaints were addressed.

"Khadim-e-Pakistan is

Prime Minister leaving for a two-day visit to Qatar today

answerable to his people for resolution of their grievances. I am committed to speaking truth to my people," he remarked. Federal Minister for Power Khuram Dastgir, Special Assistant to PM Ahsan Ishaque and relevant senior officers attended the meeting. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is scheduled to pay a two-day official visit to Qatar

from August 23-24, 2022, on the invitation of the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani.

This will be the prime minister's first visit to the State of Qatar since assuming office in April 2022.

He will be accompanied by a high-level delegation, including key members of the cabinet. During the visit, the prime minister will hold in-depth consultations with the Qatari leadership. The two sides will review the entire spectrum of bilateral relations, with a particular focus on advancing energy-related cooperation, deepening trade and investment ties, and exploring greater employment opportunities for Pakistanis in Qatar.

They will also exchange views on a range of regional and international issues of mutual interest.

### MPC meeting

## SBP maintains policy rate at 15%

Says it is prudent to take a pause at this stage

### Bureau Report

KARACHI: State Bank of Pakistan on Monday maintained its policy rate at 15 percent. To cool the overheating economy and contain the current account deficit, the policy rate has been raised by a cumulative 800 basis points since last September.

Monetary Policy Committee took this decision in its meeting here at SBP's Main Building, said SBP statement. It said that some temporary administrative steps have recently been taken to curtail imports and strong fiscal consolidation was planned for the fiscal year 2022-23.

These actions are expected to work their way through the system over the coming

months. With recent inflation developments in line with expectations, domestic demand beginning to moderate and the external position showing some improvement, the MPC felt that it was prudent to take a pause at this stage. Looking ahead, the MPC intends to remain data-dependent, paying close attention to month-on-month inflation, inflation expectations, developments on the fiscal and external fronts as well as global commodity prices and interest rate decisions by major central banks.

Since last meeting, the MPC noted three key domestic developments. First, headline inflation rose further to 24.9 percent in July, with core inflation also ticking up.

### CEC meeting

## Ulema to protect political, democratic norms: Fazl

### Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Central Ameer of Jamiat Ulema Islam (JUIF) Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Monday said the Ulema from all schools of thought were united for the cause of protecting the overall political and democratic norms. Addressing the concluding session of Central Majlis e Uloomi of his party here, Fazl accused PTI chief Imran Khan for spreading anarchy and said the Ulema could not overlook the teachings of the Holy Quran. Fazl claimed that his party had practically fought against 'fitnas' rather than mere verbal condemnation.

The JUIF chief said that a state was ruled with the support of its people; however, the mode of governance should be devised in the light of teachings of the Holy Quran

and the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Pakistan was an Islamic state; he said and urged the bureaucracy to take Sharia's affairs seriously. Regarding legislations, he said the basic target of the present coalition government was making electoral and NAB reforms.

He said an unnecessary hype was created in the name of right of votes to overseas Pakistanis, as there was no appropriate procedure for it. There was 90 percent chance of rigging in it. "Our proposal was granting appropriate representation to overseas Pakistanis," he said. The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) was a gift of former president Pervez Musharraf, and in its (NAB's) eyes every Pakistani was apparently a convict, he added.

### Parliamentary party

## PTI rejects option of returning to NA

Imran says govt intends to arrest him at late night

### Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman and former premier Imran Khan has rejected to return to the National Assembly (NA) and said that there was no option other than fresh polls. Imran Khan chaired the session of the PTI parliamentary party today. The participants of the PTI parliamentary party session discussed the political situation of the country. The parliamentary party rejected to return to the assembly at any cost and decided to not accept any option other than fresh polls.

Imran Khan issued instructions to the parliamentary party to commence preparations for elections. "PTI leaders should reach the nationals. The current rulers want to spread fear among the people. I will not step back from the struggle for real independence." Moreover, the PTI chief apprised the parliamentary party members about the next strategy. During the

session, PTI Secretary-General Asad Umar assigned tasks to the members and formed teams for taking part in forthcoming by-elections.

Sources said that Khan will activate the PTI workers before addressing the upcoming public gatherings. "Whole party will participate in the electioneering of the by-polls which will be contested following the same strategy of Punjab by-elections," sources added. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has devised a strategy to mount pressure on the federal government to refrain from arresting the party chief Imran Khan.

Prime Minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan has asserted that the federal government intended to arrest him at late night. According to details, the former premier made these remarks while chairing a parliamentary party meeting of PTI.

Speaking on the occasion, Imran Khan lauded the efforts of former federal minister Murad Saeed

for mobilising the people. "The government intended to arrest me at 3:00 or 4:00 am," he claimed.

The PTI Chairman said that such tactics by the ruling coalition would increase the party's popularity. "Not a single party has gained such popularity among people of Pakistan," he added.

Imran Khan further said that he demanded an inquiry into torture of Shahbaz Gill, but instead the government filed a terrorism case against him. While praising the party's leadership, the former prime minister noted that the country was witnessing a revolution, adding that they can change the country's destiny.

It is pertinent to mention here that following the news of former prime minister Imran Khan's arrest, PTI leadership and workers reached Bani Gala. According to details, after the news of Imran Khan's arrest spread on social media, a large number of PTI workers gathered outside Bani Gala.

## Govt to be ousted before Sept 10: Fawad

### Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) senior leader and former federal minister on Monday reacted to the current political situation, claiming that the coalition government will be ousted before September 10 and the power will be transferred to the public. In his statement, Fawad said the government feared of Imran Khan's yesterday rally and filed a case of terrorism. The fake FIR should be quashed, urged the former federal minister. Posing the question, Fawad said that why the action has not been taken against the PML-N leadership over the threatening statements.

Claiming that the PTI supporters and workers have been barred from coming to Islamabad and motorways have been closed, Fawad said the media faces restrictions so that the voice of the former prime minister does not reach the public. Fawad asked the people of the country to make their way tomorrow to Banigala and every town and city to support the PTI.

### Contempt case

## IHC to start proceedings against Imran Khan

A larger bench will take up the matter today

### Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday decided to initiate the contempt of court proceedings against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan for hurling threats to Judicial Magistrate Zeba Chaudhry. According to the Registrar Office, the decision was with the consultation of all judges. A larger bench comprising Justice Mohsin Akhter Kayani, Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb and Justice Baber Sattar will take up the matter today (Tuesday).

The PTI chairman, during a rally at F-9 Park Islamabad, had given a threatening statement about Additional Sessions Judge Zeba Chaudhry in his speech. The judicial magistrate had granted the police a two-day physical remand of PTI leader Shahbaz Gill.

The IHC notice comes a day after a first information report (FIR) was registered against Khan under the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) for threatening the judge and senior police officers at a rally in the federal capital's F-9 Park. IHC had, earlier today, approved the transit bail of the PTI leader today. Last week, the PTI chief warned that he would "not leave" Islamabad's inspector-general, deputy inspector general, and female magistrate, vowing to file



cases against them for torturing Shahbaz Gill.

"We will not spare the IG and DIG," he said while addressing a public gathering at the F-9 park.

The former prime minister called out Additional District and Sessions Judge Zeba Chaudhry, who last week had approved Gill's two-day physical remand at the request of the capital police, and said she, too, should prepare herself as the case will also be registered against her.

The PTI chief passed the remarks while leading a rally in Islamabad from Zero Point to F-9 Park in support of incarcerated leader Shahbaz Gill, who the party said was subjected to alleged "gruesome torture" in police custody. He further went on to say that if a case can be registered against Gill, then, Fazlur Rehman, Nawaz Sharif, and Rana Sanaullah will also face judicial proceedings. "They [coalition government] are trying to scare us by torturing Gill," he said, adding that this is a "decisive moment" for the people of the country.

## Economic coop

The Ambassador of UAE, H.E. Mr. Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salim Al Zaabi and Deputy Ambassador H.E Mr. Rashid Ali met PMLN Vice President Maryam Nawaz Sharif in Jati Umrah today. Matters related to mutual interest were discussed in the meeting with particular emphasis on strengthening bilateral ties between the two brotherly nations.



Photo: PID

## Qatar to give \$2b support to Pakistan



DOHA: In order to help ease Pakistan's funding crunch and consequent risk of default, Qatar is expected to give Islamabad funds worth \$2 billion in bilateral support, Bloomberg reported Monday.

Ahead of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) board meeting scheduled to be held on August 29, Pakistan has secured financing worth \$4 billion from friendly countries — which was a prerequisite to reviving the stalled Fund programme.

Pakistan will also receive \$1 billion in oil financing from Saudi Arabia and a similar amount in investments from the UAE. State Bank of Pakistan Acting Governor Murtaza Syed in a briefing said: "All the funds are expected over twelve months." Syed said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is travelling to Qatar on August 23 and 24 and an announcement of the assistance from Doha may or may not be announced during the trip.

Earlier today, Finance Minister Miftah Ismail met his Qatari counterpart Ali bin Ahmed Al-Kuwari to discuss bilateral relations and explore areas of joint cooperation. The assistance will improve the position of the foreign exchange reserves and will further strengthen the local rupee — which was the best performer globally this month.

## Govt providing cash aid of flood victims: Marriyum

Shares details of rescue, relief operation for flood hit people

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb has said that cash assistance is being provided to the flood-victims on the directions of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Talking to media in Islamabad on Monday, she said 25,000 rupees cash is being provided to the flood affected people under the Benazir Income Support Programme. She said cash assistance will provide immediate relief to the flood-affected people, enabling them to procure medicines and food items by their own.

The Minister said the Prime Minister has also directed the Finance Division to release a fund of five billion rupees, established for relief measures in the flood hit areas. She said a joint survey, in collaboration of the National Disaster Management Authority and provincial authorities, has begun to assess the damage caused to houses as well as the number of deaths in the flood related incidents.

She said one million rupees as compensation is being provided to the bereaved families of every person, who died due to the recent floods in the country.

Commenting on the political situation in the country, Marriyum Aurangzeb

said foreign funding against Imran Khan has been proven and now he is trying to create chaos and unrest in the country by spreading his fake and baseless narrative. The Minister for Information said PTI chief is escaping accountability. She said Imran Khan did not provide details of KSB bank account which was opened with the approval of Party's central finance board and foreign funding worth 780 million

Marriyum labels Imran Khan as 'drama expert'

rupees was made into this account and then this money was transferred to their personal accounts.

Marriyum Aurangzeb shared pictures of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visits to flood-affected areas to monitor the rescue and relief activities. The minister through her twitter handle shared details of government initiative for rescue, relief and rehabilitation of the flood victims. The PM has stated that he would not rest till reconstruction of all homes destroyed by recent

floods, she said.

Rs37.2 billion flood relief cash programme has been launched for immediate rehabilitation of flood-affected people.

As per the government plan each flood-affected family would get Rs25,000. Nine million persons from 1.5 million flood victims would benefit from the programme. Moreover NDMA has been issued Rs5 billion for rescue and relief activities. The families of every person died in the flood would be paid Rs1 million whereas Rs 500,000 would be given for rebuilding of flood ravaged house after completion of survey.

Marriyum Aurangzeb while taking a dig at Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) supreme Imran Khan said that Imran Khan is a drama expert, and threatening remarks against a female judge exposed his integrity. Talking to the media in Islamabad, Marriyum said when the PTI chairman realized that the economy was improving, he tried to create sedition, corruption, chaos and political instability with the aim of economic stability and people's welfare in danger. The federal minister said that Imran Khan laid economic tunnels in the last four years, adding that he destroyed the IMF program to bankrupt the country.

## CM Elahi, IK discuss political situation

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Former Prime Minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan met Chief Minister Punjab Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi and discussed the country's current political situation. According to details, matters related to the country's current political situation and public welfare projects in Punjab were discussed during the meeting. The meeting was also attended by Moonis Elahi. Both the leaders also discussed rescue and relief operations in Rajanpur, Taunsa and Dera Ghazi Khan. Imran Khan directed CM Pervaiz Elahi to use all available resources to help the flood-hit victims.

The former premier was apprised of the measures taken by the provincial government for the flood-affected. CM Punjab noted that the government has

carried out comprehensive planning to provide relief to flood victims. "The concerned department of the Punjab government and the administration is working continuously to help the victims", he added. He pointed out that the government has set up medical camps along with relief camps in the affected areas, maintaining that he was personally overseeing the rescue and relief operations.

Imran Khan lauded the initiatives for the rehabilitation of the flood victims under the leadership of CM Pervaiz Elahi. Meanwhile, Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi and Moonis Elahi congratulated Imran Khan over Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) success in NA-245 Karachi by-election. He also expressed serious concern over the retaliatory actions against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, vowing the Punjab government's support in every situation.

Mini-budget

Govt levies taxes over Rs70b

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The incumbent government on Monday imposed new taxes of more than Rs70 billion through a mini-budget.

According to the Presidential Ordinance, a sales tax of up to 7.5 per cent has been imposed on the electricity bills of traders, and 5pc sales tax will be imposed on the electricity bills of traders less than 20 thousand, and 7.5pc on the bills of traders in case of a bill of more than 20 thousand. There will be a percentage sales tax, the government is likely to get about Rs 27 billion in taxes from this initiative.

While Federal Excise Duty (FED) on imported vehicles including limousines, sports vehicles and pickups has been increased through the mini-budget.

The government will get up to Rs14 billion by increasing the FED rate on imported vehicles. On the other hand, the FED rate has not been increased on imported vehicles used for public transport or delivery of goods.

The tax on tier one 1000 cigarettes has been increased to Rs 6,500, the income tax on diplomats, which was mistakenly imposed in the budget, has been abolished, the tax exemption on Kuwait Foreign Trade Contract Company has been restored, and the sales tax on electricity bills will be imposed on traders up to 7.5%.

Dar moves SC for hearing of pending appeal

LONDON: Former finance minister Ishaq Dar has filed an application in the Supreme Court for an early hearing of the appeal which has been pending before the court since 2018. Senator-elect Dar has filed the application through his lawyers. He had originally filed an appeal in 2018 against an accountability court's decision to declare him a proclaimed offender. The latest application in the Supreme Court is requesting its intervention to consider his case on merit. On July 24, 2018, Dar was first "black-listed" by the Directorate General of Immigration and Passports without any basis or justification, according to his lawyers. That step practically banned the passport authorities in Pakistan as well as the Pakistan missions abroad from issuing Dar a passport.

The PML-N leader's valid passport was then cancelled on September 6, 2018, by the Imran Khan-led government. The action was taken despite the written request by Dar for the issuance of a requisite passport, being a necessity and a fundamental right for the purposes of travelling. He has maintained that that was a draconian step which violated his basic human rights. The factum of cancellation of the passport came into the ex-finance minister's knowledge through media reporting on September 9, 2018, while he was undergoing his medical treatment in the United Kingdom.

## PTI's intra-party election objected

ECP raises objections over Imran Khan's election

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has raised objection over former prime minister Imran Khan's election as chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). According to details, the electoral watchdog has raised seven objections to intra-party elections of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). A notice has also been issued to the party in this regard. In the notice, the ECP stated that the intra-party election was not held under the amended Constitution. Sources told ARY News that the PTI amended party constitution to make him party chairman.

The election commission has directed the PTI to hold elections by amending the Constitution with a two-thirds majority of



the National Council. Earlier in June, Imran Khan was once again elected unopposed as the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman after two panels had withdrawn in his favour. The election of Imran Khan was held during the meeting of PTI's National Conference in Islamabad. Two panels led by PTI leaders Umar Sarfaraz Cheema and Naik Muhammad had withdrawn from the elections after which the former premier was elected unopposed.

## Pakistan not facing any risk of default: Aisha Pasha

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Finance Dr Aisha Ghaus Pasha has categorically stated that Pakistan is not facing any risk of default.

Addressing the launching ceremony of the special report titled "Economic Security of Pakistan; Challenges and Way Forward" in Islamabad on Monday, she said Pakistan has ensured external financing needs for the next year. However, the challenges on the economic front are significant. She said due to prudent economic measures taken by the government the rupee has gained strength and imports have been significantly reduced.

Highlighting the importance of sustainability in the current



economic success of the government, she emphasized structurally reforming the economy to get out of this boom-bust cycle. She said tax compliance has to be increased and decision-makers need to think beyond politics and personal interests while devising tax policy. She said all stakeholders should keep Pakistan first.

She said structural reforms in the economy have to be undertaken with the consensus of stakeholders to put Pakistan on sustainable growth.

The Minister of State for Finance said without consistency of economic policies we cannot lead our country on the path of human security.

She said in today's world national security cannot be secured without human security.

## Court grants transit bail to Imran Khan till Aug 25

PTI plea states Khan willing to appear in court whenever summoned.

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: PTI Chairman Imran Khan has secured transit bail for three days till August 25 after he filed a pre-arrest bail application in the Islamabad High Court earlier to avoid arrest in a terror case filed against him last (Sunday) night. A first information report (FIR) was registered against former prime minister Khan under the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) for threatening an additional sessions judge and senior police officers of the Islamabad Police at a rally in the federal capital's F-9 Park. PTI lawyer Faisal Chaudhry and Babar Awan had filed the plea on the former PM's behalf, who maintained in the plea that he is ready to appear before the court whenever summoned.

The plea stated that Imran Khan has no criminal record from the past and has never

been convicted for any offence.

"There is no chance of fleeing or damaging evidence presented by the prosecution. Imran Khan is also ready to submit money as surety against his bail," the plea stated. But when Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani and Justice Babar Sattar heard the case, they granted Khan transit bail till August 25, overruled the registrar office's objections, and asked Khan to approach an anti-terrorism court (ATC) by August 25 — as it is the relevant forum in the case. Meanwhile, the interior ministry has asked written permission from Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's office to arrest Khan following the registration of the case. According to sources, the PTI chairman has left his Bani Gala residence to avoid arrest. It is being reported that he may have left for Lahore or Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



However, PTI leader Faisal Vawda said that Khan is still at Bani Gala.

The interior ministry has sought written permission from PM Office for the arrest of

the PTI chair. Sources said the arrest will be made with the consensus of all parties in the ruling alliance. Meanwhile, PPP leader and former president Asif Ali Zardari has opposed the arrest of Imran Khan. He believes that the arrest will cause political damage to the ruling alliance. On the other hand, Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) President Maulana Fazlur Rehman did not give a clear viewpoint on Imran Khan's arrest as PTI leader Murad Saeed claimed on Sunday night that the arrest warrants for Imran Khan had been issued.

Additional police force has been deployed outside Imran Khan's Bani Gala residence and the road leading to his residence has also been closed for unauthorised people, allowing only people close to him and the residents of the area to enter, sources told Geo News hours after the registration of the case.

**Flood relief & rescue**

# Govt striving to accommodate flood-affected people: CM Sindh

*Says no negligence will be tolerated in relief work*

**Spokesman Report**

SUKKUR/SANGHAR: Chief Minister (CM), Sindh, Murad Ali Shah has said that high-level flood will be entering Guddu Barrage by tonight, whereas a flood with more intensity would pass through the Sukkur Barrage by Tuesday.



Province is going through its toughest times.

An estimate of 600,000 cusecs of flood water will enter the barrages. This year, the province received record-breaking rains, he added.

The CM said the provincial government is striving to accommodate and assist the flood-affected people.

We are trying our level best to deliver to the people of the province, adding that no negligence will be tolerated in relief work.

Meanwhile, Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Shazia Atta Marri visited various rain-hit areas of District Sanghar to review the overall situation after the recent heavy downpour.

She monitored the overall relief and rescue works underway in rain affected

areas, including Sanghar, Dil Shakh, Perumal, Loon Khan, Khipro, UC Hafiz Rajar, Khaai, Hamzo Dars, Bhit Bhaiy, Jamalabad and other areas, said a statement issued here on Monday.

Listening to the complaints of the displaced families, she issued directives to Deputy Commissioner Sanghar Imranul Hasan Khuwaja and others officers concerned to ensure immediate drainage of stagnant rainwater, and to expedite the relief works.

Shazia said that effective steps were being taken to provide all the possible assistance and relief to the people.

## Dadu Police released performance report last seven months

**Azad Baloch**

DADU: Dadu Police released the performance report of the last seven months. To restore peace in the district, Dadu police arrested 1706 habitual criminals, thieves, bandits, wanted suspects, gamblers, drug dealers and also recovered stolen goods worth crores of rupees. The seven-month performance report of operations conducted by Dadu Police under the leadership of Irfan Ali Samo SSP shows that 1706 criminals of various types have been arrested during seven months.



According to the police report, during seven months, there were 88 encounters between police and dacoits in the limits of different police stations of Dadu district, in which 9 notorious dacoits were killed, 48 were injured and 305 notorious dacoits were arrested, an other operations 47 robbers were also arrested. 271 accused of theft from houses and shops, motorcycle robbery and theft gang were also arrested and registered cases and produce in courts. 617 suspects were also arrested in police wanted advertisements, murder cases against criminals and cared with the police crackdown on crime, 34 dangerous habitual criminals submitted self-arrests to the police.

The police report also shows that the assets recovered in the operation included one Kalakshankov 109 pistol, 7 revolvers, 22 guns, 3 rifles, 15 repeaters, 542 cartridges and bullets. and in other stolen assets a car, truck, 98 motorcycles, 1 water motor, 16 lakh 90 cash, 30 mobile phones 7 batteries, 45 min of iron and other goods worth lakhs of rupees were recovered and handed over to the owners. other than that Dadu Police arrested 365 drug and garka dealers and sellers, gamblers involved in anti-social activities and registered cases. Ten wheeler trucks, 35 motorcycles, 3 tractors, two rickshaws, 1 Datsun and four cars were also taken into custody by the police on suspicion of theft.

## 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.

## Commissioner DI Khan reviews flood situation



**Adam Khan Wazir**

D.I. KHAN: Commissioner Dera Ismail Khan Division Amir Afaq has said to deal with the recent rains and flooding situation and to ensure the provision of relief and other facilities, including remedial measures and damages.

He gave these instructions while presiding over a high-level meeting held in his office regarding measures to deal with heavy rains and flood situation, relief operations and repair works.

In the meeting, Deputy Commissioner Dera Ismail Khan Nasarullah Khan, XEN Highway, NHA, PKHA, TMOs, Pak Army officers, PESCO, C&W, PDMA, Local Government, Public Health Engineering, Officials of Irrigation, Gomal Zam Dam and other departments participated.

During the meeting, a briefing was given on the condition and damages of various highways including inter-provincial highways by XEN Highway, NHA and PKHA, on which Commissioner Dera said,

## Heritage

SIALKOT: Photographers taking photograph of poet Allama Muhammad Iqbal house during Sialkot Heritage through Lens Photo Walk, in the city.



Photo: Online

# NDMA alerts amid high level flooding forecast

*For DG Khan, eastern Balochistan*

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Monday directed the federal and provincial ministries and departments to ensure preparedness measures after exceptionally high level flooding forecast in the hill torrents of Dera Ghazi (DG) Khan division, and in rivers, nullahs of eastern Balochistan.

The NDMA issued an advisory to all the federal and provincial ministries stating that the Flood Forecasting Division (FFD) had forecast a 'very high to exceptionally high level flooding' from August 23 to 26.

"Flows from hill torrents of DG Khan division may cause the water level in Taunsa barrage to rise up - high to very high flood level - from August 23 to 26. Urban flooding is also expected in Sindh during the same period."

The advisory underlined that a high to very high level flooding was also expected in River Kabul at Nowshera and Tributaries of Kabul and Indus rivers.

The authority directed all relevant federal ministries, departments, provincial disaster management authorities (PDMA) Punjab, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), and advised respective irrigation departments, district administrations /

DDMAs, municipal and city administrations to ensure identification of vulnerable points and at-risk communities.

It also said to devise mitigation plan, maintain enhanced alert level and monitor developing situation to reduce reaction and response times.

It added that all civic agencies and rescue services (Rescue 1122, fire



brigade, ambulance service and civil defense) should remain alert and ensure availability of personnel and equipment in at-risk areas during the forecast period.

NDMA advised that people living along the banks of River Indus and in the vicinity of hill torrents should be sensitized about expected increase of water flows.

Timely evacuation of vulnerable population from low-lying and flood prone areas as per evacuation plans

must be ensured, along with the availability of food and medicines in the shelter camps.

The quarters concerned should ensure that the locals, farmers and cattle herders were forewarned to shift cattle away from those areas.

Moreover, vehicle movement in those areas should also be restricted. Provision of POL (fuel) for backup generators at water pumping stations and timely replacement of de-watering equipment must be ensured.

It also said to ensure timely provision of relief and medical supplies to the affectees, besides coordinating with relevant departments for clearance of roads in case of any blockage and obstruction.

"Travelers and tourists are forewarned about risks posed at flood vulnerable locations and may be diverted by police, NH&MP and local administrations, to safe lay-by and waiting areas with sufficient supply of water, food and essential medicines, in case of adverse and dangerous road conditions," the NDMA advised the authorities concerned.

In case of any eventuality, special situation report (SITREP) and update should be shared immediately with the NDMA. APP

## Two BHUs fully functional by PRCS

**Adam Khan Wazir**

WANA: Another milestone achieved by the Pakistan Red Crescent Society Merged Areas (PRCS-MA's), under the chairmanship of Mr. Asif Khan Mehsood. Two Ambulances (Well Equipped) were handed over to Basic Health Unit (BHU) Baloch Kot and BHU Chaghmalia, district South Waziristan along with the construction and extension of the BHU Chaghmalai Building that will be completed by October 2022.

During his Chairmanship, the PRCS initiated different endeavors generally and specifically in the health sector and now the chapter is successfully operating 9 BHUs in Merged Districts. While these Health Centers facilitated 0.04 million patients by providing free medicines to the most vulnerable communities across the Tribal Districts. On the other side, PRCS constructed 190 community latrines and distributed 12,000 water filtrations kits. During the first and second tenure of Mr. Asif Khan Mehsood PRCS distributed more than 86 thousand health and Hygiene Kits, Masks, and PPEs during COVID-19 pandemic as well.

## Faraz Haider releases new music video 'Doob Gaye'

**Staff Reporter**

KARACHI: Pakistani singer, songwriter, and music composer, Faraz Haider, has released his new music video by the name of 'Doob Gaye' after a hiatus of 8 years. Out now on multiple music platforms, this enchanting music video with its magical melody, coupled with the thrilling presence of actress and model Sabrina Naqvi, warrants his smashing comeback into the Pakistani music scene.

Doob Gaye is a musical composition by Faraz Haider himself, who has also directed and produced the music video. The screenplay, with exceptional cinematography by Imraam Sheraz, showcases the complexities of thin lines between friendship and love in relationships.

# PPL extends financial support to flood victims of Balochistan

**Spokesman Report**

KARACHI: As a leading national E&P company, Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL) has once again stepped up at the time of national flood emergency, to provide assistance to disaster-hit communities of Balochistan.

PPL's Board of Directors approved Rs. 25 million for the rehabilitation of the affected local communities in the recent floods in Balochistan. The donation cheque was presented

by GMCSY Syed Mahmood Ul Hassan to Director General, Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), Balochistan Naseer Ahmed Nasir in Quetta on Monday.

Recent rain and flash floods have affected almost the entire Balochistan and southern Punjab besides parts of Sindh. It has also caused substantial loss of human lives and has severely damaged the infrastructure, resulting in major displacement of families in the affected areas. PPL's

financial assistance is aimed at supporting relevant local civil administrations who are taking necessary measures to provide relief to citizens.

As a national company, PPL has always been in the forefront of supplementing the government's efforts by providing immediate relief, medical assistance and rehabilitation of victims of emergencies. The company has generously supported local communities and area administrations through funds,

medical camps and rehabilitation facilities during 2005 and 2013 earthquakes and repeated floods during 2010, 2011 and 2012 in Sindh and Balochistan.

As a result of its consistent efforts over the years to improve the quality of life for deserving population in the country, PPL has received the leading Corporate Philanthropy Award from Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy for 16 years, as the largest corporate giver in terms of volume of donations.

# Spotify Commemorates 75 Years of Pakistan's Independence

**Staff Reporter**

KARACHI: As Pakistan completes 75 years of Independence, Spotify is marking the occasion with a distinct mix of tunes and exclusive content that celebrates the nation's pride and heritage.

The music streaming platform will celebrate the day with some of the country's hottest artists, starting with Spotify Pakistan's captivating social media franchises "All About Quomi Taranah" and "Only in Pakistan". The former explores lesser-known facts about the anthem through the eyes of Faakhir, Bilal Saeed, and EQUAL Pakistan Ambassadors Hadiqa Kiani and Natasha Baig, whereas Zoha Zuberi and Zaw Ali each reveal their favourite part about being Pakistani. As fans hear about things that only happen in Pakistan, they will be in for a treat.

Spotify Pakistan's Instagram page will also host interactive stories on August 14, testing listeners' musical knowledge. With songs like Jazba-E-Junoon, Dil Dil Pakistan, Hum Hain Pakistani, Dil Se Pakistan, and Ay Jawan, fans can relive the nation's musical evolution.

Spotify's official Independence Day playlist, 'Pak Sarzameen,' returns again this year with additional tunes. The playlist is a collec-



tion of some of the most beloved and evergreen patriotic songs from Pakistan's music history, including 'Aye Watan Kay' by Noor Jehan, Nayyara Noor's 'Is Parcham Ke Saye', Mera Iman Pakistan' of the legendary Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, Vital Signs' popular track 'Dil Dil Pakistan', Junoon's 'Jazba-E-Junoon' and 'Dil Se Pakistan' by Haroon, to name a few. The diverse musical mix not only strikes a chord with listeners looking to vibe with the theme of Independence Day but also offers a complete selection of the greatest hits in one place.

With nostalgia playing a significant role in the day, fans can also head to the "Pakistani Music Through The Decades" destination to enjoy and discover Pakistani classics from the 50's to the 2010s.

Islamabad  
23° - 38° Clear

**SERVICES**

**Namaz Timings**

Fajr	3:18 am
Zohr	12:12 pm
Ashr	5:12 pm
Maghrib	7:22 pm
Isha	9:05 pm

**EMERGENCY**

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

**Women Police Stations**

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Rawalpindi	9270601-20

**ENQUIRY**

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WASA Rawalpindi	5555489
CAA	9281092

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

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CDA	9208301-04
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Cantonment Board	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224
Rawal Town	5773343

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

*Pakistan's progress linked with welfare of women, children: SPARC*

ISLAMABAD: Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) organized award distribution ceremonies at its vocational center for women and non-formal education center for street children situated at Meherabadi - a slum area of Islamabad.

According to a press release issued here on Monday, Director General National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) Habibullah and Muhammad Zafar Haid-er, Chief Executive Human Development Fund (HDF) Pakistan, participated in the ceremonies.

Habibullah of NCHD praised the professionalism and creative environment at the vocational center. He expressed joy over the quality of work and stitching skills of the women and girls. He also wished them success and sustainable future.

Muhammad Zafar Haid-er from HDF-Pakistan said that children always wanted to learn and become active citizens so that they could serve their country. He said all they (children) needed was a guiding hand which SPARC was extraordinarily providing. He also commended the role of SPARC in the non-formal education sector.

Asiya Arif, Executive Director SPARC, stated that SPARC was also operating centers for deprived and street children in Peshawar, Rawalpindi, Multan, and Hyderabad. She said that these centers were playing a key role in empowering women, improving their decision making, and stopping forced/early marriages. She said that SPARC will always fight for the rights of the children and women. She encouraged the women and girls of the center and appreciated them for their hard work. Farmanullah Khan, Program Manager Child Protection, highlighted that SPARC's non-formal education centers were contributing in mainstreaming the children in schools, supporting in registration of the children with NADRA and in getting their Birth Registration Certificates. Agencies

# Importance of police and judicial reforms underlined

*Weak dispute resolution mechanism hampering economy*

Staff Reporter

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 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.

If urgent actions are not taken, public anger would soon be overwhelming. Without exemplary punishments, the rising wave of crime cannot be controlled, he added.

The speakers included Chief Justice (ret'd) Anwaarul Haq, IG (ret'd) Dr. Kalim Imam, former federal secretary Sarwar Khan, Barrister Muaz Shah Fareeha Idrees, President ATT Rashid Kamal and Chairman ATT Chairman Farasat Latif, Chairman Pakistan Economy Watch Brig (ret'd) Aslam Khan and Group Country Head of United International Group Dr. Murtaza Mughal.

## Eye-catching

ISLAMABAD: A stunning view of sunset in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

# MoFEPT signs contract with PTCL to run educational channels

*The channels will boost accessibility to quality educational content*

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training (MoFEPT) and Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) signed an agreement for the provision of 04 educational OTT channels in order to deliver educational content to students across the country, at a ceremony in Islamabad. The channels will boost accessibility to quality educational content to foster learning and growth amongst students of different age groups.

Minister of Federal Education & Professional Training, Rana Tanveer Hussain was the Chief Guest at the occasion. Federal Secretary-MOFEPT, Aamir Ashraf Khawaja and Federal Secretary IT, Mohsin Mushtaq also attended the event. Contract was signed by Additional Secretary (MOFEPT), Waseem Ajmal Chaudhary and Group Chief Business Solutions Officer (PTCL & Ufone), Zarrar Hash-



am Khan.

Under the agreement, PTCL will provide 04 channels to the MOFEPT on its OTT Smart TV platform to deliver educational content for live viewing and downloading to students throughout the country. The digital channels will be available free of cost nationwide. The initiative will help MOFEPT in taking a stride toward digitalization of the education system for greater efficiency and improved learning.

During the ceremony, Rana Tanveer Hussain, Federal Ministry of Education and Professional Training said, "The arrangement with PTCL is an important

step toward the digitalization of Pakistan's educational system based on the latest learning and tutoring techniques. We believe the time is ripe for such interventions because there is nationwide penetration of smartphones and speedy internet even across remote regions. We are glad to have found a collaborative partner in PTCL that shares our vision for such a ground-breaking initiative for the advancement of learning in society. Digitalization is the future and we will explore the opportunities for enhancing the scope and reach of this initiative for a sustainable and deeper impact".

Speaking at the occasion, Waseem Ajmal Chaudhary, Additional Secretary MOFEPT said "The 04 OTT educational channels will be completely free of cost so that the educational material is accessible to students from all socioeconomic backgrounds without any need for a subscription.

## Health Corner

### Alzheimer's and Visual Memory Effects

ISLAMABAD: A new MIT study finds that Alzheimer's disease disrupts at least one form of visual memory by degrading a newly identified circuit that connects the vision processing centers of each brain hemisphere.

The results of the study, published in Neuron by a research team based at The Picower Institute for Learning and Memory, come from experiments in mice, but provide a physiological and mechanistic basis for prior observations in human patients: the degree of diminished brain rhythm synchrony between counterpart regions in each hemisphere correlates with the clinical severity of dementia.

"We demonstrate that there is a functional circuit that can explain this phenomenon," said lead author Chinnakkaruppan Adaikkan, a former Picower Institute postdoc who is now an assistant professor in the Centre for Brain Research at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in Bangalore. "In a way we uncovered a fundamental biology that was not known before."

Specifically, Adaikkan's work identified neurons that connect the primary visual cortex (V1) of each hemisphere and showed that when the cells are disrupted, either by genetic alterations that model Alzheimer's disease or by direct laboratory perturbations, brain rhythm synchrony becomes reduced and mice become significantly less able to notice when a new pattern appeared on a wall in their enclosures. Such recognition of novelty, which requires visual memory of what was there the prior day, is an ability commonly disrupted in Alzheimer's.

"This study demonstrates the propagation of gamma rhythm synchrony across the brain hemispheres via the cross hemispheric connectivity," said study senior author Li-Huei Tsai, Picower Professor and director of The Picower Institute and MIT's Aging Brain Initiative. "It also demonstrates that the disruption of this circuit in AD mouse models is associated with specific behavioral deficits." (Courtesy: Science Daily)

### "Baba Bigr Jaye" staged at PAC

Staff Reporter



RAWALPINDI: Punjab Arts Council presented a satirical drama "Baba Bagra Jaye" to pay tribute to renowned TV and theater artiste Masood Khawaja. The play has been written and directed by Anjum Abbasi.

The characters of the play included Lala Yar Muhammad, Dildar Khan, Imran Rashidi, Sapna Shah, Liaquat Shah, Jhalak Ali, Subia Ali, Sajjad Hussain and others. Naheed Manzoor and director of Arts Council Waqar Ahmed were the chief guests of the play.

Naheed Manzoor said on this occasion that Masood Khawaja's death has created a gap in comedy acting, which will take decades to fill. Masood Khawaja used to be an academy for young artists. In the end he congratulated all the artists for the success of the play. Director Arts Council Waqar Ahmed said that the story of the play is excellent.

All the actors played their roles well. We are trying to restore the lost reputation of stage plays. Stage drama is closer to reality, he added. A large number of citizens flock to the Arts Council to watch the drama.

### The Diabetes' Centre conducts Free Screening Camp at ECP

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Diabetes' Centre Islamabad, Pakistan's first and largest Hospital battling Diabetes conducted a free screening camp at the Election Commission of Pakistan here on Monday.

It's an inherent part of The Diabetes' Centre (TDC) mission statement to educate and raise awareness among general public about the fatal trickle down effect of Diabetes on major organs such as heart, kidneys, eyes and limbs.

Today's camp at ECP was aligned in line with this spirit wherein employees were screened and have had a free medical check from top notch Diabetologist of TDC.

Director Asif Ali Yasin and Assistant Director Hammad Badal of ECP extending their cooperation in conducting today's camp.

ECP's management later lauded TDC's efforts in raising Diabetes awareness and educating general masses.

### Around 300 animals died of lumpy skin virus in RWP

RAWALPINDI: As many as 300 animals had died of the lumpy skin virus in Rawalpindi division while vaccination was underway to prevent the spread of the disease in cattle. According to the spokesman of the Directorate of Livestock Department, Rawalpindi Division, more than 1,89,950 cattle had been vaccinated against Capri pox Rawalpindi, Attock, Jhelum, and Chakwal districts. He said presently, the department had 47,900 vaccination doses in stock, and immunization was also being carried out in a radius of four to five kilometres of infected areas.

He said special teams had been deputed at the possible hotspot areas while awareness campaigns were being run through mobile buses, Kisan bethak and social media.

"Lumpy skin virus causes disease in cattle and some wild animals, reducing milk production, abortion and barrenness in animals," he said, adding that the disease was not transmissible to humans, and milk and meat were safe for humans if used according to hygiene principles. Agencies

## Special Report Launch

# Economic Security of Pakistan: Challenges and Way Forward

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Strategic Perspectives (CSP) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) held a launch of its Special Report titled, "Economic Security of Pakistan: Challenges and Way Forward". The Chief Guest of the event was Dr. Aisha Ghaus Pasha, Minister of State for Finance and Revenue.

Other panellists included: Dr. Abid Q. Suleri, Executive Director, SDPI; Ambassador Seema Ilahi Baloch; Mr. Zafar ul Hasan, Joint Chief Economist, Ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms; and Mr. Amir Zafar Durrani, President, Reenergija.

Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhary, DG ISSI, welcomed the speakers and shared the idea behind launching the report. In his remarks Ambassador Chaudhary stated that

national security should be measured on a tripod of economic security, human security, and traditional security and the primacy given to Pakistan's economic security in the overall national security calculus is a step in the right direction.

In her introductory remarks, Dr. Neelum Nigar, Director of CSP highlighted the importance of economic security in Pakistan. Dr. Nigar gave an overview of the report and elucidated its key outcomes. She proposed that macroeconomic needs to shift from stabilization to sustainability, from consumption to investment, from imports to exports, and from service sector to industrial.

The Chief Guest, Dr. Aisha G. Pasha, stated that currently there is no imminent threat of default as the government has secured external financial needs for the year 2023. She also emphasized the need of



structural reforms of permanent nature with the consensus of all stakeholders. She proposed increasing tax compliance and implementation of right taxation policy to achieve long-term sustainable economic growth. Dr. Pasha also stated that the recommendations and structural reforms highlighted in the report are very important and must be implemented to ensure overall economic security of Pakistan.

Dr. Abid Q. Suleri, discussed the economic history of Pakistan. He listed some of the chronic, medium and short-term challenges to Pakistan's economic security. Moreover, he also listed challenges Pakistan is facing. Dr. Suleri emphasized on resisting the politicization of economic decision making and proposed creation of an 'Economic Security Council'.

Ambassador Seema Ilahi Bloch in her remarks emphasized on a link

between economic development and gender equality. She maintained that there is a dire need to address the barriers that impede women's development in Pakistan as it directly impacts economic development. She proposed that economists should focus on the development of human capital, 55% of which is women. Moreover, she also recommends enacting laws that promote gender equality and population control.

Mr. Zafar ul Hasan in his remarks emphasized that in order to ensure national economic security, there is a need to develop sustainable economic growth. He highlighted that owing to multiple factors, Pakistan's productivity is lowest in the region. Therefore, he proposed that Pakistan should redirect investment from infrastructure to developing human capabilities.

Mr. Amir Zafar Durrani, while addressing challenges to economic security of Pakistan, highlighted a nexus between elites and poor governance. He highlighted the loopholes in the taxation system of Pakistan. According to him, both fragility and disasters are human-triggered and can be controlled by controlling the actions that prompts it. Mr. Zafar suggested that only societal efforts and economic development can elevate the marginalized.

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# Shanghai Cooperation Organization matters???

**Ishtiaq Ahmad**

Established in 2001 as a successor to the Shanghai Five, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is the largest regional grouping in Eurasia, covering around 40 percent of the world's population and 30 percent of global economic output. Owing to its impressive profile of security and economic cooperation, the SCO has gained enormous traction across Asia. No surprise that a number of countries from the Middle East and Southeast Asia are lining up to join as dialogue partners, observers and members. The SCO currently comprises eight member states (China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan), four observer states (Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran and Mongolia) and six dialogue partners (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Turkey). In the annual summit of the SCO's heads of state in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, on Sept. 15-16, Iran will gain full membership of the organization, while Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Egypt will become dialogue

partners. Moreover, Belarus will begin the process of acquiring membership; Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia and Nepal will become observers; and Bahrain and the Maldives will start the process of joining as dialogue partners. The UAE reportedly wants to join the SCO as a member, bypassing other accession conditions. Syria, Iraq, Israel, Bangladesh and Vietnam also hope to join as dialogue partners or observers. Since its inception, the SCO has forged close ties with several international institutions and regional organizations, including the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Asian Development Bank, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and the Collective Security Treaty Organization. A memorandum of understanding between the SCO Secretariat and the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States was also concluded during last year's SCO summit in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

However, the SCO's comparative distinction arises from its rapid progress in forging close security and economic collaboration. The Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure is its key institution to

counter the three evils. Security cooperation is reinforced by military exercises, dubbed as peace missions, and counterterrorism drills held periodically in the member states. It has produced tangible outcomes in combating terrorism, in particular.

China dominates SCO's trade and investment activities. Recent reports estimate that its trade with other member states expanded 20 times from 2001 to 2020, reaching \$245 billion in 2020, up from \$12 billion in 2001. Until last year, China had invested \$85 billion and contracted additional development projects worth \$280 billion in other member states. The total trade volume of SCO member states also increased from \$668.09 billion in 2001 to \$6.06 trillion in 2020; and the share in global trade rose from 5.4 percent in 2001 to 17.5 percent in 2020. China and Russia do have competitive interests in the SCO, including trade and development versus energy and security, respectively. But their overarching goal is to create the Greater Eurasian Partnership by synergizing SCO's developmental activities with multilateral integration projects in Eurasia, including China's Silk Road Economic Belt

and Russia's Eurasian Economic Union.

This strategic mission of the SCO makes it the best option for the GCC as it seeks to diversify geo-economic linkages in Asia without jeopardizing geopolitical partnership with the US. These two paths are not at cross-purposes, as one ensures economic prosperity and the other provides security guarantee. There are other reasons, too. So far, the Gulf nations have sought bilateral free trade agreements with China, India and Pakistan, but with limited success. Their relations with the states of Central Asia and the Caucasus, despite the commonality of hydrocarbon riches, are still minimal. With ASEAN as well, successive rounds of ministerial meetings have failed to deepen trade and economic relations.

That Saudi Arabia and Qatar are set to become dialogue partners of the SCO is, therefore, an encouraging development. Bahrain will enter the club in over a year. It would be great if the UAE also joined the accession process. Together with Egypt, Turkey and other Middle Eastern aspirants of SCO partnership, the oil-rich Gulf nations have the wherewithal to act as a catalyst in Eurasian regionalism,

along with China, Russia and resourceful Central Asian and Caucasus members. That is why they do not need to worry about Iran, as it gets ready to join such a large regional organization as a full member for the first time since 1979. After all, arch-rivals India and Pakistan have been members of the SCO since 2017, without causing any trouble in its institutional efficacy.

The GCC members are, no doubt, late entrants in this pivotal regional body. But better late than never. In fact, as China's largest trading partner and recipient of the bulk of Chinese investments under the Belt and Road Initiative, Saudi Arabia can use its formidable economic clout to shape SCO's progressive agenda in its own way. In this regard, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who has been invited to participate in the Samarkand summit, can play a pivotal part by sharing the Kingdom's exceptional expertise in renewable energy with the SCO. This is one arena it has achieved the least.

*The writer is former vice chancellor of Sargodha University and Quaid-e-Azam Fellow at the University of Oxford. Courtesy Arab News*

## Homeless minorities in India

World observes International Day for Victims of Acts of Violence based on Religion or Belief on 22 August and it is an occasion to highlight the plight of minorities living in India who are deprived of all fundamental rights and freedoms. Minorities are being persecuted physically, psychologically and economically and the US Commission on International Religious Freedom recommended that India be put on its red list for severe violations of religious freedom.

Moreover, the report said, Mumbai-based Centre for Study of Society and Secularism and UK-based Minority Rights Group International have indicated that minority groups in India are increasingly encountering hate crimes, such as lynching, threats, attacks on places of worship and forced conversion. Modi government is not leaving any stone unturned to turn India into a Hindu Rashtra (Hindu state).

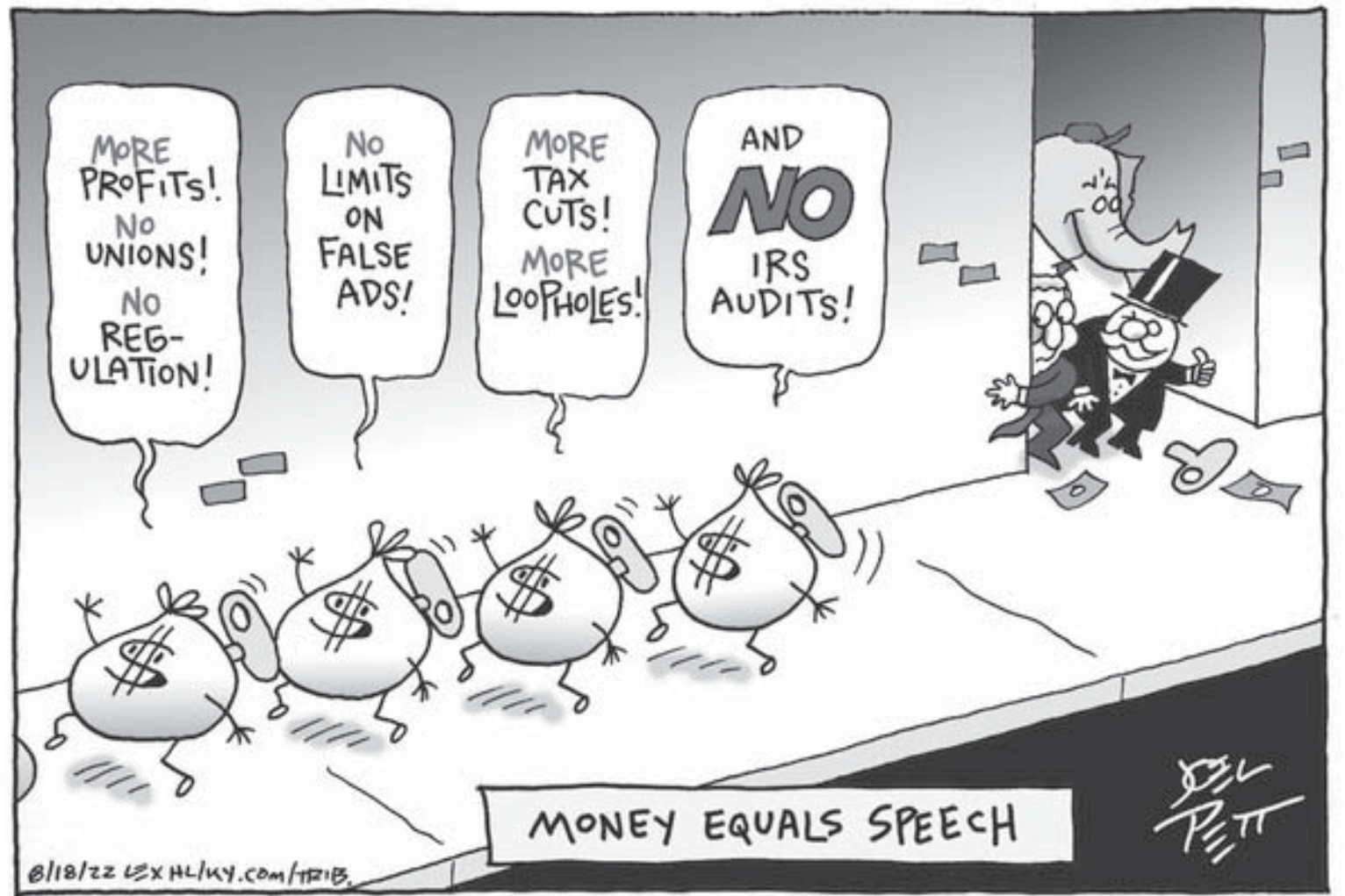
The report said non-Hindu communities are living in a perpetual state of fear on account of the discriminatory policies of Prime Minister Modi's administration and tolerance of religious violence by Hindu-supremacists against vulnerable minorities at the state level. Purposefully anti-Christian vigilantes are sweeping through villages, storming churches, burning Christian literature, attacking schools and assaulting worshippers. The very act of worship has become dangerous despite constitutional protections for freedom of religion.

The report said the rising attacks on Christians, who make up about 2 percent of the population, are part of a broader shift in India, in which minorities feel less safe. Though, the storm has not yet settled down regarding blasphemy by senior BJP leaders, RSS goons have flared up the sentiments of Christians by burning the Bible in Chitradurga, Karnataka. The objective is clear as the plan would translate to isolate and demonize minorities so that the Hindu order is consolidated and a Hindu state is established. Christians are being suppressed, discriminated against and persecuted at rising levels like never before in India and the attackers run free, every time.

In 2021, numerous attacks were made on religious minorities, particularly Muslims and Christians, and their neighborhoods, businesses, homes, and houses of worship. Many of these incidents were violent, unprovoked, and/or encouraged or incited by government officials. Both officials and nonstate actors have used social media platforms and other forms of communication to intimidate and spread hatred and disinformation against religious minority communities.

The quick spread of misinformation online has contributed to violent attacks. In October, mobs attacked mosques and torched properties of Muslim residents in Tripura, which borders Bangladesh. USCIRF received documented reports of at least 50 incidents between June and October 2021 targeting the Christian community in the state of Uttar Pradesh alone. Violent attacks have been perpetrated across the country under the guise of protecting cows in line with India's constitution and laws in 20 states (and growing) criminalizing cow slaughter in various forms.

Vigilante mobs, often organized over social media, have attacked religious minorities—including Muslims, Christians, and Dalits—under suspicion of eating beef, slaughtering cows, or transporting cattle for slaughter. Most such violent incidents are reported in states where cattle slaughter is banned. For example, in June 2021, three Muslim men were lynched on suspicion of cow smuggling in Tripura, and a vigilante mob beat two men they accused of smuggling cattle, resulting in one's death and hospitalization of the other in Madhya Pradesh.



## The food crisis is bigger than Ukraine

**Nancy Qian**

Russia's blockade of Ukrainian food shipments and the potential loss of Ukrainian harvests due to disruptions from the war have dominated headlines in recent months. Between February and June, global wheat prices surged by more than 60%, fuelling humanitarian concerns and warnings from international development agencies about increased food insecurity in poor African and Asian countries. But many of these headlines have been misleading. In poor countries, around 80% of all calories come from cereals. The most important is rice, which accounts for 27% of per capita caloric intake in the developing world, and is the main staple in Asia. In countries such as Myanmar and Cambodia, rice makes up 80% of calories. Maize is the most important subsistence cereal in Africa. Around 90% of the world's maize is consumed by African countries, with people in Malawi, Lesotho, and Kenya consuming an average of 90-180kg (198-397lb) per year.

Wheat, which is the second most important cereal globally, is relatively unimportant in poor countries. For example, annual per capita wheat consumption is only around 17 kilograms in Sub-Saharan Africa. Now, consider Ukraine's contribution to the global food supply. In 2020, it exported very little rice, 18mn tonnes of wheat, and 28mn tonnes of maize. It was the fifth-largest wheat exporter after Russia (37.3mn tonnes), the United States (26mn), Canada (26mn), and France (19.8mn); and the fourth-largest maize exporter, following the US (52mn tonnes), Argentina (37mn), and Brazil (34mn). The loss of Ukrainian wheat and maize should not by itself trigger food insecurity in poor countries, because production and exports from other countries can

increase. Consider maize. The poor countries that rely on maize produce most of it domestically, and very little of what they import comes from Ukraine.

For example, in 2020, Kenya imported only 11,818 tonnes from Ukraine. Deficits of that size should be relatively easy for other producers to fill, especially given that most maize is not needed for human subsistence. Globally, only 15% of all maize produced in the world is consumed as food. In the US – the world's largest maize producer – 10-12mn tonnes per year is used to produce sweetener.

All told, poor countries should not be significantly affected by the loss of Ukrainian agricultural products. But this does not mean that food-insecurity concerns are overblown. The problems are just different and more complex than what the headlines imply. Food insecurity has been steadily worsening for years. In low-income countries, the share of people suffering from a lack of sufficient high-quality nutrition rose from around 13% in 2015 to 26% in 2019, owing to the interplay of factors such as climate change, failing institutions, and regional armed conflict. To associate the problem solely with Russia's war in Ukraine risks creating a false assumption that it can be fixed or significantly ameliorated by ending the war in Eastern Europe.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine can indeed cause problems in global food markets. It can reduce global food supplies in the short run, especially when there are disruptions to shipping lanes and access to ports. Fortunately, recent negotiations show that these problems can be remedied. Moreover, the 850mn tonnes of global grain reserves, 25% of which are held by the US and the European Union, can also be used to help address temporary deficits. The bigger long-run danger is that Russia – not Ukraine – will reduce exports. Russia

accounts for 19% of global wheat exports and 15% of fertiliser exports. Exports could decline because of war, bad weather, or an economic crisis that derails production. It could decline for political reasons, such as a Russian gambit to leverage its market power, as it has done with gas.

Conversely, Ukraine and its allies may seek to increase the economic pressure on Russia by demanding a ban on its agricultural exports, which have thus far been exempt from trade sanctions. Political hostilities are likely to continue even after the end of the armed conflict.

Given these risks, a sensible response for the US and its agriculturally productive allies is to increase crop production and augment reserves. Increasing production allows grain reserves to expand without reducing global supplies; and with larger reserves, small amounts can be more readily released to help smooth over temporary deficits. These policies also send a strong signal to farmers to keep up production capacity, which will help ensure the ability to pursue even greater production should the need arise.

Increasing production and reserves will moderate the disruptions of war in the short term and, in time, reduce global dependence on Russian agricultural exports, giving Ukraine's allies more room for political manoeuvre. For poor countries facing the growing threat of chronic food insecurity, these policies provide insurance against mass starvation. The food crisis has triggered by the Russia-Ukraine war highlights acute food-insecurity challenges. A closer look shows that the problems run far deeper than the current war and that the global food system urgently needs to become more resilient for political and humanitarian reasons.

*The writer is Professor of Managerial Economics and Decision Sciences at Northeastern University's Kellogg School of Management. Courtesy Gulf Times*

## World highly vulnerable to nuclear disasters

**Ashok Swain**

The Ukraine war has reignited fears of a global nuclear catastrophe. Nuclear weapons might not be used deliberately, but the possibility of mistakes and miscalculations in this war is so high that the world cannot ignore the impending disaster. Ukraine's Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant – Europe's biggest – is in the frontline since March. Its safety has become such a concern that UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres repeated his call last week for military withdrawals from the nuclear plant area and warned that any harm to the facility would be 'suicide'. The alarms expressed worldwide persuaded Russia to agree to a visit by UN officials to inspect the nuclear power plant. Any accidental nuclear disaster at Zaporizhzhya might not take the size and shape of what the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe had endured with the accident in the Chernobyl nuclear plant in 1986. Still, it will be no less catastrophic than the accident at the Fukushima-Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant in Japan in 2011.

The world has 12,705 nuclear warheads, of which 9,440 are under the military stockpile for potential use. Russia and the US possess more than 90 percent of the world's nuclear warheads, while China, India, and Pakistan are expanding their stockpile. The UK has 180 nuclear warheads, and in 2021, it reversed the nuclear disarmament policy to increase the number of its nuclear warheads. All the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, despite stating in 2021 that "nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought," are increasing or modernising their nuclear weapons. These weapons have become much smaller, more accurate, and far more devastating than the ones the US used 77 years ago on Hiroshima and Nagasaki to force Japan to surrender. Despite their less explosive power, these two bombs had killed more than 200,000 Japanese civilians, mostly women

and children.

Today's nuclear weapons can wipe out a major metropolis within minutes. Now, it does not matter who attacks whom, but a full-scale nuclear war is likely to cool the whole planet by at least 13-degree F and force it into the 'Little Ice Age', and within the first hour, it can potentially kill 100 million people. As geopolitical tensions rise, the world cannot continue to ignore the threats of a nuclear war. On August 6, the UN Secretary-General was in Hiroshima to mark the 77th anniversary of the atomic bombing. From there, he beseeched the world: "We must keep the horrors of Hiroshima in view at all times, recognising there is only one solution to the nuclear threat: not to have nuclear weapons at all."

On January 22, 2021, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), commonly known as the Nuclear Ban Treaty, came into force after 51 countries ratified or acceded to the treaty. The treaty bans the use, threat of use, development, testing, production, manufacturing, acquisition, possession, or stockpiling of nuclear weapons and makes it illegal to assist, encourage or induce anyone to do so. The number of countries parties to the treaty has already increased to 66. However, the countries possessing nuclear weapons or suspected of having that ambition have kept themselves out of it. The Nuclear Ban Treaty strengthens the taboo against using nuclear weapons, but it is just the beginning. The international norms, values, and principles have become extremely vulnerable in recent years, and the threats of using nuclear warheads and nuclear power plants as weapons of war have become quite common. Thus, the Nuclear Ban Treaty does not provide much assurance for the world to feel safe and secure from a looming nuclear disaster.

*The writer is a professor of peace and conflict research at Uppsala University, Sweden. Courtesy Gulf News*

## Almost 9,000 Ukrainian troops killed in war with Russia

Russia blames Ukraine for nationalist's car bombing death

KYIV/MOSCOW: Nearly 9,000 Ukrainian military personnel have been killed in the war with Russia, the head of Ukraine's armed forces said on Monday.

The toll given by General Valeriy Zaluzhnyi appeared to be the first provided by Ukraine's military top brass since Russia's invasion on Feb. 24. Zaluzhnyi, the Commander-in-Chief of Ukraine's armed forces, told a conference held to honour military veterans and the families of those killed that children needed protection in several parts of the country including the capital Kyiv.

"They really do not understand anything that is going on and definitely need protection ... because their father has gone to the front and possibly is among the almost 9,000 heroes who have been killed," he said.

Zaluzhnyi provided no details and did not say whether the figure he cited included all service personnel killed in action, such as border guards. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy told the conference that about 1 million people were defending Ukraine as part of



Ukraine's armed forces or other services.

Zaluzhnyi did not say how many civilians had been killed or how many Russian personnel Kyiv estimated had been killed in the fighting, but the General Staff of Ukraine's armed forces has put the Russian military death toll at 45,400. Russia has not said how many of its soldiers have been killed.

Meanwhile, Russia's Federal Security

Service on Monday accused Ukraine's secret services of killing Darya Dugina, the daughter of a Russian ultra-nationalist, in a car bomb attack near Moscow.

Dugina, whose father Alexander Dugin is a prominent ideologue, was killed on Saturday evening when a bomb blew up the Toyota Land Cruiser that she was driving, Russian investigators said.

Ukraine, which is defending itself

from what it says is an imperial-style war of conquest mounted by Russia, has denied involvement in the fatal attack.

Russia calls its actions in Ukraine a "special military operation". Alexander Dugin, 60, has advocated violence to achieve the unification of Russian-speaking and other territories in a new Russian empire. Darya, who appeared regularly on state TV, was a strong supporter of Russia's actions in Ukraine.

In his first public statement on his daughter's death, he said Darya had been savagely killed before his own eyes by Ukraine. "Our hearts are not simply thirsting for revenge or retribution," Dugin wrote. "We only need our victory (against Ukraine) My daughter has sacrificed her young life on the altar of victory. So please win!"

The FSB security service was quoted by Russian news agencies as saying the attack on Dugina was carried out by a Ukrainian woman born in 1979, whom it named and whose picture and personal information appeared on Russian news websites.

## US commits to Afghan asset talks

WASHINGTON: U.S. President Joe Biden's administration will press ahead with talks on releasing billions of dollars in Afghanistan's foreign-held assets.

The decision to pursue the initiative to help stabilize Afghanistan's collapsed economy underscores growing concern in Washington over a humanitarian crisis as the United Nations warns that nearly half the country's 40 million people face "acute hunger" as winter approaches.

At the core of the U.S.-led effort, as Reuters reported last month, is a plan to transfer billions in foreign-held Afghan central bank assets into a proposed Swiss-based trust fund. Disbursements would be made with the help of an international board and bypass the Taliban, many of whose leaders are under U.S. and U.N. sanctions.

U.S. State Department and Treasury officials told

independent analysts at an Aug. 11 briefing—12 days after a CIA drone strike killed al Qaeda leader Zawahiri on a balcony of his Kabul safe-house—they will pursue the talks despite frustration with the pace, two sources said on condition of anonymity.

The Taliban and Afghan central bank—known by the initials DAB—are not acting swiftly, a U.S. official said, according to one source. "The Taliban sit on their hands and it's infuriating."

The State Department declined to comment on the briefing. A knowledgeable U.S. source who requested anonymity confirmed the briefing's substance. "The strike did not change the U.S. government's commitment to setting up the international trust fund" and it is "working with the same speed and alacrity as before the strike," said the U.S. source.

The Taliban-run foreign and information ministries

and DAB did not immediately respond to requests for comment. U.S. officials also have discussed the trust fund plan with Switzerland and other parties.

Afghanistan's economic and humanitarian crises deepened when Washington and other donors halted aid that funded 70% of the government budget following the Taliban's seizure of Kabul on Aug. 15, 2021, as the last U.S.-led foreign troops departed after 20 years of war.

Washington also stopped flying in hard currency, effectively paralyzing Afghanistan's banking system, and froze \$7 billion in Afghan assets in the U.S. Federal Reserve Bank of New York. In February, Biden ordered half the sum set aside "for the benefit of the Afghan people."

Other countries hold some \$2 billion of Afghan reserves. Initially, the \$3.5 billion Biden sequestered

would be released into the proposed trust fund and potentially could be used to pay Afghanistan's World Bank arrears and for printing Afghanis, the national currency, and passports, both in short supply.

The other \$3.5 billion is being contested in lawsuits against the Taliban stemming from the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States, but courts could decide to release those funds too. The assets also eventually could go to recapitalizing DAB, bolstering its ability to regulate the Afghan's value, fight inflation, and provide hard currency for imports.

But after Zawahiri was killed, the State Department excluded recapitalizing DAB as "a near-term option," saying that by harboring the al Qaeda leader in breach of the 2020 U.S. troop pullout deal, the Taliban had fueled concerns "regarding diversion of funds to terrorist groups."

## Iran says US delaying revival of 2015 deal

DUBAI: Iran accused the United States on Monday of "procrastinating" in indirect talks aimed at reinstating Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal, and said a prisoner swap with Washington was not linked to the negotiations.

After 16 months of fitful, indirect U.S.-Iranian talks, with European Union officials shuttling between the sides, a senior EU official said on Aug. 8 it had laid down a "final" offer and expected a response within a "very, very few weeks."

Iran last week responded to the EU's text with "additional views and considerations", while calling on Washington to show flexibility to resolve three remaining issues. The United States last week said it was studying Iran's response.

"The Americans are procrastinating and there is inaction from the European sides... America and Europe need an agreement more than Iran," Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Nasser Kanaani told a news conference. Kanaani said Tehran wanted a sustainable deal that would preserve Tehran's legitimate rights. "Until we agree on all issues, we cannot say that we have reached a complete agreement," he said.

Meanwhile, the United States has repeatedly called on Tehran to release several Iranian-Americans held in Iran on security charges. Iran has demanded several Iranians detained on charges linked to U.S. sanctions to be freed.

"We emphasize that the exchange of prisoners with Washington is a separate issue and it has nothing to do with the process of negotiations to revive the 2015 pact," Kanaani said, adding that Tehran was ready to swap prisoners.

In 2018, then-President Donald Trump reneged on the deal reached before he took office, calling it too soft on Iran, and reimposed harsh U.S. sanctions, prompting Tehran to begin breaching the pact's nuclear curbs.

"We seek a good agreement which would guarantee Iran's national interests and would be long-lasting... We won't be bitten twice," Kanaani said. The 2015 agreement appeared on the verge of revival in March after 11 months of indirect talks between Tehran and U.S. President Joe Biden's administration in Vienna.

## Yasin Malik again demands physical appearance in Jammu court

NEW DELHI/SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front Chairman, Muhammad Yasin Malik has once again demanded physical appearance during the hearing in a case registered against him in a Jammu court about the killing four Indian Air Force (IAF) personnel in 1990. Malik appeared in the hearing via video conference from Delhi's Tihar Jail where he is currently lodged.



all cases through video conferencing. However, the court offered him legal aid.

A special court in New Delhi on Monday offered legal aid to JKLF chief Yasin Malik, but he turned it down and again insisted on his physical appearance in the hearing on the killing of four Indian Air Force (IAF) personnel in 1990, PTI reported. He is serving a life sentence in a so-called 'terror-funding' case.

Turning down his demand for physical appearance, the court said there were clear directions from the high court for producing the accused in

The JKLF chief declined the offer of legal aid. The court asked him to submit his stand in writing on the next date of hearing in the third week of September. Malik observed a 10-day hunger strike from July 22 in favour of his demand for physical appearance in a Jammu court hearing the Rubaiya Sayeed abduction case.

Meanwhile, senior APHC leader Mirwaiz Umar Farooq has said there is complete media blackout imposed by the Modi regime in Indian illegally

occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq said this while talking to a BBC correspondent from the window of his house where he is under house arrest. He said that the media was not allowed to publish the statements of APHC leadership.

The Mirwaiz refuted the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha's assertions that the senior APHC leader is free to meet anyone. The BBC correspondent herself exposed the blatant lies of the Modi-installed governor when she went outside the residence of Mirwaiz Umar Farooq to meet him. She was stopped by the police and prevented from entering the house.

In the meanwhile, the Mirwaiz appeared in the window of his house and asked the correspondent that he was under detention for the past three years. Then, Indian police snatched the mobile phone of the BBC correspondent.

## Indiana governor in Taiwan following high-profile US visits

TAIPEI: Indiana's Republican governor met with Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen on Monday, following two recent high-profile visits by U.S. politicians that drew Beijing's ire and Chinese military drills that included firing missiles over the island.

Gov. Eric Holcomb arrived Sunday evening in Taiwan for a four-day visit that will focus on economic exchanges, particularly in semiconductors, according to a statement from his office.

His visit comes at a particularly tense time for Taiwan, China and the U.S. after House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visited earlier this month. China claims the self-ruled island as its own territory and views any exchanges with foreign governments as an infringement on its claim.

Tsai acknowledged the tensions in her opening remarks ahead of the meeting and welcomed further exchanges. "Taiwan has been confronted by military threats from China, in and around the Taiwan Strait. At this moment, democratic allies must stand together and boost cooperation in all areas," she said.

Separately, Japanese lawmakers Keiji Furuya and Minoru Kihara arrived in Taiwan on Monday and are to meet Tsai on Tuesday. Furuya said they also plan to visit the tomb of late Taiwanese leader Lee Teng-hui.

### Floods

## Palestine offers condolences to Pakistan over loss of lives

### Spokesman Report

RAMALLAH: The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants has expressed its deep condolences to the friendly Republic of Pakistan for the victims of the floods that swept Pakistan and still, especially the provinces of Sindh, Baluchistan and Punjab, which led to a number of deaths and injuries and caused damage to thousands of homes as well as bridges and other properties.

The Ministry affirmed the permanent support of the State of Palestine by Pakistan, and expresses its confidence in the ability of Pakistan as President, Government and people to confront and overcome this ordeal.

The Ministry extended its deepest condolences and sincere sympathy to the families of the victims, and wishes a speedy recovery to the injured.

## Farmers break barricades as protests return to Indian capital

NEW DELHI: Protesters broke barricades and shouted slogans against Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the Indian capital of New Delhi on Monday, after thousands of farmers gathered to protest against what they said were unfulfilled promises by the government.

More than eight months after farmers called off a year-long protest and the government conceded to several of their demands, more than 5,000 farmers gathered in the centre of the capital to protest against Modi and his government.

Farmers are demanding that the government guarantee a minimum support price for all produce and clear all farmer debts, among other things, according to a statement from the Samyukta Kisan Morcha, the farmer organisation that organised the protest on Monday.

A spokesperson for the federal agriculture ministry did not respond to a request for comment. Protesters wielded banners and flags and broke through barriers as they marched towards the venue, shouting slogans against Modi.

Last November, Modi said he would roll back three farm laws that had aimed to deregulate produce markets but which farmers said would allow corporations to exploit them. The federal government also agreed to set up a panel of growers and government officials to find ways of ensuring Minimum Support Prices (MSP), as the guaranteed rates are called, for all farm produce.

Last month, the federal government set up the panel and invited representatives of farmer organisations to join in. Security around the borders of the national capital was tightened and police presence was heightened in and around the protest area.

## Kenya presidential vote loser files Supreme Court challenge

NAIROBI: Kenya's losing presidential candidate Raila Odinga has filed a Supreme Court challenge to last week's election result, asserting that the process was marked by criminal subversion and seeking that the outcome be nullified and a new vote be ordered.

Odinga arrived to cheers Monday and helped to hoist boxes of material for the petition into place, starting the 14-day period in which the court must rule. At least two other petitions were filed by human rights figures.

Deputy President William Ruto was declared the winner of the close Aug. 9 election with almost 50.5% of votes. The peaceful election turned chaotic in the final minutes before the declaration when the electoral commission split and a majority of commissioners said they couldn't support the result.

The dissenting commissioners and the chairman have traded accusations of misconduct, extending the uncertainty in East Africa's most stable democracy. Until then, the election had been seen as the country's most transparent, with the commission posting more than 46,000 results forms online from polling stations for anyone to do the math themselves.

The petition filed by Odinga's team, seen by The Associated Press, names the electoral commission, its members and Ruto himself. It asserts "premeditated unlawful and criminal subversion of the integrity and constitutionalality of the electoral process in order to assist and secure a fraudulent result."

The petition singles out commission chairman Wafula Chebukati, who declared Ruto the winner, asserting that he "set out to subvert the sovereign will of the people of Kenya and overthrow the constitutional order" by declaring results that had not been completely tallied and verified. Twenty-seven constituencies allegedly left out would have affected the outcome, the petition says.

## US, South Korea open biggest drills in years

SEOUL: The United States and South Korea began their biggest combined military training in years Monday as they heighten their defense posture against the growing North Korean nuclear threat.

The drills could draw an angry response from North Korea, which has dialed up its weapons testing activity to a record pace this year while repeatedly threatening conflicts with Seoul and Washington amid a prolonged stalemate in diplomacy.

The Ulchi Freedom Shield exercises will continue through Sept. 1 in South Korea and include field exercises involving aircraft, warships, tanks and potentially tens of thousands of troops.

While Washington and Seoul describe their exercises as defensive, North Korea portrays them as invasion rehearsals and has

used them to justify its nuclear weapons and missiles development.

Ulchi Freedom Shield, which started along with a four-day South Korean civil defense training program led by government employees, will reportedly include exercises simulating joint attacks, front-line reinforcements of arms and fuel, and removals of weapons of mass destruction.

The allies will also train for drone attacks and other new developments in warfare shown during Russia's war on Ukraine and practice joint military-civilian responses to attacks on seaports, airports and major industrial facilities such as semiconductor factories.

The United States and South Korea in past years had canceled some of their regular drills and downsized others to computer

simulations to create space for the Trump administration's diplomacy with North Korea and because of COVID-19 concerns.

Tensions have grown since the collapse of the second meeting between former President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in early 2019. The Americans then rejected North Korea demands for a major release of crippling US-led sanctions in exchange for dismantling an aging nuclear complex, which would have amounted to a partial surrender of the North's nuclear capabilities. Kim has since vowed to bolster his nuclear deterrent in face of "gangster-like" US pressure.

South Korea's military has not revealed the number of South Korean and US troops participating in Ulchi Freedom Shield, but has portrayed the training

as a message of strength. Seoul's Defense Ministry said last week that Ulchi Freedom Shield "normalizes" large-scale training and field exercises between the allies to help bolster their alliance and strengthen their defense posture against the evolving North Korean threat.

Before being shelved or downsized, the United States and South Korea held major joint exercises every spring and summer in South Korea.

The spring drills had included 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 field training this year.

The drills follow North Korea's dismissal last week of South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol's "audacious" proposal of economic benefits in exchange for denuclearization steps, accusing Seoul of recycling proposals Pyongyang has long rejected.

Kim Yo Jong, the increasingly

powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, described Yoon's proposal as foolish and stressed that the North has no intentions to give away an arsenal her brother clearly sees as his strongest guarantee of survival.

She harshly criticized Yoon for continuing military exercises with the United States and also for letting South Korean civil-

ian activists fly anti-Pyongyang propaganda leaflets and other "dirty waste" across the border by balloon.

She also ridiculed US-South Korean military capabilities for monitoring the North's missile activity, insisting that the South misread the launch site of the North's latest missile tests on Wednesday last week, hours before Yoon used a news conference to urge Pyongyang to return to diplomacy.

Kim Yo Jong's statement came a week after she warned of "deadly" retaliation against South Korea over a recent North Korean COVID-19 outbreak, which Pyongyang dubiously claims was caused by leaflets and other objects floated by southern activists. There are concerns that the threat portends a provocation which might include a nuclear or

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

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close
42,826.66	43,270.65
Day's High	Day's Low:
43,314.19	42,787.86
Index Value	Change
3,912,233,946	-443.99
Percentage	Time
-1.03%	22 Aug, 2022 5:00 pm

Europe: FTSE 100 Index	
Index Value	Change
7,533.79	-16.58
Percentage	Time
-0.22%	22 Aug, 4:35 pm GMT+1

USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average	
Index Value	Change
33,215.08	-491.66
Percentage	Time
-1.46%	22 Aug, 12:17 pm GMT-4

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change
28,794.50	-135.83
Percentage	Time
-0.47%	22 Aug, 3:15 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	147.86	149.11
Bahrain Dinar	571.19	575.69
Canadian Dollar	165.28	166.63
China Yuan	31.52	31.77
Danish Krone	29	29.35
Euro	218	223
Hong Kong Dollar	27.41	27.76
Indian Rupee	2.68	2.76
Japanese Yen	1.6	1.66
Kuwaiti Dinar	697.07	702.07
Malaysian Ringgit	47.98	48.43
New Zealand \$	132.56	133.76
Norwegians Krone	21.88	22.18
Omani Riyal	558.13	562.63
Qatari Riyal	59	59.5
Saudi Riyal	57.5	58.3
Singapore Dollar	154.31	155.61
Swedish Korona	20.28	20.58
Swiss Franc	223.97	225.72
Thai Bhat	6.65	6.75
U.A.E Dirham	58.5	59.4
UK Pound Sterling	256	261
US Dollar	216	219

# Investment opportunities in erstwhile FATA highlighted

Investment in underdeveloped areas essential for future of Pakistan, says Atif Ikram Sheikh

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: FPCCI's Presidential candidate Atif Ikram Sheikh on Monday said investors should invest in erstwhile FATA because investment in the underdeveloped areas is necessary for the country's future.

International donors should also pay attention to this region because it is related to the peace of this region and the whole world. Atif Ikram Sheikh said that thousands of youths have become unemployed because of the law and order situation in the past and now it is the responsibility of all of us to provide dignified



employment for them.

Fata has a small economic base, with construction, mining and extraction claiming a major share. Much of the population is involved either in agriculture and livestock or in services sectors such as transport, storage and communication.

Unemployment in the region is quite high, far behind the national average, with less than 6% of women participating in the labour force. Limited skilled job opportunities exist, with almost 50 percent of the labour force in former Fata is employed in unskilled jobs, leading to limited income. Many of the skilled labour hailing from that area, wherever employed, have

low-level skills.

Priority should be given to the provision of infrastructure, employment and facilities in this area so that the youth are attracted to positive activities, he added. In the past, a country promised to create industrial zones in FATA and invest heavily in them, which could not be implemented, he noted.

Sheikh said that minerals, forestry and other sectors should be developed so that people can be included in the national stream without delay. Stimulating economic growth in that area would be challenging, but persistent efforts in the right direction are likely to bring dividends, he said.

# MoneyGram, Bank Alfalah partners with Babar Azam

To promote Cross-Border Money Transfers to Pakistan

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: MoneyGram International, Inc., a global leader in the evolution of digital P2P payments, and Bank Alfalah, one of the largest banks in Pakistan, today announced a new endorsement partnership with Babar Azam, Pakistani international cricketer and captain of the Pakistan national cricket team.

The partnership with Babar Azam was announced via MoneyGram and Bank Alfalah's social media handles. With this partnership, Babar Azam will promote the ability for consumers around the world to use MoneyGram's services to send money to their loved ones for cash pick-up at over 750 branches of Bank Alfalah throughout Pakistan or directly into their loved ones' bank accounts and participating mobile

wallets in Pakistan via Bank Alfalah.

"As we continue to expand our global receive network to support the urgent needs of families around the world, we are thrilled to work with Babar Azam to help promote the suite of services we offer through our partnership with Bank Alfalah," said Greg Hall, Chief Marketing Officer at MoneyGram.

Further talking about this development, Bank Alfalah's Group Head, Corporate, Investment Banking and International Business, Saad ur Rahman Khan shared, "We couldn't be happier that Babar Azam has come on board to endorse Bank Alfalah's cross-border money transfer solutions in partnership with MoneyGram. This partnership will help Bank Alfalah further spread its message amongst families in Pakistan relying on fast and convenient

money transfers from abroad and solidify the trust they place in us for responsibly and efficiently meeting their needs".

Babar's mass appeal and his ability to seamlessly connect with audiences both in Pakistan and abroad make him an excellent fit for MoneyGram and Bank Alfalah, who together help support the financial connection of overseas diaspora to Pakistan.

"I am excited to partner with a global brand like MoneyGram and one of Pakistan's largest private banks, Bank Alfalah, that help connect families and loved ones by making transfers to Pakistan seamless for consumers through their cash pick up and direct to account or mobile wallet services" shared Babar Azam. "I salute the real heroes who work hard and send money home to support their families and contribute to our country's economy."



GUJRANWALA: Acting High Commissioner of Malaysia Deddy Faisal Ahmad Salleh visiting Gujranwala Expo 2022 hosted by Gujranwala Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

# SECP proposes revamping of REITs Regulatory Framework

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has published a concept paper titled "Review of Landscape & Revamping Framework-REITs" for soliciting public comments.

It provides a glance at Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) Industry and covers proposed amendment (s) in the REITs regulatory framework.

The aim of proposed regulatory amendments is to introduce new REIT products, create ease for REIT Management Companies



in launching different REIT schemes, and shift towards reporting based regime.

REITs structure is new to Pakistan's market but in past two years, ten (10) new REIT Schemes have been launched in the country which shows huge potential for growth. National strategic projects having social and economic benefits can also be financed and executed through REITs Structure.

# TechX Pakistan, official coverage partner of 21st ITCN Asia Karachi

Our Correspondent

KARACHI: The 21st ITCN Asia Karachi is a three-day technology exhibition and event with the goal of using technology to create Pakistan's future. TechX Pakistan will work with 21st ITCN Asia Karachi as their official coverage partner during the event. Prepare yourself to enjoy Team TechX's greatest coverage of 21st ITCN Asia ever.

TechX Pakistan also covered ITCN Asia Lahore this March as an official coverage partner with great zeal and provided the best of the best services. Ecommerce Gateway Pakistan (Pvt.) Ltd. is the organization behind the 21st ITCN Asia-Information Technology & Telecom Show.



It will be a special occasion that will provide Pakistan's entire tech community a chance to unite under one roof.

With a focus on networking, knowledge sharing, and lead generation, this three-day event will offer a comprehensive platform to showcase solutions for all significant economic sectors, including but not limited to government, cloud, data center,

cybersecurity, ERP, education, banking & finance, health & Pharma, e-commerce, artificial intelligence, and robotics. A series of conferences will also create a learning environment for like-minded individuals to share knowledge.

The occasion will give Pakistan's entire tech ecosystem, together with leaders from the public and private sectors, the chance to gather under one roof to take part in the nation's largest innovation festival.

Not only this TechX Pakistan has a booth in Hall 2 having Stall number B-34, where you can meet and greet your favorite tech gurus exclusively. CTO's, CEO's and CFO's of renowned tech and business companies will be our guests. So do not waste this great chance to meet your ideals.

# Pak-Iran trade exhibition from August 24-26

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Islamic Republic of Iran and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, as two friendly and neighboring countries, have made the promotion of economic relations by facilitating the access of businessmen and economic activists to each other's market; as one of their important priorities, and to achieve the aforementioned goal, to take measures step by step.

While the world is facing economic problems such as the increase in global energy prices and interference in the supply and transit system of goods. Such situation further highlights the need of solidarity among the countries particularly of the neighboring countries due to easy and economical access to each other's goods and services markets.

Therefore with the aim of interacting and to get familiar with the economic activists, companies and businessmen of the two countries with each other's capacities and capabilities, the first specialized exhibition of Iranian goods will be held in Islamabad from August 24 to 26 at Pak-China friendship Center, Islamabad. This exhibition will be held by focusing on the needs of the markets of the two countries and with the presence of large Iranian companies and emphasizing on the introduction of high-quality products in the following fields:

- 1- LPG, petrochemical industries, and engine oil
- 2- Polymer industries and plastic products
- 3- New technologies in the field of telecommunications and smart technologies

and simulation systems and nanotechnology.

- 4- Pharmaceutical industries and medical and hospital instruments, chemicals and agricultural fertilizers
- 5- Dairy industries
- 6- Food and dried fruit industries
- 7- Electric cars, electronic tools and Cars' batteries, micro capacitors and filters
- 8- Mining and construction machines and industrial furnaces
- 9- Carpets and rugs and flooring

The exhibition to provide great opportunity to the traders and those active in the economic field and all the interested people ,knowledge-based, IT and food industries' are hereby invited to participate in the exhibition so an effective step could taken towards a profitable and reliable business.

# Chief Commissioner ICT assures to help ICCI for Industrial Estate project

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry led by its President Muhammad Shakeel Munir called on Capt. (Retd) Muhammad Usman in his office and congratulated him on his appointment as Chief Commissioner Islamabad. Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President, Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI, Khalid Iqbal Malik Chairman Founder Group, Tariq Sadiq, Zafar Bakhtawari, Fasiullah Khan, Akhtar Hussain, Omais Khattak, Usman Khalid, Zia A Zikria, Mian Waqas Masud, Khalid Chaudhry, Raja Abdul Majeed and others were

in the delegation. Addressing the delegation, Capt. (Retd) Muhammad Usman, Chief Commissioner, Islamabad said that the business community was playing an important role in the economic development of the country and assured that he would play role to resolve their key issues. He lauded the efforts of ICCI for the establishment of a new industrial estate in the region and assured that he would provide all possible help to ICCI for the materialization of this important project. He further said that he was interested in promoting Pakistan's national game hockey by developing an Astro turf ground in the Capital and said that the business communi-



ty should support him in such efforts. He assured that all highlighted issues of the business community would be given due consideration for redress.

Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry highlighted the key issues of the business community that needed close attention of the ICT Administration. He said that ICCI was making

efforts since long for the establishment of a new industrial estate in this region to boost industrialization and stressed that ICT Administration and CDA should fully support ICCI in realization of this important project. He also briefed him about the CDA related issues including lease renewal issue of industries, parking issue in markets, expediting work on JJP road and hoped that he would

take necessary measures to address them. He assured that the business community would fully support the Chief Commissioner ICT in efforts promoting hockey support in the federal capital as it was our national game. He said that for this purpose, a ground in Islamabad should be allocated to ICCI to promote sports activities.

Jamshaid Akhtar Sheikh Senior Vice President, Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI, Khalid Iqbal Malik Chairman Founder Group, Tariq Sadiq, Zafar Bakhtawari and others also spoke at the occasion and congratulated Capt. (Retd) Muhammad Usman on his appointment as Chief Commission-

# National Bank joins hands with PIA



Spokesman Report

KARACHI: National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) and Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) have signed an agreement for "Employee Banking" for provision of banking facilities to PIA employees.

Under the aforementioned arrangement, NBP will facilitate PIA employees to meet their financial needs through provision of its wide range of assets and liabilities products under the preferred service mode. The arrangement offers concessional rates and dedicated services designed to address the financial needs of PIA employees. This inter alia includes offering concessional rates to PIA employees on NBP liabilities and consumer assets products and services.

The agreement was signed by Mr. Tauqeer Mazhar (SEVP / Group Chief - Retail Banking Group, NBP) and Mr. Amos Nadeem (CFO, PIA). PIA CEO (AVM Muhammad Amir Hayat) and other senior executives of NBP and PIA witnessed the signing ceremony.

Speaking on the occasion, Tauqeer termed the arrangement as mutually beneficial for both the organizations as it will further strengthen NBP's partnership with PIA. NBP is capitalizing on its large corporate relationships by offering specialized priority services and awareness sessions for the employees of large corporates like PIA to help its employees meet their personal banking/financing needs. We are bringing banking to employees' workplace for facilitation and better customer service.

NBP is presently offering a wide range of consumer financing products that inter alia include "Personal Loans", "Financing against Gold", "House Loans" and "Auto Loans". The bank holds lion's share in the category of personal loans.

Also speaking on the occasion, Chief Financial Officer of PIA, Amos Nadeem said that PIA being the national flag carrier has always been at the forefront to adapt to global technological advances and transformation in the aviation sector. PIA considers its employees as its assets and believes investing in them to achieve its mission.

## World Test Championship

# Pakistan announce schedule for home series against England

Tests will be played in Rawalpindi, Multan and Karachi

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board on Monday confirmed details of England's tour of Pakistan for three Tests, which will be played in December.

This will be England's second half of the tour, following seven Twenty20 Internationals in Karachi and Lahore from 20 September to 2 October. Ben Stokes' side will open the tour with the first Test in Rawalpindi from 1-5 December, before both sides move to Multan for the second Test from 9-13 December. Karachi will host the third Test from 17-21 December. This will be the first time England will play a Test in Rawalpindi, which has previously staged 12 matches with the home side winning five and losing three.

When England last toured Pakistan in 2005, they lost the Multan Test by 22 runs. The venue has staged five Tests, with Pakistan winning three and losing one. National Stadium was considered Pakistan's happy hunting ground until Nasser Hussain's side in 2000 ended Pakistan's 34-Test unbeaten record, winning the third Test in near darkness by six wickets. Pakistan's only other loss



in 44 matches in Karachi was against South Africa, who won the 2007 Test by 160 runs.

Nonetheless, with 23 Test wins, the National Stadium remains Pakistan most favourite Test venue. Zakir Khan, PCB Director - International Cricket: "We are pleased that Pakistan and England Test rivalry, which has historically produced close and tight matches, will return to our backyards in December. Both the sides have evolved since they last played in Pakistan in 2005 and have recently been playing entertaining and exciting

cricket. I remain confident this series will live up to the expectations of the global cricket fans who want to watch and enjoy competitive and thrilling matches.

"Pakistan cricket fans have waited for almost 17 years to see elite England players in action. And although they have enjoyed watching a number of them live in the recent editions of the HBL Pakistan Super League, nation versus nation Test cricket is the pinnacle where international stars and heroes are born."

Clare Connor, ECB Interim Chief Executive Officer: "The return of our

men's Test team to Pakistan for the first time since 2005 will be an historic occasion. The opportunity to play Test cricket in front of passionate cricket-lovers in Pakistan after such a long time is something to be cherished. "We have been working closely with the PCB over recent months and I am grateful to them for everything they have done, and continue to do, to make our Test and T20 tours a mouth-watering prospect for all involved."

The three Tests will count towards the ICC World Test Championship 2021-23. No.4 ranked England are presently sitting in seventh position on the Test championship table, while sixth-ranked Pakistan are fifth. Schedule of Tests: 1-5 December - 1st Test, Rawalpindi 9-13 December - 2nd Test, Multan 17-21 December - 3rd Test, Karachi Schedule of T20Is (matches to start at 1930 PKT): 20 September - 1st T20I, Karachi 22 September - 2nd T20I, Karachi 23 September - 3rd T20I, Karachi 25 September - 4th T20I, Karachi 28 September - 5th T20I, Lahore 30 September - 6th T20I, Lahore 2 October - 7th T20I, Lahore

## CA Divisional Senior Tournament concludes

Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The inaugural Cricket Associations Divisional Senior Tournament 2022-23 in all six Cricket Associations concluded.

Sargodha Division, Hazara-Mardan Division, Gilgit Baltistan Division and Sahiwal Division were crowned champions in Central Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Northern and Southern Punjab jurisdictions respectively.

In the Balochistan-leg, Quetta-Rakhshan and Sibi-Naseerabad, while in Sindh jurisdiction, Karachi and Sukkur-Larkana Divi-

sion were declared joint winners after the two finals were abandoned due to rain.

Quetta-Rakhshan and Sibi-Naseerabad were declared joint winners of the Balochistan-leg. Nasir Khan representing Sibi-Naseerabad Division scored 362 runs from four matches at 90.50.

In the Central Punjab jurisdiction, Sargodha Division won the leg due to their first innings lead over Lahore Division in the final staged at the LCCA Ground from 19-21 August.

Hazara-Mardan Division were declared champions of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Divisional leg after taking

a first-innings lead over D.I.Khan-Bannu Division in the final held at the Abbottabad Cricket Stadium from 18 to 20 August.

Gilgit Baltistan Division were crowned champions of the Northern-leg on the basis of first-innings lead in the final against Rawalpindi Division staged at the House of Northern from 18 to 20 August. Sardar Hassan Raza representing Rawalpindi Division was the leading run-getter with 346 runs from two outings in the tournament at 115.33.

Karachi Division and Sukkur-Larkana Division were declared the joint

winners of the Sindh Cricket Association Division tournament after the final between the two teams was abandoned due to rain. Karachi Division's Shehzar Mohammad topped the batting charts with 213 runs from two outings in the tournament at 106.50.

Sahiwal Division clinched the title of the Southern Punjab Cricket Association-division on first innings lead against Multan in the final staged at the District Sports Ground, Multan from 18 to 20 August. Bahawalpur Division's Ali Imran occupied the top spot with 411 runs from three matches at a staggering average of 102.75.

## Bagnaia makes it three in a row

SPIELBERG: Italy's Francesco Bagnaia maintained his magnificent run of form by winning the Austrian MotoGP for a third successive victory although series leader Fabio Quartararo limited the damage.

Bagnaia led from start to finish on his Ducati - their sixth win in the seven MotoGPs since the race returned to the programme - but world champion Quartararo battled gamely on a circuit that does not favour Yamaha to finish second.

The Frenchman extended his lead over second-placed Aleix Espargaro - who rode with a broken heel - to 32 points with Bagnaia 44 adrift with seven races remaining. "It was a very, very long race, very tough," said 25-year-old Bagnaia, who was winning his fifth race of the campaign.

"However, I am very happy. It was tough at the end for the last two laps. I tried to be as calm as possible so I did not make an error. "My tyres were almost totally worn out and Fabio was gaining on me all the time.

"However, I am delighted with the end result as we have gained another five points." Bagnaia, though, said he hoped he would further eat into the lead in the San Marino MotoGP in Misano



in a fortnight. "Fabio is not my focus - it is gaining more points to eat into the deficit."

Quartararo never let up, constantly harassing Bagnaia's team-mate Jack Miller in second and finally bore fruit with four laps remaining.

"That was one of my best races," said the 23-year-old. "It was so difficult out there and I could have fallen several times. But I am super happy." Quartararo's consistency this term has kept him ahead of the pack in the world title race.

He has just three victories but has also finished on the podium four times in 13 races and only failed to finish in one race whereas Bagnaia has four retirements to his name. "Consistency is important and we have done well here," said Quartararo. "We stayed strong and have secured a very good result."

Miller held on for third, helped when

Jorge Martin, who went on to finish 10th, came off his bike on the penultimate lap. "That was lucky, though, not for Jorge!" said Miller. "It was a fantastic run but I had run out of everything by the end of the race," the Australian added.

Bagnaia's compatriot Enea Bastianini's miserable run of form since winning his third race of the season in mid-May continued. Having secured his first ever pole position he saw Bagnaia pass him and although still in contention he rode off into the gravel with 23 laps remaining.

Bastianini at least walked away whereas 2020 world champion Joan Mir took a heavy fall on his Suzuki. "It could have been a lot worse, so I feel lucky," tweeted Mir, who had his right ankle heavily strapped.

"Initial checks show some bone fragments and fractures in my ankle. Tomorrow I'll go for further checks and an MRI." Japan's Ai Ogura won the Moto2 race to regain the overall lead in the championship while main rival Augusto Fernandez finished fifth. Ogura's compatriot Ayumu Sasaki won the Moto3 race. Spain's Sergio Garcia retains the overall lead by five points from his fellow Spaniard Izan Guevara.

## Garcia downs Kvitova to claim Cincinnati crown

CINCINNATI: Qualifier Caroline Garcia completed a dream week on Sunday at the ATP and WTA Cincinnati Masters with a 6-2, 6-4 title defeat of Petra Kvitova.

The French winner claimed her third Masters-level title - her 10th overall - after winning Wuhan and Beijing in a Chinese double five years ago.

Garcia followed the extraordinary template of Emma Raducanu, who won the US Open 11 months ago as a qualifier. Number 35 Garcia, who fell on her back after clinching victory, maintained her lead on the Tour with a 27th match victory since June.

"Pure joy, just happiness," she said. "Every single win is very important. It's always very hard to describe. "It doesn't happen so often and you have to really enjoy it. I'm grateful for this great week of tennis, and to win another title, it's very special." She said expectations were low when she arrived for the qualification rounds.

"I was not that confident when I arrived, qualities were tough matches. I was really happy to be through and play in the main draw," she said. "Every match was a new challenge. I had to be focused on myself, on my game, what can I do, how I can be more aggressive, how can I improve.

"Just one day at a time I ended up here today on the final and now lifting the trophy." Kvitova, a double Wimbledon champion, was playing the 40th final of her career and looking for a 30th title.

Garcia set up match point against an opponent who needed off-court medical treatment by sending over her 11th ace of the afternoon. The end came on the next point as Kvitova returned long. "It was definitely not the result I wanted, but if someone had told me I would be in the final I would be very happy," said Kvitova.

"I have to see the positive things: I could have been out in my first match, I have to be proud of the 40th final of my career. "I didn't win the bigger trophy, but she really played very, very well. "Caroline just, when she was down, she just served aces. She deserved to win."

She added: "The big question right now is with my health (fitness), how everything will be in a couple of days, but still having a (practice) week before US Open will help me, I hope." Garcia repeated a victory over Kvitova from here seven years ago; she upset three top-10 players this week on her run to the trophy. Garcia ran her season ace total to 286 with the victory in 96 minutes.

## Hasnain to replace Shaheen in Asia Cup

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Mohammad Hasnain will replace Shaheen Shah Afridi in the Pakistan squad for the ACC T20 Asia Cup, which will be played in the United Arab Emirates from 27 August to 11 September.

22-year-old Hasnain has represented Pakistan in 18 T20Is in which he has taken 17 wickets.

Hasnain will join the side from the United Kingdom, where he is representing Oval Invincibles in The Hundred competition.

Meanwhile, Asif Ali, Haider Ali, Iftikhar Ahmed and Usman Qadir will leave for Dubai in the wee hours of Tuesday. They will replace Abdullah Shafique, Imam-ul-Haq, Mohammad Haris, Salman Ali Agha and Zahid Mehmood, who were part of the 16-member ODI squad against the Netherlands.

Pakistan will take on India in their opener in Dubai on Sunday, 28 August, while their second Group A fixture will be against a qualifier (UAE, Kuwait, Singapore or Hong Kong) in Sharjah on Friday, 2 September. The Super Four matches will be played from 3-9 September.

Pakistan squad for ACC T20 Asia Cup - Babar Azam (captain) (Central Punjab), Shadab Khan (vice-captain) (Northern), Asif Ali (Northern), Fakhar Zaman (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), Haider Ali (Northern), Haris Rauf (Northern), Iftikhar Ahmed (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), Khushdil Shah (Southern Punjab), Mohammad Hasnain (Sindh), Mohammad Nawaz (Northern), Mohammad Rizwan (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), Mohammad Wasim Jnr (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), Naseem Shah (Southern Punjab), Shah Nawaz Dahani (Sindh) and Usman Qadir (Central Punjab).

## Pre-season camp for 2022-23 domestic season begins today

Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The pre-season camp for the 2022-23 domestic men's season will commence today at the respective cricket centres of the six Cricket Associations.

The preliminary squads of Balochistan, Central Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Northern, Sindh and Southern Punjab will train at Bugti Stadium, Quetta, LCCA ground, Lahore, Abbottabad Cricket Stadium, House of Northern, Islamabad, Hanif Mohammad High Performance Centre, Karachi and Inzamam-ul-Haq High Performance Centre, Multan, respectively, till 25 August. The players will arrive at the cricket centres today.

These squads have been finalised by the national men's selector, Muhammad Wasim, in consultation with the six Cricket Associations and the final line-ups for the National T20, which begins from 30 August, and Cricket Associations T20, commencing 2 September, will be announced on the last day of the camp.

The players and officials part of the ongoing Kashmir Premier League will join their sides when they arrive in Rawalpindi and Quetta on 26 August. The camps at six centres will be conducted by the coaches part of National High Performance Centre panel.

## SBP to provide facilities for holding National Ju-Jitsu Championship

LAHORE: Director General (DG) Sports board Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi has said that the SBP would provide the best facilities and cooperation for holding the 13th National Men/Women Ju-Jitsu Championship, scheduled to be held here at Nishtar Park Sports Complex Gymnasium Hall from August 23 to 25.

He said this while addressing a press conference at National Hockey Stadium on Monday. Director Sports Nadeem Qaiser, Director Admin Syed Omair Hasan, Chief Sports consultant SBP Hafeez Bhatti, President Pakistan Ju-Jitsu Federation (PJFF) Khalil Ahmed Khan, Secretary PJFF Waqar Ilyas Khan, Director Referee Kazim Ali Changezi and other officials were also present.

Addressing the press conference, Muhammad Tariq Qureshi said that country's top teams including Pakistan Army, Navy, Wapda and all provinces will participate in the 3-day championship. "The championship will be considered a sort of trials and performance of all male and female players will be monitored minutely in the event and the top performers of the competition could be given a chance to represent Pakistan in international Ju-Jitsu competitions."

Elaborating the origin of the game, the DG SBP said that Ju-Jitsu is a kind of martial arts and the games of judo and karate have also started from Ju-Jitsu.

## Coric upsets Tsitsipas to win title

CINCINNATI: Borna Coric, who only returned in March after missing a year with a shoulder injury, dominated fourth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas to win the ATP Cincinnati Masters.

The world number 152 from Croatia dispatched the Greek star 7-6 (7/0), 6-2 to become the lowest-ranked player to ever lift a Masters trophy. "I have no words, to be honest. It's just an unbelievable feeling," the winner said. "I'm just gonna enjoy this."

"I thought I could play well. I was training hard, and I knew I could play good tennis, but to play this level of tennis - I was just not aware. I'm just super happy, obviously."

Coric lost his only previous final at this level, going down to Novak Djokovic in Shanghai four years ago. On Sunday, Coric replaced 143rd-ranked Spaniard Roberto Carretero, the 1996 Hamburg champion, as the lowest-rated Masters trophy lifter.

## Lueckenkemper helps Germany top Euro medals table

MUNICH: Newly-crowned European 100m champion Gina Lueckenkemper won a second gold as she spearheaded Germany to a decisive victory in the women's 4x100m relay in Munich.

The end of seven breathtaking days of top-quality track and field could not have been better scripted as the German quartet motored to victory in 42.34 seconds in the final event.

Status Quo's 'Rockin' all over the world' blasted over the tannoy as a packed-out Olympic Stadium went wild as Lueckenkemper celebrated with teammates Alexandra Burghardt, already a silver medalist in the two-woman bobsleigh at this year's Winter Olympics, Lisa Mayer and Rebekka Haase.

The fancied British quartet, featuring 200m silver medalist

Dina Asher-Smith on anchor, didn't get the baton past the first leg thanks to a botched handover. The Germans did, and swiftly, their gold ensuring the host country topped the overall athletics medals table with seven golds, seven silvers and two bronzes.

Britain finished second with six golds, six silvers and eight bronzes. "If someone would have told me before the championships that I would come home with two gold medals, I would have said they're crazy," said Lueckenkemper.

Anchor leg Haase added: "Gina always told us that she has a gold medal and that she wanted one more medal tonight. One more, so we made it." The men's 4x100m relay was missing Italy's Olympic and European 100m champion, Marcell Jacobs.

The Italian quartet, whom Jacobs led to Olympic gold in last

year's Tokyo Games, was deprived of a place after Turkey were reinstated after being impeded in the heats. It was left to a strong British foursome to claim gold in a championship record of 37.67sec, smashing the previous best of 37.94 set by France in Split in 1990.

Jeremiah Azu, bronze medalist in the 100m, led off, handing over to Zhanel Hughes, the 200m champion and 100m silver medalist.

Jona Efoloko ran the second bend before handing over to Nethaneel Mitchell-Blake, the 200m silver medalist purring home for a comprehensive victory.

"Zhanel has got three medals, Jona has now got one, Jeremiah has got two, and I've got two - just do the maths!" beamed Mitchell-Blake. In another night of top-notch performances, reign-

ing world indoor champion Mariano Garcia of Spain held off Britain's Jake Wightman to win the men's 800m.

Garcia clocked a personal best of 1min 44.85sec for gold, world 1500m champion Wightman taking silver in 1:44.91. "I was feeling strong and I knew I could fight for a place on that podium so I decided to go for it," said Garcia.

Wightman had stepped down to the 800m after surprising Norway's Jakob Ingebrigtsen - who did a 1,500-5,000m double in Munich - for 1,500m gold in last month's world championships in Oregon. "I was not quite close enough in the last straight and it is tough when you are not that close with strong opponents," said the Briton.

"I did not manage to stay strong enough to pass Garcia. This is a tough race with lots of tactics."

There was a second title for war-torn Ukraine as world indoor champion Yaroslava Mahuchikh triumphed in the women's high jump.

Mahuchikh, who fled her native country on a three-day odyssey by car to get to the world indoors in Belgrade in March,

managed a best of 1.95 metres. She won on countback from Montenegro's Marija Vukovic, with Serbian teenager Angelina Topic claiming bronze (1.93).

"I would like to dedicate this medal to the Ukrainian people," Mahuchikh said. "I hope to go back home in September, I left



my country in March and I miss my home and my friends and my father."

Germany's Julian Weber had earlier sent the large home crowd wild in a fair warning to the likely reaction to the women's relay team as he won javelin gold with 87.66m on his fifth attempt. Yemaneberhan Crippa of Italy produced a devastating final 50-metre sprint to win the men's 10,000m in 27:46.13, while the women's 100m hurdles went the way of Poland, 21-year-old Pia Skrzyszowska producing a textbook display for a runaway triumph in 12.53sec.

Hungary's Luca Kozak claimed silver in 12.69sec while Swiss family fortunes looked up as Dita-j Kambundji took bronze, following elder sister Mujinga's gold and silver medal-showing in the 200 and 100m respectively.