



Daily The Spokesman

A Leading National Daily



فرمان رسول ﷺ
ام المؤمنین خدیجہ رضی اللہ عنہا نے کہا
کہ یہ رسول اللہ! میں دیکھتی ہوں کہ آپ
کے دوست (جزائیل علیہ السلام) آپ
کے پاس آتے ہیں دیر کرتے ہیں۔ اس پر
آیت نازل ہوئی «یا مدینہ! ایک ماہی»
یعنی آپ کے پروردگار نے آپ کو چھوڑا
ہے اور آپ سے وہیزا رہا ہے۔
(بخاری، حدیث نمبر 4951)

Barkat Rice Mills (Pvt) Limited

Govt is doing its best for floods' hit people: Maryam

PML-N vice-president Maryam Nawaz Sharif says the government is doing its best for the relief of the people affected by floods. On this hard time, we will not leave the people who are badly affected by the devastation caused by the floods.



CPEC transforms Pakistan's socio economic landscape: Chinese Envoy

Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong on Monday said the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) had transformed Pakistan's socio-economic landscape by overhauling its infrastructure and alleviating the energy crisis. Titled Pakistan-China relations 'rock-solid', the envoy expressed his country's sympathies to Pakistan in lieu of the ongoing flooding China would not leave Pakistan in such testing times.

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Soothe

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif interacts with flood affected families in Nowshehra on Monday.



Photo: PID

Floods & rains

Pakistan to face food security challenge: Ahsan

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal Monday said that the country might face a big challenge of food security as rice, banana, onion and other agriculture produces have been badly affected due to the recent floods.

Addressing a press briefing here, the minister said that the recent floods and torrential rains have also damaged 40-50 percent cotton crop across the country. He said Pakistan is witnessing more devastation than that caused by the flood in 2010.

The minister informed that 0.9 million livestock and one million houses have been washed away in the recent floods while over 1000 people lost their lives.

Rs25,000

Govt offering fiscal aid to each flood-victim family: PM

Directs to utilize all resources for relief of flood victims

Our Correspondent

NOWSHERA/CHARSADDA/MOHMAND: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif here Monday said all flood victims in the country, including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, would receive cash assistance of Rs 25,000 each through the Benazir Income Support Programme by September 3. The distribution of cash assistance among the flood-hit people was underway in all the provinces, including Sindh and Balochistan, as the federal government had allocated Rs 28 billion for the purpose, he said while talking to the flood victims here at the relief camps.

The prime minister said Rs one million each would be provided to the heirs of deceased.

Federal ministers Marriyum Aurangzeb and Murtaza Javed Abbasi, PM's Adviser Engr Amir Muqam, Quami Watan Party Chairman Aftab Sherpao and Aawami National Party President Aimal Wali Khan also accompanied the prime minister during his visit to the relief camps. Shehbaz Sharif said the federal government had provided funds of Rs 15 billion to Sindh

and Rs10 billion to Balochistan, while the special grant for the KP flood victims would be announced soon. Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif has directed the concerned authorities to utilize all available resources for

Pakistan's future hinges upon solar, wind power generation: PM

the relief of flood-affected people. He issued these directives during a visit to flood relief camps in Nowshehra and Charsadda on Monday. On this occasion, the Prime Minister also interacted with the children and flood affected people in the camps. Shahbaz Sharif said the federal and provincial governments along with NDMA and Pak-Army are collectively working for the rehabilitation of the flood affected people. He said the government is providing one-million rupees compensation to those whose family

member lost their lives in flood while twenty-five thousand rupees are being disbursed among all flood-affected families. Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif on Monday stressed the need to immediately shift the country's power generation capacity to solar and wind power production systems as the costly power generation was continuously depleting the national exchequer. During a briefing at the Mohmand Dam site, the prime minister said Pakistan had been facing a very acute problem of expensive power generation due to the import of expensive fuels, and then subsidising it for the consumers. He said it was a three-tier loss to the national exchequer, as the country had been importing costly fuels for power generation and then reducing the cost of the power for consumers.

The prime minister, referring to the timely completion of the hydro power projects, opined that these hydro power projects and the tapping of other natural resources like solar and wind 'are our future and we need to immediately shift to that direction, otherwise the economy will continue bleeding annually.'

20 aircrafts

UAE pledges massive relief goods for Pakistan

UAE authorities contact COAS Bajwa in this regard

RAWALPINDI: The United Arab Emirates (UAE) authorities on Monday contacted Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa and pledged 20 aircrafts carrying relief items for flood victims, Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) reported. The ISPR in a statement said that the UAE authorities have contacted COAS for flood relief assistance and pledged 20 aircraft sorties flood Relief equipment to assist flood victims across Pakistan.

Meanwhile, international aid was reaching Pakistan on Monday, as the military and volunteers desperately tried to evacuate many thousands stranded by widespread flooding driven by "monster monsoons" that have claimed more than 1,000 lives this summer.

Cargo planes from Turkey



and the United Arab Emirates began the international rush to assist the impoverished nation, landing on Sunday in Islamabad carrying tents, food and other daily necessities. Trucks carrying tents, food, and water arranged by Pakistan were also being dispatched to various parts of the country by the National Disaster Management Authority for tens of thousands of flood victims. They were among the nations that pledged to help Pakistan tackle the crisis after officials called for international help. The United Nations will launch an international appeal for Pakistani flood victims on Tuesday in Islamabad.

Twitter's manipulation

Pak gravely concerned over Indian act

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan expressed serious concern on Monday over reports on the Indian government's attempt to infiltrate the security system of the social media platform, Twitter, by forcing it to employ an Indian "agent/representative", a statement issued by the Foreign Office said Monday. On August 23, a former Twitter security chief alleged that the Indian government forced the social media firm to put a government agent on the payroll, according to a whistleblower disclosure with US regulators.

Peiter 'Mudge' Zatkoff said the government agent would have had access to sensitive user data due to Twitter's weak security infrastructure. Accord-

ing to the statement, reports revealed that the matter came up during Twitter's briefing to India's Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information and Technology where legal depositions made in the US by a former Twitter employee were also discussed.

The statement said that a large number of Twitter handles particularly those belonging to Kashmiri political leaders and media persons, continue to remain blocked due to India's frivolous legal objections. Last month, Pakistan also registered its strong protest with the Indian government over the blocking of access to the content of several Twitter handles of Pakistan's diplomatic missions as well as the national broadcaster Radio Pakistan.

Calamitous floods

China, KSA, other countries show solidarity with Pakistan

Xi Jinping, King Salman, KSA Crown Prince express condolences with President Dr Alvi

ISLAMABAD: Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud have expressed their condolences and sympathies with President Dr Arif Alvi over the loss of lives and injures to scores of others in the recent floods, inundating different regions of Pakistan.

In his cable, the King expressed profound sorrow and sincere sympathy to the President of Pakistan, families of the deceased and the friendly people of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, wishing the deceased Allah Almighty's mercy and forgiveness, their relatives every patience, and the injured a speedy recovery and appealing to Allah Almighty to preserve the President and people of Pakistan against any harm," the contents of the cable shared by President of Paki-



stan's Press Wing and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on its official Twitter handle on Monday.

While in his cable, the Saudi Crown Prince and Deputy Prime Minister expressed his profound sorrow and sincere sympathy with the President of Pakistan and the families of deceased.

He also prayed for the deceased and wished speedy recovery for the injured people. Chinese President Xi Jinping and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday expressed solidarity with Pakistan as the country faces a catastrophic situ-

ation due to floods. Chinese President Xi Jinping said that China will continue to provide all possible assistance to Pakistan to deal with floods. Issuing a goodwill message to Pakistan President Dr Arif Alvi, Xi Jinping expressed solidarity with the flood victims. "I believe that the government and people of Pakistan will overcome the disasters of the floods through joint efforts", Xi Jinping hoped.

On the other hand, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi wrote on the social networking site Twitter that he was saddened to see the flood disaster in Pakistan. He further wrote, "We express our heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims, the injured and all those who died in the natural calamity." "We extend our heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims, the injured and all those affected by this natural calamity and hope for an early restoration of normalcy", he added.

Toshakhana case

ECP asks PTI chief to submit reply by Sept 7

Staff reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Monday adjourned the hearing of a reference for the disqualification of Imran Khan over not disclosing Toshakhana gifts in the ECP till September 7 next on the request of more time to submit an answer. Barrister Ali Zafar, a lawyer for Imran Khan, did not appear before the ECP, and, in his place, his assistant Barrister Gohar appeared and adopted before the ECP panel that one more week was required to submit an answer by Imran Khan in the case.

"Ali Zafar is in Lahore, and therefore, he could not be consulted," Barrister Gohar said.

"Everything is part of the record already. It should not take so much time," the chief election commissioner (CEC) stressed. "We will try to submit the answer till the next hearing. I am asking for the time in a personal capacity," Barrister Gohar replied.

IMF okays release of \$1.7 b to Pakistan: Miftah

Lambastes PTI leadership for trying to hamper IMF deal

Senior Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) Board approved on Monday the revival of Pakistan's Extended Fund Facility Programme (EFF). Minister for Finance Miftah Ismail in his tweet said that now Pakistan would receive the 7th and 8th tranche of \$1.7 billion from the IMF. "Alhamdulillah the IMF Board has approved the revival of our EFF program. We should now be getting the 7th & 8th tranche of \$1.7 billion."

He also thanked Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for taking so many tough decisions and saving Pakistan from default. He also congratulated the nation on the good news. Miftah Ismail also hinted at trade with India. During an informal conversation with the media, he said that he would trade with India after seeing the conditions of farmers.

Meanwhile, a question was raised by the journalist that, in the past, pro-trade ministers from India had to go home. Responding to this, the Finance Minister said that "If people have to go home to protect themselves from inflation, then it is fine. As much as I am working for the improvement of the economy, I hope I will not be fired." He further said that the supply of fruits and vegetables is



Islamabad: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Mr. Miftah Ismail held a meeting with Finance Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mr. Taimur Saleem Khan Jhagra at Finance Division on Monday. Photo: PID

likely to be affected due to floods. If the supply is affected, the import of vegetables will have to be opened. If we have to import vegetables from

Miftah Ismail hints at trade with India

India, we will do so.

Finance Minister Miftah Ismail castigated the PTI leadership after Shaukat Tarin allegedly asked Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to withdraw from the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) deal.

In a press conference after the leaked audio surfaced, Miftah said at this time, Pakistan is drowning and the only hope after God is the international money lender. "Shaukat Tarin is the architect behind PTI's move. Is Imran Khan so power-hungry that he will do anything to get back? Is Imran Khan bigger than Pakistan?"

"Should we rename Pakistan to Bani Gala? Have they no shame? How can they stoop so low?" the finance minister questioned. Miftah said the KP finance minister had told him that he had not sent the letter — in which he pulled out from the IMF deal — to the lender. "Have some shame [...] I verified it, the letter was sent to the IMF."

Diversifying diplomacy

The Ambassadors designate of Germany, Spain, Belgium, Libya, Kenya, and Ethiopia presenting their credentials to President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Monday.



Photo: PID

POL prices likely to be slashed from Sept 1

news Desk

ISLAMABAD: The prices of petroleum products are likely to go down by up to Rs10 per litre from September 1 mainly because of the decrease in international oil prices, ARY News reported Monday quoting sources. A well-placed source said that the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has started working on a proposal to decrease fuel prices in line with a reduction in global oil prices.

According to sources, the regulator will send a summary to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for cutting petrol and diesel price by Rs10 per litre respectively. If approved, the new prices will come into effect from September 1. Earlier, it emerged that Pakistan has assured the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to gradually increase the levy on petroleum products up to Rs50 per litre, ARY News reported, quoting well-placed sources.

In the LOI, Pakistan has assured the international lender to gradually increase the levy on petroleum products to Rs50 per litre. Earlier, the federal government increased petrol price by Rs6.72 per litre for the rest of August 2022.

Economic & trade

Pakistan highly values ties with the world: President

Receives credentials from envoys-designate of Germany, Spain, Belgium, Libya, Kenya & Ethiopia

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The ambassadors-designate of Germany, Spain, Belgium, Libya, Kenya, and Ethiopia presented their credentials to President Dr Arif Alvi at a ceremony held here at Aiwan-e-Sadr on Monday. Ambassador of Germany, Alfred Grannas; Ambassador of Spain, Jose Antonia de Ory Peral; Ambassador of Belgium, Charles Delogne; Ambassador of Libya, Moamer Z. O. Abdalmoatib; Ambassador of Kenya, Mary Nyambura Kamau, and the Ambassador of Ethiopia, Jemal Beker Abdula, made separate calls on the President.

Talking to the German Ambassador, the president said that Germany was one of the largest foreign direct investors in Pakistan. He said that German firms with expertise in wind and solar energy as well as in hydel power projects could take advantage of new sets of incentives offered by Pakistan in these sectors. The president encouraged German investors to invest in Pakistan's Special Economic Zones (SEZs) under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

He said that keeping in view the huge potential of business, trade and investment between the two countries, the existing level of bilateral trade needed to be substantially improved. He stressed the

need for bilateral cooperation between the two countries to mitigate the negative fallout of climate change and global warming against the backdrop of devastating floods in Pakistan. Talking to the Ambassador of Spain, the President expressed the need to further expand bilateral relations in the economic, trade, investment and tourism sectors.

He appreciated the Spanish support to Pakistan on GSP Plus Scheme and hoped

Investors should invest in Special Economic Zones under CPEC: President Alvi

that this support will continue in future as well. He stressed the need for the early finalization of an agreement on defence cooperation between the two countries. Talking to the Belgian Ambassador, the President stressed the need to substantially increase the volume of bilateral trade from its existing volume of US\$ 1.35 billion by increasing the pace of exchanges of business delegations, participating in trade fairs and launching joint ventures as well as forging meaningful cooperation in agri-

culture, port handling and dredging, and science and technology.

To the Ambassador of Libya, the President stressed the need for expanding the scope of trade ties and exploring new avenues of economic cooperation between the two countries. He expressed the hope that the new ambassador, appointed after a gap of 11 years, would work towards further deepening the relationship between the two brotherly nations. Talking to the Kenyan Ambassador, the president said that Pakistan accorded utmost importance to the economic and trade ties with Kenya. He also expressed satisfaction over the existing level of bilateral cooperation and coordination in the areas of trade, economy, defence and border management.

During his discussion with the Ethiopian ambassador, the President appreciated the decision of Ethiopian leadership to open a diplomatic mission in Islamabad, and expressed the hope that it would improve bilateral relations, enhance mutual exchanges, and would open a new era of friendship and cooperation between the two brotherly countries.

He also welcomed the increasing cooperation between the two countries in the aviation sector and the commencement of two weekly direct flights reconnecting Karachi with Africa through Addis Ababa.

Rs20 per kg

LPG prices hiked across Pakistan



ISLAMABAD: The prices of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) witnessed a huge increase in several areas of Pakistan without a notification from the government. In a statement, Chairman LPG Distribution Association (LDAP) Irfan Khokhar said that the LPG prices in major cities of Pakistan have increased by Rs20 per kg. The gas was now being sold at Rs240 to Rs 250 per kg.

Meanwhile, the prices of Liquefied Petroleum Gas in rural areas have reached to Rs270 after an increase of Rs50 per kg. Irfan Khokhar claimed that the government should take action against black marketing of LPG. He further stated that the prices were increased unjustifiably, noting that the liquefied gas prices as per Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) is Rs218 per kg.

A month earlier, the prices of Liquefied petroleum gas witnessed a third increase in days with distributors threatening a nationwide strike and sit-in against the hike. Chairman LPG distributors association Irfan Khokhar said that the mafia has completed the hat-trick of hike in LPG prices in days and Rs30 was increased in 48 hours without a notification from the government.

Rupee further skids vs US dollar

ISLAMABAD: The US dollar's hike against rupee continued unabated. According to forex dealers, the US dollar rose by Rs1.26 in the inter-bank to trade at Rs221.92 while banks are selling the greenback at Rs222.50. In open market, the US dollar is being traded between Rs229 and Rs231.

The rupee's slide after weeks of recovery against US dollar continued on Friday with greenback selling at Rs230 in open market. According to forex dealers, the US dollar rose by Rs1.25 in the inter-bank to trade at Rs220.66 while banks are selling it at Rs221.20. In open market, the dollar traded between Rs228 and Rs230.

The rupee began a declining trend during the ongoing week despite assurances of IMF for release of US\$1.17 billion tranche and investments of upto US\$4 billion confirmed by Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

In an alarming trend, the foreign exchange reserves held by the central bank fell by \$87 million during the week ended on August 19, according to data released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) on Thursday.

Sharing a break-up of the foreign reserves position, the central bank said that the foreign currency reserves held by the SBP were recorded at \$7.81 billion, down by \$87 million compared to \$7.89 on August 19. "During the week ended on August 19, 2022, SBP's reserves decreased by \$87 million to \$7,809.9 million," the SBP said in a statement. Total liquid foreign reserves held by the country stood at \$13.52 billion, said the SBP on Thursday.

Pressurizing centre

Tarin asks Punjab, KP to backtrack from IMF commitments

ISLAMABAD: Former Finance Minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Shaukat Tarin has allegedly asked Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Finance Ministers to backtrack from IMF commitments in order to pressurize federal government. According to details, an audio clip has surfaced in which former finance minister was allegedly giving directions to provincial finance minister to derail International Monetary Fund deal.

In alleged audio, Shaukat Tarin said that they need to backtrack from Rs750 billion commitments and tell the lender that the commitment Punjab made



was pre-floods and now the province "cannot honor it". The PTI leader told the finance minister to draft a letter and send it to him for vetting so it could be sent to the federal government and later on to the IMF representative in

Pakistan.

At Tarin's request, Leghari asked whether Pakistan would suffer if Punjab withdraws from the deal.

"Well, frankly isn't the state already suffering because of the way they are treating your chairman [Khan] and everybody else? IMF will definitely ask them: where will you get the money from now?" Tarin responded. He further said that Centre is sending PTI leadership to jail and filing terrorism case. Tarin said that this could not go on further and the party could not bear being "mistreated" and not respond. "We cannot be blackmailed."

Imran trying to sabotage IMF program: Bilawal

Says this is a betrayal of country and people

LAHORE: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Monday lashed out at Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan, claiming that the former prime minister is trying to sabotage the International Monetary Fund (IMF) economic bailout of the mess he created. Taking to Twitter, Bilawal penned, "KP finance minister says as a 'blackmailing tactic' his Punjab finance minister said this would damage the state". He also said that these instructions passed on by the one who left the country on the verge of default.

Lashing out at the PTI Chairman,

FM Bilawal said that he [Imran] chose this moment to exploit his governments in KP and Punjab to sabotage the national economic interests. "This is a betrayal of our country and our people," he added. Bilawal also said that first the former premier entered into deal with the IMF, then he almost pushed the country to default to save his prime ministership. In another tweet, the FM claimed that Imran Khan had been caught corruptly abusing charity donations for his personal and political purposes, adding that he was exposed in foreign funding case.

To avoid getting caught he's been

on a relentless campaign against every institution, adding Bilawal. He further lambasted the PTI Chairman, saying that he [Imran] would sink so low now, was beyond his expectations. Sharing his thoughts over catastrophic floods in Pakistan, Bilawal said that the country has been devastated by floods as over 1,500 people have been killed and 33 million affected. While the people in the four provinces (KP, South Punjab, Balochistan and Sindh have lost everything, FM Bilawal urged that every Pakistani should be doing all they can to help their fellow citizens. APP

Contempt

IHC bins plea against Nawaz, Shehbaz

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) Monday dismissed a petition seeking contempt of court proceedings against PML-N supreme Nawaz Sharif and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. The petitioner had contended that the prime minister was the guarantor of his elder brother's return to Pakistan after he gets medical treatment, however, he has yet to return — despite the passage of nearly three years.

IHC Chief Justice Athar Minallah, in the order, mentioned that his court could not take up the plea as it was already pending in the

Laure High Court (LHC). "The petitioner has been heard at length. In response to the court's query, he has admitted that the petition wherein interim order was passed is pending before the learned Lahore High Court," the order read.

The order mentioned that the petitioner also admitted that the name of Nawaz was removed from the Exit Control List (ECL) pursuant to the decision of the federal cabinet — subject to certain conditions. "...the removal of the name from the Exit Control List was not pursuant to an order or direction passed by any Court," the order read.

Audio leak

Shaukat Tarin gave sensible advice to KP, Punjab ministers: Asad

ISLAMABAD: PTI Secretary-General Asad Umar said Monday Shaukat Tarin — being a former finance minister — understands the country's economy — and, therefore, he didn't suggest anything wrong and gave "sensible" advice to Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's finance ministers. "He told both finance ministers to tell the federal government they should go back to the IMF and inform them that we [our provinces] have been hit by a flood and it is not a normal situation," Umar said in a press conference.

The PTI leader said that Tarin asked the finance ministers to tell the federal government that it should seek a concession in the budget surplus that was initially agreed upon. "Will a sensible person believe that this wasn't a good suggestion? Didn't Imran

Khan, when COVID hit the country, ask the IMF personally for fiscal space? Wasn't a debt relief programme started for developing economies?" Umar questioned. He added that it is sensible to seek concession from the international lender — given the current situation.

"Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is asking countries for funds to provide relief to the flood affectees. Can't you ask the IMF to provide fiscal space for a certain period of time, so we can rehabilitate our people through our own money and not ask others for donations?" he stressed. Umar claimed that the letter was sent to the federal government and not the IMF. Separately, PTI Senior Vice President Shireen Mazari said that there is "nothing illegal or wrong in the conversation". The PTI leader said that



the party has publicly opposed the terms on which "imported government" is taking loans from the international money lender.

"But what is illegal is the wire-tapping done on the conversation without court order. A criminal offence."

Flood Relief

MNAs, MPAs to monitor rescue, rehab operations in province: CM Sindh

Says government wants to save people's lives and property

SEHWAN: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Monday said that the government has nominated MNAs and MPAs as focal persons in each district for the immediate rescue/relief and rehabilitation of rain/flood affected people.

He expressed these views while talking to media persons after inspecting Manchar Lake near Sehwan, adding the government was making efforts to deal with the situation arising from the recent rains, and would not abandon their people in this testing time.

He further said that for the last 10 days he and his cabinet members were continuously visiting Sindh, while he personally came here three before.

He said that the decision regarding water discharge has to be taken by technical persons/engineers as the government can not take such deci-



sions. "Government wants to save people's lives and property because the situation

was bad across Sindh," CM said, adding that at present, the water pressure was high on the side of the river and there

was a crack in the dyke, which he called a serious threat to Juhi town.

The chief minister said that the water level in Manchar lake was currently 121 feet and in 2010 this level had increased to more than 118 feet.

He said he had spoken to the chief of the Pakistan Navy as two helicopters were reaching Dadu for the rescue activities.

He thanked the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for visiting Sindh and said the PPP Chairman and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari was personally monitoring the situation in Sindh by postponing his trip to Europe.

On this occasion, while giving a briefing to the CM, Irrigation department SE said there was 500,944 cusecs of water flow at Guddu barrage, while at Sukkur barrage water flow was recorded at 530,750 cusecs. APP

Miseries of flood victims

SOHBATPUR: People wade through flood water along with their belongings to reach safety at National Highway. As the monsoon spell has wreaked havoc across Pakistan but some areas have been impacted more than others. Balochistan has suffered a lot due to heavy rain and floods that have inundated several villages.



Photo: Online

Khushhali Bank to promote SBP's farmer-loans, awareness

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: A series of training videos have been launched in national and regional languages, by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), with a vision to create awareness about agriculture-financing products and procedures, for the farming communities across the country, especially in the underserved areas. Khushhali Microfinance Bank Limited (KMFBL) has joined-hands with the SBP and all the agriculture-lending banks, who are disseminating these insightful videos, through the relevant digital-platforms and social-media.

The stakeholders of Pakistan's economy understand that; Lack of awareness about agriculture-financing products and formal lending-services, is a major challenge for banks, it hinders outreach to the rural-markets. The SBP is inspiring the financial sector for Capacity-building, besides launch-

ing various initiatives for awareness, promotion and development of agriculture-financing in the country. However, farming communities at the grassroots level are still largely unaware and are not able to optimally utilize these secured and regulated financial services.



In order to broaden the scope of SBP's campaigns, KMFBL and all other prestigious financial institutions are now being engaged to explore the potential of digital-media, driven by the rapid penetration of internet and increased usage of smartphones across Pakistan. Revolutionary technologies are thus creating many great

opportunities for disseminating information. These innovative solutions have enabled precise penetration of the target segments, promising better results, timely outreach and cost-effectiveness than the conventional awareness sessions. The Financial-Literacy videos by SBP also ensure easier comprehension and longer retention.

The first video in this series covers the overall agriculture-financing landscape of the country, SBP's initiatives and GoP's schemes, all from a farmer's perspective. Keeping in view the need for enhancing accessibility of credit in the diverse underserved areas, this video has also been translated into three regional languages apart from Urdu; i.e. Sindhi, Balochi and Pash-tu. The next two videos in the series focus on crop and non-crop sectors, including information regarding agriculture-loan products and diving deeper into the procedures and documentation required for both segments.

Pakistan to host APICTA awards 2022

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Asia-Pacific ICT Alliance (APICTA) and Pakistan Software Houses Association (P@SHA) announced that Pakistan will be officially hosting the APICTA Awards this year for the first time.

Hosted by P@SHA, the APICTA Executive Committee meeting with delegates from 16 member economies including Malaysia, Australia, Sri Lanka, and Chinese Taipei was held in Serena Hotel, Islamabad. It was announced that Pakistan has successfully won the bid to host the APICTA Awards, making it a historic milestone for Pakistan's IT & ITeS industry. First held in

2001, the APICTA Awards have previously been hosted by member economies such as Australia, Malaysia, China, and Singapore. The Awards have proven to be a productive force to develop the local & regional economy and have already led to lucrative business opportunities for qualifying Pakistan IT & Ites companies in the recent past.

By hosting APICTA awards, Pakistan would have an opportunity to position its strategic case for 'Make in Pakistan'. Majority of APICTA delegations will be first-time visitors to Pakistan and at least 200 international delegates are expected for the 5-day event, including IT leaders, entrepreneurs, policymakers,

foreign officials, researchers and students which will help further strengthen a progressive image of Pakistan.

Entry into the APICTA Awards is only possible by qualifying through similar awards programs conducted by the authorized representative of each member economy. P@SHA, being the sole authorized representative within APICTA, is the only gateway for Pakistani IT & Ites enterprises, startups, and students to enter APICTA Awards. To be fair and transparent, the rules for the jurors are highly regulated, with a mature judging system and advisory judges to verify the decisions as impartial. Any intentional anomalies can even lead to disqualification

of judges. Applications for the P@SHA ICT Awards are open till September 5th and may be submitted via www.pashactawards.com.

Chairman APICTA, Jit Sing Santok Singh appreciated Pakistan's recognition of talent and expressed that he expects more opportunities through this knowledge transfer coming to the country after hosting the awards. While discussing the need of such opportunities he added "ICT is not a business enabler, it IS the business." He expressed his sincere thanks to P@SHA for their support. Further looking forward to a great event and are hoping to make this an event with some great memories to take back."

PTCL Group pledges Rs1.75b to support flood affectees

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: PTCL Group, country's largest telecom services provider, has come forward to aid communities affected by floods across various provinces of Pakistan through a relief package worth PKR 1.75 billion.

The package includes donation to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund, NGOs, provision of free calls in flood affected areas, housing loans to displaced people and medical facilities.

PTCL Group will be providing medical services to affectees in its Health Centers, where a total of 13 doctors and 27 paramedical staff in 8 districts will perform their duties. To further extend Group's support, Ufone 4G has announced free calls for people in the flood affected communities so that they can keep them connected with their families & friends, and to help them establish contact with the aid agencies and the Government. Moreover, U Microfinance Bank has pledged towards providing low-cost house loans for flood-affected families to rebuild their homes.

In addition to this, PTCL Group has decided to contribute to the Prime Minister's Flood Relief Fund in order to support Government of Pakistan's efforts for the rehabilitation of the communities and also donate to various leading aid agencies working in Balochistan and Sindh provinces to provide immediate relief assistance in the affected areas.

PTCL Group's employees and staff will voluntarily give donation that will be matched by the organization and the total amount will be donated to a leading charity.

Sharing his thoughts on pledging support, Hatem Bamatraf, President and Group CEO, PTCL & Ufone, stated; "These are trying times for millions of people across Pakistan, with everything including lives, shelter and sources of income taken away by one of the worst natural calamities in modern times.

BISP launches Emergency Helpline numbers

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) in coordination with district administration, banks and police officials deputed at the special payment campsites is fully mobilized and ensuring speedy disbursements of Rs. 25000 per family to the flood affectees of Balochistan, Sindh, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

As of Monday evening a total of Rs. 8882068536 have been disbursed among 353119 flood affected families all across Pakistan under the Flood Relief Cash Assistance program. So far, 42862 affected families of Balochistan have received Rs. 1,085,312,744; 211235 families have received Rs. 5,307,078,670 in Sindh; 35053 families of KP have received Rs. 881,137,000 and 63,969 flood affected families have received Rs. 1,608,540,122 in Punjab. The payment process is likely to see a boom in the coming days as flood affectees in huge numbers are visiting special payment campsites which have been established to ensure fair and transparent payment of financial assistance worth Rs. 25000 per affected family. The management of BISP has deputed its staff at these campsites so as to facilitate the payment process.

METRO Pakistan hands over relief goods for flood affectees

Our Correspondent

KARACHI: Metro Pakistan, the leading international wholesale company, steps forward as the first retail business in Pakistan to supply relief and food supplies for the flood IDPs in Karachi. In a simple handing over event M Thiru, Head of Operations, METRO Pakistan met the Commissioner Karachi, Muhammad Iqbal Memon at his office and handed over relief goods.

At the occasion, M Thiru, Head of Operations, METRO Pakistan, said, "METRO is always at the forefront to provide humanitarian assistance and has used its resources to assist, as and where required. We will continue to do so, till it is over."

The Commissioner appreciated the efforts of METRO Pakistan for participating in the relief work in this difficult time, and said "The people are severely suffering due to rains and floods. The government is playing its due role to help out the flood affected people and restore their lives. The administration of Karachi is active in helping out the affected families with the assistance of our friends like METRO".

The relief goods included foods, drinks, and other edible items. METRO Pakistan is extending its relief good assistance to other parts of Pakistan, in the coming days.

Meeting of Hamdard Naunehal Assembly held

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: A meeting of Hamdard Naunehal Assembly (HNA), comprising two separate sessions, was held at a local hotel here in Karachi. Ms Sadia Rashid, President Hamdard Foundation Pakistan presided over the sessions. The renowned writer, Anwar Maqsood was the chief guest of the first session titled: "Hamdard Naunehal Assembly, a successful journey since 1985." Ghazi Salahuddin, a prominent journalist and intellectual, was the chief guest of the second session titled: "This is our country, have we played our due part in its progress?" Former members of HNA, who are now professionals serving the nation in different fields, attended the meeting to express their gratitude and pay tribute to Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said and HNA.

SECP hosts first Meeting of ECO Heads of CMSA meeting

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: "Without a shared vision that taps into a larger pool of intellectual and physical resources, we cannot do justice to our mandates," said SECP Chairman Aamir Khan while addressing the first ever meeting of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Heads of Capital Market Supervisory Authorities, on Monday.

The meeting was arranged by the ECO Secretariat, and hosted by the SECP, to promote sustainable socio-economic development of the region through collaboration between member states. The meeting was attended by representatives from eight of the total 10 ECO member countries, including Republic of Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Republic of Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Republic of Uzbekistan.

Khan, speaking at the occasion, stressed upon the importance of collaboration and knowledge sharing

between member states, which will enable the region to achieve shared success. He also briefed participants about recent reforms carried out by SECP to improve Pakistan's capital markets. Mr. Khan reiterated SECP's commitment for enhancing cross-border cooperation, recalling the earlier meeting of capital market regulators forum of Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Forum hosted by SECP in 2019. He added that, "Our glorious shared and individual histories place a burden on us today to create the environment that fosters a sustainable future for posterity".

Ms. Musarat Jabeen, Executive Director SECP, welcomed the participants, and stated that through leveraging the experience of other member states, ECO members have huge potential for advancement in the realm of capital markets. Seyed Mohsen Esperdi, Deputy Secretary General, ECO Secretariat, spoke about market connectivity and benefits of information sharing to make effective use of available opportunities in the region.

Soneri Bank announces half yearly results for 2022

Our Correspondent

KARACHI: The Board of Directors of Soneri Bank Limited, in their 193rd meeting held in Murree on 28th August 2022, approved the Bank's condensed interim financial statements for the half year ended 30 June 2022.

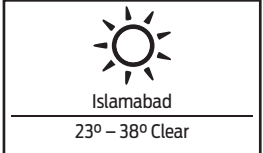
The Bank posted profit before tax (PBT) of Rs. 1,864 million and profit after tax (PAT) of Rs. 545 million for the half year ended June 2022, as compared to Rs. 3,027 million and Rs. 1,822 million respectively in the same period last year. The Bank's EPS was recorded at Re. 0.4940 per share for the current reporting period, as compared to Rs. 1.6529 for the comparative prior period.

The Bank's Net Interest income for the half year ended at Rs. 5,200 million, decreasing by 8.86 percent against Rs. 5,705 million reported for the same period last year. The key factor behind this reduction was pressure on spreads amidst rising interest rates, and the timing difference on repricing of the overall balance sheet. Non-interest

income for the period was reported at Rs. 1,904 million as against Rs. 2,051 million for the comparative prior period. Growth in expenses was restricted at 14.65 percent as compared to the prior period with Non-markup expenses reported at Rs. 5,733 million for the period quarter.

The Bank's net advances portfolio stood at Rs. 201,400 million as at 30 June 2022, 21.70 percent higher than the year end 2021 level, the Bank's Non-performing loans to total Advances ratio improved to 4.53 percent (December 2021: 5.95 percent), with specific coverage at 76.08 percent (December 2021: 76.51 percent).

Bank's Deposits registered an increase of 10.63 percent when compared to 31 December 2021, ending at Rs. 445,864 million at 30 June 2022. The Bank's CA mix improved to 29.02 percent in June 2022 as against 27.17 percent at December 2021, with period end Current Accounts at Rs. 129,369 million as against Rs. 109,494 million at the year end 2021.



SERVICES

Namaz Timings
 Fajr 4:12 am
 Zohr 12:09 pm
 Asr 4:47 pm
 Maghrib 6:38 pm
 Isha 8:05 pm

EMERGENCY

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

Women Police Stations

Islamabad 9222596
 Rawalpindi 9270601-20

ENQUIRY

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

HOSPITALS

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

DEPARTMENTS

CDA 9221334-43
 CDA 9208301-04
 Met Office 9250360-6
 RDA 5555864
 TMA 5770886
 Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Ashrafi urges people to help flood victims without prejudice

Paigham-e-Pakistan also determined the rights of minorities as enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Special Representative of the Prime Minister for Interfaith Harmony and Middle East Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi on Monday urged the people to help the flood victims without any prejudice.

Addressing the 'Paigham-e-Pakistan Ulema Conference' held at the Rawalpindi Arts Council and organized by the Punjab government in collaboration with International Islamic University Islamabad's Islamic Research Institute, he said people should set aside their religious and ethnic affiliation, and come forward for the assistance of the distressed people.

Shedding light on the significance of Paigham-e-Pakistan, the chairman of Pakistan Ulema Council said it was a complete doctrine which taught respect of other's sect and faith, while remaining in one's own religious domain.

It was signed by more than 15,000 Ulema, Mashaykh and religious scholars

of all schools of thought in a bid to bring social, political and religious reforms in all segments of the society, he added.

He said the Paigham-e-Pakistan also determined the rights of minorities as enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan. "Our worship places should be used for mutual love and respect, and not for hatred or bigotry against each other," Ashrafi said.

He further said that in near future, another document titled 'Sahiban-e-Pakistan' would be launched on the rights of women in the light of the divine command and the constitution.

He credited the Pakistan Army for rendering their matchless services to save the lives and properties of the flood-ravaged people across the country.

Ashrafi said Pakistan's enemy wanted to destabilize the federation by creating division between the nation and the armed forces through fifth-generation warfare. "It is our national resolve to counter the prop-

aganda being made against our security institutions through all possible means."

He also reminded the hoarders and the profiteers about the wrath of Allah Almighty had they not amended their conduct, and asked them not to take advantage of the people's miseries as they were already in financial crisis due to torrential rains and flash floods in the country.

Responding to a question, he expressed dismay over former finance minister Shaukat Tarin's audio leaks, and said it was beyond comprehension that how a man who had been at a responsible position could direct the two federating units to write letters to the International Monetary Fund in a bid to sabotage the federal government's deal with it.

He appreciated the Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi who did not pay any heed towards such a move that could bring Pakistan's economy on the brink of destruction.

Flood fund raising

ISLAMABAD: Students of Quaid-e-Azan university collecting money during fund raising campaign for flood affected people at a road, in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Two died, Rawalpindi's dengue tally reached 367

RAWALPINDI: District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control (DCEPC), Dr Sajjad Mehmood on Monday said that two dengue patients had died, while the total confirmed cases reached 367 in the Rawalpindi district.

The health officer informed that as many as 27 new patients arrived during the last hours, including 18 from Potohar town urban area, one from Chak Jalaldin, Rawalpindi Cantonment and Kahutta, while six cases were reported from outside districts in Rawalpindi counting four from Islamabad and one each from Multan and Jehlum.

During the last 24 hours, 213 dengue fever suspects had been brought to the district's health facilities, while the district administration had registered 38 FIRs, issued notices to 114, challan to 51, sealed four premises, and a fine of Rs 150,100 was imposed against the violations of dengue SOPs, he added.

Presently, he said that 15 patients having positive results were admitted to the Holy Family Hospital, 13 to Benazir Bhutto Hospital and ten to the District Headquarters Hospital.

WoW health provides free medical consultation in flood hit areas

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Digital health-care start-up, WoW (World of Wellness) Health has started free medical consultation via audio and video calls from flood hit areas across Pakistan.

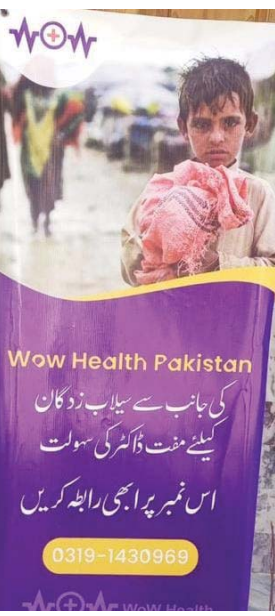
According to details, WoW Health collaborating with national and international NGOs, organizations and individual humanitarian groups working on ground in disaster hit areas so that they can carry medicines with them while reaching out to effected

people and then WoW health consultants are available 24/7 for free of cost health advice to help people in this grave situation.

While explaining the initiative, WoW Health's MD and founder, Sikandar Zaman told that a wave of pain leaves our souls shattered once we are told that over 30 million people have lost a place they once called home. Flood victims are looking forward to help as their situation is getting worse. Many areas are disconnected from the country due to water

and landslides and logistics and commute is limited. In this scenario WoW Health decided to use its all-digital resources to provide best possible medical consultation to at least control any merging epidemic in this already difficult hour, he added.

WoW Health also providing relief goods and medicines in different flood hit areas. Sikandar Zaman also urged nation to come forward to support our people in these difficult times and we need to think beyond our political affiliations rather thinking more about humanity.



PANAH discusses importance of healthy food policies

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Heart Association organized a health conference on the importance of healthy food policy at National Press Club Islamabad. RIUJ President Abid Abbasi and General Secretary Tariq Wirk were the hosts of the event. The function was presided over by the president of PANAH, Major General (retd) Masudur Rehman Kayani. The guests included Munawar Hussain, Consultant of Global Health Advocacy Incubator, Dr. Khawaja Masood from Ministry of Health and many people from civil society, health professionals and media. Parliamentary Secretary Health Shazia Soomro was the Chief Guest of the occasion.

Addressing the event, PANAH Secretary General Sanahullah Ghuman said that Pakistan National Heart Association has been educating people about heart and related diseases for the past 40 years and the causes that lead to these diseases. PANAH is also working with the government to make laws to prevent them so as to give a healthy life to our countrymen and especially children because a healthy nation is the guarantee of a country's strength. Today's program is also on the same issue. Today we will talk about one such harmful thing i.e. Sugary Drinks



which is one of the main causes of many diseases like heart, obesity, diabetes. Today we will talk about the policy options that we can follow to reduce their consumption and prevent diseases.

Khawaja Masood from the Ministry of Health said that sugary drinks are drinks that contain added sugars. According to the World Health Organization, consumption of added sugars should be less than 10% of total calories. Excessive consumption of these sugary drinks poses great risks to the health of children and adults in particular. One of the main reasons for the increase in obesity, diabetes, heart disease and other diseases is sugary drinks, and because of the high consumption of these sugary drinks, today Pakistan ranks third in diabetes in the world and the rate at which it is increasing. Pakistan is at the first place in the world. Due to the high consumption of these drinks, not only these diseases are increasing rapidly, but the

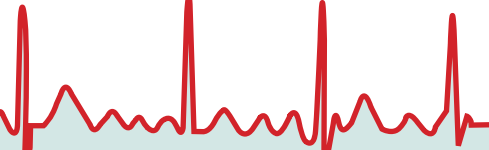
health burden of the government is also increasing. Pakistan's annual expenditure on preventing obesity alone is estimated at more than 2640 million US dollars.

Munawar Hussain, Consultant of Global Health Advocacy Incubator, said that the world has taken some effective measures to reduce the consumption of sugary drinks and protect people from health harms of these beverages, we should also benefit from these measures. Among the measures taken by the world for this are awareness of the harms of these drinks as well as increase in taxes on them, restriction on their marketing, front of pack labeling and warning signs and school food policy. The countries that implemented higher taxes on these beverages, not only reduced the burden of disease in their country but also increased the revenue of the government. When Saudi Arabia increased the tax on soda by 50% and on energy drinks by 100%, the consumption of soda decreased by

41% and the consumption of energy drinks reduced by 65% as compared to previous year. Similarly, Qatar, Chile, Maldives and many other countries have not only reduced health burden but also increased revenue by taking appropriate policy actions to reduce diseases in their countries. He talked about the Health Contribution Bill, how it would help reduce consumption of sugary drinks, reduce disease and increase government revenue.

Addressing the event, RIUJ President Abid Abbasi said that PANAH is rendering valuable services to save the country from diseases. On behalf of the media, we assure you that the media stands by in these efforts of public awareness and legislation. The President of the event, Major General (Retd) Masudur Rehman Kayani said that Pakistan is currently under the grip of heart and related diseases. Many people are suffering from them, including a large number of children. If the government made these items the country will suffer irreparable damage. The chief guest of the event, Shazia Soomro, while appreciating the services of the PANAH, said that the work that the PANAH is doing to raise awareness about health among the people is very valuable. She assured that they will stand with PANAH for legislation in this regard.

Health Corner



Good sleepers have lower risk of heart disease and stroke

ISLAMABAD: Nine in ten people do not get a good night's sleep, according to research presented at ESC Congress 2022. The study found that suboptimal sleep was associated with a higher likelihood of heart disease and stroke. The authors estimated that seven in ten of these cardiovascular conditions could be prevented if everyone was a good sleeper.

"The low prevalence of good sleepers was expected given our busy, 24/7 lives," said study author Dr. Aboubakari Nambiema of INSERM (the French National Institute of Health and Medical Research), Paris, France. "The importance of sleep quality and quantity for heart health should be taught early in life when healthy behaviours become established. Minimising night-time noise and stress at work can both help improve sleep."

Previous studies on sleep and heart disease have generally focused on one sleep habit, such as sleep duration or sleep apnoea, where breathing stops and starts while sleeping. In addition, prior studies have often assessed sleep at baseline only. The current study used a healthy sleep score combining five sleep habits. The researchers investigated the association between the baseline sleep score, and changes over time in the sleep score, and incident cardiovascular disease.

This study included 7,200 participants of the Paris Prospective Study III (PPP3), an observational community-based prospective cohort. Men and women aged 50 to 75 years and free of cardiovascular disease were recruited in a preventive medical centre between 2008 and 2011. The average age was 59.7 years and 62% were men. Participants underwent a physical examination and completed questionnaires on lifestyle, personal and family medical history, and medical conditions.

Questionnaires were used to collect information on five sleep habits at baseline and two follow up visits. Each factor was given 1 point if optimal and 0 if not. A healthy sleep score ranging from 0 to 5 was calculated, with 0 or 1 considered poor and 5 considered optimal. Those with an optimal score reported sleeping 7 to 8 hours per night, never or rarely having insomnia, no frequent excessive daytime sleepiness, no sleep apnoea, and an early chronotype (being a morning person). The researchers checked for incident coronary heart disease and stroke every two years for a total of 10 years.

At baseline, 10% of participants had an optimal sleep score and 8% had a poor score. During a median follow up of eight years, 274 participants developed coronary heart disease or stroke. The researchers analysed the association between sleep scores and cardiovascular events after adjusting for age, sex, alcohol consumption, occupation, smoking, body mass index, physical activity, cholesterol level, diabetes, and family history of heart attack, stroke or sudden cardiac death. They found that the risk of coronary heart disease and stroke decreased by 22% for every 1 point rise in the sleep score at baseline. More specifically, compared to those with a score of 0 or 1, participants with a score of 5 had a 75% lower risk of heart disease or stroke.

The researchers estimated the proportion of cardiovascular events that could be prevented with healthier sleep. They found that if all participants had an optimal sleep score, 72% of new cases of coronary heart disease and stroke might be avoided each year.

Over two follow ups, almost half of participants (48%) changed their sleep score: in 25% it decreased whereas in 23% it improved. When the researchers examined the association between the change in score and cardiovascular events, they found that a 1 point increment over time was associated with a 7% reduction in the risk of coronary heart disease or stroke.

Dr. Nambiema said: "Our study illustrates the potential for sleeping well to preserve heart health and suggests that improving sleep is linked with lower risks of coronary heart disease and stroke. We also found that the vast majority of people have sleep difficulties. Given that cardiovascular disease is the top cause of death worldwide, greater awareness is needed on the importance of good sleep for maintaining a healthy heart." (Courtesy: Science Daily)



ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Arshad Munir Joint Secretary Ministry of Information & Broadcasting receives certificate from Secretary Ministry of Information & Broadcasting Shahera Shahid after attending a workshop at Information Service Academy.

PAF establishes Flood Relief Fund

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Air Force (PAF) on Monday established "PAF Flood Relief Fund" for providing relief and rehabilitation to the affectees of torrential rains and flash floods in the country.

The donations for the flood affectees could be deposited in Allied Bank's account number PK85ABPA0010099183680023 and Askari Bank's account number PK96ASC0003851650000097, said a PAF news release. APP

First consignment of relief goods from Japan due today

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The first consignment of emergency relief goods including tents and plastic sheets would arrive in Pakistan at Jinnah International Airport Karachi on Tuesday.

"The government of Japan would provide emergency relief goods including tents and Plastic Sheets through Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to Pakistan in response to the damages caused by the flood disaster," said a news release issued by the Japan embassy in Pakistan. The emergency relief goods will be delivered to Pakistan in two consignments.

In addition, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, WADA Mitsuhiro has expressed his condolences and profound grief over the extensive damage, including the loss of precious lives, due to the floods caused by the torrential rains in Pakistan.

He also extended sympathies and condolences to the bereaved families. "I also pray from the bottom of my heart for the early recovery of the sufferers and the earliest possible restoration of the affected areas," said the Ambassador. He reiterated that the government of Japan will support Pakistan's efforts to overcome this challenge in collaboration with the government of Pakistan.

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Türkiye & Russia-Ukraine ties

Yasar Yakis

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres met this month in the western Ukrainian city of Lviv. The composition of Erdogan's accompanying delegation offered an idea about what he was planning to achieve in Ukraine. It included defense and trade ministers, as well as the chairman of the defense industry, among others. Several issues were debated during this meeting. The most important one was the threat directed at Europe's biggest nuclear power plant, which is located in Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine. There are conflicting reports about the risks that the Russian-occupied power plant is exposed to. Russia has reportedly considered disconnecting the plant from the Ukrainian power grid and connecting it to its own.

If this were to happen, the Ukrainian grid would be exposed to more frequent power cuts in the forthcoming winter. The Russian military presence in and around the power plant may have three effects. The first is that the Ukrainian technicians will be prevented from perform-

ing their duties. They were in charge of maintaining and running this plant according to the safety standards of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The interruption of their tasks exposes the power plant to risks. A group of 42 countries, plus the EU, issued a statement drawing attention to the negative consequences of the Russian military presence in and around the power plant.

The second is the explosives placed in and around the plant. Any minor negligence could cause a new catastrophe like the one that happened in Chernobyl.

An accident that took place in Chernobyl in 1986 affected half a million people and caused losses of billions of dollars. The third effect of the Russian presence in the power plant is the threat to the fact that Zaporizhzhia belongs to Ukraine. It was built and owned by Ukraine. Guterres said: "The electricity generated at the Russian-held nuclear power plant in Zaporizhzhia belongs to Ukraine. The plant has to be demilitarized." The second important agenda item in Lviv was the bilateral talks held between Erdogan and Zelensky. They discussed all aspects of Turkish-Ukrainian relations.

After the meeting, Erdogan said that he reconfirmed Turkey's support for the terri-

torial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine. This was not surprising, as Ankara had to act together with the other NATO countries. But he did not stop there. About a week

The wheat price in the US fell by 5 percent and reached its lowest point since February. This deal opened up breathing space from the Black Sea to the world. Erdogan is also interested in another subject that concerns both Russia and Ukraine. At their meeting, Zelensky raised the issue of an exchange of prisoners of war.

after the Lviv summit, Erdogan repeated that Turkey does not recognize Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea and that the peninsula has to be returned to Ukraine. Last Thursday, he went a step further when, in response to Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's comment that a Turkish mili-

tary operation in Syria would be "unacceptable," he said: "We do not pay attention to those who make threatening remarks for Turkey. We will continue our operations." Let us see how Russia reacts to such a remark.

Coinciding with the Lviv summit, Iran came up with strong support in favor of Russia in the Ukrainian crisis. Tehran believes — perhaps for good reasons — that it "must back Russia in Ukraine because Russia is fighting a common enemy: The Western alliance." This makes Turkey's sensitive role even more important.

Despite Turkey's declared position that Russia's Ukraine invasion is illegal, it plays a delicate role by maintaining solid relations with both Moscow and Kyiv. The grain deal was another subject debated in the Lviv meeting. Turkey played an important role in making this deal possible. It opened the way for the export of Ukrainian grain and many countries around the world benefited from it.

Through this scheme, 25 cargo ships have carried 625,000 tons of grains all over the world, offering relief in the markets. The wheat price in the US fell by 5 percent and reached its lowest point since February. This deal opened up breathing space from the Black Sea to the world. Erdo-

gan is also interested in another subject that concerns both Russia and Ukraine. At their meeting, Zelensky raised the issue of an exchange of prisoners of war. Erdogan promised to raise this subject with Russian President Vladimir Putin. This could be a new role for Turkey to play between Russia and Ukraine, and Ankara could easily assume such a role.

Meanwhile, the Turkish trade minister and the Ukrainian infrastructure minister signed in Lviv a memorandum of understanding. The document provides for cooperation between the two countries over the removal of the debris of destruction caused by the war and for reconstruction in the country once the conflict ends. Turkish businessmen seem to be prepared to start work as soon as the political decision is made by the Ukrainian authorities.

With 42 companies doing business internationally, Turkey's construction industry ranks second in the world after China and ahead of the US. All these initiatives indicate that Erdogan is eager to assume new roles in terms of Russian-Ukrainian relations.

The writer is a former foreign minister of Turkey and founding member of the ruling AK Party.

Asian financial cooperation

In March 2022, emerging East Asia's local-currency bond market was worth \$23.5tn. In 2005, the Asian Development Bank proposed the most ambitious attempt at regional financial co-operation: the Asian Currency Unit. A basket of the Asean+3 currencies, the ACU was devised as an anchor to which countries in the region could tether their own currencies, thereby deterring competitive devaluations and enabling countries in the region to float their currencies collectively against the US dollar. This would enable faster adjustment of current-account imbalances and promote regional trade and financial flows.

Building on the ACU idea, a group of Japanese economists devised a supplementary concept: the Asian Monetary Unit, whose value would reflect a weighted average of East Asian currencies. But, while Asian academics welcomed the proposals as possible first steps toward the creation of a common regional currency, neither the ACU nor the AMU has gained traction among policymakers. Unfortunately, Asian financial co-operation has been losing momentum in recent years for several reasons. First, the need for regional liquidity support has become less urgent. Most of the Asean+3 countries run current-account surpluses most of the time, and the region had accumulated some \$3.7tn in foreign-exchange reserves by the time the global financial crisis erupted in 2008 — a more than six-fold increase from the \$542 billion they held in 1997.

Second, although the Asian bond market has made impressive headway over the past ten years, the development of local-currency bond markets is driven by domestic financial needs rather than regional financial cooperation, and cross-border local currency bonds are rarely issued. In fact, individual countries' financial development has significantly outpaced the development of infrastructure for the cross-border issuance of local-currency bonds. As a result, factors like non-standardised regulations, inadequate market liquidity, and a lack of an effective securities settlement system continue to hinder the development of cross-border issuance of local-currency bonds in the region.

Third, since the Asian financial crisis, most East Asian countries have adopted a managed-floating exchange-rate regime. But none of them has pegged their currencies to a basket of East Asian currencies based on the ACU, largely because they are unwilling to accept constraints on their exchange rates for the sake of exchange-rate stabilisation among regional currencies. More broadly, greater economic and financial co-operation is vital to Asia's long-term prosperity.

The Asian financial crisis had begun. Unable to service their foreign debt, Thailand, Indonesia, and South Korea turned to the International Monetary Fund for support. But the IMF's rescue packages were too little, too late, and came with excessively harsh conditions. East Asia, it increasingly appeared, would be better off saving itself. The region certainly had resources. Though some countries, like Thailand, were running current-account deficits, East Asia as a whole ran an external surplus. On July 2, 1997, the Thai baht collapsed. After waves of speculative attacks, the government had run out of foreign currency and become unable to support its exchange-rate peg to the US dollar. So, it floated the baht, which went into free-fall. A wave of financial and non-financial Thai corporates that had borrowed heavily in dollars filed for bankruptcy.



My Words My Talk

Aid to flood victims

The series of floods following the heavy rains continues across the country and the floods have intensified in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces, in which people, birds, big buildings, crops and other properties have been swept away. Flowing like khashak and erasing from the page. The death toll of fifty more human deaths due to the flood yesterday exceeded one thousand, while one and a half hundred bridges were damaged by the flood. Due to flood, rail, mobile, internet service, electricity and road traffic have been suspended in many areas. According to the initial report of the flood damage assessment agency, the number of affected houses has reached around seven lakh and the total loss of property is more than 900 billion rupees.

Thousands of cattle have also been washed away in the flood channels and human bodies, including those of women and children, are seen floating in many places. The affected areas are practically in a state of famine where human helplessness is seen dancing. The victims of the floods are not in a happy situation, they are not getting any shelter or food. So the people who escaped the horrors of the floods are now dying of hunger and diseases because they do not even have access to treatment facilities. In the context of this situation, Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi has announced a relief

fund of 5 billion rupees to help the flood victims, which is a welcome development. He said that helping the flood victims is the real politics. They will not leave the brothers and sisters who are surrounded by trouble alone, on the call of the victims; everyone must unite and support them.

Every eye is tearful and heart is saddened by the destruction in South Punjab, Balochistan, KPK and Sindh. To prevent the human tragedy, everyone should work together in a joint and coordinated manner to restore the country. The entire country has been affected by the floods. One should leave all work and go ahead to help the flood victims. Everyone will have to play their role for the rehabilitation of roads, schools, hospitals.

Chief Minister Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi said that coming forward to help flood victims is not less than worship. Helping brothers and sisters in distress is the common responsibility of the nation and I am sure that the nation will play a full part in the rehabilitation of the victims and the rehabilitation of the population. It is a fact that the government administration machinery was not active in the affected areas for the next two weeks from the beginning of the flood.

At this time, Army Chief Gener-

al Qamar Javed Bajwa himself is active in monitoring and facilitating the relief work in the affected areas, who has reviewed the rescue and relief activities in Sindh and Balochistan. On the contrary, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif along with Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto arrived in some affected areas of Sindh yesterday for the first time and tied up the victims while former Prime Minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan also visited the camp in a helicopter along with the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa yesterday. Went to Ismail Khan and made an aerial survey of the flood affected areas. This country-wide flood has created a national challenge that requires complete unity and strong determination to deal with it. In this regard, the announcement of the National Conference by the Prime Minister is definitely a positive decision.

Next week, the National Conference will be held under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister, in which the Chief Ministers of the four provinces and Gilgit-Baltistan, the Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir, the Chairman All relevant partners will be invited except NDMA. The objective of the conference is to make cooperation between the Federation and the provinces effective, coordinated and productive.

The conference will certainly prove effective in coordinating efforts to help the flood victims and restore the affected areas, but the challenge is so difficult and it requires such a large scale of financial resources, manpower and national commitment that only the country's administration can coordinate efforts are not enough.

At the provincial level as well, special broadcasts will be started from Radio Lahore which will continue on a daily basis from 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM. After the federal government, the Pakistan Army has also established a flood relief donation account to help the flood victims. Our history is that when there are hard times and due to starvation, two stones are tied on the stomach of the ruler as compared to one of the common man. If our ruling class becomes a practical example before appealing to the nation, surely the common people will also see the ideal desire for national reconstruction and it will become easier to face this difficult time. Transparency in the distribution of aid and funds must also be ensured to the utmost extent. In preparing to deal with the current situation, it should also be kept in mind that due to climate change, long-term planning with immediate measures is essential to control the situation in the coming times.

The writer is senior analyst and observer and can be reached at mudassarqadeer579@gmail.com



Mudassar Qadeer

Climatic catastrophe & UN's role

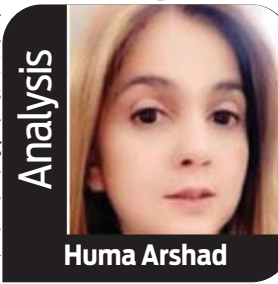
The United Nations is mobilizing its resources to support Pakistan's efforts to deal with the devastating floods in the most affected provinces of Balochistan and Sindh, Pakistan has requested a more active role of the United Nations (UN) in relief work after the devastation caused by the recent floods across Pakistan, adding that the provision of humanitarian relief to the people in the affected areas was a high priority. This was communicated by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in a meeting with the UN Resident Coordinator in Pakistan, Julien Hameis. The PM also discussed various areas of the UN's work and cooperation with Pakistan, including the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, flood relief, food security, and ecosystem restoration.

According to Pakistan's Minister for Climate Change, Sherry Rehman, over 1500 people were killed during monsoon rains across the country since June this year, while 3,000 were left injured. According to the UN, spokesman UN has mobilized \$7 million to respond to the floods. The UN has provided 1,100 metric tons of food rations, therapeutic feed, and nutritional supplements in the affected areas. It also provided medicine, water purification tablets, tents, newborn baby kits, tarpaulins, and other goods. Following a rapid needs assessment, a response plan is being finalized to coordinate the joint response and call for further resources, including from the (UN's) Central Emergency Response Fund. The United Nations

says its team in Pakistan is stepping up efforts to assist millions of people impacted by the recent devastating floods in the country.

The UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) has allocated US\$ 3 million to UN agencies and partners in Pakistan to respond to the floods. This will be used for health, nutrition, food security, and water and sanitation services in flood-affected areas, focusing on the most vulnerable. For its part, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is working with authorities to assess needs and provide veterinary supplies, he added. The floods have caused widespread destruction across the country. Millions of children, women, and men have been affected since mid-June, and over a thousand lives have been lost. People have lost their homes, livestock, harvest-ready crops, and their only sources of livelihood. Infrastructure across the country has suffered massive damage, and roads, bridges, and buildings have been washed away.

The government is conducting search and rescue operations, providing relief supplies, and preparing a cash assistance program. The UN, and non-government organizations, have been working alongside the government to provide support. The ongoing assistance by UN agencies includes medical supplies and services by WHO, safe water and nutrition by UNICEF, support for maternal health by UNFPA, food assistance by WFP, vaccination of livestock by FAO, and shelter for refugees by UNHCR.



Huma Arshad

Analysis

The writer is senior analyst and commentator.

Russia to hold sweeping joint war games with China, others

Drills reflect increasing defense ties between Moscow and Beijing

MOSCOW: Russia said Monday it will launch sweeping military drills in the country's east that will involve forces from China — a show of increasingly close defense ties between Moscow and Beijing amid tensions with the West over the Kremlin's action in Ukraine.

The Russian Defense Ministry said that the Vostok 2022 (East 2022) exercise will be held Sept. 1-7 in various locations in Russia's Far East and the Sea of Japan and involve more than 50,000 troops, over 5,000 weapons units, including 140 aircraft and 60 warships.

The ministry released a video of Chinese troops arriving in Russia in preparation for the exercise. The drills will be conducted at seven firing ranges in far eastern Russia and will engage troops from several ex-Soviet nations, China, India, Laos, Mongolia, Nicaragua and Syria.

The ministry said that units of Russian Airborne troops, long-range bombers and military cargo planes will take part in the drills along with



other forces.

While first announcing the exercise last month, the Russian military emphasized that it's part of planned combat training that is continuing despite Moscow's military action in Ukraine. It hasn't disclosed the number of troops engaged in what

the Kremlin calls the "special military operation" there.

The ministry noted that as part of the maneuvers, the Russian and Chinese navies in the Sea of Japan will "practice joint action to protect sea communications, areas of marine economic activity and support for

ground troops in littoral areas."

The drills reflect increasing defense ties between Moscow and Beijing, which have grown stronger since Russia sent its troops into Ukraine on Feb. 24. China has pointedly refused to criticize Russia's action, blaming the U.S. and NATO for provoking Moscow, and has blasted punishing sanctions imposed on Moscow.

Russia, in turn, has strongly backed China amid the tensions with the U.S. that followed a recent visit to Taiwan by U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. Speaking earlier this month, Russian President Vladimir Putin drew parallels between U.S. support for Ukraine and Pelosi's trip to Taiwan, charging that both were part of alleged American efforts to foment global instability.

Russia and China have held a series of joint war games in recent years, including naval drills and patrols by long-range bombers over the Sea of Japan and the East China Sea. Last year, Russian troops for the first time deployed to Chinese territory for joint maneuvers.

Palestinian President offers condolences over floods in Pakistan

Spokesman Report

RAMALLAH: President Mahmoud Abbas on Monday offered his condolences to the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Arif Alvi over the victims of the deadly flooding in Pakistan.



The president expressed in a cable his deep concern and intense sorrow about the disastrous flooding and heavy monsoon rains that have claimed the lives of hundreds of people, displaced millions of others, and caused enormous financial losses.

The president expressed his full solidarity with the Pakistani government, people, and families of the victims, wishing the injured a speedy recovery.

President Abbas also sent a cable of support and condolences to the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mian Muhammad Shabbaz

Palestinian toll mounts as Israel steps up West Bank raids

TUBAS: At least 85 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank this year as Israeli forces have carried out nightly raids in cities, towns and villages, making it the deadliest in the occupied territory since 2016.

It includes several civilians, including a veteran journalist and a lawyer who apparently drove unwittingly into a battle zone, as well as local youths who took to the streets in response to the invasion of their neighborhoods.

The length and frequency of the raids has pulled into focus Israel's tactics in the West Bank, where nearly 3 million Palestinians live under a decades-long occupation and Palestinians view the military's presence as a humiliation and a threat.

Israeli troops have regularly operated across the West Bank since Israel captured the territory in 1967.

Israel says it is dismantling militant networks that threaten its citizens, and that it makes every effort to avoid harming civilians. Palestinians say the raids are aimed at maintaining Israel's 55-year military rule over territories they want for a future state — a dream that appears as remote as ever, with no serious peace negotiations held in over a decade.

The dead include 17 teens under the age of 18, as well as six women, according to the ministry. Israel says that teenagers and women are often involved in violence, while critics accuse the army of using excessive force in many cases.

Israel is also holding more than 600 Palestinians without charge or trial in what's known as administrative detention — the highest in six years.

Iraq's powerful Sadr quits politics

BAGHDAD: Iraq's powerful cleric Moqtada al-Sadr said on Monday he was quitting politics and closing his institutions in response to an intractable political deadlock.

"I hereby announce my final withdrawal," Sadr said in a statement posted on Twitter, criticising fellow Shia political leaders for failing to heed his calls for reform.

He did not elaborate on the closure of his offices, but said that cultural and religious institutions would remain open.

Sadr has previously announced withdrawals from politics or government and the disbanding of militias loyal to him but retains widespread control over state institutions and still has a paramilitary group with thousands of members.

He has often returned to political activity after similar announcements, although the current political deadlock in Iraq appears harder to resolve than previous periods of dysfunction.

Monday's announcement raised fears that Sadr's supporters might escalate their protests without their leader to closely control them, which could further destabilise Iraq.

The country has struggled to recover since the defeat of Islamic State in 2017 because political parties have squabbled over power and the vast oil wealth possessed by Iraq, OPEC's second-largest producer.

NASA scrubs launch of new moon rocket

CAPE CANAVERAL: NASA called off the launch of its mighty new moon rocket on its debut flight with three test dummies aboard Monday after a last-minute cascade of problems culminating in unexplained engine trouble.

The next launch attempt will not take place until Friday at the earliest and could be off until mid-September or later.

The mission, when it happens, will be the first flight in NASA's Artemis project, a quest to put astronauts back on the moon for the first time since the Apollo program ended 50 years ago.

As precious minutes ticked away Monday morning, NASA repeatedly stopped and started the fueling of the Space Launch System rocket because of a leak of highly explosive hydrogen, eventually succeeding in reducing the seepage to acceptable levels. The leak happened in the same place that saw seepage during a dress rehearsal in the spring. The fueling already was running nearly an hour late because of thunderstorms off Florida's Kennedy Space Center.

Then, NASA ran into new trouble when it was unable to properly chill one of the rocket's four main engines, officials said. Engineers continued working to pinpoint the source of the problem after the launch postponement was announced.

"This is a very complicated machine, a very complicated system, and all those things have to work, and you don't want to light the candle until it's ready to go," said NASA Administrator Bill Nelson.

Referring to launch delays, he said: "It's just part of the space business and it's part of, particularly, a test flight."

The rocket was set to lift off on a flight to propel a crew capsule into orbit around the moon. The six-week mission was scheduled to end with the capsule returning to Earth in a splashdown in the Pacific in October.

UK stands in solidarity with Pakistan: Queen Elizabeth

Spokesman Report

LONDON: British Queen Elizabeth has expressed solidarity with Pakistan amidst flood-caused destruction.

In a message to the President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi, Britain's Queen Elizabeth said that the United Kingdom stands in solidarity with Pakistan as it recovers from these terrible events.

She said she is deeply saddened to hear of the tragic loss of life and destruction caused by the floods across Pakistan.

The Queen said my thoughts are with all those who have been affected, as well as those working in difficult circumstances to support the recovery efforts.

The UK is providing urgent support to Paki-



stan after flooding in the south of the country killed at least 900 people. Extreme monsoon rainfall has affected millions of people, with 700,000 homes destroyed.

In response to the disaster, the UK will provide up to £1.5m support the relief effort. The UN is carrying out a needs assessment over the weekend, and a UN appeal is expected to be launched

on Tuesday.

Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State for South and Central Asia, North Africa, UN and the Commonwealth

and the Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict, said: "The floods in Pakistan have devastated local communities and the UK is providing up to £1.5

million to help the immediate aftermath. We are witnessing the catastrophe that climate change can cause and how it impacts the most vulnerable.

"My thoughts and prayers are with all the victims and their families and I would like to pay tribute to everyone involved in the relief efforts. We are also working directly with the Pakistan authorities to establish what further assistance and support they require. The UK stands with the people of Pakistan during this time of need."

The UK also provides assistance to Pakistan through international organisations working directly with the victims of the disaster, including the World Bank and the United Nations.

Ukraine begins counter-offensive to retake Russian-held south

Russia says it shot down Ukrainian drone at nuclear plant

ZAPORIZHZHIA: Ukraine announced on Monday the start of a long-awaited counter-offensive to retake territory in the south seized by Russian forces since their invasion six months ago, a move reflecting Kyiv's growing confidence as Western military aid flows in.

The news came as a team from the U.N. nuclear watchdog headed to Ukraine to inspect the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant—captured by Russian forces in March but still run by Ukrainian staff—that has become a hotspot in the war.

Moscow and Kyiv have traded accusations of shelling in the vicinity of the nuclear plant, Europe's largest and close to front lines, amid fears of a radiation disaster in a country still haunted by the 1986 Chernobyl disaster.

"Today we started offensive actions in various directions, including in the Kherson region," Ukrainian public



broadcaster Suspilne cited southern command spokeswoman Natalia Humeniuk as saying.

Russia rapidly captured swathes of Ukraine's south near the Black Sea coast, including the city of Kherson, in the early phase of the war in stark contrast to its failed attempt to capture the capital Kyiv.

Ukraine has been using sophisticated Western-supplied weapons to hit Russian ammunition dumps and wreak havoc with supply lines. Humeniuk told a brief-

ing on Monday that Ukraine had struck more than 10 such ammunition dumps in the past week, adding they had "unquestionably weakened the enemy".

She declined to give details of the counter-offensive, saying Russian forces in southern Ukraine remained "quite powerful".

The governor of Ukraine's Russian-annexed Crimea Peninsula, Sergei Aksyonov, dismissed her announcement as "another fake of Ukrainian propaganda". Crimea is adjacent to the

Kherson region.

Russia's RIA news agency, quoting local official Vladimir Leontiev, reported that people were being evacuated from workplaces in Nova Kahovka, a town 58 km (36 miles) to the east of Kherson, after Ukrainian forces carried out more than 10 missile strikes there.

Russian foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said the IAEA mission must carry out its work in a politically neutral manner. "They must be objective," she told Rossiya 24 television channel.

Russian forces fired at Enerhodar, the Dnipro river-side town where the plant is located, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's chief of staff said late on Sunday on his Telegram channel alongside a video of firefighters dousing burning cars. "They provoke and try to blackmail the world," Andriy Yermak said.

APHC reiterates call for shutdown, march on Thursday

SRINAGAR: In Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, the All Parties Hurriyat Conference have reiterated call for shutdown and a march towards the grave of veteran Kashmiri leader Syed Ali Gilani at Hyderpora, Srinagar, on his first martyrdom anniversary on Thursday.

APHC General Secretary Molvi Bashir Ahmad Irfani in a statement issued in Srinagar urged the Kashmiris living across the Line of Control and abroad to hold protest demonstrations to expose Indian crimes in the occupied territory. He said that Syed Ali Gilani was the leader of the century who dedicated his entire life and sacrificed

everything for the sacred cause of freedom. His life struggle and sacrifice is the role model for the generation to come, he added.

Molvi Bashir Irfani said that India can kill Kashmiris but cannot defeat spirit of freedom. He appealed to the UN, OIC and international human rights organization to take cognizance of human rights violations by India in Kashmir and take immediate and concrete steps to stop Indian state terrorism.

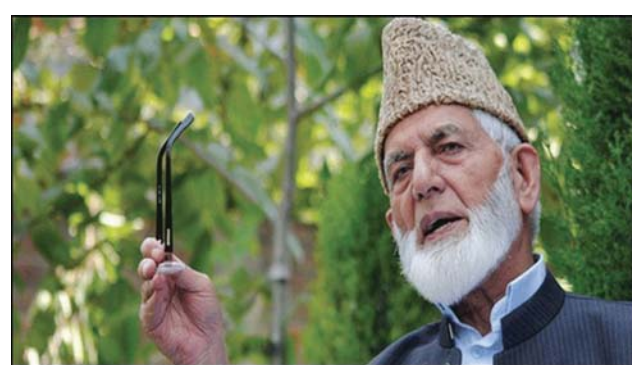
Senior APHC leader Agha Syed Hassan Al-Moosvi Al-Safvi in a statement issued in Srinagar said the best way to pay tribute to the martyred leader is to accom-

plish his mission—freedom from India and resolution of the Kashmir dispute as per aspirations of the Kashmiri people. He said that Syed Ali Gilani dedicated his whole life for the freedom cause and Indian authorities kept him under house detention till his death. In violation of basic human rights, Agha Moosvi said, Gilani was not even provided medical facilities during house detention. The senior APHC leader appealed to the Kashmiri people to arrange prayer sessions and Quran Khawana in their houses and at mosques for the departed souls.

Agha Moosvi said the time is

ripe for the international community to come forward and facilitate a settlement of the Kashmir dispute to pave the way for durable peace in South Asia and to avert a nuclear catastrophe between nuclear-armed Pakistan and India. He said that peace in the region is linked to the settlement of the Kashmir dispute in its historical perspective.

Democratic Political Movement Chairman Syed Bashir Andrabi said that Syed Ali Gilani was such a great leader and freedom icon who inculcated the spirit of freedom among the Kashmiri people. He was such an influential orator and committed freedom leader,



he added. APHC leaders Khadim Hussain and Syed Sibte Shabbir Qummi in a joint statement in

Srinagar while pledging support to shutdown and the march towards Hyderpora, Srinagar, on Thursday, denounced the India's

fascist actions in IIOJK. They said New Delhi has unleashed a reign of terror to convert the Muslim majority into a minority in the occupied territory.

Other Hurriyat leaders including Engineer Hilal Ahmad War, Farida Behanji, Yasmeen Raja, Zamrudra Habib, Abdul Ahad Parra, Firdous Shah, Jammu and Kashmir Peoples League Chairman Ghulam Muhammad Khan Sopori, Intiaz Reeshi, Tehreek-e-Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir and APHC-AJK leaders Altaf Ahmed Butt, Zahid Ashraf and Nisar Mirza in their statements also paid tributes to Syed Ali Gilani.

Bull & Bears
PSX 100-Share
Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
42,504.34	42,591.51	
Day's High	Day's Low:	
42,591.51	41,828.13	
Index Value	Change	
5,930,318,355	-87.17	
Percentage	Time	
-0.2%	26 Aug, 2022 5:00 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
7,427.31	-52.43	
Percentage	Time	
-0.70%	26 Aug, 4:35 pm GMT+1	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
32,135.70	-147.70	
Percentage	Time	
-0.46%	29 Aug, 11:49 am GMT-4	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
27,878.96	-762.42	
Percentage	Time	
-2.66%	29 Aug, 3:15 pm GMT+9	
Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	152.03	153.28
Bahrain Dinar	586.41	590.91
Canadian Dollar	169.17	170.52
China Yuan	31.72	31.97
Danish Krone	29.41	29.76
Euro	228	231
Hong Kong Dollar	28.1	28.45
Indian Rupee	2.72	2.8
Japanese Yen	1.75	1.8
Kuwaiti Dinar	716.68	721.68
Malaysian Ringgit	48.38	48.83
New Zealand \$	135.27	136.47
Norwegians Krone	22.67	22.97
Omani Riyal	572.71	577.21
Qatari Riyal	59.66	60.16
Saudi Riyal	60.5	61.1
Singapore Dollar	158.2	159.5
Swedish Korona	20.46	20.76
Swiss Franc	228.11	229.86
Thai Bhat	6.65	6.75
U.A.E Dirham	63	63.5
UK Pound Sterling	267.5	271
US Dollar	229.5	232

Digital Pakistan

Huawei organizes E-commerce Cloud Summit at 21st ITCN Asia

The event provided opportunity for entire tech ecosystem of Pakistan along with leaders from public & private sectors

Our Correspondent

KARACHI: The Huawei E-commerce Cloud Summit 2022 was held on the third day of the 21st ITCN Asia-Information Technology & Telecom Show. The E-commerce summit was jointly organized by Huawei, EduCast, and Sindh Board of Technical Education.

The event was attended by a number of high level dignitaries including Mohsin Mushtaq, Secretary Ministry of IT and Telecom, Ms. Aisha Humera Chaudhary, Additional Secretary, Ministry of IT and Telecom, Yang Guangyuan, Economic & Commercial Consul General Karachi, Embassy of the People's Republic of China, along with other respective members from the organizing parties.

The event provided a comprehensive platform to showcase solutions for all important verticals of the economy but not limited to Government, Cloud, Data Center, Cybersecurity, ERP, Education, Banking & Finance, Health & Pharma, Ecommerce, Artificial Intelligence, and Robotics with a focus on networking, knowledge sharing & lead generation and a series of conferences shall create a learning environment for the like-minded people to share



knowledge & experiences.

The event provided an opportunity for the entire tech ecosystem of Pakistan along with the leaders from the public & private sectors to gather under one roof to witness the biggest tech festival of the country.

Ms. Aisha Humera Chaudhary, Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, "Today we are launching Cloud E-Commerce Summit organized by Huawei at ITCN and really appreciated E-Commerce Gateway is doing collabora-

tion with Universities including Pakistan and China and Huawei." She hoped this collaboration can improve the Pakistan IT exports as well as Services.

Zeeshan Khattak, Chief Commercial Officer of PSEB stated that they are working with Huawei. He said, "Chinese companies can leverage our resources and locations. That is where our partner Huawei is useful as well. Pakistan profits from that as well. This creates opportunity for our Pakistani companies as well."

Bilal Abbasi, GM Ignite spoke about how Ignite runs 7 incubation center around Pakistan. Karachi, Quetta, Lahore, Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Peshawar. He emphasized how stable and secure Cloud is important for e-commerce as suggested and informed by Huawei. Furthermore, MoITT has created cloud policy to help understand how to make cloud set up in Pakistan.

Dr. Masroor Ahmed Shaikh from Sindh Board of Technical Education, "I'm extremely thankful to Huawei for promoting Sindh Board of Technical Education by stable and secure cloud and network service, they are our partners. Currently we are offering 150 programs of vocational training. We are following information technology upgradation for our courses and programs regularly."

Professor Dr. Arshad Saleem Bhatti, Rector Virtual University Pakistan, "Thank you very much for inviting me in this very key session on E-commerce jointly organized by Huawei, EduCast, Sindh Board of Technical Education. We have a great potential for initiatives like e-commerce in Pakistan and how resources of Virtual University can be used to train our youth to take advantage of this emerged market."

Cotton price reached highest level in country's history

Cotton import to increase import bill, says Mian Zahid Hussain

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Monday said rains and floods have damaged the cotton crop more than any other crop.

The destruction of the cotton crop has pushed its prices up to the highest level in the history of the country which is a threat to the country's largest industrial and export sector of textiles, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the situation is alarming as the largest industrial and export sector, which employs millions of people and earns handsome foreign exchange for the coun-



Mian Zahid Hussain

try is facing this problem.

Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that due to rising cotton prices, many textile and ginning mills are running below capacity while many have closed, affecting employment, business, exports and production.

He said that a huge amount of cotton will have to be imported to keep the textile mills running, which will consume

a lot of foreign exchange and increase the import bill, whereas two billion dollars worth of cotton was imported in the last financial year as well.

There is a need to initiate a major project to increase cotton production at the local level, he said, adding that no cotton growing area has been spared by the rains and flood. In some places where crops have escaped complete destruction, their quality has been badly affected and due to these factors, the price of cotton has increased by two thousand rupees per bale in the last eight days and this trend is likely to continue.

Meanwhile, many ginning factories have inundated and many warehouses have collapsed, which is having a negative impact on the situation. Mian Zahid Hussain said

that the rural economy has been destroyed due to rains and floods. A sharp decline in rural demand is expected, which will affect dozens of sectors including tractors, trucks, vehicles, motorcycles and fertilizer companies, while severe shortages of commodities and vegetables are also likely.

He further said that the government's decision to impose a 19% sales tax on fertilizer, DAP, phosphorus etc. due to the pressure of IMF is wrong as distressed farmers will have to face more pressure due to which the agricultural production will fall further. Some politicians, instead of uniting, are busy pulling each other's legs for their own vested interests resulting in political chaos at this critical time which is affecting relief activities.

Government lack resources to deal with disaster: Atif Ikram

Foreign investment needed to rebuild damaged infrastructure

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: FPCCI's Presidential candidate Atif Ikram Sheikh on Monday said the government lacked resources to deal with the disaster and it cannot rehabilitate affected people and damaged infrastructure on its own.

Other countries and international organizations should cooperate with Pakistan to enable it to deal with the rehabilitation of victims and overcome losses resulting from the natural disasters, he said. Atif Ikram Sheikh said that the government should attract foreign investors to reconstruct the damaged infrastructure.

Talking to the business community, the business leader said that rules for foreign investment should be eased, the security of investors should be ensured and the overall investment environment should be improved.



Public-private partnerships should also be considered to rebuild damaged roads, bridges, railway lines, dams, government offices, communication systems and houses, he underlined. Apart from this, health, education and drinking water facilities should be provided in the affected areas.

Thousands of flood affected are drinking polluted and unhygienic water for several days and if they were not provided with clean drinking water, the death toll from disease can surpass deaths resulting from floods, he warned.

KCCI demands withdrawal of unprecedented hike in electricity tariff

Industries to close down on their own due to unabsorbable tariffs, says Zubair Motiwala

Staff Reporter

KARACHI: The Leadership of Businessmen Group (BMG) and Karachi Chamber of Commerce of Industry (KCCI), while totally rejecting the unprecedented 80 percent hike in electricity tariff, stated that this unbearable upsurge in electricity tariff has created a miserable situation not only for the public but also for the business & industrial community wherein many businesses and industrial units will close down on their own as it was impossible to absorb such an extraordinary raise in electricity tariffs.

Addressing a press conference here on Monday, Chairman BMG Zubair Motiwala and President KCCI Muhammad Idrees demanded that keeping in view the gravity of situation and likely repercussions on the already ailing economy, the government must immediately withdraw hike in electricity tariff, Fuel Adjustment Charges (FAC) and reintroduction/ increase in Fixed Charge-

es so that the industries could survive in an extremely competitive environment while the hardships being faced by common man could also be reduced in the ongoing era of inflation. General Secretary BMG AQ Khalil, Senior Vice President Abdul Rehman Naqi, Former President Younus Muhammad Bashir, prominent members of the Business Community, representatives of Industrial Town Associations and sector-specific trade associations were also present at the press conference.

Chairman BMG stated that it was a matter of grave concerns that the base tariff has been raised by Rs9,8972 per unit, which has jacked up per unit cost from Rs19 to around Rs30 per unit, indicating an unprecedented hike of 50 percent. "This is not the end of the story as this increased electricity base tariff of Rs30 per unit will obviously be subjected to 17 percent Sales Tax, Excise Duty and Income Tax as well and when all these components are combined, an unbearable minimum impact in between 65 percent to 80 percent,

would appear in the electricity bills", he noted, adding that if electricity tariffs continue to go up at same pace, the per unit tariff may reach somewhere in between Rs55 to Rs65 in the next couple of months.

Touching upon another important aspect which has raised the cost of doing business for industries, he informed that variant tariffs have once again been restored for the industries under the policy of Peak and Off-Peak Hours which was suspended in the past and a uniform tariff was applicable throughout the day so that the industries could carry on their production at full capacity without any interruption. "The restoration of peak and off-peak hours is going to create a very difficult situation for the industries as they will either have to curtail their production or suspend operations during peak hours and then reengage labour for resumption of pending work during the remaining non-peak hours which happens nowhere around the world but only in Pakistan.

Zong 4G stands steadfast with Nation

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: In the wake of the unprecedented floods which has affected millions of people across the country, Zong 4G has announced free of cost services for all impacted areas.

Zong 4G is going above and beyond by providing free services to all impacted customers. This includes free of charges calls to any Zong Number in Pakistan for people in affected areas. The affected can subscribe for daily free minutes by dialing *9090# and ensure that remain connected with

their loved ones, especially during these testing times. Additionally, the company is ensuring that not only its employees and their families are safe, but also that no customer suffers outages or network lags in their mobile or 4G services.

Zong 4G stands steadfast with the Nation in this dark time when millions of Pakistanis find themselves affected by this crisis. To this end, the company pledges to everything within its power to ensure the safety, security and well-being of customers, employees, and all stakeholders.

Recession in US good for developing countries: PEW

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Monday said a recession in the US and EU will provide relief to the developing countries reeling under high oil and commodity prices.

The interest rates are being continuously increased in the US to reduce inflation, which is affecting economic activity, and will cause a recession, it said. Recession in the US will shrink the global growth rate which will affect the exports of almost all the countries of the world, including Pakistan, while the remittances will also decrease, said Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President PEW.

On the other hand, the decreased demand will start the process of reduction in the price of almost everything including oil and agricultural commodities, he said. Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that global economic contraction will be bad news for oil-exporting countries but good news for oil-importing countries like Pakistan.

KPT setting up regulatory body on issue of demurrage charges: Tariq Huda

Our Correspondent

KARACHI: Karachi Port Trust is considering setting up a regulatory body on the issue of demurrage charges, which will be announced soon, to determine the demurrage charges at the port.

These views were expressed by Karachi Port Trust Chairman Syed Muhammad Tariq Huda in his address at the luncheon held at Korangi Association of Trade and Industry (KATI). On this occasion, KATI Patron-in-Chief SM Muneer, President Salman Aslam, Senator Abdul Haseeb Khan, KITE CEO Zubair Chhaya, Senior Vice President Maheen Salman, Vice President Farrukh Qandhari, Standing Committee Chairman Faraz-ur-Rehman, Former Presidents, Farhan-ur-Rehman,

Masood Naqi, Danish Khan, Manzar Alam, Farrukh Mazhar and others were also present.

Chairman KPT Tariq Huda further said that I am trying to reduce the demurrage charges but due to some unavoidable reasons this issue is delayed, in a few days I will invite all the business community to the KPT head office where it will be formally announced. He said that due to the recent change in the import policy, all the containers were stopped at the port, which has now been allowed to leave, due to which the demurrage charges were incurred. Tariq Huda said that since 2002 no charges have been increased by KPT. However, employee salaries and other administrative expenses increased. This is the reason why now the operating prof-

it and revenue are equal, in the past KPT's profit was high, many development projects were completed by KPT's expenses including KPT flyover, underpass and other projects. However, due to a lack of budget, it is difficult to bear the expenses of development projects. Now is the time to take concrete steps to increase the income of KPT. Chairman KPT said that we will start Pakistan's single window operation which will provide facilities to importers and exporters.

Tariq Huda said that we should use our marine resources. In this regard, if the business community under the leadership of SM Muneer presents its suggestions, I will provide all possible support. He said that if the Pipri railway track is completed, 100 containers can be cleared from the port



KATI Patron-in-Chief SM Muneer, President Salman Aslam presenting the shield to KPT Chairman Syed Muhammad Tariq Huda. Senator Abdul Haseeb Khan, Zubair Chhaya, Maheen Islam, Farrukh Qandhari and Faraz-ur-Rehman were also present.

immediately. Apart from this, the elimination of marine pollution also becomes our responsibility to take all possible measures. We are throwing 8000 tons of garbage in the sea every day which has increased the pollution. We must immediately step up efforts to boost infrastructure

and commercial activities. KPT will soon launch an awareness campaign to prevent environmental pollution.

On this occasion, KATI Patron-in-Chief SM Muneer said that corruption is spreading rapidly in the country. The country is currently going

through an economic crisis, 90% of the industry has closed in Faisalabad, in such a situation we have to improve the economy. He said that floods have created havoc in the country at this time, in such a situation negative campaigns against Pakistan Army on social media are condemnable. SM Muneer said that the Army Chief keeps a close eye on the economy. The most corrupt officer in the country is appointed as Water Board Chairman. Despite the filling of dams across the country, the water board continues to cut off water. Chief Patron KATI said that fisheries have an export value of 450 million rupees, but the road and infrastructure there are in a state of disrepair. In connection with KATI's initiative to help the flood victims, I

salute Salman Aslam who took immediate relief measures.

President Salman Aslam said that KATI is the first organization that took practical steps to help the flood victims. I have taken the first aid consignment of 5 trucks under my leadership, and I will prepare the second consignment soon. He said that KATI also announced 50 lakh rupees for the relief of flood victims. President KATI said that the local industry is facing difficulties due to the global crisis. Severe inflation has broken the backbone of the common man. The cost of production is threatening to bankrupt industries, while port demurrage charges and other payments are adding to the cost of doing business which manufacturers cannot afford.

Kingdom Valley National T20 Cup 2022-23 begins today

Pindi Cricket Stadium is hosting the first 16 matches till 7 September

Spokesman Report

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan's best domestic white-ball cricketers will be in action from today as Kingdom Valley National T20 Cup 2022-23 kicks off in Rawalpindi.

The 33-match tournament is a curtain raiser for the 2022-23 men's domestic cricket season and will be followed by Quaid-e-Azam Trophy (first-class) and Pakistan Cup (one-day).

The Kingdom Valley National T20 Cup 2022-23 will be played in two legs. Rawalpindi's Pindi Cricket Stadium will host the first 16 matches till 7 September and then the action will move to Multan Cricket Stadium, where the remaining matches will be played from 10-19 September.

Led by Khalid Usman, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the defending champions, will enter the tournament with the mission of securing a hat-trick of titles after winning the 2020-21 and 2021-22 editions. They have won 15 of their last 24 matches and begin their campaign on 31 August when they play Central Punjab.

Khalid Usman: "There is a little pressure when you are defending the title, but, thankfully, we have a good unit that has all the potential to do the job. The atmos-



phere in the team is great. My message to my boys is to play fearless, positive cricket and give their 110 per cent. The new structure and introduction of CCA and divisional cricket in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province has helped a great deal in nurturing the young cricketers in our region."

Balochistan enter the tournament with confidence as they ended the previous season on a high by winning the Pakistan Cup. Since playing the final of the 2019-20 edition of the tournament,

Balochistan have failed to make it to the semi-finals and that's what they would look to change when they face-off Central Punjab on the opening day of the tournament under the captaincy of Yasir Shah.

Yasir Shah: "We are looking forward to carry the momentum from the Pakistan Cup. Our youngsters – Haseebullah and Abdul Wahid Bangalzai – were terrific in that tournament, and I am sure they will continue their form. We have a good T20 side and our players have been doing well in different leagues recently."

Central Punjab faced a defeat to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Lahore last season, thanks to Ifkhar Ahmed's whirlwind 19-ball 45 not out, in the final. It was the first instance of the side making it to the final after they failed to qualify for the semi-finals in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 editions. All-rounder Faheem Ashraf leads them this season.

Faheem Ashraf: "To captain Central Punjab is surely an honour because it is the biggest region in the country. It is a dream to lead or represent Punjab or Central Punjab. To thrive in T20 competitions, it is important to come together as a unit and develop good combinations from the onset, so we are looking to do that."

Northern were champions of the first National T20 played following the revamp of the domestic structure. They lifted the trophy at Iqbal Stadium, Faisalabad, by thumping Balochistan in the final. They have been one of the most consistent teams in the tournament, making it to the semi-finals in the last two editions. Under the captaincy of Umar Amin, their aim must be to start good at their home, Rawalpindi, and go the distance when the tournament moves to Multan.

Kane fires Spurs to win over Forest

LONDON: Harry Kane's double earned a 2-0 win at Nottingham Forest that lifted Tottenham to third in the Premier League, while Aston Villa boss Steven Gerrard is under intense pressure after a 1-0 defeat against West Ham on Sunday.

Antonio Conte's side have made an encouraging start to the campaign. Kane ensured they maintained that momentum at the City Ground. The England captain put Tottenham ahead with a clinical finish after crossing Dejan Kulusevski's pass just outside the Forest area in the fifth minute.

It was Kane's 200th league goal, including his Tottenham career and loan spells at Millwall, Leicester and Leyton Orient. Kane wasted a chance to increase Tottenham's lead 11 minutes after half-time when Steve Cook handled Ivan Perisic's cross.

Dean Henderson saved Kane's penalty as he missed from the spot in the league for the first time since 2018. Kane made amends with his fourth goal this season in the 81st minute. Rich-



arlison won the ball back and crossed for the striker to head into the empty net.

With three wins from four games, Tottenham are level on points with second placed Manchester City and two points behind leaders Arsenal as the two north London rivals set the early pace. "The game was really tough. To play in this stadium is not easy. There is a lot of noise around the pitch," Conte said. "Forest won many duels but in the second half I thought we did much better to control the game."

"The players are improving in their resilience and learning to suffer together and be compact." West Ham arrived at Villa Park bottom of the table after losing their

first three games without scoring. Pablo Fornals' goal late in the second half ended West Ham's wait to get off the mark as they climbed out of the relegation zone.

Fornals' shot deflected off Villa defender Ezri Konsa and looped over keeper Emiliano Martinez to break the deadlock with 15 minutes left. The Hammers, beaten by Manchester City, Nottingham Forest and Brighton, are now level on points with Villa, who have lost three of their first four matches.

Villa's latest setback will only add to the scrutiny on Gerrard amid talk of dressing room unrest with the former Liverpool and England midfielder. A midweek League

Cup second round win at third-tier Bolton had given Gerrard a little breathing space. But Villa fans are growing increasingly restless with Gerrard, who has struggled to make a sustained impact since leaving Rangers to succeed Dean Smith last season.

"I have got two ears and I hear a lot of things. I heard the fans' frustration and last time I checked my ears were still working so, yeah, I pick up on everything," Gerrard said. "I've been in the game long enough. If you lose three games out of four it is not the start the supporters wanted and certainly not the start that I wanted, so of course I understand. "We certainly share our supporters' frustration and there is no one more frustrated than me."

With matches against Premier League leaders Arsenal and champions Manchester City looming as their next two fixtures, Villa could be deeper in trouble by early September. West Ham boss David Moyes added: "The performance was really in truth not the most important thing today, the result was."

Reto wins in Canada for first LPGA title

OTTAWA: South Africa's Paula Reto captured the first title of her nine-year LPGA career on Sunday, holding on down the stretch to win the Canadian Women's Open by one stroke.

The 32-year-old from Cape Town made five birdies on the front nine on her way to firing a four-under-par 67 and finishing on 19-under 265 for 72 holes at Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club. Reto ended her drought in her 157th career LPGA start.

"Dream come true for sure," Reto said. "I'm really happy and it has been such a long time. I was like, 'I hope one day I will win,' and it came true. I'm really so excited." Reto, who fired a course-record 62 on Thursday, only won her first pro title in February on the Sunshine Tour in her homeland. Third-ranked American Nelly Korda, who would have taken the number one spot with a victory, also shot 67 to share second with South Korea's Choi Hye-jin on 266.

New Zealand's Lydia Ko closed with four consecutive birdies to shoot 63 and finish fourth on 267 with South Korea's An Na-rin fifth on 268.

LPGA rookies Choi and An shared the 54-hole lead but Choi began with 14 pars and shot 69 while An fell back with a double bogey at the seventh and a triple bogey at the par-5 eighth on her way to firing a 72. Clinging to a one-stroke lead, Reto went over the green at the par-3 17th but chipped the ball inches from the cup and tapped in for par to stay in front heading to the par-5 18th.

Reto sent her approach into the right rough on a slope, then punched out to 15 feet from the hole. Choi then came up short on a long eagle putt over a ridge that would have given her a share of the lead, instead settling for her ninth top-10 effort of the season.

Reto lipped out on her birdie putt then tapped in for the victory. "I was so nervous coming to the last hole," Reto said. "I was like, 'Just calm your nerves.' "I kind of hit a bad 3-wood and that rough shot over there kind of saved me. I was just committing to it, trying to keep it simple."

Reto began one stroke off the pace but charged quickly with an opening birdie and a chip to inches from the cup to set up a birdie at the third. After a birdie at the par-5 sixth, Reto holed a six-foot birdie putt at the par-3 eighth and a long birdie putt at the par-5 ninth to seize three-stroke edge at the turn.

Korda, the Tokyo Olympic champion, had charged into second place with a birdie at 11 and an eagle at the 12th. She answered a bogey at 14 with a birdie at 15 and 16 while Reto took a bogey at the 14th, trimming her lead to one stroke to set up the closing drama.

Minister inaugurates Punjab Open Tennis Championship

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Taimoor Masood formally inaugurated the Punjab Open Tennis Championship 2022 at state-of-the-art tennis courts here at Nishtar Park Sports Complex, on Monday.

Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Ali Jan Khan, Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi, Director Sports Nadeem Qaiser, Deputy Director Tariq Wattoo, Assistant Direc-

tor Zahoor Ahmed, former Davis cupper and Secretary Punjab Lawn Tennis Association (PLTA) Rashid Malik, PMU officers and other notable sports figures were also present.

DG Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi briefed the minister about details of the championship. The final of the 5-day tournament would be played on Tuesday.

Malik Taimoor Masood said that it is the first occasion when a major tennis

championship is being staged at the newly-built courts.

"These modern courts are equipped with all modern facilities, and we are confident that these courts will play an important role in development of the game of tennis among the young generation," he added.

The Punjab sports minister said that the Sports and Youth Affairs Department is taking crucial measures to improve sports infra-

structure in all parts of the province. "These courts can help a lot in development of tennis at junior level and will help in identifying new talent," he added.

He said that around 150 male and female tennis players from all parts of the province are displaying their tennis skills in this high-profile tournament. "The championship is being contested in various age group categories including men's singles, boys U-18, girls U-18, boys U-16, boys

Serena readies farewell as US Open begins

NEW YORK: Serena Williams will take centre stage as the US Open gets under way with the 23-time Grand Slam winner preparing to bid an emotional farewell to tennis.

After announcing earlier this month that the countdown to her retirement had begun, Williams will step on court at Arthur Ashe Stadium at Flushing Meadows for what could be her final appearance in a Grand Slam singles event.

The 40-year-old sporting and cultural icon won the first of her Grand Slam titles at the same venue in 1999, lifting the trophy as a fresh-faced 17-year-old.

In Monday's sold-out night session, which starts at 7:00 pm (2300 GMT), Williams will face

Montenegro's Danka Kovinic, the world number 80. Whether Williams is able to extend her US Open campaign beyond that match remains to be seen.

In her last outing at the Cincinnati Masters earlier this month, Williams was thumped 6-4, 6-0 by Britain's Emma Raducanu – who herself was knocked out of the Australian Open by Kovinic in January. Win or lose on Monday, Williams won't be departing the US Open stage immediately.

On Saturday, organisers confirmed that she and elder sister Venus Williams had been given a wild card into the women's doubles tournament, which starts on Wednesday. It is the first time the Williams

sisters have played doubles since 2018, reuniting a partnership that has yielded 14 Grand Slam titles and three Olympic gold medals.

Whenever Serena Williams does leave the stage, she will do so after a career that has left a lasting legacy on her sport.

"I just think she's the biggest thing that will ever be in the sport," said Japan's Naomi Osaka on Saturday. "It's just really an honour just to watch her play. She's giving us a chance to watch her more."

Elsewhere in the women's draw, Poland's world number one Iga Swiatek will look to claim her second Grand Slam title of 2022. The French Open champion won six straight tour-

naments earlier this season but has struggled to recapture that dominance during the North American hardcourt swing, making early exits at both the Cincinnati Masters and Canadian Open.

Swiatek launches her US Open campaign on Tuesday against Italy's Jasmine Paolini. In the men's draw, Spanish great Rafael Nadal is chasing a fifth US Open crown and 23rd Grand Slam title in a draw that is missing Novak Djokovic.

Djokovic was barred from entry to the United States over his refusal to get vaccinated against Covid-19, putting him at odds with US government travel restrictions for overseas visitors.



With Djokovic out of the picture, Nadal's biggest opponent over the next fortnight may well be his own injury-prone body.

Gymholics conducts workshop



Spokesman Report

KARACHI: A workshop titled "Strength, Hypertrophy and Endurance" was organized under the auspices of Gymholics and with the support of Pakistan Sports, Education and Culture Council.

One-day workshop was supervised by Danish Mian Noor while fitness expert Salman Sheikh was the expert speaker who gave lectures to the course participants and talked about his experiences. A large number of 35 male and female trainers participated in the course. Finally, the chief guest of the closing ceremony, Pakistan Sports, Education and Culture Council President Syed Asrarul Hasan Abdi appreciated the arrangements of the ceremony and also distributed certificates among the participants.

Pakistan hockey legend Manzoor Hussain Jr passes away



Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: Former Pakistan Hockey team Olympian and Legend Manzoor Hussain Junior died of heart attack.

The former hockey icon, suffered a heart attack and was taken to hospital where he breathed his last. The President PHF Brig. (Retd) Sajjad Hussain Khokhar and General Secretary Haider Hussain have offered condolences over the death of Manzoor Hussain Junior.

Manzoor Hussain was part of the Pakistan team that won the Bronze Medal in the 1976 Olympics in Montreal. Eight years later, he was Captain of the Pakistan team that won the Gold Medal at the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles.



KATHMANDU: Pakistan women football team greeted by SAFF representatives at Kathmandu Airport

Shaheen Afridi departs for London

Spokesman Report

DUBAI: The Pakistan Cricket Board on Monday announced Shaheen Shah Afridi has departed for London where he will complete his rehabilitation.

PCB Chief Medical Officer, Dr Najeebullah Soomro: "Shaheen Shah Afridi requires uninterrupted, dedicated knee specialist care and London offers some of the best sports medical and rehabilitation facilities in the world. In the best interest of the player, we have decided to send him there."

"The medical department will receive daily feedback on his progress whilst in London and we are confident Shaheen will return to full fitness before the ICC Men's T20 World Cup."

Whilst in London, Shaheen will remain under the supervision of the PCB Medical Advisory Panel, which also comprises London-based Dr Imtiaz Ahmed and Dr Zafar Iqbal. Since 2016, Dr Imtiaz has been the Head of Medical Services at the Queens Park Rangers Football Club, while Dr Zafar is Head of Sports Medicine at the Crystal Palace Football Club since 2015 (having worked previously with Tottenham Hotspur FC, Liverpool FC and Kent County Cricket Club).

Shaheen suffered a PCL injury in July whilst fielding during the first Test against Sri Lanka. He is expected to regain complete fitness before the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2022, though his return to competitive cricket will be decided upon by the PCB

gruelling two weeks at Flushing Meadows. Nadal has played just once since an abdominal injury forced him to withdraw from his Wimbledon semi-final with Nick Kyrgios – a first-up loss to Borná Coric in Cincinnati.

Nadal admitted on Friday that he had been protecting his injury in Cincinnati but had been able to practice with intensity in the build-up to the US Open. "I take it very easy in the Cincinnati, too, in the practices. The match, I try my best without putting all the effort there on the serve," Nadal said. "I hope to be ready for the action. That's the only thing that I can say." Nadal begins his US Open campaign against Australia's Rinky Hijikata on Tuesday.