



IMF Board Approves \$3 Billion Stand-by Agreement for Pakistan

Islamabad (AGENCIES): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) Executive Board has approved a Stand-by Agreement (SBA) of \$3 billion for Pakistan, as announced on the IMF's website. The agreement was reached after discussions between the IMF staff team, led by Nathan Porter, and Pakistani authorities in late June. The SBA builds upon the efforts made under Pakistan's 2019 Extended Fund Facility program, which was set to expire at the end of June. Finance and Revenue Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar shared the news on his Twitter account, highlighting the positive impact on the country's foreign exchange reserves. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have already deposited \$2 billion and \$1 billion, respectively, with the State Bank of Pakistan, boosting the total foreign exchange reserves to over \$12.7 billion. The approved SBA will support the government's immediate efforts to stabilize the economy, maintain macroeconomic stability, and provide a framework for financing from multilateral and bilateral partners.



It will also create room for social and development spending through improved domestic revenue mobilization and careful spending execution to address the needs of the Pakistani people. The finance minister expressed that the government is committed to completing this program, emphasizing the importance of steadfast policy implementation and necessary reforms, particularly in the energy sector, to promote resilience

and improve the business climate. The immediate disbursement of SDR894 million (approximately \$1.2 billion) is now available, with the remaining amount to be phased over the duration of the program, subject to quarterly reviews. This agreement marks an important step towards economic stabilization and addressing the challenges faced by Pakistan, with a focus on fiscal discipline, exchange rate management, and ongoing reforms.

Egypt building artificial river parallel to the Nile for \$5.2bn



CAIRO (AGENCIES): Egypt is building an artificial river parallel to the Nile River at a cost of \$5.2 billion and as part of its New Delta project. Authorities say the river will help expand agricultural land and reduce the need to import food and wheat. The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February last year drove a global surge in wheat prices, leaving Egypt struggling as it is the world's biggest wheat importer. Russia and Ukraine supplied Egypt with 80 per cent of its wheat imports in 2021. Authorities have said that water for the artificial river will come from recycled agricultural drainage and groundwater. Egypt is facing a water scarcity crisis and UNICEF has said that the country will run out of water by 2025.

300 Israel reservists leave duty in protest against advancing judicial overhaul plans

TEL AVIV (AGENCIES): Approximately 300 Israeli reservists serving in cyberwarfare units announced they will not be attending their volunteer reserve duties in protest of the Knesset's approval of the first reading of the reasonableness bill. In a letter published yesterday, the Israeli reservists wrote: "The Netanyahu government proved today that it is bent on crushing the State of Israel. Passing the law to cancel the reasonableness clause is the first step in the transformation of the State of Israel into a corrupt, backward, and weak state." It further warned that by passing this law, which prevents the Supreme Court from dealing with decisions made by elected officials, the government aims to undermine and dismantle the state of Israel. Under Israel's unicameral system, wherein there is only one parliamentary chamber, no constitutional restraint on government policy will remain if the bill becomes law.

Half of world sinking in debt crisis, warns UN chief

UNITED NATIONS (AGENCIES): UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has highlighted the alarming situation where half of humanity lives in countries that spend more on servicing debt than on health and education. In a report titled 'A World of Debt', it is revealed that 52 countries, including Pakistan, are in serious debt trouble, accounting for almost 40% of the developing world. Guterres calls for urgent fiscal relief for these countries, as global public debt reached a record \$92 trillion

last year. Developing countries shoulder a disproportionate amount of this debt, hindering their ability to invest in the Sustainable Development Goals and the energy transition. Guterres emphasizes that this systemic failure stems from an outdated financial system and proposes urgent remedies such as an effective debt workout mechanism and massive scale-up of affordable long-term financing. The upcoming G20 meeting in September is seen as an opportunity to address these issues.

Ukraine will receive F-16s - White House

KIEV (AGENCIES): Kiev will "likely" get F-16 fighter jets from Washington's allies in Europe who may have some to spare, US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan said on Wednesday. While many NATO countries have offered to train Ukrainian pilots, so far none have pledged to send actual airplanes. "On the F-16 fighter jets, President [Joe] Biden took the decision some weeks ago, working in close consultation with allies, to begin the training of Ukrainian pilots on those jets," Sullivan told Good Morning America host George Stephanopoulos from Vilnius, Lithuania, where he is attending the NATO summit. "That training will take some time, and then there will be the transfer of F-16s, likely from European countries that have excess F-16 supplies," Sullivan added. The fighter jet was designed in the 1970s by General Dynamics, and is currently in



limited production by Lockheed Martin. On Tuesday, Denmark announced a "coalition" that will handle the training of Ukrainian pilots on the US-made jets, starting in August. It will be led by Denmark and the Netherlands, and also consists of Belgium, Canada, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the UK and Sweden. About half the countries involved do not actually operate the F-16, while none of those that do have publicly committed to sending any to Kiev.

China warns NATO against expanding into Asia-Pacific

BEIJING (AGENCIES): The Chinese government has urged NATO not to expand into the Asia-Pacific, warning that it would retaliate to any increased Western military presence in the region after the alliance criticized Beijing during its summit in Lithuania. China's Mission to the European Union issued a statement on Tuesday in response to NATO's joint communique, which accused Beijing of pursuing "coercive policies" that "challenge" Western interests. "The China-related content of the communique disregards basic facts, wantonly distorts China's position and policies, and deliberately discredits China. We firmly oppose and reject this," the Chinese diplomats said. The statement went on to pledge that Beijing would



"safeguard its sovereignty" and oppose "NATO's eastward expansion into the Asia-Pacific." It added that "any actions that damage China's legitimate rights and interests will be met with a resolute response." Leaders of the Western military alliance met on Tuesday in the Lithuanian capital, Vilnius, to discuss additional aid to Ukraine, among other matters.

Six killed in banned Kenya protests



Nairobi (AFP/APP): Six people were killed on Wednesday in clashes between police and demonstrators in Kenya who joined banned opposition protests against tax hikes, police officers told AFP. After the violence, Interior Minister Kithure Kindiki issued a warning that the authorities would no longer be tolerate it. "Lives have been lost, scores of law enforcement officers and civilians have been grievously injured and unimaginable loss to the country's economy has been occasioned," he said in a statement condemning "widespread violence, looting and destruction of private and public property". "This culture of impunity will stop," he vowed. Police had earlier fired tear gas on protesters in and around Nairobi, with five of the six deaths reported in the towns of Mlolongo and Kitengela on the capital's outskirts. Tear gas was also used to disperse crowds attacking a highway connecting Nairobi to the port city of Mombasa, with one death recorded in Emali, a town located along that route. "We have three deaths in Mlolongo, where a group of demonstrators had blocked the road to protest, and we also have two others in

Kitengela and one in Emali," a police officer said. "There was a confrontation with police officers deployed to quell the riots and some (people)... were shot in the process," he said on condition of anonymity. A second policeman said, "I can confirm the deaths in Mlolongo, Emali and Kitengela," without elaborating further. In Nairobi's Kangemi slum, dozens of children were hospitalised, some unconscious, after teargas was fired near their classrooms, the head of the clinic told AFP. "We took 53 of them to the hospital and they are all now in a stable condition awaiting discharge," he said. Opposition leader Raila Odinga, pursuing a protest campaign against the government, had urged demonstrations against a tax law that has seen fuel prices surge, adding to the difficulties faced by poor Kenyans. But late Tuesday, police chief Japhet Koome said the authorities had not received any official notification of rallies, as required by law. "All lawful means will be used to disperse such demonstrations," he warned. Major roads in several western cities where Odinga commands significant support were deserted as protesters took to the streets.

Pakistan, speaking for OIC, accuses West of 'lip service' their pledge to fight hatred

GENEVA (AGENCIES): Pakistan, speaking on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), has criticized the West for merely paying "lip service" to their commitment to combat religious hatred. This statement came after the UN Human Rights Council passed a resolution condemning the burning of the Holy Quran. Ambassador Khalil Hashmi, Pakistan's permanent representative to the UN in Geneva, expressed disappointment with countries that opposed the resolution, stating that they lacked the courage to condemn such acts. The United States, the European Union, and the United Kingdom were among the countries opposing

the resolution, citing concerns over human rights and freedom of expression. Ambassador Hashmi clarified that the resolution did not aim to curtail free speech but rather sought to strike a balance between freedom of expression and responsibilities in preventing religious hatred. He emphasized that the resolution was not targeting any specific country and aimed to address the broader issue of combating religious hatred. The resolution was supported by several countries, including Pakistan, China, India, and the United Arab Emirates, while countries such as the US, the UK, France, and Germany voted against it.

More than 3 million have fled Sudan unrest: UN

Geneva (AFP/APP): More than 3 million people have now fled their homes in Sudan due to the nearly three-month-old conflict between rival armed forces, the United Nations said on Wednesday. Figures from the UN's International Organization for Migration (IOM) showed that more than 2.4 million people were now displaced within Sudan, while nearly 724,000 have escaped across the country's borders. The fighting in Sudan broke out on April 15. The army, led by Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, has been battling the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces commanded by his former deputy Mohamed Hamdan Daglo after the two fell out in a power struggle. "We have surpassed the 3 million figure of people displaced due to the conflict in Sudan," IOM spokeswoman Safa

Msehli told AFP. "This is more than a figure, however: these are people who have been uprooted, fleeing for their lives; families that have been separated, and children that won't be able to go to school. "We simply cannot turn away from Sudan. An immediate cessation of hostilities is urgently needed. "We need the international community's sustained support to provide aid and protection to those affected by the conflict." The number of people who have sought refuge outside Sudan is likely to be even higher than the IOM's figure as the number of individual arrivals it gives for Egypt -- nearly 256,000 -- cites Egyptian foreign ministry figures from June 18. Around 3,000 people have been killed in the violence, according to the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project.

UN rights council's resolution on Quran burning must lead to action against hatred: Munir Akram

UNITED NATIONS (AGENCIES): Pakistan's Ambassador to the United Nations, Munir Akram, has welcomed the adoption of a resolution by the UN Human Rights Council condemning recent incidents in which the Holy Quran was burnt, saying it was a "strong signal that the OIC countries will not tolerate such acts of hatred, hostility

and violence." "Adoption of this resolution should lead to concrete actions against such manifestations of religious hatred and Islamophobia," he said in a statement released in New York. Amongst the 47 members of the Geneva-based Council, there were 28 votes in favour of the resolution, 12 votes against, and seven abstentions.

About Khyber Mail The Khyber mail was first published in Peshawar, Pakistan in 1932. A newspaper in English by the eminent journalist Sheikh Sana Ullah. From 1932 to 1989 it has survived as leading English newspaper in the region by the sons of Sana Ullah i.e. Sheikh Zaka Ullah, Sheikh Inayat Ullah and Sheikh Saleem Ullah. The publication was shut down in 1989 due to various reasons. The current owner Rizwan Inayat son of Sheikh Inayat Ullah and grandson of Sheikh Sana Ullah, has restarted the family heritage but meeting with the requirement of the century, by giving the readers current happenings around the world with one touch anywhere any time and updating the reader to pace up with the world.

Army's BD Party saves man from cardiac failure in N Waziristan

PESHAWAR (APP): In a rousing response to a man passing through cardiac arrest, the personnel of Pakistan Army's Bomb Disposal Party provided in time medical support and saved the life of the man accompanied by his minor son in Sapalga village of North Waziristan, local administration informed on Wednesday. The man named Noor

Shehzad along with his seven-year-old son was travelling in a car for Miran Shah when he suffered a severe heart attack near Thall Pull, miles away from any medical facility. A Bomb Disposal Party of Pakistan Army passing through the area took a stop near the car and were told by the child that his father was feeling severe pain in the chest. The BD Party

with their Primary expertise provided first aid to the man on the spot and later called in an army medical team which provided proper medical cover to the man thus saving the precious life of a father in front of his minor son. After some time, the much-obliged man and his son were able to continue their journey for Miran Shah.

Implementation of consistent policies imperative for economic growth, prosperity: SCCI

PESHAWAR (APP): Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry acting president, Ijaz Khan Afridi stressed the need for implementation of consistent policies to bring economic stability in the country. The SCCI's acting chief emphasized that the chambers and business community should be consulted before the formation of policies, which would have long-lasting and durable impacts on the national economy and the country will lead toward sustainable development. Ijaz Khan Afridi was speaking during the study visit of participants of the 37th Mid-Career Management Course of the National Institute of Management Islamabad here at the chamber's house on Wednesday. The senior officers' delegation was led by NIM Islamabad Directing Staff, Ms Sema A Khan.

During visit of the senior officers, the SCCI's former presidents Faud Ishaq, Zahidullah Shinwari, Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Sherbaz Bilour, former senior vice presidents Ziaul Haq Sarhadi, Imran Khan Mohmand, members of the chamber's executive committee Haji Ghulam Hussain, Hafaf Ali Khan, Laal Badshah, Monawar Khurshid, Qurat Ul Ain, and Muhammad Aurangzeb, Ihsanullah, Ishtiaq Muhammad, Qaiser Shahzad, NIM senior officers, trader, industrialist and members of business community were present in a large number. On the occasion, a briefing through a multimedia presentation to NIM senior officers was given regarding the chamber history, important goals, future planning, projects and other important initiatives for welfare of the business community. During the meeting, the participants asked various queries regarding industrialization in newly merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, grievances of business community on non-opening of Letter of Credits (LCs), establishment of Special Economic Zones in KP, industrialization, Ease of Doing Business, along with bilateral trade

between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The SCCI's acting president Ijaz Khan Afridi, former presidents Faud Ishaq, Zahidullah Shinwari, Zulfiqar Ali Khan Sherbaz Bilour and others responded to all questions of the participants comprehensively. Faud Ishaq and Zahidullah Shinwari and others asserted the implementation of consistent and durable policies are essential for industrialization, economic growth and development. The chamber's senior members called for taking pragmatic steps for resolving issues pertaining to imports and exports and provision of facilities to existing industries to stabilize the national economy. The speakers said the economic policies should be framed by making proper consultation with chambers, traders and relevant stakeholders. They also stressed the need for building of concrete coordination and liaison between government institutions, chambers and the trading community. Earlier, the SCCI acting president Ijaz Khan Afridi highlighted initiatives that had been made by SCCI for welfare and resolution of traders' community issues.

Army, FC deployed in Kurram to control situation: Home Deptt

PESHAWAR (APP): Additional troops of Pak Army and FC had been deployed on the request of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government, in district Kurram to control the situation over land disputes among locals. An official communique of the KP Home department issued here said the Army and FC would remain in the area till the situation gets normal, adding that the decision has been taken to normalize the situ-

ation and avoid further losses and casualties. The government was trying to get the longstanding issue resolved amicably through Jirga and the support of the revenue department, it informed. It warned of strict action against such individuals and requested the people to cooperate with the district government and law enforcement agencies to foil the nefarious designs of anti-state elements.

Child killed in house fire in KP's Shangla

PESHAWAR (APP): A seven-year-old child was killed when a house in Guddusar Pitao area of Shangla district caught fire during the wheat thresher process, police informed on Wednesday. The unfortunate incident occurred in the house of one, Aurangzeb when all his chil-

dren were present in the house. The police, Rescue 1122 and locals succeeded in dousing the fire after hectic efforts, however, Aurangzeb's seven-year-old son, Muhammad Shan was burnt to death. The nine-room house of Aurangzeb was also completely destroyed by fire.

DPO briefs NIM delegation about the performance of KP police

ABBOTTABAD (APP): A delegation of officers participating in the 37th Mid-Career Management Course National Institute of Management (NIM) on Wednesday visited the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Hazara Police Office. The delegation met with the DIG Hazara Tahir Ayub Khan, District Police Officer (DPO) Abbottabad Omar Tufail, and DPO Haripur Muhammad Omar Khan and exchanged ideas on key issues. DPO Abbottabad Omar Tufail briefed the participating officers on the performance of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police, the security situation, and current challenges.

Omar Tufail also informed about the measures taken for public facilitation, crime prevention initiatives, developmental projects, foreigner security, traffic management systems, and current challenges faced by the police. D.I.G Hazara Tahir Ayub Khan and DPOs responded to the delegation's queries and provided detailed insights. At the conclusion, Senior Coordinator Major (R) A. Khan expressed gratitude to D.I.G Hazara Tahir Ayub Khan and DPOs and presented a shield to DIG Hazara on behalf of NIM Islamabad. DIG Hazara also presented a shield on behalf of the Hazara Police.

Two more killed, over 20 injured in Parachinar clashes

PESHAWAR (APP): At least two more people were killed and over 20 injured on Wednesday as firing continued between tribes in Parachinar in Kurram district over an issue of property ownership. According to police and hospital sources, the firing continued for the last five consecutive days at various villages of the Parachinar took the lives of two more people with over 20 reportedly injured. The firing was taking place between people from Pewar Gido, Balash Khel, Khar Killay, Sadda and Para Chamkani Karman wherein automatic and heavy weapons were

being used during the clashes. Police said in recent clashes, two more people have been killed while over 20 were reportedly injured. Most of the injured have been shifted District Headquarters Hospital Parachinar and Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Sadda. Condition of some of the injured was stated to be critical, the hospital sources said. Federal Minister, Sajid Turi, Deputy Commissioner Saiful Islam Shah and DPO Muhammad Imran told media that strong efforts were on to make a ceasefire truce between the conflicting tribes.

Paramedics stage protest outside Health Directorate

PESHAWAR (APP): The paramedics from all districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Wednesday stage a protest demonstration outside the office of Director General Health here. The protestors blocked Warsak road for all kinds of traffic and chanted raised slogans against DG Health. The protestors deplored il-

legal appointment of paramedics, slowly working on the promotion of paramedics and sacking of over 1000 IPI technicians. They also protested against the non-payment of fuel charges to IPI technicians for the last two years and warned to continue protesting until their demands were accepted.

AC discards foreign cigarettes in Hayatabad

PESHAWAR (APP): Following instructions of Deputy Commissioner, Shah Fahad, Assistant Commissioner (AC) Headquarters, Zainab Naqvi on Wednesday took action against the sale of tobacco products in close vicinity of educational institutions in Hayatabad. According to the district administration, Project Coordinator Tobacco, Ajmal Shah and officials from the Civil Defense also accom-

panied the AC. During the action, hundreds of packets of unregistered and foreign cigarettes were confiscated and later discarded through fire. Zainab Naqvi warned the shopkeepers not to sell cigarettes to people below the age of 18 and especially avoid selling tobacco projects within 50-meter radius of educational institutions. She also warned of stern legal action in case of violation of the orders.

Australian HC calls on KP Governor

PESHAWAR (APP): Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan Neil Hawkins here on Wednesday called on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Ghulam Ali at Governor House. During the meeting, mutual cooperation for the promotion of education, trade, agriculture and tourism came under discussion. The Governor proposed the establishment of Pak-Australia Technical Centre at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa so that our students could get advantage of the modern technology of Australia. The Governor said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa especially merged areas were blessed with abundance of mines and mineral resources and due to lack of technology, precious marble and other mines and mineral resources are being wasted. He said

the technical centre would help save these precious resources while the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa would also take advantage of the Australian technology. He said the increase of Australian scholarships for the youth of the province including merged areas would help them to get modern education and technology. He called for further strengthening of bilateral relations between the two countries and increase of students scholarship of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Australian High Commissioner praised the proposal of technical centre, modern technology, students scholarship and said that the his country was working in education, agriculture and other sectors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and worked on different projects in merged areas.

GOLD PRICE IN PAK

Gold Rate	24K Gold	22K Gold	21K Gold	18K Gold
Per Tola Gold	Rs 233,300	Rs 213,857	Rs 204,137	Rs 174,975
Per 10 Gram	Rs 200,017	Rs 183,348	Rs 175,015	Rs 150,013
Per Gram Gold	Rs 20,002	Rs 18,335	Rs 17,502	Rs 15,001
Per Ounce	Rs 567,041	Rs 519,785	Rs 496,161	Rs 425,280

FOREX RATES

Currency	Buying	Selling
US Dollar	278	281
China Yuan	38.68	39.08
Japanese Yen	1.91	1.98
Saudi Riyal	74.5	75
U.A.E Dirham	77.6	78.5
UK Pound	362	367
Euro	309	312
Australian Dollar	197.5	200
Canadian Dollar	216	218

Emergency Numbers

Organization	Phone No
Rescue 1122 HQrs	091-2264224-25
Rescue 1122 Mardan	0937-9230770
Fire Brigade Cantt:	091-9212534
Fire Brigade City	091-2566666
Police Emergency	091-9212222
Edhi Ambulance	091-2214575
Red Crescent Ambulance	091-2210836
Emergency Ambulance	091-2590846
Civil Defence, Peshawar	091-9212176
Lady Reading Hospital	091-9211430
HMC Peshawar	091-9217140-46
KTH Peshawar	091-9216340-8
Irnam Hospital	091-9216115
Mission Hospital	091-2212371
Al-Khidmat Hospital	091-2215945
Fauji Foundation Hospital	091-9212771-4
Frontier Foundation Blood Services	091-5703463
Hamza Foundation, Peshawar	091-5841632
Sui Gas, Peshawar	091-9213016
Wapda Complaint Peshawar	091-9212041
PIA, Peshawar	091-9213351
Airport Inquiry	114
Railway Inquiry	117

IMSciences Announces Admissions for MS & Ph.D. Islamic Business & Finance with Scholarships

Peshawar (Khyber Mail): The Institute of Management Sciences (IMSciences) has opened admissions for MS and Ph.D. programs in Islamic Business & Finance. Prospective candidates can now apply for these programs by visiting the admission portal at <http://admission.imsciences.edu.pk/>. To promote education in the field of Islamic Business & Finance, IMSciences is offering a number of scholarships for eligible students. The Bank of Khyber is generously providing 07 fully funded scholarships, while CEIF IMSciences is offering 03 fully funded (Tuition Fee) scholarships. These scholarships aim to support talented individuals who wish to pursue their studies in Islamic Banking and Finance. In-

terested candidates are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity and apply for the scholarships to pursue their academic and career aspirations. The IMSciences is known for its excellence in providing quality education and research opportunities in the field of management sciences. The Islamic Business & Finance programs offered by IMSciences are designed to equip students with the necessary knowledge and skills to thrive in the growing field of Islamic finance. For further information and to apply for admissions and scholarships, interested individuals are advised to visit the official admission portal at <http://admission.imsciences.edu.pk/>. Don't miss this chance to advance your career in Islamic Business & Finance!



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Addressing Polio Resistance in KP

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) has achieved significant progress in the fight against polio, as evidenced by a notable decrease in families refusing to administer anti-polio drops to their children during the recent vaccination campaign. According to the Emergency Operations Centre, refusals in June decreased by 35%, highlighting the success of ongoing efforts in high-risk areas. While this is encouraging, we must build upon these achievements by intensifying vaccination campaigns and countering vaccine misinformation.

K-P, historically considered a polio hotspot, has shown commendable commitment to overcoming vaccination barriers. In 2022, all 20 polio cases reported in the country originated in K-P. Health authorities have played a crucial role in dispelling myths and addressing unfounded fears associated with the vaccine. The strong support of religious scholars (ulema) has also been instrumental in encouraging vaccinations and countering propaganda. To achieve complete eradication, further actions are necessary. We must strengthen vaccination campaigns, particularly in high-risk areas, by implementing innovative strategies and involving the community. K-P recently linked civic services to polio vaccination certificates as an incentive to boost immunization rates. Similar approaches can be used to encourage vaccination at a community level.

Additionally, combating misinformation requires proactive measures such as engaging with communities, religious leaders, and influencers. By disseminating accurate information and fostering trust, we can bridge knowledge gaps and ensure a collective understanding of the benefits of polio vaccination.

The declining number of families refusing polio drops in K-P reflects a positive shift in attitudes towards immunization. This progress is a testament to the determination of health authorities and the dedication of frontline workers. However, we must not become complacent. Resources should be directed towards sustaining and expanding these efforts. Through continuous vaccination campaigns, targeted community engagement, and countering misinformation, we can ultimately eradicate polio in our country and secure a healthier future for our children.

Has humanity missed its chance to deal with global warming?

- By Mohamed Chebaro

No matter how hard one tries, one cannot escape news of the Earth's changing climate, as we now live in a more polluted world and a hotter planet for all living species. Last week, record-breaking temperatures were registered globally, according to data from the US National Centers for Environmental Prediction. It said the average global temperature reached a new high of 17.23 degrees Celsius on Thursday — the third time in the space of a few days that it had surpassed the sizzling heat waves that hit the world in August 2016, when the average temperature climbed to just under 17 C. The upward trend is continuing unabated, according to the UN's World Meteorological Organization. Wherever you look, records keep on being broken. In the last few weeks, southern parts of the US have been under an intense heat dome. In China, an above average heat wave has produced temperatures above 35 C, while some North African countries have seen temperatures hovering near 50 C. Even Antarctica, currently in its winter months, has broken its July record temperature, with 8.7 C recorded, according to Ukraine's Vernadsky Research Base. The announcement regarding the record-breaking temperatures might be an abstract occurrence for all of us mortals, yet its impact has been translating into increased damage to ecosystems everywhere, and ultimately a likely death sentence for nature as we know it. Just look at the fires in Canada and the resulting smoke giving the skies of New York a yellow hue. The war in Ukraine is not the sole culprit in the cost-of-living crisis being felt worldwide. It is down to a mixed bag of rising prices of energy, but also crop yields have been affected due to droughts and dwindling water supplies, as well as wetter or drier seasons than those the farmers were previously used to. In short, the economic prosperity and growth that we have long relied on, at least in the Global North, to pay for the green transition is showing signs

of recession and, when that happens, it puts pressure on government projects to finance the shift to a greener economy in rich and poor countries alike. The question that needs to be answered is did we miss the chance to halt global warming when the coffers of the developed nations were full in previous decades? The current economic outlook in countries that are considered economically healthy increasingly points to higher inflation, less growth, fewer returns and even recession. Poorer economic performance is a bad omen for the fight to limit global warming and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Clearly, we live in an era of geopolitical discord, an absence of multilateralism and overall weak leadership, along with a less than satisfactory economic outlook across the board. Therefore, one can notice that fears are surfacing concerning the green transition, as richer nations' governments are pushed to freeze or redirect the funds earmarked for limiting emissions and meeting climate targets. For example, UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak is reportedly planning to renege on his government's £11.6 billion (\$14.9 billion) pledge to help poorer countries deal with climate change. This may be shortsighted and could damage the many building blocks achieved through the Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, better known as COP, particularly if others follow suit. It is the economy that often wins or loses elections in democratic countries, but the economy and its performance is also what might encourage rich nations to finally set a timetable for their promised delivery of \$100 billion annually to help developing nations green their economies and build resilience against future climate change. That promise is more than two years past its due date and still 20 percent short of its target, amid uncertainties about the mechanisms needed to ensure such funds are not siphoned off by corrupt and unaccountable state

actors. At last year's COP27 in Egypt, the heads of developing nations won a small victory when delegates agreed to put the controversial issue of compensation for "loss and damage" on the summit agenda. But like all initiatives that are put on paper, their application needs a vigor that is absent from today's world. For all the above reasons, combined or individually, I feel that maybe the world has already forfeited its chance to bring us back from the brink by acting while the economic cycle was more positive, allowing for surplus and more experimentation. In recent years, the need to worry about the future of our planet has finally resonated among people in the rich world, but that is a commodity not shared by the people of the Global South, who have for decades had to grapple with other adversities and focus on securing their next — or tomorrow's — meal. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said last week: "The situation we are witnessing now is the demonstration that climate change is out of control." If people keep looking for a painless transition that does not force them to stop doing the things that they like most, such as driving or jetting off abroad, new record temperatures will continue to be seen on land, in our oceans and in the atmosphere. We all talk about reducing our carbon footprint, but nobody seems ready to change their behavior or habits, not as a society, as a system of government or even at the corporate level. Until we do, the marshlands of southern Iraq will continue to dry up, forest fires will intensify, from Canada to Spain and elsewhere, and lakes are likely to shrink further, while our oceans will only heat up further and in an unsustainable way for humanity and nature alike.

• Mohamed Chebaro is a British-Lebanese journalist, media consultant and trainer with more than 25 years of experience covering war, terrorism, defense, current affairs and diplomacy.
- Courtesy: ARAB NEWS

Musk believes 'ESG is the devil' and he's not the only one — By Dr. Mathew Maavak

In a June 10 Tweet, Elon Musk, the embodiment of the electric vehicle (EV) revolution, declared that "ESG is the devil." ESG stands for the "environmental, social and governance" principles which dictate that certain aspects of a company's work must be taken into account when deciding whether to invest in it. An investment-worthy company must have a good score on things like climate change, sustainability, energy efficiency, diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as corruption and bribery prevention, among others. Musk's outburst was sparked by the shockingly low ESG scores assigned to Tesla by S&P Global, a ratings and market intelligence heavyweight. Tesla earned 37 points (out of a possible 100, where anything above 70 is considered "good" and anything below 50 is deemed "poor") on its ESG scorecard while Philip Morris, the global tobacco giant, received a commendable score of 84. Similarly, as the Washington Free Beacon discovered, the London Stock Exchange gave British American Tobacco a score of 94. Perhaps, lighting up 20.3 billion tobacco products daily worldwide does wonders for the environment and sustainability. The ESG turnaround wasn't entirely unexpected. I had even published a recent analysis on how the World Economic Forum (WEF) and its factotums would ultimately take the fall for our crumbling liberal-globalist order. Musk is just one among a growing number of stalwarts to turn their backs on the global ESG train wreck. Insurance behemoth Lloyd's of London recently announced that it was exiting from the net-zero alliance for insurers, and it was the sixth such organisation to do so within a week. There are good reasons for this shift. For starters, hundreds of ESG managers were stung by the recent collapse of Silicon Valley Bank, that had prioritized woke agendas over the security of its depositors. The ESG agenda effectively forces firms to sacrifice business logic in favor of liberal lunacies marked by gender dysphoria, pseudo-diversity and climate militancy. As banks promoting this mania get bankrupted, one wonders how ESG initiatives are going to be funded down the line. Investment behemoths like BlackRock,

Vanguard and State Street (aka Big Capital) are leading the global ESG rollback. The trio manage assets worth \$22 trillion worldwide, amounting to a quarter of the global GDP, and they can no longer pander to socialist pies-in-the-sky. Big Capital thrives on trillion-dollar profits, not trillions of social media soundbites and hissy-fits. Punitive threats, like the following prediction from KPMG, will not faze Big Capital: "By 2030, poor performers [will] have been weeded out and consistent non-compliance will be met with severe consequences including penalties, public naming, a prohibition to operate and even imprisonment. The C-Suite and Directors will now be personally liable for ESG breaches." Does anyone really believe that the Big Four (Deloitte, Ernst & Young (EY), KPMG and PwC, the world's largest accounting networks) will agitate for punitive actions against their sacred cows? Big Capital virtually owns them. Even the British government plans to drop its flagship £11.6 billion climate pledge, prompting an infuriated Guardian to accuse Prime Minister Rishi Sunak of "betraying populations most vulnerable to global heating". Incidentally, KPMG had provided Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank (another failed entity) with a clean bill of health just weeks before their collapse. Neither the professorial definition of The Science nor the science of accounting added up in these cases. These champions of sustainability are also unable to sustain themselves as they have begun firing thousands of employees.

Here are five big reasons why the ESG agenda is doomed.

1. Renewable chimeras: Renewable energy — a cornerstone of the ESG agenda — is not as clean, eco-friendly, efficient or as sustainable as advocates claim it to be. In the area of battery technologies, science policy analyst David Wojick had deduced that the "grid scale storage" required to replace fossil fuels with wind and solar power in a "net zero" United States would cost \$23 trillion — matching the nation's annual GDP for 2021. Apart from its unsustainable costs, the renewables ecosystem is also harmful to the environment. Solar panels contain a toxic mix of gallium, tellurium, silver,

crystalline silicon, lead and cadmium, among others. It costs an estimated \$20 to \$30 to recycle one panel while only \$1 to \$2 is needed to consign the same panel to a landfill. It is a similar story with millions of tons of decommissioned wind turbine blades which themselves contain toxic materials that are leaching into the environment. Ironically, wind power is heavily dependent on oil and its byproducts throughout its production-to-operation lifecycle. The net energy return on investments (EROI) from "renewable" sources remains abysmal. If and when proper recycling protocols are mandated worldwide, the renewable energy sector will collapse overnight. The growing affordability of EVs has less to do with government subsidies and more to do with the fact that only five percent of their batteries are recycled. And batteries constitute just one component of a highly-unsustainable renewables ecosystem.

2. Human rights abuses, poverty and food insecurity: The EV boom is significantly fueled by underpaid, underfed and underaged cobalt miners. Cobalt is an essential component of lithium-ion batteries and nearly 70% of global supplies are mined in the Democratic Republic of Congo. As Amnesty International reports, nearly 40,000 children slave away in these mines under the most appalling conditions. Perhaps they were energised by Greta Thunberg's warning in 2018 that the world would end in 2023 unless fossil fuels were banned in toto? The embarrassing Tweet has since been deleted but the world did end for "hundreds, if not thousands" of Congolese children. Likewise, Glencore, a major player in the Congo cobalt sector, has deleted all contents from its dedicated ESG webpage. One wonders whose childhoods are being stolen in a hypocritical and unmistakably racist global ESG regime? Third-world children will also reel from ESG-dictated reductions in Western farm outputs. Ireland and the Netherlands, among others, are planning to cull millions of livestock in order to "meet emissions targets" and "save the planet." The science behind this madness was conjured up by the usual suspects such as KPMG. A reduction in meat

supply will create seismic imbalances throughout the global food ecosystem. The demand for plant alternatives such as pulses will skyrocket, tearing ever bigger holes in the pockets of vegans and meat-eaters alike. Meats sold at taxed mark-ups will be infused with mRNA vaccines. In the meantime, the WEF has a solution: worms, maggots and insects as a dietary option for the poor.

3. Freeloader anarchists: With the ESG gravy train trundling to a halt, freeloading activists may escalate their direct actions. A group called Just Stop Oil and affiliate eco-anarchists are now vandalising fuel pumps when they are not gluing themselves onto roads and disrupting football matches. They have even vandalised the wax effigy of Britain's climate monarch, Charles III, at Madame Tussauds museum in London. Coincidentally, Charles III — echoing Thunberg's dire predictions in 2018 — has just launched a "climate clock" which gives humanity only six years before a climate armageddon. But here is the irony of ironies: Just Stop Oil is funded by the Climate Emergency Fund (CEF) which in turn received donations from Aileen Getty, the granddaughter of oil tycoon Jean Paul Getty. Once the bottom of the ESG pork barrel is scraped threadbare, the ensuing anarchy will be off the charts. Anarchists may even turn on each other. A recent "pride parade" in London was railroaded by Just Stop Oil activists. It was Woke vs Woke! As far as Big Capital is concerned, these anarchists have reached the limits of their usefulness. Social upheavals and lockdowns worldwide have enabled Big Capital to gobble up small and medium businesses at rock bottom prices. But if the current bedlam in France serves as a precautionary lesson, pre-emptive measures will be sought against the "savagely hordes of vermin" who were once lionized as social justice warriors. BlackRock has already assigned extra security measures for CEO Larry Fink and President Robert Kapito "over growing concerns for their safety." They know what lies ahead.

4. Anal science: Eco-anarchists who regularly invoke "The Science" somehow miss the low hanging fruits. One such ripe picking is in the area of toilet

paper production and usage. A staggering 15% of deforestation in the United States alone is attributed to tissues that allegedly aggravate the global climate crisis with "every flush". Despite this data, one has yet to hear of a single toilet paper stand being targeted by eco-anarchists anywhere. Timeless artworks by Vincent Van Gogh and Monet, on the other hand, are deemed offensive. Eco-anarchists are just not interested in practical solutions. Bidets, for example, can drastically minimise toilet paper demand and deforestation. Furthermore, the bidet is no longer a resource-dictated compromise in the Third World. It is prevalent in technological powerhouses such as Japan and South Korea where the bowls are replete with hi-tech features such as volume, speed, temperature control, air-dryers and sometimes even music. Italy and France have a long bidet tradition as well. But the science of bidet is too passive and workable for the anal anarchist. Agitprop professionals can only make a living through public theatrics; not by quietly switching habits in their private spheres. Emotionally damaged and/or cerebrally challenged children grow up into destructive adults. That is the wellspring from which anarchists emerge. Therefore, do not expect Thunberg and her ilk to call for sustainable hygiene habits — even as countless monies are flushed down the toilet on drag queen shows and gender dysphoria curriculums in schools. I just can't see Greta yanking out toilet rolls from Swedish schools because they are stealing her childhood. In any case, she is too busy promoting Ukraine's eco-friendly war arsenal these days. As for the child slave miners of Congo, "let them eat cake" as Marie Antoinette once said.

5. BRICS multipolar order: There is a geopolitical dimension to Big Capital's U-turn on ESG. Resource-rich sub-Saharan Africa is tilting towards the BRICS bloc, in particular China, even as the West implodes from within. A new generation of African leaders are ganging up to free their nations from the shackles of the West, IMF, World Bank and even the United Nations.

- Courtesy: RT



Pakistan-Belarus Parliamentary Friendship Group vows to enhance bilateral relations and trade between Pakistan and Belarus

The first virtual meeting between the Parliamentary Friendship Groups of Pakistan and Belarus was held today, in the National Assembly Secretariat, Islamabad. The virtual meeting was chaired by Ms. Javaria Zafar Aheer, MNA/Convener of Pakistan-Belarus Parliamentary Friendship Group (PFG). From Belarus side, Mr. Andrei Savinykh, Head of the Working Group of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus on Cooperation with the Parliament of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, chaired the meeting. The two sides discussed matters pertaining to bilateral cooperation. Ms. Romina Khurshid



Alam, MNA/ SAPM, Ms. Zahra Wadood Fatemi, MNA and Dr. Shazia Sobia Aslam Soomro, MNA were present from Pakistan side, during the meeting. From Belarusian side, Mr. Aleksandr Grankovsky, Ms. Irina Supranovich, Mr. Vitaly Utkin attended the meeting. Ms. Javaria Zafar Aheer, MNA/Convener of Pakistan-Belarus Friendship Group (PFG) mentioned that Pakistan

greatly values its relationship with the Republic of Belarus and views it as an important partner and friend. Political situation between our two countries has evolved into a durable, broad based and comprehensive partnership. Members of Pakistani side appreciated the signing of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Belarus and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the Abolition of Visas for holders of Diplomatic and Service Passports and urged to consider liberalize visa regime for Pakistanis to further facilitate business communities and enhance economic interactions.

“Gandhara Symposium 2023: Cultural Diplomacy: Reviving Gandhara Civilization and Buddhist Heritage in Pakistan,” Islamabad



The 3-day Gandhara Symposium 2023, titled “Cultural Diplomacy: Reviving Gandhara Civilization and Buddhist Heritage in Pakistan”, commenced in Islamabad today. The Symposium has been organized by PM Task Force on Gandhara Tourism; the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI); and Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Inaugural Session was addressed by the Honourable President of Pakistan, His Excellency Dr. Arif Alvi, as Chief Guest. Dr. Ramesh Kumar Vankwani, Minister of State/Chairman of PM Task Force on Gandhara Tourism, was Guest of Honor. Director Gener-

al ISSI Amb. Sohail Mahmood, in his welcome address, stated that Pakistan has millennia-old, multi-layered cultural heritage, of which Gandhara is a very important dimension. He stated that the Symposium’s objective is to put further spotlight on Gandhara civilization and raise global awareness about the Buddhist heritage in Pakistan. The government and people of Pakistan are proud of the fact that this rich legacy has been well preserved. He expressed the hope that Panel Discussions, Round Table, and site visits during the Symposium would help delineate a pathway to advance the desired goals, including promotion of faith tourism.

Kashmiris to observe Kashmir Martyrs’ Day tomorrow

ISLAMABAD (APP): Kashmiris on both sides of the Line of Control (LoC) in Pakistan and the world over will observe the Kashmir Martyrs’ Day, tomorrow (Thursday), to pay homage to the martyrs of July 13, 1931, and all other Kashmiri martyrs. According to Kashmir media service, the day will be marked by a complete shutdown in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and a march towards the Martyrs’ Graveyard at Naqashband Sahib in Srinagar where the martyrs of July 13 are buried. The call for observance of the day has been given by the All Parties Hurriyat Conference and supported by all pro-freedom leaders and organizations. The APHC in a statement issued in

Srinagar urged people to make the call for shutdown and march a success to send a strong message to the world that the people of Jammu and Kashmir believe in the peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute under the UN resolutions and are not ready to accept Indian subjugation, at any cost. Rallies, seminars and conferences will be held in Azad Kashmir, Pakistan and all major capitals of the world to pay tributes to the Kashmiri martyrs. On July 13, 1931, the troops of Dogra Maharaja had killed 22 Kashmiris, one after another, outside Central Jail in Srinagar during the court proceedings against one Abdul Qadeer who had asked the Kashmiri people to defy the despotic Dogra rule.

Conspiracies against country can only be thwarted through transparent elections: Javed Latif

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister Mian Javed Latif on Wednesday said the threats and conspiracies against the country could only be thwarted through transparent and timely elections. Addressing a press conference here, he said the vision of the Pakistan Muslim League (N) regarding the upcoming general elections was very clear as people and institutions of the country agreed that only Nawaz Sharif could steer the country from the prevailing crises. The minister said that decision regarding the upcoming government would be taken by people of the country. He said that if efforts had been made to stop threats, blackmailing and attacks in 2014, the incident of 9th May would not have happened. “Facilitators are equally complicit with the main culprit. Today, Israel is talking about going to the United Nations. When such a game (played in Pakistan) takes place in these countries, do other states try to protect these criminals,” he questioned. Javed Latif observed that foreign funding was given to Pakistan Tehreek-e-In-

saf’s (PTI) chief from India and Israel with the aim to destabilize Pakistan. He was of the view the objectives which our enemy could not achieve by army, it achieved on 9th May by investing in the PTI chairman. The minister said that today some institutions were deliberately expressing pressure on them but in actuality, there was no pressure on them, adding that Parvez Elahi also got relief. The injustice with Nawaz Sharif should be redressed and action should be taken against the elements involved in the conspiracy, he demanded. Javed Latif said that senior lawyers and politicians had admitted that injustice had been done to Nawaz Sharif adding that the state was not weak and conspiracies against the country would be foiled in future. He said “It is in the interest of the country to hold fair and transparent elections on time. The people of Pakistan will decide who will be the next government. If fair and free elections are held, Nawaz Sharif will be elected as Prime Minister for the fourth time”.

Senate Secretariat Media Directorate

ISLAMABAD: Meeting of Senate Standing Committee on Industries and Production was held at Parliament House on Tuesday with Senator Khalida Ateeb in Chair. The Senate Committee was briefed on the retrenchment drive initiated in Pakistan Steel Mills for its rehabilitation. Officials informed that around 5,282 employees were offered retrenchment with payment of their outstanding dues plus an additional pay, however 4,434 employees agreed to the proposal and 1,591 employees have turned down the offer and some 42 employees have moved to the Court for adjudication. A budget worth Rs.19.5 Billion was allocated for the retrenchment process and approximately Rs.12.5 Billion has been released to Pakistan Steel Mills, officials added. Senator Khalida Ateeb questioned as to whether the new appointments after the retrenchment have been made or not. To which, officials failed to respond.

House on fire, 10 killed

LAHORE (APP): Ten people, including two minor children, were killed in a fire incident at Samian Mohallah, Family Park Taxali, Walled City, on Wednesday. Police said the ill-fated people were sleeping when the fire erupted in second floor of a three-storey house. On information, the Rescue 1122 reached the spot and started rescue operation. The rescuers extinguished the fire after hectic efforts as 11 vehicles and 33 rescuers took part in the operation. The rescuers recovered 10 bodies from the house and shifted them to Mayo Hospital. The victims died of suffocation who were identified as Sonu, 14, Amber, 25, Alamdar, seven months, Mano, 14, Saira Banu, 60, Adil Hussain, 16, Anzal Fatima, 4, Sania, 18, Seemaab, 13, Farzana, 40.

Two brothers kill each other

FAISALABAD (APP): Two brothers reportedly shot dead each other over some domestic dispute in the area of Khurarianwala police station. Rescue-1122 spokesman said here on Wednesday that 22-year-old Zaib Rustam and 25-year-old Sohail Rustam r/o Chuta Rasoolpura exchanged harsh words and then started blunt firing on each other over some disputes early in the morning. As a result, both brothers received serious bullet injuries and died on the spot before getting any medical assistance. During exchange of fire, their grandmother Muhammad Bibi (70) also received serious injuries and Rescue 1122 shifted her to Rural Health Center Khurarianwala. The area police took the bodies into custody and started investigation, he added.

PM condoles death of Atta Tarar’s aunt

FAISALABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday expressed grief over the death of the aunt of his Special Assistant Atta Tarar and the sister-in-law of former President Rafiq Tarar. The prime minister prayed for the departed soul to rest in peace and for grant of patience to the bereaved family, the PM Office said.

Seminar held at The Centre for Aerospace and Security Studies (CASS), Lahore

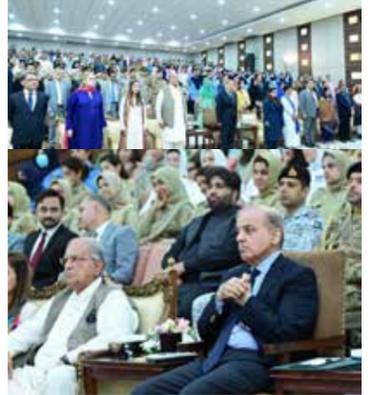
A seminar was conducted by the Centre for Aerospace and Security Studies (CASS), Lahore on the theme of “Pakistan’s Foreign Policy Choices in the Evolving Global Order”. The seminar featured a keynote address by Ambassador (Retd) Javid Husain who underscored the need for a pragmatic approach in Pakistan’s foreign policy towards the great powers, regional countries, and especially the neighboring states. Ambassador (Retd) Naghmana Hashmi dwelt in detail on how to further deepen Pakistan’s strategic ties with China. Ambassador (Retd) Riffat Masood in a video message, reflected on policy options vis a vis India and Pakistan’s representative on Afghanistan, Ambassa-



dor (Retd) Asif Durrani emphasized the utmost importance of a stable and peaceful Afghanistan. The statements of the guest speakers were followed by an extensive question-and-answer session. Earlier, in the beginning, Ambassador (Retd) Muhammad Haroon Shaukat, Director, Foreign Affairs CASS, made an introductory statement. President, CASS, Lahore, Air Marshal Asim Suleiman (Retd) made the concluding remarks while summing up the recommendations.

PM Shehbaz unveils Women Empowerment Initiative

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif launched today the umbrella project having its eight components (sub-projects) for women empowerment in the country. Launching ceremony was held in of the Prime Minister Office, Islamabad. Ministry of Human Rights will administer these Initiatives for women empowerment that have been allocated 5 billion in the budget 2023-2024 with a total cost of Rs. 10.4 billion in future. In his address Federal Minister for Human Rights Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada said that today the most these significant Prime Minister’s Initiative have been launched on Women Empowerment which are unprecedented and promises immense contribution towards protection and promotion of rights of women in Pakistan. Women empowerment is not just a matter of fairness; it is a fundamental human right. Minister said that every individual, regardless of their gender, deserves to be treated with dignity, respect, and equality. The Constitution



of Pakistan through its guarantees on protection of fundamental rights and principles of policy ensures these ideals. Similarly, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes the inherent dignity and equal rights of all individuals, irrespective of their gender. He said that it was our duty, as a society and as individuals, to ensure that every woman in Pakistan enjoys these rights in their entirety.

Nawaf Saeed Al-Malakiy Ambassador of Saudi Arabia Calls on Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu Air Chief Marshal of Pakistan Airforce

ISLAMABAD (Adnan Hameed): The Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, H.E. Mr. Nawaf Saeed Al-Malakiy, called on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force in his office today. The meeting was focused on areas of mutual interest and regional developments. During the meeting, Chief of the Air Staff shared his pragmatic policy decisions aimed at modernizing PAF through smart acquisition of niche technologies, upgradation of infrastructure and revitalization of operational & training domains. The Air Chief highlighted that Saudi Arabia being the center of the Muslim world and a significant strategic partner has longstanding religious, cultural and historical bond with Pakistan which is exemplified



through robust bilateral relations. He also reiterated his unwavering commitment to enhancing the existing ties in realms of military-to-military cooperation and training. Highlighting the bond of brotherhood between the two nations, the Air Chief said, “Pakistan values its strong diplomatic, economic and defence relationship with Saudi Arabia which is based on convergence on all important issues relating to regional peace, security and stability.”

National Council for Homeopathy calls for establishing research center

ISLAMABAD (APP): President of the National Council for Homeopathy, Rao Ghulam Murtaza emphasized the urgent need to establish a research center for homeopathic treatment which will further enhance the potential of alternative medicine. Talking to APP here on Wednesday, Murtaza said that according to World Health Organization (WHO), forty percent of approved pharmaceutical products in use are derived from natural substances which highlights the vital importance and sustainability of the homeopathic system of treatment. Introducing the National Council for Homeopathy, he said that the council is a Federal government organization that is dedicated to promoting the homeopathic system of treatment, regulating colleges, registering practitioners, and ensuring adherence to a code of conduct. Murtaza noted that several pricing matters were pending with the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP), leading to high prices for various medicines. He emphasized that the regularization of these medicines under DRAP would make homeopathic treatment more effective and affordable. In response to a question, Murtaza stated that homeopathic practitioners are not

allowed to provide medications in blank covers, and patients should be informed about the treatment and prescribed medicines. He mentioned the collaboration between the council and healthcare commissions to regulate the practice of homeopathy. He highlighted that healthcare commissions have established minimum standards of delivery, which state that practitioners cannot provide medicines to patients without a prescription and must disclose the name of the medicine. Approximately 170,000 homeopathic doctors are registered with the council, but only around 40,000 are actively practicing, he said adding that lack of passion for the healthcare system and the difficulty some individuals face in practicing homeopathy. Murtaza explained that the fundamental philosophy of homeopathy requires a life-long commitment which differs from conventional treatment methods. He mentioned that pharmaceutical companies traditionally support doctors with research and brands, while homeopathic doctors rely on symptoms to determine appropriate treatments. He noted that the same health issue might require different medicines in the homeopathic system of treatment.

192 Pakistani students get scholarships in European universities

ISLAMABAD (APP): The highest number of 192 Pakistani students have received scholarships to study in European universities under the EU's flagship Erasmus Mundus Joint Master scholarships programme including 103 men and 89 women during the current year. The European Union Delegation to Pakistan hosted a pre-departure event to celebrate the achievement of the recipients of the scholarship, said a news release. This is the second year in a row that Pakistan ranked top in the world for the number of scholarships awarded and remained in the lead in terms of scholarship applications. In his welcome remarks, EU Chargé d'Affaires a.i. Thomas Seiler said, "Today we con-

gratulate the young men and women who will embark on an educational and cultural journey through the Erasmus+ programme over the coming months. I am sure that they will return with strong knowledge and rich experiences, and their exposure to European universities will also contribute to the development of Pakistan." The EU Chargé d'Affaires a.i. further added, "The results of the scholarship's selection demonstrate that Pakistani students are well prepared and that the Pakistani universities provide them with the necessary skills to compete at the global level." He added that he is particularly pleased to see more students from Pakistan have accessed the Erasmus+ programme.

National Front pays tribute to 13th July martyrs

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Jammu Kashmir National Front while paying tributes to the martyrs of 13th July has said that Kashmiris' liberation struggle was awash with tales of bravery and courage. In a statement received here, the National Front spokesman said that the 13th of July is an important milestone in the history of Kashmiris' resistance against oppressors. "Martyrs are the pride of our nation", he said adding that the Kashmiri nation owes a debt of gratitude to all those brave hearts who sacrificed their precious lives for the noble cause. Referring to

Kashmiris' decades-old struggle to rid their motherland of foreigners, he said, "Kashmiri are a resilient nation with an enviable history of fighting against oppressors and usurpers". He said that Indian rulers must bear in mind that Kashmiris could not be conquered by the dint of force. "Despite using all means of oppression and suppression the successive Indian governments have miserably failed to suppress the Kashmiris' liberation struggle and their urge for freedom", he said, adding that the day was not far when Kashmiris' sacrifice would reach to fruition.

Mariyum Aurangzeb announces launch of regional transmission by PTV Peshawar Center

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb said on Wednesday that she was glad to announce launch of regional transmission by Pakistan Television. In a tweet, she said that PTV Peshawar Centre would run its transmission seven day a week round the clock. She said the transmission was available in all local languages and dialects of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and was also available on satellite to make it accessible for overseas Pakistanis. The minister

said start of this initiative marked the fulfillment of a long standing demand of the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa since the inception of PTV National. She said this transmission provided a platform for information, education and infotainment content addressing local issues and celebrating rich and vibrant culture and heritage of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It would also help develop a local media ecosystem which would better serve the interests of local communities, she maintained.

DC terms sectarian harmony need of hour

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Deputy Commissioner Mansoor Arshad has said that sectarian harmony and solidarity were the need of the hour. He stated this during a meeting with Shia leaders and caretakers of different Thallas held here in his office which was also attended by District Police Officer (DPO) Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani. The deputy commissioner said that Dera Ismail Khan belongs to its residents. He said the solidarity and unity among the residents was needed which was shown by their forefathers in the past. During the meeting, various problems and complaints were pointed out on behalf of Shia leaders and caretakers of Thallas. They said that not only the electricity unannounced loadshedding but also the tripping and low voltage should be

avoided during Ashura. Moreover, they said the presence of doctors along with the other staff in the hospitals should be ensured. The ambulances should be provided for the field so that in case of any untoward incident, immediate treatment could be ensured on the spot. Besides, the facility of ambulances should also be provided in remote areas. It was further said that along with the cleaning of the drains, slabs should also be placed to cover the big drains in time so that the flow of water could be maintained in case of rain. Similarly, the cleanliness of procession routes should be ensured and tents should be installed at suitable distances on the routes for shade where clean drinking water should also be made available. Besides, street lights also be installed on these routes.

CTP imposes fine of Rs 6,488,350; issued 19,159 challan tickets over traffic rules violations

RAWALPINDI (APP): City Traffic Police (CTP) Rawalpindi had issued 19,159 challan tickets and imposed a fine of Rs 6,488,350 over violations of traffic rules during the last ten days. Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Taimoor Khan while talking to APP informed that 10,946 challan tickets were issued to motorcyclists without helmets while FIRs were registered against ten drivers for violating traffic rules. He added that permits for nine vehicles were cancelled while

479 challan tickets were issued for one-way violations. Similarly, the CTO informed that 551 challan tickets were issued to vehicles bearing tinted glasses while 359 challan tickets were issued for wrong parking. Taimoor said that challan tickets were issued to 82 vehicles for emitting smoke. He said all available resources were being used to ensure the safety of road users and to keep the highways free from accidents, adding no negligence will be tolerated.

Farmers advised to complete sesame cultivation in July

FAISALABAD (APP): The agriculture experts advised farmers to start cultivation of sesame (Til) immediately and complete it during July as late sowing can hamper production. A spokesman for the Agriculture (Extension) Department told APP here on Wednesday that sesame was playing a vital role in catering domestic food requirements as sesame was an excellent source of manga-

nese and calcium which had good effects for healthy growth of bones. He said that the sesame seeds were also a high source of protein, vitamin, dietary fiber, phosphorous, iron, zinc, etc. Therefore, farmers should cultivate sesame crop over maximum space of their lands because it would also play a dynamic role in mitigating financial constraints of growers due to its attractive market value.

Four soldiers embrace martyrdom, three terrorists killed in Zhob Garrison attack

RAWALPINDI (APP): Four soldiers of Pakistan Army on Wednesday embraced martyrdom while bravely thwarting a terrorist attack on Zhob Garrison in Northern Balochistan and killed three heavily armed terrorists during the ensuing fire exchange whereas another five soldiers were critically injured. According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR),

on July 12, in early hours of the morning, a group of terrorists launched a dastardly attack on Zhob Garrison in Northern Balochistan. However, the initial attempt of the terrorists to sneak into the facility was checked by the soldiers on duty. In ensuing heavy exchange of fire, the terrorists were contained into a small area at the boundary. A clearance operation by

the security forces was underway to apprehend the remaining two terrorists as well, the Military media wing said. The four martyred soldiers had embraced, Shahadat (martyrdom), during the clearance operation. "The Security Forces remain determined to thwart all such ghastly attempts at destroying peace of Balochistan and Pakistan," the ISPR vowed.

Woman dies after being hit by bus

MULTAN (APP): A woman was crushed to death after hitting by a passenger bus while crossing the road near Hassan Sawali Muzaffargarh road. According to Rescue officials, a woman named Hajira Bibi w/o Mushtaq resident of Hassan Sawali Muzaffargarh road was crossing the road when a passenger bus hit her. As a result, she sustained serious injuries and died on the spot. The heirs refused to shift the body to Nishtar hospital. The local police were informed about the incident.

Rapist of mentally retarded girl arrested

KASUR (APP): Kot Radha Kishan police claimed on Wednesday to have arrested a man on the charge of raping a mentally retarded teenage girl in Mazhar colony. On the report of Shazia Bibi, the mother of victim Neelam, DPO Kasur Tariq Aziz Sandhu ordered the police to arrest the accused at the earliest. Taking action, the police have arrested the accused identified as Sahel aka Monti after registering a case. The victim has been shifted to hospital for legal medico report. Further investigation was underway.

LDA one window cell to work in two shifts

LAHORE (APP): One window cell of the Lahore Development Authority (LDA) will now work in two shifts and two directors have been appointed to improve performance and timely execution of complaints. After the visit of the chief minister to the LDA, the commissioner and DG LDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa called a meeting and removed the Director One Window Cell. Timings of the cell has been changed from 9am to 9pm and citizens will now be able to avail LDA related services till 9pm. The DG directed the additional DG Housing to monitor performance of officers and issues related to the cell.

Dr Saeed elected chairman YDA

SARGODHA (APP): Election of the Young Doctors Association (YDA) was held in Dr Faisal Masood Teaching hospital here on Wednesday. According to results, Dr Hafiz Osama bin Saeed has been elected as chairman while Dr Shah Hussain Waseem was elected as general secretary. It is worth mentioning that the office bearers have been elected for six months.

Two robbers arrested

FAISALABAD (APP): Nishatabad police arrested two members of a gang involved in dacoity and highway robberies. Police said on Wednesday that weapons, cell phones, two motorcycles and cash were recovered from them. A team headed by SHO Mian Arasalan conducted a raid near Chak No 120-JB, Pull Baghwala and arrested Rafaqat Maseih and Ahmed while two others fled away.

Police recover TikTokers from Katcha area

SUKKUR (APP): Kashmir-Kandhkot Police on Wednesday claimed to have recovered three TikTok dancing girls from the Katcha area of Garhi Tegho, district Kashmir-Kandhkot. According to SSP Kashmir-Kandhkot Irfan Samo, during an operation by the Police in Garhi Tegho in the Katcha area, the kidnappers after freeing three dancer girls managed to escape.

Muharram teaches lessons of tolerance, patience, brotherhood

MULTAN (APP): Chairman Ruet e Hlal Committee Moulana Abdul Khabir Azad said Muharram ul Haram illustrated us lessons of tolerance, patience, and brotherhood. Addressing to a peace committee meeting arranged here Tuesday, he said we all must have to play a coherent role to maintain peace in the society in Muharram. He said the Punjab government was seeking cooperation from Ulema of all schools of thought. "We will get the message of Pakistan a success in the world," he remarked. Commissioner Amir Khattak said on the occasion that the Punjab gov-

ernment conferred all-out authority upon the district administration to hold peace in its jurisdiction. He said Municipal Corporation was tasked to repair routes of the holy processions. WASA is directed to change the cover of drainages as per need, he said. Amir Khattak said it was being written to the authority concerned to avoid load-shedding with voltages reduction on the 9th and 10th of Muharram. Meanwhile as per the statement issued by the local police, there would be 911 processions coupled with 3182 public meetings held both on the 9th and 10th of Muharram.

DC visits NADRA office, directs for immediate resolution of citizens' issues

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) South Waziristan Upper Ashfaq Khan directed the authorities concerned of the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) to ensure immediate resolution of the citizens' problems. He stated this during a surprise visit to the NADRA office South Waziristan Upper situated in Tank. On this occasion, the DC was accompanied by Assistant Commissioner Ladha Anees ur Rehman. Ashfaq listened to the problems of the people present there and asked

the Assistant Director NADRA to resolve the problems of them immediately. Similarly, the women who came there apprised the deputy commissioner about the difficulties being faced by them, on which the DC called the female staff of the office and get the token process started immediately. He also directed that women's problems should be resolved on priority. The deputy commissioner issued instructions to the Assistant Director NADRA to ensure provision of all possible facilities for citizens at his office.

30 vehicles impounded over illegal LPG cylinder use

MULTAN (APP): District administration launched a crackdown against commercial vehicles with illegal LPG cylinders and impounded 30 vehicles. Secretary Regional Transport Authority (RTA) Rana Mohsin raided a general bus stand and Vehari Chowk and removed illegal cylinders from the vehicles and

took them into custody. A fine of Rs 100000 was also imposed on violators. Moshin said that there would be no permission for installing LPG cylinders into vehicles for the safety of the passengers. He said that strict action would be taken over the violation of routes and overcharging from passengers.

PM launches Pakistan Endowment Fund for Education, incorporation of coding constitution in curriculum

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday launched the Pakistan Endowment Fund for Education along with incorporation of computer coding and constitutional studies in the National Curriculum. Addressing the launching ceremony, he said Rs 14 billion had been fixed for the programme for next four years out of which Rs 3 billion would be spent during current fiscal year. He expressed his wish to continue this project forever with increased funding to provide opportunities of higher education to maximum deserving students. "Our government's tenure is going to end in August and I pray that the next elected government

should give top priority to the education sector", he said adding that funding for this programme should be enhanced up to Rs 140 billion for next 10 years. He recalled that he, as Chief Minister Punjab launched the Punjab Education Endowment Fund (PEEF) in 2008 with an annual allocation of Rs 2 billion. The prime minister said over 400,000 students benefited from this Fund who were now serving the country in different professions. He said promotion of education was not aimed at politics but he consider it as worship. He vowed to pay special focus on the less developed areas of the country where the young people could not complete their studies due to lack of resources.

Interior Minister condemns terrorist attack in Balochistan's Zhob Cantt

ISLAMABAD (APP): Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah on Wednesday strongly condemned the terrorist attack in Zhob Cantt. Sanaullah in a news statement said the courageous personnel of the security forces sacrificed their lives to prevent a major catastrophe and successfully sent three terrorists

to their ultimate fate. "I pray for the elevation of the security personnel who embraced martyrdom," stated the Interior Minister. "We will not rest until terrorism is completely eradicated," he added. The interior minister said that the sacrifices of our forces will forever be remembered in history.

President asks bank to refund lost amount, apologize to fraud victim

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi has rejected a representation filed by Bank Alfalah Ltd (BAFL) against the decision of Banking Mohtasib directing it to send an apology to a customer for enabling online transaction/payment system on his credit card without his consent and neglecting his timely complaint about a disputed transaction. He said that when Internet Banking Facility was provided by a bank to its customers, it was incumbent upon the bank to educate its customers about its pros and cons. He also directed

BAFL to refund the lost amount of Rs 66,850 along with the profit to the customer. The President gave these remarks while deciding upon a case wherein Muhammad Yar (the complainant) had filed a complaint before the Banking Mohtasib stating that he had a Bank Alfalah Credit Card and a scam of Rs.66,850/- occurred on his Credit Card when his card was used at Noon-e-Commerce solution. He informed the bank that he had not done this transaction and requested to stop this online transaction/payment.

Egypt announces sale of \$1.9bn worth of state assets

CAIRO (Agencies): Egypt has signed contracts to sell stakes in state assets worth a total of \$1.9 billion as part of a program to boost the private sector and raise scarce hard currency, Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly said on Tuesday. The stake sales are seen as crucial to Egypt's chances of easing prolonged pressure on the Egyptian pound, attracting badly needed dollars, and launching economic reforms under a \$3 billion International Monetary Fund loan program. Of the \$1.9 billion, \$1.65 billion would be paid



in foreign currency, Madbouly said. The government had a target of raising \$2 billion from stake sales by the end of June, but its efforts faced delays in recent months, driving down the value of the pound on the parallel

market. The pound has lost about half its value against the dollar since early last year at the official exchange rate and inflation is at record highs. The new contracts include a deal to sell minority stakes in three oil and petrochemical sector companies to Abu Dhabi sovereign wealth fund ADQ for \$800 million, a deal to raise \$700 million by offering capital in a portfolio of hotels, and a deal for a 31 percent stake in Ezz Dekheila IRAX.CA steel company worth \$241 million, said Planning Minister Hala El-Said.

Saudi Arabia funds \$20m electricity project in Rwanda

RIYADH (Agencies): Saudi Arabia is providing a soft loan of \$20 million to fund an electricity project in Rwanda that would help boost the country's social and economic development, the Saudi Press Agency reported on Tuesday. The agreement was signed between the Saudi Fund for Development's CEO Sultan Al-Marshad and Rwanda's Minister of Finance and Economic Planning Ndagijimana Uzziel in the capital, Kigali. The aim is to build



a network of medium- and low-voltage lines and power distribution transformers for homes and government social services in Rwanda's Kamonyi region. It is expected that

more than 60,000 people in the African country will benefit from the electricity provision. It would also enhance various job creation projects in agriculture and other industries. During the signing ceremony, Al-Marshad said the project would improve Rwanda's electricity infrastructure and enhance sustainable social and economic development in the country. He said the SFD has been working effectively with Rwanda for the past 47 years.

Countries extend digital tax freeze until 2024

PARIS (Agencies): With the exception of Canada, countries with digital services taxes have agreed to hold off applying them for at least another year as a global multinationals tax deal to replace them was pushed back, the OECD said on Wednesday. More than 140 countries were supposed to start implementing next year a 2021 deal overhauling decades-old rules on how governments tax multinationals that are widely considered to be outdated as digital giants like



Apple or Amazon can book profits in low-tax countries. The first part of the two-pillar deal aims to reallocate taxing rights on about US\$200 billion in profits from the biggest and

most profitable multinationals to the countries where their sales occur. The more than 30 governments that have or plan national digital services taxes had agreed to put them on ice under a standstill clause until the end of this year or drop them altogether once the first pillar takes shape. The second pillar calls on governments to put an end to tax competition between governments to attract investment by setting a global minimum corporate tax rate of 15% from next year.

BOE says UK economy resilient to higher rates

LONDON (Agencies): The Bank of England said on Wednesday that Britain's economy was proving resilient to the risks posed by higher interest rates, although it would take time for the full impact to feed through. "The proportion of households with high debt service ratios ... has increased and is expected to continue to do so through 2023. But it is projected to remain some way below the historic peak reached in 2007," the BOE said



in its half-yearly Financial Stability Report. The BOE said households were more affected by higher interest rates than banks, while the corporate

sector remained "broadly resilient." "Nevertheless, higher financing costs are likely to put pressure on some smaller or highly leveraged firms," it added. The BOE added that following the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank, it was working with Britain's finance ministry to ensure that there were options to smoothly wind up small banks which were exempt from some requirements applying to larger ones.

AXA mulls sale of reinsurance arm to cut disaster risk

NEW YORK (Agencies): One of the world's top insurers is mulling offloading its property reinsurance business in a bid to cut its exposure to natural disasters like hurricanes, according to three people familiar with the matter. French insurer AXA SA has been discussing strategic options for its XL Re unit, including a possible private sale or stock market

listing, said the people, who spoke on condition of anonymity. The discussions, described by the sources as preliminary in nature and which may not ultimately lead to a transaction, come two years after the business was reported to have attracted interest from French mutual insurer Covea. AXA declined to comment. Reinsurers take on some of the risks

that primary insurers underwrite in exchange for compensation. The rewards for providing cover for natural catastrophes can be high, but so can the losses. Events such as Hurricane Ian last year – the third costliest storm in US history – have prompted some reinsurers to stop this line of business, particularly as climate change makes it harder to evaluate risks.

N. Zealand holds rates, says inflation to fall further

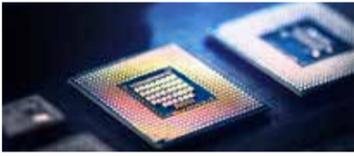
WELLINGTON (Agencies): New Zealand's central bank left its key interest rate unchanged Wednesday and said it expected inflation to ease further in coming months. The decision to keep the official cash rate at 5.5% comes after government figures in June showed the economy had tipped into recession. The Reserve Bank of New Zealand said interest rates were "constraining spending and inflation pressure as anticipated and required". The

freeze will come as a relief to the country's mortgage holders, who have seen their monthly repayments rise rapidly over the past year. Rates would need to "remain at a restrictive level for the foreseeable future" to return inflation to the 1-3% target, the bank added. Central banks around the world have been forced to ramp up interest rates for more than a year as they try to control inflation, which surged as economies reopened from Covid lockdowns

and in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The move gave stocks a tiny boost, with the benchmark NZX50 index edging up in the minutes after the announcement, while even the local dollar staged a very small recovery against the US dollar. Policymakers raise rates to make borrowing more expensive, reducing the buying power and demand of consumers and businesses, which usually pushes prices down.

Taiwan chip exports drop 21% in inventory clear-out

TAIPEI (Agencies): Taiwan's exports of integrated circuit chips dropped for a sixth consecutive month in June on slowing global demand. Exports decreased 20.8% from a year earlier to a four-month low of US\$12.6 billion, according to data from Taiwan's ministry of finance. The island is home to Apple Inc and Nvidia Corp's go-to chipmaker, Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co, along with a coterie of smaller but essential chip industry players. The annual



decline was the largest since March 2009, partly amplified by a high base last June. "The demand for integrated circuits continues to be weak," the finance ministry said in a statement accompanying the data, as sticky inflation and

continuous rate hikes by central banks have tapered the global economy. Consumer tech firms have spent much of this year working through an inventory glut, which is expected to weigh on sales for the likes of TSMC through at least the end of the year. Sales of smartphones have yet to resume growth after a protracted slump in 2022, while PC and laptop makers also struggle to compel new purchases and continue to see double-digit declines.

Thomson Medical buys Vietnam's top private hospital

SINGAPORE (Agencies): Thomson Medical Group Ltd has agreed to buy FV Hospital for as much as US\$381.4 million, marking the biggest-ever healthcare deal in Vietnam. The Singapore-listed company will pay about US\$359.6 million upfront and another US\$21.8 million

should FV Hospital meet certain performance milestones, it said in a press release Wednesday. The firm will fund the deal with internal resources as well as debt. Bloomberg News reported last month that Thomson Medical was in advanced talks to acquire the business from

Quadria Capital after beating out rival bidders. "FV Hospital provides a strategic foothold for us in Vietnam and a gateway to grow and focus on future investments in this fast-growing market," Kiat Lim, Thomson Medical's executive vice chairman, said in the statement.

IMF's Georgieva expects global growth around 3% for next 5 years

WASHINGTON (Agencies): International Monetary Fund Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said on Tuesday that the IMF expects global growth of around 3 percent annually for the next five years, well below historical averages of about 3.8 percent, which may pressure capital flows. In opening remarks at an IMF economics lecture, Georgieva said that governments, particularly in emerging markets, will need to tighten fiscal policy to keep debt under



control and help inflation. They also will face further tightening of financial conditions as inflation persists, and "there may be impact on capital flows," she said.

Dollar slides, pound at 15-month high ahead of US CPI

SINGAPORE (Agencies): The dollar sank to a two-month low against its major peers on Wednesday in the lead-up to a key US inflation reading, while sterling scaled a 15-month top on expectations the Bank of England (BOE) has further to go in raising rates. US inflation data is due later on Wednesday, with expectations core consumer prices rose 5% on an annual basis in June. The figures should also provide further clarity on the Federal Reserve's progress in its fight against inflation. Ahead of the release, the US dollar fell to a two-month low of 101.45 against a basket



of currencies, extending its losses from the start of the week after Fed officials said the central bank was nearing the end of its current monetary policy tightening cycle. The euro rose 0.07% to US\$1.1018, flirting near Tuesday's two-month high of US\$1.1027.

Canada probes Nike over alleged use of forced Uyghur labour

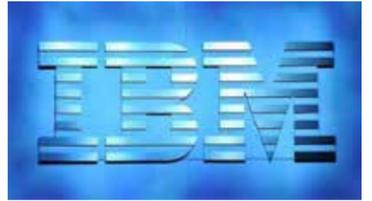
MONTREAL (Agencies): Sporting giant Nike and mining company Dynasty Gold are being investigated in Canada over allegations they used forced labour from China's Uyghur minority, a Canadian watchdog announced yesterday. The companies are both "alleged to have or have had supply chains or operations in the People's Republic of China identified as using or benefitting from the use of Uyghur forced labour," a statement from the Canadian ombudsman for Responsible Enterprise said. The investigations were announced after a coalition of 28 civil society organisations filed several complaints in June last year about the overseas activities



of the two Canadian companies, according to the statement. Nike Canada is suspected of having "supply relationships with Chinese companies identified as using or benefitting from the use of Uyghur forced labour. Nike maintains that they no longer have ties with these companies and provided information on their due diligence practices," the statement said.

IBM mulls use of own AI chip to lower costs

SAN FRANCISCO (Agencies): International Business Machines (IBM) is considering the use of artificial intelligence (AI) chips that it designed in-house to lower the costs of operating a cloud computing service it made widely available this week, an executive said yesterday. In an interview with Reuters at a semiconductor conference in San Francisco, Mukesh Khare, general manager of IBM Semiconductors, said the company is contemplating using a chip called the Artificial Intelligence Unit as part of its new watsonx cloud service. IBM is hoping to take advantage of the boom in generative AI technologies that can



write human-like text more than a decade after Watson, its first major AI system, failed to gain market traction. One of the barriers the old Watson system faced was high costs, which IBM is hoping to address this time. Khare said using its own chips could lower cloud service costs because they are very power-efficient.

UK regulator reconsiders Microsoft-Activision Blizzard deal

LONDON (Agencies): The UK's antitrust regulator said it was open to Microsoft changing its acquisition of Activision Blizzard to address its concerns that blocked the deal in April after a US court ruled yesterday that the US\$69 billion deal could go ahead. Microsoft responded by saying it was considering how the transaction might be modified to address concerns made by the UK's Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), the first regulator to block the deal. All sides said they had agreed to ask the UK court due to hear Microsoft's appeal later this month to put it on hold while they worked on new proposals. The deal to buy the "Call



of Duty" maker is the largest ever for Microsoft and the biggest in videogame history. The CMA became the first major antitrust regulator to block the deal in April, citing concerns about competition in the nascent cloud gaming market. Both companies reacted furiously to the decision, with Microsoft saying it "had shaken confidence" in the UK as a destination for tech businesses.

Tata nears deal to become first Indian iPhone maker

NEW DELHI (Agencies): Tata Group, India's largest conglomerate, is close to an agreement to acquire an Apple Inc supplier's factory as soon as August, marking the first time a local company would move into the assembly of iPhones, according to people familiar with the matter. A takeover of the Wistron Corp factory in southern Karnataka state, potentially valued at more than US\$600 million, would cap about a year of negotiations, said the people, asking not to be named as the matter is private. The facility employs more than 10,000 workers,



who assemble the latest iPhone 14 model. Wistron has committed to ship iPhones worth at least US\$1.8 billion from the factory in the fiscal year through March 2024 to win state-backed financial incentives, the people said. It also planned to triple the plant's workforce by next year.

Ashwin's four wickets put West Indies in deep trouble

Roseau, Dominica (AFP/APP): Ravichandran Ashwin was one wicket away from another five-wicket innings haul with the West Indies stumbling to 137 for eight at tea on the first day of the opening Test against India in Dominica on Wednesday. Omitted for the World Test Championship final against Australia a month earlier, the 36-year-old spinner added the scalps of Alzarri Joseph and debutant Alick Athanaze in the afternoon session to improve his figures to four for 49. He had earlier removed openers Tegenarine Chanderpaul and Kraigg Brathwaite having been brought into the attack after just 40 minutes' play on what looked then like a placid pitch offering little assistance for the faster bowlers. Athanaze, the top scorer with 47, impressed with his



composure and shot-making but the 24-year-old miscued an attempted pull to offer a simple catch to Shardul Thakur at midwicket to be the last wicket to fall in another disappointing session of play for the home side. Ashwin's spin partner, Ravindra Jadeja, got the wickets tumbling again shortly after lunch when he had wicketkeeper-batsman Joshua da Silva caught behind shortly after lunch.

It was his second wicket in quick succession following the demise of Jermaine Blackwood at the end of the morning session via a superb leaping catch by Mohammed Siraj at mid-off. Siraj then broke the only meaningful partnership of the innings so far, inducing Jason Holder into a pull for Thakur to take the catch at deep square leg and end a stand worth 41 for the sixth wicket. Thakur also had his share of success with the ball in the morning, disposing of Raymon Reifer via a low catch to wicketkeeper Ishan Kishan, whose glove work has generally been less than accomplished. Kishan is one of two Indian debutants, the other being Yashasvi Jaiswal, who will open the batting with captain Rohit Sharma in the first match of this two-Test series.

Abdul Latif Jameel Motors signs up as strategic partner of Gamers8 esports event in Riyadh

RIYADH (Agencies): The Saudi Esports Federation and Abdul Latif Jameel Motors have signed an agreement for the company, the Kingdom's authorized Toyota dealership, to become a strategic partner of this summer's Gamers8: The Land of Heroes event. The partnership will include showcases of innovative technologies during an event that is described as the world's biggest gaming and esports festival, which began on July 6 and continues for eight weeks at Boulevard Riyadh City. Organized by the federation, Gamers8: The Land of Heroes features elite video game tournaments, in addition to live concerts from major global, regional and local musical acts, and many other activities and attractions. The total prize pool for the competitions during the event is \$45 million, which is triple that of last year's inaugural Gamers8. The festival will conclude with the Next World Forum, a gaming and esports convention at the Four Seasons Hotel Riyadh at Kingdom Center on Aug. 30 and 31. "The Saudi Esports Federation is delighted to confirm Abdul Latif Jameel Motors as a strategic partner for Gamers8: The Land of Heroes," said Omar Batterjee, the federation's director of corporate communications and public relations. "Welcoming such an illustrious company and leading entity from Saudi Arabia's automotive sector is a testament not only to the remarkable evolution of Gamers8 but also to the willingness of our Kingdom's wider business community to join us on our



mission to break new barriers in the world of gaming and esports "We are incredibly excited to embark on this collaboration journey alongside Abdul Latif Jameel Motors. We believe our combined efforts and activities on the ground will contribute greatly to the influence, impact and success of our second season, as well as enhance cooperation between our two industries, which will be central to the Kingdom's sustained economic growth and development in the years ahead." Abdul Latif Jameel Motors said it aims to engage with a young audience during the event through unique and fun activities, while also promoting the GR MENA Cup, the final regional stage ahead of the GR GT Cup, an esports motor racing tournament organized by Toyota. The GR

MENA Cup will take place in October in Jordan, during which digital racers from the region will compete for a place at the GR GT Cup in November in Japan. "This groundbreaking partnership aligns with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 as it supports the Quality of Life Program," said Munir Khoja, managing director of marketing communication at Abdul Latif Jameel Motors. "The agreement also signifies the convergence of automotive excellence and esports. We look forward to finding opportunities to engage with the youth of Saudi through our vehicles while creating unique and exciting experiences (and) together, we embark on a journey that redefines the boundaries of gaming and mobility, paving the way for a new era of possibilities."

Wimbledon 2023 semi-finals: Elina Svitolina hopes to continue 'crazy' run

LONDON (Agencies): Ukrainian Elina Svitolina says it is "crazy" she is in the Wimbledon semi-finals nine months after giving birth and amid the mental impact of the war in her homeland. The 28-year-old faces Czech player Marketa Vondrousova on Thursday. Svitolina gave birth in October and returned to the WTA Tour three months ago, hoping to "bring a little happiness" to the people of Ukraine. "I know that lots of people back in Ukraine are watching," Svitolina said. "It definitely means a lot." Svitolina and Vondrousova will open play on Centre Court from 13:30 BST. They will be followed by last year's runner-up Ons Jabeur, who faces Australian Open champion Aryna Sabalenka. Svitolina, who has never won a Grand Slam, knocked out world number one Iga Swiatek in the quarter-finals. She



reached the quarter-finals of the French Open last month in her first Grand Slam appearance since giving birth. She has beaten four major champions - Venus Williams, Sofia Kenin, Victoria Azarenka and Swiatek - on her way to the last four at Wimbledon. But, asked if she could win the tournament, she said: "You crazy?! "I don't think so much about it - well, until you told me this. I take one match at a time."

The Ashes: England bowler Kate Cross says taking away Australia's 'aura' has been key to success

LONDON (Agencies): Taking the "aura" away from world champions Australia has been pivotal in England's Ashes turnaround, says Kate Cross. England won the first one-day international of the multi-format series by two wickets on Wednesday to level the points-based series at 6-6 with two games to play. The visitors - regarded by many as one of sport's greatest ever teams - only need to win one more match to retain the Ashes, but have now lost three consecutive games after previously taking a commanding six-point lead. England slipped to 235-8 in pursuit of 264 before Cross' arrival at the crease with skipper Heather Knight, who finished unbeaten on 75 to complete the stunning fight-back. "I was just thinking to myself, 'I do not want to lose this game' - I have seen us lose too many Ashes," said Cross, who struck an unbeaten 19 from number 10 as England achieved their highest-ever ODI run chase in Bristol.



"I thought I'd channel my inner Chris Woakes and show number 10s can bat. "We know we have still got a lot of work to do - they are the best team in the world, but we are clinging on." World champions Australia were previously on a remarkable run of 41 wins from their last 42 ODIs, but have been rattled by England's attacking approach in the white-ball series so far. And Cross says that focusing on their own game rather than Australia's record is key to slowly breaking down the visitors' stranglehold on world cricket.

Tunisia's Ons Jabeur beats Elena Rybakina to reach Wimbledon semi-final

WIMBLEDON, London (Agencies): Ons Jabeur gained revenge for her defeat in last year's Wimbledon final on Wednesday, coming from behind to beat Elena Rybakina and reach the last four. In a repeat of the 2022 title match, the Tunisian sixth seed beat her third-ranked opponent 6-7 (5/7), 6-4, 6-1 on Centre Court. The 28-year-old will face Belarusian second seed Aryna Sabalenka for a place in Saturday's final at the All England Club. "I'm very happy with

the performance — a lot of emotion out there, especially playing someone that serves really well," she said. "It's frustrating to return but I'm glad I did everything, shouted, got angry, then got calm and focused and hopefully I can manage my emotions like this for the next two matches." Rybakina was first to pounce, breaking to love in the fourth game when Jabeur went wide with a backhand but the Tunisian hit back immediately.

Real Madrid coach Ancelotti to face tax evasion trial

BARCELONA (Agencies): Carlo Ancelotti will stand trial for tax fraud after the Real Madrid coach allegedly failed to declare image rights earnings in 2014 to the Spanish tax office. A Spanish judge said Ancelotti had "acknowledged" the actions which deprived the country's treasury of 386,361 euros (\$428,000), in a court document seen by AFP on Wednesday. "It is evident that there are sufficient indications to consider the deeds under investigation could constitute an alleged offense against the public treasury," said the judge in her findings. Ancelotti had declared his



earnings as Real Madrid coach in the 2014 tax year but not earnings from his image rights or other related income, according to the accusations

by the Spanish tax office. The court official dismissed a similar complaint about Ancelotti's tax return from 2015, which he filed while a tax resident in the United Kingdom. The Italian, 64, took over at Real Madrid in 2013, before leaving in May 2015, before being appointed at Bayern Munich the following year. Ancelotti later managed Napoli and Everton before returning to Real Madrid in 2021, where he has one year left on his contract. The veteran coach has agreed to coach the Brazil national team from June 2024 onwards, the country's federation said earlier in July.

Lionel Messi arrives in Florida as David Beckham helps paint mural of Inter Miami's new star

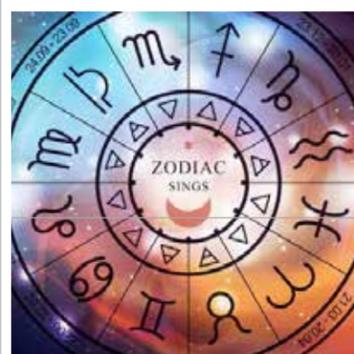
MIAMI (Agencies): Lionel Messi's move to Inter Miami has been one of the hottest topics throughout soccer's summer transfer window and it appears he is one step closer to making his Miami debut. The Argentine has swapped the streets of Paris for South Beach and has now finally arrived in his new footballing home ahead of the highly anticipated move. Messi was spotted landing in South Florida on Tuesday, along with his family, as the deal looks closer to being officially confirmed. The 2022 World Cup winner will also be greeted by a huge mural of himself as he makes his way through Miami - which was helped along by Inter Miami co-owner David Beckham. In a series of Instagram stories, Victoria Beckham shared clips of the mural, including one of husband David helping to create the piece of art alongside Argentine artist Maximiliano Bagnasco. "So, I think that David has done a really good job of painting Messi



here in Miami. We've only been here a few days and he has got straight to it," Victoria said on Instagram. "And look, it's massive. Is there nothing that David Beckham can't do? He is up there, painting away, I'm impressed." Beckham has not tried to hide his excitement around the signing of the seven-time Ballon d'Or winner and recently touched on the magnitude of the move. "I have always said from the word go that if I had the opportunity to bring the best players in the game to Miami, at whatever

time of their careers, I would do that. I have always made that commitment to our fans," the soccer megastar told The Athletic. "So, when I hear that one of the best players — if not the best player — who has won everything in the game, who is still a great player, still young and still doing what he's doing, wants to play for my team, it's a massive moment for us." It isn't just Beck's who is excited about Messi's arrival with anticipation around the forward's transfer reaching a fever pitch across the US.

DAILY HOROSCOPE: JULY 13, 2023



– It's a general reading which may differ from person to person because of time date and year.
 – **ARIES:** Clear communication is vital today, and it's pretty easy if you take your time with it! Of course, sometimes you just want to speak quickly, but you should still be able to spit it out.
 – **TAURUS:** You're not proceeding with your usual caution today, and you might find yourself farther out on a limb than usual. This is one of those times when great risk can potentially bring great reward.
 – **GEMINI:** You're in motion all day long, or at least all through the most interesting parts of it. Your energy is great, and you should find that the people you meet are a little more interesting than usual.
 – **CANCER:** You've got a deep, internal conversation going on today, and you may just be eavesdropping! The various aspects of your personality are all arguing over some seemingly small issue.
 – **LEO:** Your mind is racing today, but that doesn't mean that you can't still take care of business. If you're facing

any big decisions, though, it could be tough for you to think through all the options.
 – **VIRGO:** You and your coworkers need to think things through today. There are issues that still need resolution. It might be a good time to take the lead, but accept the first good idea that comes up.
 – **LIBRA:** You're full of great energy that's manifesting itself in the mental realm. Maybe you're creating new ideas, maybe you're figuring out finances, but you're having a lot of fun while you do it!
 – **SCORPIO:** You're feeling pretty irritated until you realize what's going on and that it's easy to fix. Once you spot the flaw in the plan, you can set things up differently and get back to the good times.
 – **SAGITTARIUS:** You're the linchpin of a big project at work or a big plan at home, so do your part and make sure that everyone is doing the same. It's a good time to live in the moment and put off planning.
 – **CAPRICORN:** It's important to speak up today even though you may fear getting drowned out by all the other voices. It's a good time to listen carefully to others, but interrupt if it's the only way to be heard.
 – **ACQUARIUS:** Your fresh ideas are spawning lots of good buzz around the workplace or wherever else people are paying attention. It's a really good time to push yourself to the forefront of the conversation.
 – **PISCES:** You're even busier than usual today, but it's mostly good stuff and bringing in new business. You may end up pretty tired by the end of the day, but there's nothing wrong with that!

Strong TVET systems can help countries meet Sustainable Development Goals: ILO

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) systems in many low- and middle-income countries do not match skills and labour market needs and are unprepared to meet the large rise in demand for TVET in the coming years, according to a new joint study by the World Bank, the International Labour Organization (ILO), and UNESCO. The participants of the seminar organized on Wednesday in Islamabad stressed the need to implement, a new joint study by the World Bank, the ILO, and UNESCO which says TVET needs

to adapt to globalization, technological progress, demographic transformation, and climate change. In the context of rapidly changing labour markets and evolving skills needs due to globalization, technological progress, demographic transformation, and climate change, the need for well-performing TVET is even greater to ensure smooth job transitions. This is especially critical as global youth unemployment stands at 16 per cent, much higher than the overall unemployment rate. These averages mask large disparities across countries, particularly in low- and mid-

dle-income countries. However, despite its high potential, training often falls short of expectations in low- and middle-income countries, says the report. This is largely due to difficulties facing learners, unsupported teachers, and weak incentives for providers. "We are witnessing an unprecedented deepening of inequalities within and between countries, a rise in working poverty, significant challenges for youth employment, and a risk of informalization of the formal economy," said Mia Sepo, Assistant Director-General for Jobs and Social Protection at the ILO.

Senator Saifullah Abro Advocates for Enhanced APA Effectiveness at Tehran Working Group



ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Senator Saifullah Abro has made significant contributions during his recent address at the APA Working Group on Statutory Document in Tehran, Iran. He focused on strengthening the effectiveness and institutional capacity of the APA, emphasizing the role of Parliaments in fostering peace. Senator Abro called for collaboration between the APA and other governmental organizations to tackle pressing global issues such as the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change. He stressed the importance of accountability and access to information in implementing APA objectives through national legislation and public policy. Additionally, Senator Abro proposed the establishment of an Asian Parliament to serve as the authoritative voice for Asia. He expressed wholehearted support for APA reforms and encouraged productive discussions to bolster the APA's influence in the region. Previously, Senator Abro underscored the need for legislation against the desecration of holy symbols and a sustainable funding mechanism for the APA. He strongly condemned the recent desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden and called for collective efforts within the APA to foster interfaith harmony and combat xenophobia and Islamophobia. Senator Abro also raised concerns regarding the lack of consensus and progress in APA funding and recommended the involvement of experts to develop a comprehensive funding plan for approval at the upcoming plenary session, aiming to establish a sustainable mechanism for APA budgeting and funding.

Balochistan Govt, UN join hands to strengthen agriculture, livestock, fisheries

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Government of Balochistan (GoB) joined hands with The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) through a Unilateral Trust Fund (UTF) agreement signed at the FAO Office on Wednesday, to mobilize policy support for driving a sectoral development and fostering climate-smart practices in agriculture and fisheries. The collaboration will be implemented through Gwadar - Lasbela Livelihood Support Project (GLLSP-II), a project financed by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) Florence Rolle, FAO Representative in Pakistan, and Rehmat Dashti, Project Director, GLLSP-II signed the agreement. Jointly implemented by GoB the National Rural Support Programme (NRSP), FAO, and the World Food Programme (WFP), the six-year project aims to promote climate-resilient agriculture and livestock farming systems, empower smallholder with knowledge and skills and enable them to build better resilience. FAO will provide technical assistance to the project, which will employ the Farmer Field School (FFS) approach. Through FFS, the project seeks to create an inclusive learning environment that fosters knowledge sharing and skill development among farmers. GLLSP II is committed to promoting gender equality and youth engagement, ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to benefit from the program.

AJK Govt, Turkish NGO sign MoU for cooperation in education

ISLAMABAD (APP): Country Director of Turkish Maarif Foundation Harun Kucukaladagli called on Azad Jammu and Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq at Jammu Kashmir House in the federal metropolis on Wednesday and discussed matters of mutual interests. Maarif Foundation is keen to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the government of Azad Kashmir to extend its educational activities in Azad Jammu Kashmir. Speaking on the occasion, the prime minister while referring to the cordial relationship between Turkiye and Pakistan, said that both countries have been enjoying close ties with each other for several decades. The prime minister specially mentioned Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's remarkable role in promoting Kashmiris' right to self-determination at every international forum and expressed his profound gratitude to the Turkish President for his consistent support of Pakistan's principled stance on the Kashmir issue. Appreciating Maarif Foundation's contribution to imparting quality education to children all across the globe, the PM said that signing MoU with the Foundation would be instrumental in providing quality education to children in Azad Kashmir. He said that the Turkish government has already provided scholarships to a number of university students of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, which has increased their academic abilities. He also hailed the Turkish government for its all-out support to the people of Azad Kashmir during the 2005 earthquake that shook the entire region. On this occasion, Harun Kucukaladagli told the AJK PM that Maarif Foundation has rendered significant services in the field of education worldwide. He said that the foundation was also working to provide quality education in Pakistan and 28 campuses of the foundation were working in ten cities of Pakistan. Harun Kucukaladagli said that the foundation was working in 51 countries and has more than 446 schools around the world in which more than fifty thousand students were studying.

Five more soldiers embrace martyrdom in Zhob Operation, remaining two terrorists killed

RAWALPINDI (Agencies): Five more soldiers embraced martyrdom who got critically injured during clearance after heavily armed terrorists attacked Zhob Garrison in Northern Balochistan on Wednesday. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) confirmed that the clearance operation underway at Zhob Cantt was completed. In total five terrorists were sent to hell during the operation. However, five soldiers who while fighting gallantly got critically injured earlier succumbed to injuries and embraced shahadat taking the



figure to a total of nine, shaheeds, (martyrs). The Security Forces and the nation remain resilient and determined to thwart all such dastardly attempts of the enemy aimed at destroying the peace of Balochistan and Pakistan, the ISPR said.

UK Acting High Commissioner calls on Leader of Opposition in National Assembly

Islamabad (Agencies): Islamabad: 12th July 2023; Leader of Opposition in National Assembly Raja Riaz Ahmed said that international community must intervene to resolve Kashmir issue as per UNO resolutions. He also said that abrogating constitutional status of Kashmir is great injustice and international community should take cognizant to the plight of Kashmiri people. He also said that Pakistan and UK enjoys cordial relations based upon mutual interests and commonality of views. He expressed these views during his meeting with UK Acting High Commissioner in Pakistan Ms. Zoe Ware in Parliament House Islamabad today. Leader of Opposition Raja Riaz Ahmed said that Pakistan values high its ties with UK. He also said that contesting elections

is right of every political party and no political party should be banned. Furthermore, he also strongly condemned the 9th May vandalism and demanded that all those involved in anti state activities must be brought to justice. He also said that constitution ensures all fundamental rights including Right of Freedom of Speech. He also berated about process of choosing next caretaker Prime Minister. UK Acting High Commissioner in Pakistan Ms Zoe Ware said that UK and Pakistan enjoys cordial relations based upon trade. She also expressed that UK stance on Kashmir is unchanged and Participating in G-20 in illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir was to promote tourism. She said that UK would continue to support Pakistan in its endeavours for socio-economic development.

NCSW, UNFPA host meeting to strengthen provincial commissions

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) in collaboration with UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund), hosted an event 'Strengthening Provincial Commissions on the Status of Women and Building Synergies' on Wednesday. Provincial Commissions on the Status of Women (PCSWs) from every province, including Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Jammu & Kashmir participated, said a press release. The major objective of the event was to share the experience and expertise of NCSW with the provinces for building synergies for effective coordination and further uptake in the provincial context as well as to promote collective advocacy on major areas including countering gender-based

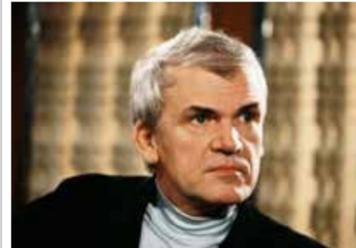
violence and child marriage, political party manifestos, allocation of reserved seats for differently-abled women in the boards of the National and Provincial Commissions on the Status of Women, launching of scooty project and day care centers at public universities and hospitals, celebration of National and International Women Day with a collective vision and goals. The National Media Fellowship programme, Media Monitoring System and preparation of National Reports for CSW were special focus of deliberations followed by group discussions with representatives of each Provincial Commission. The lessons learned by NCSW and challenges faced were shared for building way forward through collaboration.

Murad launches Book 'Story of Indus Civilization' at Sindh archives

KARACHI (Agencies): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Wednesday said that the book 'Story of Indus Civilization' was a literary continuation that encapsulates the culture and heritage of the province and was aimed at preserving and promoting the diverse culture, heritage, history and traditions that make Sindh the bastion of a plural society. He said this while speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the 'Story of Indus Civilization' printed and published by Sindh Archive's dept at the Archives auditorium. The CM said that publishing the book was an attempt to fill the scholarly void of what was the cradle of civilization. "It aims at contributing to a more intelligent and meaningful discussion on the origins of the modern man who started setting up communities and flourished along

the enriched River Indus," he said and added that the book looked to excavate through thousands of years of preserved history to bring us closer to the riddle of understanding our raison d'être. Murad Shah said that the Sindh Archives of a treasure of literature. "I visited the Archives some 20 years ago and had spent half of the day reading old and rare books," he said and added again he would visit the Archives and would spend his whole day to take benefit from the rare literature. Minister of Culture Syed Sardar Shah speaking on the occasion said that the Civilization of Indus started right from the area it emanated from and covered various countries on the way and it terminated into the Arabian Sea. "The language of the entire civilization has assimilation which could be traced through research," he said.

Czech-French writer Milan Kundera dies at 94



Prague (AFP/APP): Czech-French writer Milan Kundera, author of "The Unbearable Lightness of Being", has died aged 94, the Milan Kundera Library said on Wednesday. "Unfortunately I can confirm that Mr Milan Kundera passed away yesterday (Tuesday) after a prolonged illness," Anna Mrazova, spokeswoman for the library in his native city of Brno, told AFP. "He died at home, in his Paris apartment," she said. The novelist, poet and essayist lived in France since his emigration from Communist-ruled Czechoslovakia in 1975. He was known for dark, provocative novels dealing with the human condition and sprinkled with satire reflecting his experience of being stripped of his Czech nationality for dissent. The Czech news agency CTK quoted Czech ambassador to Paris, Michel Fleischmann, as saying Kundera wanted to be buried in his native Brno. Browsing through the shelves at Prague's Municipal Library on Wednesday, Jiri Hlavacek said the news of Kundera's death was "a shock". "Milan Kundera is a phenomenon that I thought would never perish," he told AFP. "He always gave me a reason to think harder about his topics. And then his style, it's a complicated, long complex sentence with a punch line at the end, and it's a pleasure to read," Hlavacek added.

Telenor Pakistan, Kistpay partner to scale smartphone financing

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Telenor Pakistan, in collaboration with Kistpay, a leading smartphone financing platform in Pakistan, has announced a partnership aimed at providing affordable smartphone financing solutions to a large number of customers. The two companies held a signing ceremony to commemorate the occasion, attended by prominent figures including Irfan Wahab Khan, CEO of Telenor Pakistan, Asif Jafri, CEO of Kistpay, and Julian Gorman, Head of APAC Region GSMA, with Saira Faisal, Country Lead, and Jeanette Whyte, Head of Public Policy APAC GSMA, participating virtually to highlight the significance of the partnership. One of the key highlights of this collaboration is the introduction of Shariah-compliant smartphone installment plans, specifically designed to cater to Telenor's extensive customer base in Pakistan. The partnership aimed to provide an inclusive solution for individuals from middle and low-income segments, promoting smartphone ownership through user-friendly, interest-free financing options that align with Shariah principles. By making the purchase of smartphones convenient and affordable, this collaboration seeks to further the digitization efforts in the country and empower communities.

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