HEC needs to put in more efforts to enhance quality of higher education: Rana Tanveer

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, Rana Tanveer Hussain during a meeting held here Thursday urged the Higher Education Commission (HEC) to put more efforts to enhance the quality of country's higher education.

In the meeting held at the HEC Secretariat, the federal minister also stressed on increasing access to higher education in such a way that it does not compromise quality.

Acting Chairperson HEC, Dr Shaista Sohail gave a detailed briefing to the minister on roles and responsibilities of HEC as well as challenges being faced by the higher education sector.

The meeting was attended by all divisional heads of HEC.

The federal minister appreciated HEC for its various initiatives to develop the higher education sector but stressed that more efforts are required to implement the policies to improve quality in letter and spirit. "There is no denying the fact that access to higher education must increase, but there should be a constant improvement in the quality of education and research", he stressed.

Rana Tanveer also emphasized that the universities should be encouraged to generate resources other than the government's funding.

He underlined the need to strengthen universities' capacity for resource generation as well as efficient management of these resources.

"Teachers play a key role in any education system. HEC has a system in place for their capacity building, but it needs to be further strengthened and planning should also be done to include training of college teachers. Secondly, the world is shifting towards a system where focus is being given to skills of students therefore we also need to train our teachers and university management to plan their curricula and teaching methodology in that way," he said.

Rana Tanveer Hussain directed HEC authorities to restart the national ranking process of universities, saying that it is an important factor to urge universities for improving their performance. "It is good that a few of our universities have made it to top ranked global universities but the figure is too low. I believe that ranking at national level will play a catalytic role for enhancing performance of our universities."

Dr. Shaista Sohail, in her briefing, gave an overview of all major functions of HEC, including quality assurance, accreditation of universities and degree programmes, funding mechanism, strengthening of universities' physical and technological infrastructure including Smart Universities and other HEC services like attestation and equivalence of degrees.

The Acting Chairperson HEC also described the challenges faced by HEC in execution of its policies and hoped that with the government's support the higher education plans will be implemented smoothly. —**APP**

Gastronomic delights await passengers

DOHA: Qatar Airways brings special Eid surprises to the Premium Lounges and inflight during the four-day Eid-ul-Azha holiday, marking the pinnacle of the Hajj pilgrimage. Premium Passengers will be welcomed onboard with a special Eid greeting, and offered a bespoke à la carte menu that features Middle-Eastern flavours including a traditional mixed-grill and a layered Arabic cheese 'Kunafa', topped with crumbled pistachio. Meals will be presented with a festive lantern and a custom-made box containing 'Mamoul' – butter date cookies from Qatar's prestigious date brand, Qinwan.

The festivities will continue in Economy Cabins, where the in-flight digital menus will include a greeting message from the airline, highlighting a variety of the region's inspired flavours. Passengers will be offered a delicious lamb 'thareed' with vermicelli rice for the main course and an orange blossom 'basbousa' cake for desert.

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, His Excellency Mr. Akbar Al Baker said: "Every year we renew our tradition of celebrating Eid-ul-Azha with our passengers. We know that during Eid, travellers are longing to reunite with their families, so we want to make their journey extra special by beginning the festivities onboard. On behalf of Qatar Airways, we wish all celebrating passengers a joyous Eid-ul-Azha holiday." At the World's Best Airport, Hamad International Airport (HIA), Qatar Airways will host Eid celebrations at Al Safwa First and Al Mourjan Business Lounges, where passengers will be offered welcome drinks. —

TDCP Boating Safari project inaugurated at Indus River

By Our Staff Reporter

MULTAN: Secretary Tourism Punjab Muhammad Ehsan Bhutta inaugurated TDCP Boating Safari project at Indus river Chachran Sharif Rahim Yar Khan on Thursday.

On this occasion, manager P&D TDCP Amir Nawaz, DC Rahim Yar Khan, incharge TDCP DG Khan Sheikh Muhammad Ijaz and other officials were present. Deputy Commissioner Rahim Yar Khan thanked Secretary Tourism and Punjab government for providing such a facility for tourists and termed it as gift to Rahim Yar Khan.Local people also thanked Tourism/ TDCP for such facility.

Secretary Tourism department thanked all of them and requested to clear land acquisition matters in one month so that Tourist resort may also be built. He on behalf of Punjab government assured them for providing all support for promotion of Tourism.

He said that Archaeology Directorate was also conserving two monuments in area like Chitti Masjid & Pattan Minara alongwith TDCP for facilitation of Tourism in the district. Tourism Development Corporation Punjab (TDCP) have arranged two boats having 12 seats for the project concerned in which all facilities were available. The local people were selected for working on the project and they are deputed after imparting training while TDCP staff was present for other services. The boating project was continuation of the tourist projects being set up in South Punjab.

Incharge TDCP Multan Ashar Iqbal Malik said that the officials have pledged more tourist sites at Tehsil level in North and South Punjab for attraction of tourists. He said that boat Safari project, theme park and resorts had been established and some are in completion stages.

16 collective slaughter places set up in city

As many as 16 collective slaughter places have been set up in the city on the occasion of Eid ul Azha.

CEO Multan Waste Management Company and Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue Ameer Hassan on Thursday directed the authorities concerned to ensure enhanced cleanliness arrangements for collective altars.

The CEO directed officials to deploy sanitary workers and supervisors at every slaughter place and ensure all arrangements to maintain pollution free environment. Ameer Hassan said that the establishment of collective slaughter places in the city needed to be encouraged as it was easy to lift offal of sacrificial animals from there.

According to the details, the collective slaughter places were set up at Colony Ground, S Block Umar Pa Rakn Alam Colony, Rahim Ground Y Block, Anwar Mustafa Ground Z Block, Shah Rakn Alam Colony D Block, Faizan Madina Ansar Chowk, Madrasa Jamia Uloom Masoom Shah Road, Madrasa Khair Madaris Manzoorabad, Post Office Street near Baghan Mosque Union Council 33, Rahmania Mosque Tariqabad.

QUETTA: A livestock vendor sells sacrificial animals on a road ahead of Eid-ul-Azha. —Online

Thousands more flee as Sydney floods track north

SYDNEY: Thousands of people on Australia's east coast fled their homes on Wednesday as torrential rains tracked north after unleashing floods in Sydney that submerged communities, roads and bridges under mud-brown water.

New South Wales authorities issued fresh flood alerts north of Australia's largest city and warned that rising, rain-swollen rivers still posed a danger in parts of Sydney despite easing rainfall in the city.

"This event is far from over," the state's Premier Dominic Perrottet said.

Since the floods began over the weekend, emergency services have issued more than 100 evacuation orders.

A total 85,000 people have been told to leave their homes immediately or be ready to depart imminently so they will not be stranded by rising floodwaters.

Across Sydney's western fringe, rivers broke their banks and large areas have been transformed into inland lakes, with mud-brown waters invading homes while cutting off roads and bridges. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese visited the affected area on Wednesday, promising to look for "long-term solutions" after multiple flooding disasters across Australia's east coast in the past 18 months. Albanese said that while "Australia has always been subject of floods, of bushfires", scientists have warned climate change would make such events

more frequent and intense. "What we are seeing, unfortunately, is that play out," he said. There were 21 flood rescues across New South Wales overnight, and on Wednesday more than 1,000 emergency service workers were in the field. The federal government has declared a natural disaster in 23 flooded parts of the state, unlocking relief payments to stricken residents. Many people affected have lived through successive east coast floods that struck in 2021 and then again in March this year when more than 20 people were killed. Australia's Bureau of Meteorology said the weather system was expected to move off coast later this week. —**AFP**

India issues notice to SpiceJet after plane makes landing in Karachi

NEW DELHI: India's aviation regulator has issued a warning notice to airline SpiceJet after a review of recent incidents — including an aircraft's emergency landing at Karachi airport — showed "poor internal safety oversight and inadequate maintenance actions" by the airline. The airliner carrying 132 passengers and 12 crew members from Delhi had on Tuesday made an unexpected landing at Jinnah International Airport Karachi after reporting some fault and seeking permission from authorities. India's DGCA said that a review of several incidents involving SpiceJet's planes. —*AP*

COURT NOTICE

In The Court Of IRFAN ALI CIVIL JUDGE FIRST CLASS Gujranwala.

Suit for Partition etc . Muhammad ishfaq vs Muhammad asif etc .

Notice to Muhammad arshad s/o Mushtaq ahmad caste rajput r/o nae abadi Gali number 5 muhallah rasool pura Gujranwala Pakistan. Presently Residing abroad. Where as the service of the defendant is not going to be effected through ordinary means, So the service of defendant be effected though Proclamation in the newspaper. You the above named defendant is directed to appear in the court in person or through counsel on 14/07/2022 at 8:00am failing which ex party proceedings shall be initiated against you . Given under my hand and the seal of this court irfan ali civil judge first class Gujranwala .

Sri Lankans return to cooking with firewood as economy burns

COLUMBO: As once relatively wealthy Sri Lanka suffers a dire economic crisis with shortages of everything from medicines to gas, people are returning to cooking with firewood.

The switch began at the beginning of the year when more than 1,000 kitchens exploded across the country, killing at least seven people and injuring hundreds more. The reason was suppliers looking to cut costs and increasing the proportion of propane, which raised the pressure to dangerous levels.

But now, along with much else in the country of 22 million people, gas is either unavailable or too expensive for most.

Some tried to shift to kerosene oil cookers, but the government did not have dollars to import it along with petrol and diesel, which are also in short supply. And those who bought electric cookers were in for a rude shock when the government imposed lengthy power blackouts as it ran out of dollars to import fuel for generators. Niluka Hapuarachchi, 41, was miraculously unharmed when her gas range exploded soon after cooking Sunday lunch in August.

"Fortunately, no one was there at the time. There were pieces of glass all over the floor. The glass-top stove had exploded. I will never use gas for cooking. It is not safe. We are now on firewood," she said, despite moves to address the propane problem. Also read: 'We are going to die': Food shortages add to Sri Lanka's woes Roadside eatery owner M.G. Karunawathi, 67, also switched to wood and said it was a choice between closing her business or putting up with smoke and soot. "We suffer (smoke inhalation) when cooking with firewood, but we have no choice," Karunawathi told AFP. "It is also difficult to find firewood and it is also becoming very expensive." Sri Lanka used to be a middle-income country, with GDP per head comparable to the Philippines and living standards the envy of neighbouring India.

But with economic mismanagement and the crucial tourism industry hammered by Covid-19, the nation has run out of dollars needed to pay for most imports. And the pain will likely continue for some time, with Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe in parliament on Tuesday saying: "We will have to face difficulties in 2023 as well.

"This is the truth. This is the reality."

Unofficial inflation is now second only to Zimbabwe, and the United Nations estimates about 80 per cent of people skip meals because they cannot afford food.

Before the crisis, almost all households in Colombo could afford to use gas, but now woodcutter Selliah Raja, 60, is doing a roaring trade.

"Earlier we had just one customer — a restaurant that had a wood-fired oven — but we now have so many, we can't meet the demand," Raja told AFP.

He says his timber suppliers in the provinces have doubled their prices because of the sharp rise in demand and skyrocketing transport costs.

"Earlier, land owners paid us to uproot rubber trees that are no longer productive," lumberjack Sampath Thushara told AFP in the tea-and-rubber-growing southern village of Nehinna.

"Today, we have to pay to get these trees." Foraging for wood can also be dangerous in the snake- and insect-infested forests. Last week, a father of three died from wasp stings in central Sri Lanka and four others were hospitalised.

Demand is also surging for alternative energy, and entrepreneur Riyad Ismail, 51, has seen sales light up for the hi-tech firewood stove he invented in 2008.

He has attached a small battery-powered electric fan to blow air into the barrel-shaped stove to ensure better burning, thus reducing smoke and soot associated with traditional firewood burners.

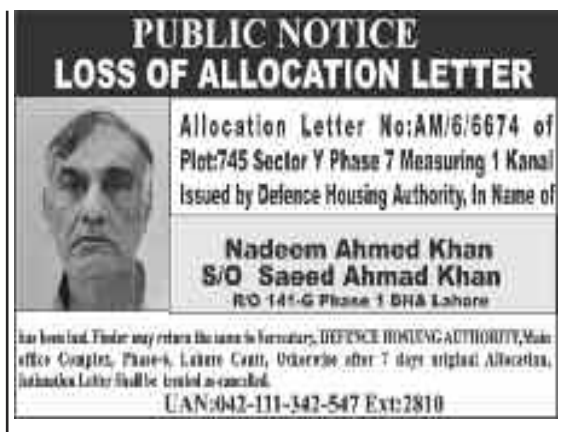
His upmarket "Ezstove" and the mass-market "Janalipa", which uses coconut charcoal, promises a minimum 60pc savings compared with cooking with gas.

Both his stoves — which cost around $20 and $50, respectively — have become big sellers with buyers having to go on a waiting list. It has been so successful, Ismail says, there are several copies on the market. "You will see many renditions of my design… other people are piggybacking (on the design)," Ismail said while making chicken satay.

Crisis-hit Sri Lanka set for uneasy 'economic war cabinet'

Sri Lanka was set to form a new cabinet on Monday as bitter political rivals make common cause to tackle a worsening economic crisis after last week's deadly violence, party leaders said.

Protestors remained camped outside President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's residence demanding that he resign meanwhile, as troops continued to patrol the streets while ordinary Sri Lankans queued up for scarce supplies.

Ranil Wickremesinghe, appointed prime minister for a sixth time on Thursday, has struggled to form a "unity government" after the main opposition insisted that Rajapaksa should follow his brother Mahinda who quit as premier last week. However, two stalwarts from the main Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) opposition party agreed to break ranks and join an "economic war cabinet", party sources told AFP. Opposition leader Sajith Premadasa said his party would not block in parliament any legitimate "solutions to the economic problems".

Another opposition group, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), said they will also offer conditional support to Wickremesinghe, overturning their ear-