

Education tourism sector, a new engine of economic sustainability: Chairman PHEC

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Punjab Higher Education Commission (PHEC) Dr Shahid Munir Tuesday said that international education tourism is one of the rapidly growing sectors of the world economy beyond doubts.

Talking to a delegation of leading industrialists led by Coordinator to Federal Tax Ombudsman and former senior Vice President chamber of commerce and industry Meher Kashif Younis in Lahore, he said education tourism is one of the best ways to help students to gain a good multiple perspective around the world and helps in obtaining new varied cultures with multifaceted rich experiences in various fields of the visiting countries.

He said education tourism sector has emerged as a new engine of economic sustainability, according to

a press release received here on Tuesday. He said government should accord priority in providing infrastructures and facilities to follow international standards to attract foreign students in various teaching disciplines of varsities with affordable packages coupled with truly healthy academic congenial atmosphere besides imparting high equality education by top class foreign qualified distinguished Pakistani teachers. Dr Shahid Munir said education tourism sector has a high prospect to be developed by taking into account the demand factors of international students to pursue studies abroad and its spill over affects to higher education productivity.

Meher Kashif Younis underlining the vital importance said with its rapid growth, the market is set to register an impressive compound amount growth rate

(CAGR) of 18pc between 2021 and 2031 reaching a valuation of around US\$185.9bn by end 2031.

He said education tourism will not only benefit the host country but also will foster personal and professional growth for students allowing them to take advantage of cultural exchange.

He said key players in the market are introducing attractive packages to woo students. Another member of the delegation, a luminary in the field of tourism, Dr Kaiser Rafique and CEO Discover Pakistan highlighting the significance of digital marketing said it plays a vital role in promoting the services and packages lured by various educational institutions and other companies across the world. He was of the considered opinion that various countries are promoting educational tourism as part of their strategy to boost

the local economy. He said the host countries benefit from international students' accommodation expenditures, food, beverages, tuition fees, taxes and other leisure activities. Winding up his views based on his life long rich experience, he said the number of international students has been steadily increasing over the last three decades and China, India and Korea are their top global students providers. He said the most popular destinations for educational tourism are US, UK, France, Germany, Australia and Japan which hosts around 62pc of world's total international students population. He said Pakistan has capacity to enroll at least 100,000 international students in one go provided government chalks out a master plan timely in this regard taking all stakeholders into confidence to encash the ample opportunities. —APP

Biden unveils Webb space telescope's first full-colour image of distant galaxy

NEW YORK: US President Joe Biden, pausing from political pressures to bask in the glow of the cosmos, on Monday released the debut photo from NASA's James Webb Space Telescope — an image of a galaxy cluster revealing the most detailed glimpse of the early universe ever seen. The White House sneak peek of Webb's first high-resolution, full-color image came on the eve of a larger unveiling of photos and spectrographic data that NASA plans to showcase on Tuesday at the Goddard Space Flight Center in suburban Maryland. The \$9 billion Webb observatory, the largest and most powerful space science telescope ever launched, was designed to peer through the cosmos to the dawn of the known universe, ushering in a revolutionary era of astronomical discovery. The image showcased by Biden and NASA chief Bill Nelson showed the 4.6 billion-year-old galaxy cluster named SMACS 0723, whose combined mass acts as a "gravitational lens," distorting space to greatly magnify the light coming from more distant galaxies behind it. At least one of the faint, older specs of light appearing in the "background" of the photo — a composite of images of different wavelengths of light — dates back more than 13 billion years, Nelson said. That makes it just 800 million years younger than the Big Bang, the theoretical flashpoint that set the expansion of the known universe in motion some 13.8 billion years ago.



"It's a new window into the history of our universe," Biden said before the picture was unveiled. "And today we're going to get a glimpse of the first light to shine through that window: light from other worlds, orbiting stars far beyond our own. It's astounding to me." He was joined at the Old Executive Office Building of the White House complex by Vice President Kamala Harris, who chairs the US National Space Council.

The space agency posted a list of five celestial subjects chosen for its showcase debut of Webb. These include SMACS 0723, a bejeweled-like sliver of the distant cosmos that according to NASA offers "the most detailed view of the early universe to date." It also constitutes the deepest and sharpest infrared image of the

distant cosmos ever taken. The thousands of galaxies were captured in a tiny patch of the sky roughly the size of a grain of sand held at arm's length by someone standing on Earth, Nelson said.

Webb was constructed under contract by aerospace giant Northrop Grumman Corp. It was launched to space for NASA and its European and Canadian counterparts on Christmas Day 2021 from French Guiana, on the northeastern coast of South America. The highly anticipated release of its first imagery follows six months of remotely unfurling Webb's various components, aligning its mirrors, and calibrating instruments.

With Webb now finely tuned and fully focused, scientists will embark on a competitively selected list of missions exploring the evolution of galaxies, the life cycles of stars, the atmospheres of distant exoplanets, and the moons of our outer solar system. Built to view its subjects chiefly in the infrared spectrum, Webb is about 100 times more sensitive than its 30-year-old predecessor, the Hubble Space Telescope, which operates mainly at optical and ultraviolet wavelengths. The much larger light-collecting surface of Webb's primary mirror — an array of 18 hexagonal segments of gold-coated beryllium metal — enables it to observe objects at greater distances, thus further back in time, than Hubble or any other telescope. —AFP

Thousands of animals unsold due to sudden decrease in S Punjab prices

By Our Staff Reporter

MULTAN: Thousands of small animals remained unsold due to sudden decrease in prices in different cattle markets in South Punjab on occasion of last night before Eid ul Azha.

Earlier, the price of small animals remained very much high during the whole season because of citizens' lack of interest towards big animals especially calf. However, the prices of small animals dropped significantly which caused loss of millions of rupees to the cattle farmers and dealers. Earlier, the cattle farmers had pinned hopes of economic returns against their animals.

Majority of the citizens avoided to purchase big animals due to fear of Lumpy Skin disease which was seen common in south Punjab.

Hundreds of the big animals were found died of Lumpy Skin disease on daily basis and it caused heavy loss to the cattle farmers. The prices

of small animals remained very much high before 10 days of Eid ul Azha, said Malik Muhammad Nadeem, a cattle farmer as well as dealer, while talking to APP. One night before Eid, the prices witnessed sudden decrease. The price of 40 kilogramme animals was stated Rs 60,000 to Rs 70,000 during the whole season.

However, the price of the animal with same weight reduced to Rs 30,000 to 35,000, he added. Out of 10 animals, he could sell two animals only, Nadeem hinted. Another cattle dealer, Muhammad Waheed also informed that people were showing interest towards the small animals due to Lumpy Skin disease in big animals (calf). Everyone was expecting high economic gains. He however expressed wonder stating that the price of small animals dropped significantly during Eid days. Waheed observed that he was selling animals for last 10 years. Waheed added, he could not sell animals as he was

Japan bids sombre farewell to slain Abe, its longest-serving premier

TOKYO: With prayers, flowers and flags draped in black ribbons, Japan on Tuesday said farewell to Shinzo Abe, a polarising figure who dominated politics as the country's longest-serving premier, before being gunned down at a campaign rally last week.

Crowds packed pavements lined with a heavy police presence as the hearse carrying Abe, who died at age 67, departed from a central Tokyo temple on a procession through the city.

With nearly a dozen helicopters circling overhead, people bowed deeply, their hands clasped in prayer, as the hearse passed in a procession carried live on broadcaster NHK. Others clapped, cheered or waved. "Thank you very much for your work for our country," one man repeatedly shouted.

Hundreds had filed into the temple where Abe's funeral was held on Monday evening and Tuesday morning, prior to the private ceremony, to pay their respects. His killing on Friday by an unemployed man wielding a homemade gun stunned a nation where both gun crime and political violence are extremely rare. The funeral procession passed through the capital's political heart of Nagatacho, where hundreds had lined up in front of the parliament building Abe first entered as a young lawmaker in 1993, after the death of his politician father.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and a group of cabinet ministers waited quietly in front of the office from which Abe, Japan's youngest prime minister when he first took office, led the nation for two stints, the longest from 2012 to 2020, when he resigned due to health problems. As the hearse slowly passed, Kishida bowed his head, a set of Buddhist rosary



beads around his clasped hands. Abe's widow, Akie, bowed back from the front seat of the hearse. From early morning, long lines of people dressed in black, mixed with others in informal clothing with backpacks, formed outside the temple in the sultry summer air.

Keiko Noumi, a 58-year-old teacher, was one of many who came to offer prayers and flowers to a large photograph of Abe set up inside the temple grounds showing him in a simple white shirt, laughing with his hands on his hips. "There was a sense of security when he was the prime minister in charge of the country," she said. "I really supported him, so this is very unfortunate."

Others queued in front of ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) headquar-

ters to make offerings at a makeshift shrine that will be in place until Friday. Party staffers come out to offer cold barley tea to mourners sweating in the sultry air. Tributes have poured in from international leaders, with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken making a brief stop en route to the United States from Southeast Asia on Monday morning to pay his respects. US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and Taiwan Vice President William Lai, on a private visit as a family friend, also joined mourners.

Nearly 2,000 condolence messages arrived from nations around the world, Kyodo news agency said. French leader Emmanuel Macron sent his condolences in footage posted on the country's official presidential Twitter account after he vis-

ited the Japanese embassy in Paris. "I remember all our meetings and work together, especially during my visit (to Japan) in 2019 ... I've lost a friend," said a solemn Macron. "He served his country with great courage and audacity." The suspected killer, arrested at the scene and identified by police as 41-year-old Tetuya Yamagami, believed Abe had promoted a religious group to which his mother made a "huge donation", Kyodo news agency has said, citing investigators.

The Unification Church, known for its mass weddings and devoted following, said on Monday the suspect's mother was one of its members. Reuters could not determine whether the mother belonged to any other religious organisations. Yamagami shot Abe from behind, unloading two shots from a 40-cm-long (16-inch) improvised weapon wrapped with black tape. Chief cabinet secretary Hirokazu Matsuno told a news conference on Tuesday that the Japanese government will consider whether there is a need to further regulate handmade guns.

"We are aware that current regulations strictly restrict firearms, whether handmade or not," he said. Satoshi Ninoyu, head of the National Public Safety Commission, told a Tuesday news conference he had directed that a team be established to investigate the security situation around Abe's assassination. "We take this incident extremely seriously," he said. A farewell ceremony was set to be held in Abe's election district in the distant southwest Yamaguchi prefecture, as well as Tokyo, in the future, the Mainichi newspaper said. Out on the capital's streets, Japan's mourning continued. "He was my favourite prime minister," said Akihito Sakaki, 58 and self-employed.

India to surpass China as most populous country in 2023, says UN report



NEW DELHI: India is set to surpass China as the world's most populous country in 2023, with each counting more than 1.4 billion residents this year, a United Nations report said on Monday, warning that high fertility would challenge economic growth.

The world's population, estimated to reach 8 billion by Nov. 15 this year, could grow to 8.5 billion in 2030, and 10.4 billion in 2100, as the pace of mortality slows, said the report released on World Population Day.

India's population was 1.21 billion in 2011, according to the domestic census, which is conducted once a decade. The government had deferred the 2021 census due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The world's population was growing at its slowest pace since 1950, having fallen below 1% in 2020, UN estimates showed.

In 2021, the average fertility of the world's population stood at 2.3 births per woman over a lifetime, having fallen from about 5 births in 1950. Global fertility is projected to decline further to 2.1 births per woman by 2050.

"This is an occasion to celebrate our diversity, recognize our common humanity, and marvel at

advancements in health that have extended lifespans and dramatically reduced maternal and child mortality rates," UN Secretary-General António Guterres said in a statement. Still, a growing population was a reminder of a shared responsibility of care for the planet and to "reflect on where we still fall short of our commitments to one another," he said.

Referring to an earlier World Health Organisation report estimating about 14.9 million deaths relating to the COVID-19 pandemic between January 2020 and December 2021, the UN report said global life expectancy at birth fell to 71 years in 2021 from 72.8 years in 2019, mostly due to the pandemic.

The United Nations said more than half of the projected increase in the global population up to 2050 will be concentrated in eight countries — Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines and the United Republic of Tanzania. Countries of sub-Saharan Africa are expected to contribute more than half of the increase anticipated through 2050. However, the population of 61 countries is projected to decrease by 1% or more between 2022 and 2050, driven by a fall in fertility. —AFP

Russia's Putin to meet Erdogan and Raisi next Tuesday to discuss Syria, Kremlin

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin will meet his Turkish counterpart Tayyip Erdogan and Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi to discuss Syria during a visit to Tehran next Tuesday, the Kremlin said.

It will be only Putin's second foreign trip since the start of Moscow's armed intervention in Ukraine on February 24, following a trip to Central Asia at the end of June. Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said three leaders — from the three guarantor states of the Astana process, designed to find a peace settlement in Syria — would hold a trilateral meeting.

Russia and Iran are the key military and political backers of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, while Turkey has provided military assistance to the Free Syrian Army and other rebel groups still

fighting against Assad's forces in north-west Syria. The Kremlin had said on Monday that Putin and Erdogan, who have been mediating between Moscow

and Kyiv since Russia sent its armed forces into Ukraine on February 24, would hold in-person talks soon after a phone conversation in which they dis-

cussed efforts to facilitate grain exports from Ukraine. Peskov made no mention on Tuesday of any bilateral meeting between Putin and Raisi in Tehran. —AFP

