

Masood Khan meets Joe Biden

WASHINGTON: Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Masood Khan met President Joe Biden at Oval office, White House in Washington DC and they exchanged views on relations. In a tweet, Masood Khan said Pakistan and the United States express the resolve to strengthen bilateral ties as they celebrate the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations. Masood Khan tweeted "It was an honour to meet and greet President Joe Biden @POTUS at the Oval Office, White House. Pakistan and the US resolve to strengthen their ties, as they celebrate the 75th Anniversary of their diplomatic relations. —Online

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'Undeniable' flaws in security for Abe: Local police

TOKYO: There were "undeniable" flaws in security for former PM Shinzo Abe, the head of police in the area where the leader was assassinated admitted on Saturday, pledging an investigation. Japan's best-known politician was on the campaign trail in the western region of Nara when a gunman opened fire at close range. Security at local campaign events in Japan can be relatively relaxed, with little violent crime and strict gun laws. But given Abe's profile, questions have been raised about whether measures to protect him were too lax. —APP

OIC Secy-Gen greets Ummah on Eid-ul-Azha

ISLAMABAD: Secretary-General of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Hissein Brahim Taha has extended his best wishes to the Ummah on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha 1443. He also congratulated all heads of the OIC's member states on this blessed occasion.

In a statement issued from the OIC Headquarters in Jeddah on Saturday, Brahim Taha observed that Eid came at a time when several member states were going through huge difficulties. The secretary-general prayed to Allah Almighty to make this occasion the beginning of immediate relief that heals the spirit of the Ummah and gathers it to realize stability, peace, and prosperity in all countries of the Muslim World. He also congratulated Saudi Arabia, the Chair of the 14th Islamic Summit, led by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz, and Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman, for the successful handling of the Hajj season, and for providing the required facilities and services for the safe performance of the rituals, as well as the excellent care given to the pilgrims, ensuring their safety. —APP

Chohan claims receiving 'threatening calls'

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehrik-i-Insaf (PTI) MPA in Punjab Assembly Fayyaz ul Hassan Chohan on Saturday claimed to have received calls from the "unknown number", threatening him to leave the party or face dire consequences.

In a video message, Fayyaz Chohan said that he received a call from a no-caller id and the caller threatened him to leave PTI in two days or face severe consequences.

He blamed the PML-N leadership including Maryam Nawaz for orchestrating such plans but said that such designs would not suppress the courage of the PTI activists, who are working for the success of their candidates in by-polls in 20 constituencies. —DNA

Chinese carrier helps bridge Pak digital gap

BEIJING: In recent years, Pakistan has accelerated the construction of its mobile communication facilities, with companies like China Mobile Pakistan (CMPak) playing a significant role in the local market and network.

Companies in Pakistan are now looking to provide services to allow people from all over the world to work from their homes. With the advent of online services in recent years, the trend has been gaining traction and platforms like CMPak are playing a big role in realizing the dreams of young Pakistanis when it comes to jobs. Since 2014, the company has been involved in the construction of 4G networks in Pakistan, with more than 14,000 4G base stations and the largest 4G network in the region.

Li director of network planning at CMPak told CGTN that now the company is serving 44 million local customers, helping Pakistan eliminate the digital divide. People here can enjoy high-speed internet services anytime, anywhere. To help local communities better bridge the digital gap and enable more people to find new opportunities in the digital age, the company is working to provide communication facilities and network services to more people in Pakistan. They also offer technology solutions to provide free health promotion activities and online medical consultation to people in remote areas of Pakistan. Li also said that CMPak is actively taking part in the Belt and Road Initiative and is providing communication services for 26 China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects and more than 200 Chinese-funded enterprises. —DNA

Nawaz offers Eid prayers in London

LONDON: Former prime minister and PML-N supremo Nawaz

Sharif offered Eid-ul-Azha prayers in London on Saturday. Along with Nawaz Sharif, former finance minister Ishaq Dar, Hassan Nawaz, PML-N (UK) President Zubair Gul, Umar Manika, Nasir Janjua, Iqbal Sindhu, Ijaz Gul, Imran Saeed, Waheed Nazir and Asad Ansari offered Eid prayers in London. They also prayed for national security. —DNA



ISLAMABAD: A view of deserted Jinnah Avenue due to Eid-ul-Azha holiday.

Food insecurity threat to South Asia, including Pak: UBG

ISLAMABAD: Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry's United Business Group (UBG) Chairman Shahzad Ali Malik Saturday said that the looming food insecurity hovering in and around the region has posed an impending threat to all under developed countries especially South Asia including Pakistan.

Speaking at a penal discussion on "Ramification of food Insecurity in Pakistan", held here under the aegis of the UBG, Shahzad Ali Malik, Sitar-I-Imtiaz former President Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry quoting the world food programme, said recently Pakistan's double digit food price inflation, along with dwindling income, has left more Pakistanis food insecure. He said a sizeable number of Pakistanis are food insecure of which 18 percent confronted with acute food insecurity. He said 20 percent of population in Pakistan is undernourished and 44 percent children under five year are stunted.

He said in recent years, Pakistan has produced more food that its population consumes and has been a major producer of wheat and rice. However, the poor segment of the society and most vulnerable people in country cannot afford a sufficient and nutritious diet despite the overall growth in food production. Shahzad Ali Malik said primarily this is due to limited economic access to the poorest especially women lacking an adequate and diverse diet. He said all complementary feeding indicators are far below acceptable levels, only one in seven children aged 6-23 months hardly gets a meal with scarce dietary diversity. He said major chunk of

children are deprived of the minimum number of the meals a day. Elaborating, he said, food insecurity has two dimensions availability and affordability.

He said abject poverty, food insecurity, mal-nutrition, frequent infections, poor health condition, and hidden hunger are also closely associated to each other while number of hungry people is rising every year. He further said the main threats to food security are, population explosion increases food demand, higher food prices, absence of variety of agriculture plant species, increasing in the area of scarcity water, limitation of the availability of land and finally food losses and food waste.

Shahzad Ali Malik said in prevailing circumstances, we must take immediate corrective measures to avert severe food insecurity grappling the region including Pakistan. He suggested that all stakeholders at the helm of affairs must be taken on board for formulating prudent national policy to address this core issue with the active participation of public and private sectors to achieve the desired results. APP

Record 50m mobile phones assembled in Pakistan in one year

Chief Executive Officer, Engineering Development Board (EDB) Almas Hyder Saturday disclosed that first time in memory, a record number of over 50 million smart and feature mobile phones were assembled in Pakistan in one year.

Talking to media in Lahore, he said during the period under review, 22 millions smart mobile phones were assembled of which 99 percent sold so far in markets while 28 million feature mobile phones were pieced together of which 97 percent

were purchased. He said mobile phone parts valued \$1.12 m were imported to Pakistan by the assemblers, according to a press release received here.

A total of 31 local and foreign mobile phone companies were awarded licenses of which 21 are operational while remaining are in process of setting up plants for production including Nokia.

He said only one foreign company imported 3.8 million feature phones during this period which is also now going to establish plant in Pakistan.

Almas Hyder said the best quality locally assembled smart and feature mobile phones equipped with ultra model technology has restored the confidence of buyers in Pakistan which he added is much cheaper and most economical than foreign assembled mobiles. He said the moments mobile phones are assembled, they immediately absorbed in the market which speaks of good governance and transparent policy being pursued by the EDB for luring local and foreign investment in Pakistan.

Almas said Pakistan engineering industry has a large potential to grow and contribute a significant role towards national development for robust economic activities. He expressed his commitment to strengthen engineering base by attracting foreign direct investment in this sector.

He said, "We have one of the best liberal investment regime in the region coupled with plenty of natural resources and manpower". Almas Hyder said EDB is endeavoring to harmonize and align all standards to have a better and favorable business environment for all businesses in Pakistan especially foreign investors. —

CTD arrests six alleged terrorists across Punjab

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) has on Saturday arrested six suspects belonging to different banned organisations. According to the spokesperson of CTD, to effectively counter the menace of terrorism and to avert any untoward incident, CTD Punjab conducted 13 IBOs in different districts of Punjab, in which 13 suspects were interrogated and six suspects namely Wahid Bhatti from the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Jameel-ur-Rehman from TTP, Shafiq Hussain from Daish, Mohsin Khurshed from TTP, Imran Khan from TTP, Ghazi Force and Kashif Ali from Daish were arrested, while CTD also recovered 1155 gm explosive material, safety fuse 24.6 feet, four

detonators, one IED bomb, four hand-grenade, cash Rs. 36, 340, one receipt book, hashish 1700gm, and one match box from them. Five FIRs were registered against the arrested persons, he said.

Furthermore, during this week, 357 Combing operations were conducted with the help of Local Police/LEAs and during these combing operations, 14,009 persons were checked, 45 suspects were arrested and 38 FIRs were registered while 22 recoveries were made, the spokesperson added. The CTD Punjab is proactively pursuing its goal of safe and secure Punjab and will not leave any stone unturned in its efforts to bring terrorists and anti-state elements behind bars, he said and concluded that, In case of any information regarding terrorism,

please call on the Counter Terrorism Department, Punjab helpline 0800-11111.

Another report adds: The Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) on Saturday arrested six alleged terrorists across Punjab, including two from Lahore and recovered ammunition from their possession.

As per CTD officials, the arrested terrorists were identified as Wahid Bhatti, Jameel Ur Rehman, Mohammad Abdullah, Mohsin Khurshed, Imran Khan, and Kashif Ali. The CTD teams arrested four terrorists from five districts of Punjab and two from the metropolis of Lahore.

The counter-terrorism teams also recovered arms, ammunition, and explosive material from their possession. While investigation is underway with the suspects at an unidentified location.

Businessmen concerned over interest rate hike

ISLAMABAD: The business community Saturday expressed concerned over interest rate hike which will slide down economic growth considerably besides increasing the cost of production compared to neighbouring competitors in global markets.

Talking to a delegation of industrialists and traders jointly led by Shahid Nazir and Mufti Yousaf Shah, members executive committee of chamber, Meher Kashif Younis, Coordinator to Federal Tax Ombudsman and former senior Vice President Chamber of Commerce and Industry said an increase in the interest rate also raises the cost of capital resulting in reduction of investment within economy.

He said the benchmark rate of 15 percent is the highest since November 2008 and even three to four times higher than in the region.

Meher Kashif Younis lamented that Industrial sector is already under stress of heavy taxation, gradual increase in petroleum products, in gas and power tariffs and levy of fixed charges of electricity which will not only discourage the inflow of foreign and local investors but also tumble down the process of industrialisation resulting in massive unemployment. He said SMES which always play vital role in economic growth and development will also be hit badly by increasing interest rates rendering them non functional. —APP

Need stressed to unlock regional economic potential

ISLAMABAD: President SAARC Chambers of Commerce and Industry Iftikhar Ali Malik Saturday stressed the need for unlocking potentials of regional economic cooperation and integration to boost trade among SAARC members' countries especially with Afghanistan at this critical juncture.

Talking to a delegation of traders led by Ch Muhammad Farooq Arain of Manchester UK which called him here today he said inter regional trade in South Asia is less than one third of its potential which indicates 67 percent of trade is not being fully exploited.

He said role of Afghanistan as a connector and as land bridge between Central Asia, the Middle East and South Asia needs to be reviewed in prevailing scenario to primarily focus on promotion of trade and investment.

He said even today, Afghanistan is seen as a viable doorway to South Asian countries for direct access to oil and gas of republics of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

He said better trade ties will help promote economic growth and to do away with abject poverty in the region especially in Afghanistan thus enhancing its cross border and transit trade with neighbouring countries.

He said poor trade facilitation at borders and prevalence of a variety of non tariff barriers are major hurdles in further enhancing mutual trade manifolds with Afghanistan.

Iftikhar Ali said at the moment what we need is total up-gradation and strengthening of existing facilitation, handling and clearance of transport and trade at the Pak-Afghan land borders besides consolidation of initiatives taken by new regime of Taliban. —APP

Ahsan refuses to take action against those insulted him

From Our Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal on Saturday that refused to take action against the family who insulted him at a restaurant. It should be noted that an incident of indecency took place with Ahsan Iqbal in a private restaurant late Friday.

He said that the law allows him to take action against the rioters but he won't take action because women and children were involved in the incident, adding that such incidents should be discouraged. "If I had a security guard or an emotional supporter with me, the situation could have turned worse," he said and added the incident has been condemned at home and abroad since yesterday.

The PML-N leader said that they were trying to clean the society of extremism because the ideology of hatred and extremism spreads like cancer. He said the politics of Imran Niazi is promoting hatred and asked the people of the PTI not to indulge in such incidents.

Heavy rain in country

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Pakistan Navy is also providing rations and other necessities of life in the affected areas. The Pakistan Navy set up medical camps in different areas where people were provided treatment and medical facilities. Pakistan Navy personnel also assisted locals in cleaning standing water in different areas. The spokesperson of Pakistan Navy said we are striving to provide all possible assistance to the people of the coastal areas in this need of the hour.

Boats on roads as rains turn Karachi streets into river
Monsoon rains forced people of Karachi to use boats for commute as roads in some of the areas turned into rivers on Saturday.

Different areas of Karachi continued to receive rain for the fifth-consecutive day. Areas that were most affected include Clifton Teen

Talwar, II Chundrigar Road, Burns Road, Saddar, PECHS, Sharae Fayasal and Bahadurabad.

Pakistan Metrological Department (PMD) predicted on Saturday that the rains would continue till late into evening and has issued urban-flood warning for low-lying areas. Sardar Sarfaraz, Chief Metrologist of the PMD, said that low pressure is building over Arabian Sea. If the system continues to build, it could cause heavy rains, he said.

Due to Saturday's downpour, II Chundrigar Road – city's business hub – was inundated, forcing rescue service to run boats to help commute. Rain water had accumulated around City Railway Station. Many motorists were also stuck up in knee-deep water.

Quetta Commander shows grief over loss of lives: ISPR
Commander Quetta Corps Lt-Gen Sarfraz Ali on Saturday visited

provincial disaster management authority (PDMA) Balochistan and expressed grief over the loss of precious lives in various incidents due to heavy monsoon rains in the province.

Corps Commander was given detailed update on flood situation in the province and relief activities being undertaken by different institutions, said an ISPR news release here received. The Home Minister, Chief Secretary Balochistan and Director General PDMA appreciated assistance of security forces to civil administration for providing maximum and timely relief for flood affected areas and population.

The Corps Commander assured continued and all out support of security forces to provincial administration and PDMA in ongoing relief operations. He also appreciated and encouraged the efforts of all departments undertaking relief operations across the province.



KARACHI: People gather at the Railway Station to go back home ahead of Eid-ul-Azha.