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Britain engages in 'undeclared' war with Russia

Detailed News On Page-07

Brazil's Lula calls for South American unity

Detailed News On Page-07

Martial ruled out of DA Cup Final

Detailed News On Page-06

Briefs

Bilawal to depart for Jordan, Iraq

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister (FM) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will undertake a visit to Jordan and Iraq this afternoon, the Foreign Office said Wednesday. In the first leg of the visit, the foreign minister will travel to Jordan to attend the royal wedding. From Jordan, the foreign minister will visit Iraq from June 5-7. "During the visit, the Foreign Minister will meet with Iraqi leadership, and hold detailed meeting with his counterpart," the FO said. Important agreements will also be signed during the visit. FM Bilawal is undertaking this visit at the invitation of the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Iraq, Dr. Fuad Hussein.

3 people tasked to kill me

MUHAMMAD UMER

RAWALPINDI: Awami Muslim League (AML) chief and former interior minister Sheikh Rasheed claimed that three people have been tasked to kill him. As per details, AML chief Sheikh Rasheed said that his life is under threat and three people have been given the task to kill him. He urged the Chief Justice of Pakistan to take notice of this matter. In a video message, the former interior minister said that he is neither on good terms with former SAPM Shehzad Akbar nor he was present in any of his agendas.

Petrol prices slashed by Rs 8: Dar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The government has slashed petrol prices. According to new prices petrol prices have been decreased by RS 8 while light diesel prices are slashed by RS 5 per litre. The Finance Minister Ishaq Dar while addressing a press conference told that the government has decided to pass on the rates reduction in the POL prices in the international markets. The kerosene price is reduced to RS 20.

Shehbaz meets Belarusian FM

PM praises Pak-Belarus cordial ties

Visiting dignitary conveys greetings of President, PM Shehbaz extends invitation to visit Pakistan

DNA

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Wednesday said Pakistan greatly valued its cordial and broad-based relations with Belarus. He also affirmed Pakistan's commitment towards building mutually beneficial cooperation with Belarus in all areas, including economic, agriculture, science and technology, information technology, education, and culture domains. The prime minister received Foreign Minister of Belarus Sergei Aleinik, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. Foreign Minister Aleinik conveyed the warm greetings of President Lukashenko to the prime minister, while highlighting that Belarus regarded Pakistan as an important country in the region and appreciated its efforts to promote regional peace and stability. The prime minister also briefed the foreign minister on the human rights violations by India in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). Noting that Pakistan and Belarus would be commemorating the 30th anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic relations in 2024, the prime minister welcomed continued high-level exchanges and engagement. In this regard, he also reiterated his invitation to the Belarusian president to undertake a visit to Pakistan, at his earliest convenience.

Pak slams IMF's 'intervention' in internal matters

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: State Minister for Finance and Revenue Aisha Ghaus Pasha Wednesday slammed the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for "intervening" in Pakistan's internal matters. "Pakistan's conduct is in line with the law," the state minister said, terming IMF Mission Chief for Pakistan Nathan Porter's statement - regarding the political situation in Pakistan - "extraordinary". While the IMF does not comment on domestic politics, Porter had said that the Fund hopes "a peaceful way forward is found in line with the Constitution and the rule of law." Hoping that both sides will reach a staff-level agreement before the announcement of the federal budget - expected to be unveiled on June 9 - for the fiscal year 2023-24, the state minister said that the delay is neither good for Pakistan nor the Fund.

Continued on Page 06

Fight against terrorism

UK CGS lauds Pak Army's sacrifices

Gen Sir Nicholas Patrick Carter calls on COAS General Asim Munir



RAWALPINDI: Gen Sir Nicholas Patrick Carter, chief of general staff (CGS) of the UK Army and his team in a meeting with COAS General Asim Munir and his team. - DNA

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Gen Sir Nicholas Patrick Carter, chief of general staff (CGS) of the UK Army, on Wednesday called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir and acknowledged the Pakistan Army's sacrifices in the fight against terrorism. According to a press release issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Gen Sir Sanders met Gen Munir at the

General Headquarters in Rawalpindi. "Upon arrival at the GHQ, CGS UK Army laid a floral wreath at Yadgar-e-Shuhada [memorials of martyrs]. A smartly turned-out contingent of the Pakistan Army presented the guard of honour to the visiting dignitary," the military's media wing said. During the meeting, regional security issues and matters of mutual interest were discussed.

Continued on Page 06

DNA



LAHORE: Foreign Minister of Belarus Sergei Aleinik calls on the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. - DNA

2 terrorists killed in N. Waziristan

Separately, soldier gets martyred during attack on polio team

DNA



RAWALPINDI: Two terrorists were gunned down by security forces in an operation conducted in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's North Waziristan district, the military's media wing said on Wednesday. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said that security forces conducted an intelligence-based operation today in the general area of Dossali after receiving a tip-off about the presence of terrorists. "During the conduct of the operation, intense fire exchange occurred between security forces and terrorists,"

Continued on Page 06

Gets 20-day bail

Imran says PTI doesn't need 'electables' now

Whenever elections are held, the PTI will win; claims Khan

PTI deserters meet Qureshi

Qureshi son says his father not leaving party

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan Wednesday expressed confidence in his party's popularity among the masses, saying he doesn't need "electables" anymore. The former prime minister, currently facing a slew of legal challenges after being voted out of office, boasted that the PTI has the largest vote bank in the country. "If you have that much vote big, it doesn't matter who is leaving and joining the party," Khan said in an interview with foreign media outlet. He was also asked to comment on the mass exodus of leaders from

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: In a bid to change, what sources claimed, the loyalty of detained Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Vice-Chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi - who according to Chairman Imran Khan will lead the party in case of his disqualification - the party's key deserters met him in Adiala jail on Wednesday. A delegation of PTI defectors comprising the party's bigwigs Fawad Chaudhry,

Continued on Page 06

Continued on Page 06

China blames US for air confrontation

'The United States' long-term sending of ships to conduct close surveillance on China seriously harms China's national sovereignty'

NEWS DESK

BEIJING: China has blamed a US "provocation" for an incident in which a Chinese plane crossed in front of an American surveillance aircraft over the South China Sea. "The United States' long-term and frequent sending of ships and planes to conduct close surveillance on China seriously harms China's national sovereignty and security," foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said on Wednesday. Of provocative, dangerous activity is the cause of the security issues on the seas. China will continue to take all necessary steps to resolutely protect its own sovereignty and security," Mao said. The US military said on Tuesday a Chinese fighter pilot performed an "unnecessarily aggressive maneuver" near an American surveillance aircraft operating over the South China Sea last week. Video footage released by the US military shows a Chinese fighter jet crossing in front of the American aircraft, which can be seen shaking from the resulting turbulence.

Continued on Page 06

Inside...

President calls for timely justice delivery to avoid aggravation... - Page 02

Erdogan's win a manifestation of Turkish people's confidence - Page 03

Small Dams imperative for climate resilience - Page 04

Media manipulation and political Chaos: Unraveling the link - Page 05

Silver Jubilee of G-77 Vienna Chapter celebrated - Page 06

US envoy slaps sanctions on Kosovo over recent tensions - Page 07

Serena Hotels commitment to responsible tourism above board - Page 08

Commission objects to bench hearing audio leaks case

CJP Umar Ata Bandial adjourns hearing till next week; SC registrar office returns govt's plea with objections

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: After the federal government, the judicial commission formed to probe the audio leaks related to the judiciary also raised objections to the Supreme Court bench hearing the pleas challenging the high-powered body. "It would not be appropriate for this bench to hear these petitions," read a reply submitted by the judicial commission ahead of the hearing on Wednesday. The five-member Supreme Court (SC) bench headed by Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial and comprising Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Shahid Waheed, (SC) was hearing the pleas. During the previous hearing, the court stayed the proceedings of the commission and suspended the federal government's notification of the commission's constitution. When the hearing resumed today, the court said that new petitions had been filed against the commission and that it would hear them next week. The hearing was then adjourned shortly after it started. The federal government had, earlier this month, constituted a three-member judicial commission headed by SC's Justice Qazi Faez Isa - under Section 3 of the Pakistan Commissions of the Inquiry Act, 2017 - to probe

the veracity of recent audio leaks and their impact on the independence of the judiciary. Today, Secretary to Commission Hafeezullah Khajjak submitted a response to the SC's notice. In its response, the commission wondered why its proceedings had been stopped without any notice given to it regarding the matter and why it had not been heard before the stay order was issued.



"The proceedings of the Commission were stopped without hearing the Inquiry Commission," the response stated. Moreover, the commission's response pointed out that no other member of the alleged audio leaks had filed a plea in the Supreme Court nor objected to the commission, adding that several people had confirmed they had

CJP consults SJC member on complaints

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial as the chairperson of the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) sought an opinion from a member on Wednesday, regarding the complaints of misconduct against Supreme Court judge Justice Sayyed Mazahar Ali Akbar on various charges. Media reported quoting sources that Justice Bandial has sought an opinion from one member of the council over the complaints of misconduct against Justice Naqvi. Different complaints were filed by lawyers and superior bars against the top court judge. According to Section 7 of the SJC Inquiry of SJC Procedure of

no objection to the inquiry. Addressing the court's assertions that the commission was usurping the powers of the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) since it was the role of the council to enquire into matters of the judiciary, the response stated that the commission had already clarified its position on Article 209 in the first session. "It was clarified that the action of the Commission should not be considered as the action of the Supreme Judicial Council," the response stated. Furthermore, in the detailed 26-page long response, the commission raised questions on the appropriateness of the incumbent bench to hear the matter. Taking the same line as the federal government in its petition yesterday, the commission said: "The oath taken by the Chief Justices and Judges of the Supreme Court and the High Courts require them to act, 'in accordance with the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the law'. They are also required to, 'abide by the code of conduct issued by the Supreme Judicial Council' and not to allow their 'personal interest to influence' their 'official conduct' or 'official decisions'." The response stated that a judge "must decline resolutely" to act in a case involving his own interest."

Continued on Page 06

Continued on Page 06

President calls for timely justice delivery to avoid aggravation of disputes

He said the federal and provincial ombudsman had their key role in the promotion of public service and good governance

QUETTA: President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday called for early disposal of the small domestic cases to avoid the aggravation of disputes and bloodshed. He said the federal and provincial ombudsman had their key role in the promotion of public service and good governance.

Addressing a seminar here, the president said as a member of National Assembly (NA) in 2017, he proactively worked for passing a bill related to alternate dispute resolution to reduce the burden on the mainstream judiciary. Dr Arif Alvi pointed out, "When physical interaction was not possible owing to security issues, the executives including himself must have arranged online setups such as "Zoom meetings" to ensure direct communication with the common people to guarantee timely justice delivery."

Last night, he said, "He disposed of 10 cases of the federal ombudsman and normally he disposes of the cases of appeals in just a few hours.

The president also stressed the need to raise awareness about the role of the ombudsman as few people were currently aware of its role.

He also directed for removal of obstacles in the way of interaction between government officials and the common people. He said, "Islam teaches people to show patience and forgiveness to promote peace and harmony in society." "No nation needs any foreign aid if they truly follow the values and teachings of Islam."

Referring to the living standards of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the His companions, the president also asked the country's executives to follow them and adopt the

living standard of the common man. Speaking about the importance of woman's rights and their participation in society, the president said, "Islam is the first religion that emphasized to provide an inheritance to women and in Quran it has been emphasized with clarity." Normally in our society, he said women of a family withdrew their inheritance rights in favour of their brothers which happened often under pressure. However, he said it rarely happened that men of a family withdrew their inheritance right in favour of their sisters.

Stressing the need to ensure the women's participation in every field of life, President Alvi said the country could not afford the burden of 52% population, therefore they must be given freedom in public places so that they could freely work at any place.



Quetta: First Lady Begum Samina Alvi being apprised about the vocational training, rehabilitation and therapy facilities for persons with disabilities, at Balochistan Disabled Complex. —DNA

Kazakh envoy for improving trade ties with Pak

STAFF REPORT

BAHAWALPUR: Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan Yezhan Kistafin has visited Bahawalpur on a one-day visit.

He attended a meeting at Al-Zamir on Wednesday where he was briefed about the history of the region and its role in possible opportunities for mutual cooperation between Pakistan and Kazakhstan.

Kistafin met Principal Sadiq Public School Bahawalpur David Dowdles and Dean of Faculty Management Sciences, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur Prof. Dr Jawad Iqbal, and discussed opportunities for mutual cooperation in education. He also met Director Cholistan Development Authority Liaqat Gilani who told him about the rich history of Cholistan and the indigenous products of the area. Consul General Kazakhstan Consulate Lahore Rao Khalid Khan, Former President Bahawalpur Press Club Naseer Ahmad Nasir, Director of Media and Publications, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur Shahzad Ahmad Khalid, Senior Journalist Baqul-Mohsin, and others were also present at the meeting. Later, the Kazakh envoy visited Noor Mahal where he was briefed about the history of Bahawalpur State and the contributions of Nawab of Bahawalpur Sir Sadiq Muhammad Khan Abbasi to Pakistan. —APP

Time ripe for collective efforts to achieve progress

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Nutshell Conferences Group and Martin Dow Group, in strategic partnership with Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Unity Foods Limited, hosted Day 1 of the 6th Edition of LEADERS IN ISLAMABAD BUSINESS SUMMIT, with the theme "The BIG Rethink."

The sub-themes on Day 1 varied from the need for the Big Re-Think, to Leadership in the Age of Disruption, to Disrupting the Future. The day comprised nine individual addresses, three panel discussions, and one conversation.

Addressing the Inaugural Session, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, highlighted

the need to streamline policies for facilitation and building a collaborative environment. He shared his vision of five essential Es for a sustainable and stable future: Exports, e-Pakistan (digitization), Environment (water security and food security), Energy (move to renewables) and Equity & Empowerment. Highlighting the need for equity he said; "We are looking at education, health and population control as our drivers and are targeting 20 poorest districts for an accelerated development program to end disparity."

Khurram Dastgir Khan, Federal Minister for Power, stated that as a result of disruption of the Ukraine war and ensuing rethinking, Pakistan's electricity generation will now be indigenous for sustainability and growth. "We will have five

sources, out of which four will be domestic and one will be semi-domestic." He further added that despite immense devaluation, they have been holding on to the base tariff for electricity since September 2022, owing to the new energy source from Thar Coal. Muhammad Azfar Ahsan, Founder & CEO Nutshell Group, and former Minister of State & Chairman Board of Investment, in his welcome address, elaborated on the theme "The BIG Rethink" for progress. "I blame incompetence, lack of political will, absence of collaboration between stakeholders and lack of continuity of policy framework for bringing us to the present condition." He reinforced that Pakistan's progress lies in uplifting education, health and digitalization.

KOICA holds alumni knowledge sharing seminar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) Pakistan Office held Alumni Knowledge Sharing Seminar at Serena Hotel, Islamabad. H.E Sang Pyo Suh, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, Country Director KOICA Pakistan Office Mr. Je Ho Yeon and Dr. Ikram Ul Haq, President of KAAP, attended the Knowledge Sharing Seminar.

More than one hundred KOICA Alumni members working in various ministries and institutes, media personnel and civil society participated in the knowledge-sharing seminar. Alumni's valuable experiences and lessons learnt from Capacity Improve-



ment and Advancement for Tomorrow (CIAT) program Korea are also shared in the meeting. Dr. Muhammad Hassan from NUST presented on "Expanding Renewable Energy in Pakistan's Electricity Mix", and Ms. Saiqa Imran from PCRWR presented on "Climate Change Variability and its Impact on Water Resources of Pakistan". Both presenters

said experiences in Korea inspired them in many aspects, and they would like to develop and change Pakistani society with their experience in Korea. Further, H.E Sang Pyo Suh, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea said that this year we would celebrate the 40th anniversary of the diplomatic relation between the Republic of the Korea and the Islamic

Republic of the Pakistan. Mr. Jamsheed Ahmed Malghani from Pakistan Halal Authority presented on KAAP donating more than 4 million PKR to the severely flood-affected people for the rehabilitation process in District DG Khan, Punjab. More than 1,600 KAAP members are working as a bridge for friendship between Korea and Pakistan.

Varsities' role in peace, development highlighted

PESHAWAR: Students at a speech contest here on Wednesday highlighted the role of universities in fostering sustainable peace, development and counter-extremism.

The Higher Education Regulatory Authority (HERA) provided an opportunity to the youth by organizing an inter-university speech competition for them. The event was arranged at the Sarhad University of Science and Information Technology Peshawar for students from various private institutions. The theme was "The Role of Universities in Sustainable Development, Peace, and Counter-Violent Extremism," which pertained to the global challenges at hand. The organizers said the competition provided a platform for innovative ideas and collaboration, inspiring a commitment to an inclusive and harmonious society. Distinguished guests, including chief guest HERA Chairman Fazal-e-Qadir, Director of National Counter Terrorism Authority Saleha Zakir Shah, representatives from Sarhad University, and Iqra National University distributed certificates to the participants. —APP

PTI responsible for May 9 vandalism

PESHAWAR: Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi here Wednesday claimed that Pakistan Tahrir e Insaf (PTI) was responsible for the ransacking of government and public properties during May 9-10 vandalism and accused Imran Khan

for downing the arrested party workers. Talking to media persons after visiting the burnt Radio Pakistan's building here to express solidarity with the employees of the national broadcaster and Associated Press of Pakistan, Faisal Kundi deplored that horde of

Pakistan Tahrir e Insaf have ransacked and put on fire the government and people's properties including Radio Pakistan's building and stolen its expensive computers, electronic appliances, furniture, sound system, vehicles engines and other expensive items. —APP



ISLAMABAD: A view of the dedicated cycle parking stand at Super Market as it is a very good initiative by Capital Development Authority (CDA) for the facilitation of the people in Federal Capital. Online

Turkish CG advises KCCI to hold single country exhibition in Istanbul

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Turkish Consul General (CG) Cemal Sangu on Wednesday advised Karachi Chamber to look into the possibility of holding Single Country Exhibition in Istanbul for boosting Pakistan's exports to Turkey. The Turkish envoy exchanging views during visit to Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) said that after successfully organising Pakistan's Single Country Exhibition in Istanbul, a similar Turkiye Exhibition could also be staged in Karachi. "Turkiye and Pakistan were important markets for each other, hence, we must work really hard and unite our energies for advancing the existing trade and investment relations", he emphasized adding that Turkiye attached special

importance to Pakistan and both countries had been enjoying very strong cultural, religious and trade ties. Referring to cultural, religious and linguistic similarities of both the countries, he was of the view that despite excellent ties and supporting each other at many international forums bilateral trade remained low. Keeping in view the huge population of Pakistan and Turkiye, he was confident that the two countries could achieve many things together. Pakistan's tourism sector offered a lot of opportunities which were also needed to be effectively promoted so that tourists from Turkiye could take interest in the region, Cemal Sangu noted. Being the largest producer of motorbikes, Pakistan could export the product to Turkiye while Pakistani and Turkish

companies could undertake joint venture in Pakistan for producing motorbikes and its tyres and their export to Turkiye and other countries, he said. He advised KCCI to send a trade delegation to Turkiye for exploring trade and investment opportunities which would be fully facilitated by the Turkish Consulate in Karachi. "Turkiye Consulate has been issuing long term multiple visits visas to businessmen who are interested in enhancing trade and investment ties with their Turkish counterparts," he added. President KCCI Mohammed Tariq Yousof, while welcoming the Turkish CG, stated that Pakistan-Turkiye bilateral relationship were based on close friendship and brotherhood since 1954. He also appreciated Turkiye's critical role to help

Pakistan in securing GSP-plus status and supporting Pakistan's exclusion from FATF's grey list. He noted that despite huge trade potential between the two countries, Pakistan's exports to Turkiye during July 22 to April 23 were \$270 million compared to \$268 million during the corresponding period of last year. He said that both countries were desirous of having a Free Trade Agreement (FTA), which, if materialised, could enhance bilateral trade volume beyond \$5 billion and further integrate both economies. He was of the view that there was a huge potential for joint ventures and investments in Special Economic Zones (SEZs) under the CPEC and other sectors such as Islamic Finance, Halal food, low-cost housing, infrastructure de-

velopment, telecommunications, and education. "Turkey's auto industry is stepping up efforts to keep pace with the global shift toward electric vehicles. Under Pakistan's Auto Policy 2021, Turkish auto brands can explore investment opportunities in Pakistan's Auto Sector due to the big market size", he added. KCCI president also stressed the need of establishing institutional linkages among universities and co-operation to exchange and promote and develop inter-country tourism through joint ventures. Commercial Attache of Turkiye Eyup Yildirim, Senior Vice President KCCI Touseef Ahmed, Vice President Haris Agar, Former President Iftikhar Ahmed Vohra and KCCI Managing Committee Members were also present on the occasion.

Convention on 'Women Building Peaceful Communities' held

PESHAWAR: The PAIMAN Trust organized a provincial convention on 'Women Building Peaceful Communities' here on Wednesday. Mossarat Qadeem, Executive Director of PAIMAN Trust, in her welcome address, highlighted that the aim of the convention was to discuss the importance of women's role in building social cohesion in Pakistan, the opportunities and challenges and share best practices regarding women's role in peacebuilding in the country. She elucidated that PAIMAN localized women's peace and security agenda in the context of "our culture and

religion" and added, "We expect that it will make its footprint on policy-making in Pakistan as well since it is now an essential pillar in global affairs." Qadeem said that PAIMAN Trust, under its 'Let's Live in Peace' initiative, had been empowering women socio-economically to play a leading role in building social cohesion in their communities since 2007 through Women TOLANA, a community peace group. "This flagship intervention has contributed to the development of hundreds and thousands of women leaders at various levels who have established their

agency as effective peacemakers by introducing concepts of tolerance, interfaith, intra-faith harmony, and pluralism, bringing communities together," she added. A former female MPA said that after attending PAIMAN's session, only then she realized the importance of women's role in peacebuilding. Zara, a social entrepreneur and peacebuilder, shed light on her experience of sensitizing women in her community about their role as mediators and peacebuilders, after she underwent PAIMAN's training. —APP

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

MAY

May 03/Poland
National Day
May 06/Bulgaria
Armed Forces Day
May 06/UAE
Armed Forces Day
May 07/Kazakhstan
Armed Forces Day
May 08/Czech Republic
National Day
May 09/European Union
National Day
May 17/Norway
Constitution Day
May 21/Hungary
Armed Forces Day
May 22/Yemen Republic
Re-unification Day (National Day)
May 24/Eritrea
National Day
May 25/Argentina
National Day
May 25/Lebanon
Liberation and Resistance Day
May 28/Azerbaijan
Republic Day
May 28/Ethiopia
National Day



Hotels & Restaurants

Serena Hotel.....111 133 133
Marriott.....051- 2826121
Monal.....0334-5421812



Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

Rescue (Police).....15
Bomb Disposal.....15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance.1122 & Rescue Services.4451122
Motorway Police...9266044
Motorway Police.9270601-20
Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9222596
Rawalpindi.....9270601-20



Enquiry

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



Hospitals

CMH.....5611111
MH.....5611116
Cantt Hospital...9270907-11
DHQ.....5556311-4
RGH.....9290301-7
Holy Family.....9290322-7
PIMS.....9261170-79
Polyclinic.....9218300-09
Shifa International 4603666



Departments

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

Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation.....9209224
Potohar Town.....9209224
Rawal Town.....5773343

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Erdogan's win a manifestation of Turkish people's confidence

Pakistan-Turkey relations ideal, Pakistan is very important in the policies of President Erdogan, Ambassador of Turkey Dr. Mehmet Pachi

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that the re-election of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is a manifestation of the Turkish people's confidence in his personality and policies. President Erdogan supported Pakistan like a brother in every difficult time. Turkey is once again seen as a world power because of his sustainable policies. The people of Pakistan love him immensely. Pakistani nation will not forget his services in every difficult time.

He expressed these views yesterday while talking to the Turkish Ambassador Dr. Mehmet Pachi on the occasion of a visit to the Turkish Embassy along with a delegation of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce. On this occasion, the delegation congratulated the Ambassador on the re-election of Recep Tayyip Erdogan as President by Islamabad Chamber and Business Community. The President of Islamabad Chamber said that these words of the President of Turkey are close



est to the truth that Pakistan and Turkey are two countries and one nation. What happens in Ankara, we feel in Islamabad. The people of both countries love each other immensely. This is the reason that the joy of the success of the newly elected President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is being celebrated equally in both countries. Turkey has supported Pakistan

in every hour of difficulty. I hope that under President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Turkey will become a strong economic power and a stronghold of the Islamic world. Pakistanis as a nation will never forget their services, be it the 2005 earthquake or other natural disasters, the government and people of Turkey actively participated in relief activities on every

occasion. Turkey's standing with Pakistan at every forum on the Kashmir issue is an indication that the relationship between Pakistan and Turkey is very deep and sustainable. In recent days, Turkey paid its right to friendship by boycotting the G20 conference held in Occupied Kashmir. The Pakistani nation and government are always ready to help

Turkey in every difficulty. Pakistan values brotherly relations with Turkey. After the establishment of Pakistan, Turkey was among the first countries to recognize Pakistan and even today Pakistan and Turkey stand side by side in difficult times. He further said that under the leadership of President Erdogan, Turkey has made enormous progress in various fields the present success is behind his endless services. On this occasion, the Ambassador of Turkey thanked Islamabad Chamber of Commerce President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari and the delegation. He said that the relationship between Pakistan and Turkey is an example. I hope the relationship between the two will be stronger in the future. He said that the people of Turkey will never forget the way the Pakistani people and government supported Turkey in the recent earthquake in Turkey. On this occasion, he thanked the President of Islamabad Chamber for giving valuable donations to the victims of the earthquake and presented certificates of appreciation on behalf of the Government of Turkey.

French envoy visits NUML

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Department of French, National University of Modern Languages (NUML) organized the celebration ceremony of the Academic Cooperation Agreement on Wednesday.

This Agreement was signed in 2020 between Alliance Française d'Islamabad and NUML but the ceremony of this accord could not be held due to covid-19. The Ambassador of France, Nicolas Galey, was the Chief Guest, while Pro-Rector RSI Dr. Zubair Iqbal, Dean faculty of Languages Jamil Asghar Jami, Ms. Gaele Le Breton, Director of all Alliance Françaises in Pakistan, Mr. Ali Bhatti, Director, Alliance Française d'Islamabad and Ms. Hannah Bieber, Education Officer of French as a Foreign Language at French Embassy graced the event with their presence. The Ambassador of France emphasized the need for cooperation in education and science and technology between the two countries. The main purpose of this cooperation was to promote friendly exchange visits between the parties in areas of French language teaching and research. Especially the DELF examinations shall be held at the premises of NUML. The other activities to be conducted through collaboration include short courses, internships, seminars, and workshops. At the end, students of the French department presented songs and cultural dance as well.

Police arrest four for carrying illegal weapons

RAWALPINDI, May 31 (APP): Rawalpindi district police have arrested four accused for carrying illegal weapons and recovered weapons and ammunition from their possession, said a police spokesman here on Wednesday. He informed that Naseerabad, R.A. Bazar, Rawat and Kahuta police in their ongoing operations held four accused, namely Abdul Salam, Umar Siddique, Waseem Abbas, and Saleem Butt for possessing illegal weapons and recovered four 30-bore pistols, and ammunition from their possession. —APP

Police net 10 drug peddlers, bootleggers

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi police in an action against suspected drug peddlers and bootleggers conducted raids in different areas and rounded up 10 accused on recovery of over 3,390 kg charras and 20 liters liquor, said a police spokesman here on Wednesday. He informed that Rattaamal police held Shakir for having 700 grams charras while Shehzad was sent behind the bars on recovery of 1400 grams charras. R.A. Bazar police netted Zargham for possessing 520 grams charras. —APP

Ramesh stresses for religious tourism promotion through Gandhara sites

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State, Chairman for Prime Minister (PM) Task Force on Gandhara Tourism Dr Ramesh Kumar Vankwani on Wednesday stressed the need to further explore the sacred sites and monuments built during Gandhara era as to promote religious tourism in the country. PM's Task Force organized a visit to the Buddha's archaeological sites and caves in Shah Allah Ditta, D-12 here. The delegation comprising ambassadors of Thailand and Indonesia, diplomats, members of civil society and media attended the event. Talking to the media, Ramesh said, "Islamabad Capital Territory's history

is as old as human history." The chairman apprised that evidence of Hinduism and Buddhism religions were existing in the federal capital. He underlined the need to explore these sites to attract international tourists

to Pakistan, with an aim to generate revenue through religious tourism. He was of the view that Pakistan was home to a multitude of heritage sites, monuments

and historic buildings which demonstrates the diverse layers of history of this region. The rich Gandhara heritage of Pakistan was an iconic phenomenon in the whole world as Gandhara art is a

great and major attraction for Buddhists. "The Gandhara's archaeological sites, such as Takhti-Bahi and Taxila are showcasing remarkable Buddhist artefacts, representing the region's rich legacy," he

said. He said Buddha's caves located in Shah Allah Ditta were a source of respect for every belief no matter what religion people belong to. Every religious cleric had served masses and preached a lesson of moral ethics in the past. The incumbent government was making all-out efforts to promote Gandhara tourism in the country, the minister said. He said Buddha caves would again be a centre of religious interfaith harmony as masses were thronging from various parts of the country to the archaeological sites. "I will present my recommendations to PM Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif to promote the tourism industry," he concluded. —DNA



Pakistan earns \$599mln by exporting transport services

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan earned US \$599.740 million by providing different transport services in various countries during the nine months of the current fiscal year (2022-23) as compared to the corresponding period of last year. This shows a growth of 2.70 per cent as compared to \$583.980 million earned through the provision of services during the corresponding period of the fiscal year (2021-22), the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. During the months under review, the exports of sea transport services witnessed an increase of 31.50 per cent, going up from \$87.580 million last year to \$115.170 million during the months

under review. Among the sea transport services, the exports of freight services increased by 66.63 per cent from \$53.190 million last year to \$88.630 million whereas the exports of other sea transport services decrease by 22.83 per cent from \$34.390 million to \$26.540 million current year, the PBS data revealed. The exports of air transport services decreased by 1.82 per cent, declining from \$479.110 million last year to \$470.380 million during July-March (2022-23). Among the air transport services, the exports of passenger services increased by 0.41 per cent, from \$317.030 million to \$38.320 million, whereas the exports of freight services declined by 14.27 per cent, from \$23.340

million to \$20.010 million, in addition, the export of other air transport services dipped by 4.82 per cent from \$138.740 million to \$132.050 million. Meanwhile, the exports of road transport services during the months under review witnessed a decline of 17.16 per cent by going down from \$11.190 million to \$9.270 million during this year, it added. Among the road transport services, the exports of freight services increased by 15.16 per cent, from \$2.770 million to \$3.190 million during the fiscal year under review, while other road services dipped by 27.79 per cent to \$ 6.080 million from \$8.420 million. The export of postal and courier services also decreased by 19.34 per cent, from \$6.100 million to \$4.920 million, the data revealed.

Zong 4G partners with 'Roshan Packages'

As one of the leading telecommunication companies in the country, Zong 4G aims to provide its customers with the latest and most innovative solutions

ISLAMABAD: Zong 4G, Pakistan's leading digital company, has partnered with Roshan Packages Limited, one of the country's largest packaging manufacturers, to provide bespoke connectivity for its business. This partnership will enable Roshan Packages Limited to employ Zong 4G's business solutions to optimize the efficacy and reliability of its daily operations across the board. As part of this partnership, Zong 4G will provide Roshan Packages Limited with customized connectivity solutions tailored to meet their specific business needs. By leveraging Zong's sophisticated services, Roshan Packages Ltd. aims to achieve increased operational efficiency and reliability in their day-to-day activities. The official spokesperson of Zong 4G said, "We are delighted to join hands with Roshan Packages Limited in enhancing their daily operations. Zong 4G is committed to digitizing Pakistan's corporate landscape by providing next-generation business solutions that are crucial for sustainable business growth. We look forward to unlocking this potential with Roshan Packages Limited through this alliance." CEO of Roshan Packages Tayyab Aijaz talked about the importance of integrating digital solutions in businesses. Highlighting the benefits of technology in upscaling business operations, he commended Zong 4G's robust connectivity and diverse business solutions in helping to make this possible for various corporate sectors including the packaging industry.

Zong 4G remains committed to driving digital innovation in Pakistan, and this partnership with Roshan Packages Limited is a concerted step in that direction. Cultivating the digital transformation of the local corporate sector is a top priority at Zong 4G, and this collaboration is another breakthrough in its journey of leading the digital revolution in Pakistan. As one of the leading telecommunication companies in the country, Zong 4G aims to provide its customers with the latest and most innovative solutions. —DNA

Court declares bail plea of Bushra Bibi ineffective

ISLAMABAD: An Accountability Court (AC) on Wednesday declared the interim bail petition of Bushra Bibi, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan's wife, as ineffective in 190 million pounds' investigation initiated by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB). The court, in its written order, said it had been told that neither Bushra Bibi's arrest warrants had been issued so far nor her custody was required in the said case. It said Bushra Bibi had filed a petition seeking pre-arrest bail in the said case, which was being disposed of under Section 498 of the NAB Ordinance. AC Judge Muhammad Bashir announced the verdict after hearing arguments against the petition. NAB Investigation Officer Mian Umar Nadeem and Bushra Bibi's lawyer Khawaja Haris appeared before the court during hearing. During hearing, NAB's Deputy Prosecutor General Sardar Muzafar Abbasi said that PTT's Chairman Imran Khan in his statement on May 13, used unethical words against NAB and its chairman. Imran Khan had been doing a false propaganda against NAB and claimed that the bureau had issued arrest warrants against his wife, he argued. The NAB prosecutor said neither the Bureau had conducted a raid nor it had issued arrest warrants against Bushra Bibi. The Bureau had had no personal conflict with anybody and petitioner Bushra Bibi should cooperate with it whenever she was summoned for investigation. —APP

Rs 75,589 million released for NHA

ISLAMABAD: The government released Rs 75,589.14 million for National Highway Authority's Public Sector Development Programme during the current fiscal year. An official of the NHA informed on Wednesday that so far local currency authorization for NHA's projects stood at Rs 61,628.72 million whereas disbursement worth Rs 14,960.42 million has been done in shape of foreign aid. It is worth a mention that a total allocation of Rs 111,253.40 million was done for road infrastructure projects of the NHA in the current financial year budget last year. Out of the total allocation of Rs 111,253.40 million, Rs 88,393.40 million were allocated in local currency whereas Rs 22,860.00 million were earmarked in foreign component worth Rs 22,860.00 million. —APP

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Briefs

ANF seizes over 45 kg Ice drug in two operations

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting two operations managed to seize over 45 kg Ice drug, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Wednesday. He informed that in an operation at International Cargo Office, Rawalpindi, ANF recovered Ice drug from a parcel consisting 10 cartons with a total 104 kg weight booked for Australia. Ice was absorbed in garments, he added. He said, in another operation conducted in Kach Balochistan, 45 kg crystal methamphetamine (Ice drug) was recovered from a far-flung rural area. Separate cases have been registered against the accused while further investigations are under process.

Inayat Hussain Bhatti remembered

ISLAMABAD: A great multi-talented artist Inayat Hussain Bhatti was remembered on the occasion of 24th death anniversary in which fans from all walks of life through media platforms paid him rich tributes for his unforgettable life time achievements in entertainment industry. He was born in 1928 in Gujrat and moved to Lahore to pursue further studies. As fate would have it, he ended up singing for Radio Pakistan and subsequently, for the 1949 Punjabi hit 'Pheray', private news channels reported. He was a multi-talented distinguished singer, actor, director author, social leader, columnists, religious scholar and zakir. He was interested in Sufi poetry since he was a child. Inayat sang for nearly 500 films, in both Urdu and Punjabi. His impressive discography includes 2,500 songs.—APP

Expert on 'No Tobacco Day' urges media to raise awareness

ISLAMABAD: A health expert on 'No Tobacco Day' stressed social media website owners to raise more awareness among youth of the harmful effects of tobacco on human life which killed million of people each year, despite the steady reduction in tobacco use globally. Dermatologist Lt. Col. (R). Dr. Ishrat Abuzar talking to a private news channel advised smokers to either quit smoking or prepare for increased risk of smoke-related illnesses including mouth related cancers that could also prove fatal. The World No-Tobacco Day is marked annually on May 31 to raise awareness about the negative health impact of tobacco and to advocate effective tobacco control policies, she highlighted. Like other parts of the world, Pakistan is also marking the "World No Tobacco Day" in which awareness would be created among the masses about the dangers.—APP

Court Notice

In the court of Madam Raheela Khalid Sahiba Senior Civil Judge Family Western Gujranwala
Case: Non-expenditure of claims
Title: Hanuf, daughter of Muhammad Ashiq, Muhammad Ibrahim, son of Muhammad Tariq, resident of Gali Maulvi Yusuf, Jandiala Tehsil, District Gujranwala.
Advertisement Name: Mohammad Tariq Son of Mohammad Arif Qum Khokhar Residence Street No. 2 Sheesh Mahal Nai Abad Sheikhpura Presently residing in Dubai UAE
In any case, it is not possible for the defendant to comply with the above case in an easy way, so the defendant is requested through a newspaper advertisement to appear in the court on the next date of appearance on 19/06/2023 at 8:00 AM in person or as a lawyer, otherwise the action will be unilateral. Will be implemented.

Small Dams imperative for climate resilience: Experts

In his closing remarks, President IRS, Ambassador Nadeem Riyaz commented that no government was capable of doing everything on its own and that we needed to join our hands together to make Pakistan a prosperous country

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) in collaboration with the Human Development Foundation (HDF) hosted a roundtable discussion on Small Dams in Pakistan: Combating Climate Change Impact and Enhancing Water Resilience. The event brought together field experts and relevant stakeholders to discuss the pressing challenges of climate change and sustainable development with a special focus on Soon Valley, Khushab District. Mr. Mehboob ul-Haq, CEO HDF, in his opening remarks commented that it was through our collective efforts that we could chart a clear path towards a more resilient and sustainable future through the construction of small dams. He reflected on HDF's remarkable projects in Soon Valley to establish a climate-resilient smart community, including the construction of Afaf Dam, cultivation of olive, peach, and



blueberries as well as pioneering the use of smokeless stoves that run on biomass pellet fuel. The panelists shared passionate insights and expertise on these transfor-

and produce maximum economic benefits for the local communities.

The speakers emphasized the sustainability of interventions taken in this regard as well as the engagement of community in development projects. Selina Irfan from Climate Chain Consulting suggested taking a bottom-up approach rather than a top-down one, contending that community engagement lied at the heart of all development initiatives and had to be registered as such. The conservation of wetlands, biodiversity and the overall ecosystem at the Ramsar sites in Soon Valley was also stressed upon, exploring the significance of undertaking eco-tourism initiatives in the region.

Experts agreed that a strong public-private partnership was imperative for sustainable community building in the country. In his closing remarks, President IRS, Ambassador Nadeem Riyaz commented that no government was capable of doing everything on its own and that we needed to join our hands together to make Pakistan a prosperous country.

Women's Chamber demands incentives in upcoming budget

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Women's Chamber of Commerce has demanded incentives for businesswomen in the upcoming budget. The dream of national development can never become a reality by keeping the majority of the country's population away from economic activities, it said. In its budget proposals, the IWCCI has demanded an increase in the taxable income limit for businesswomen, saying that it will encourage them to join the



document economy. The founder president of the Islamabad Women's Chamber Samina Fazil said in the budget proposals sent to Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, that reports of heavy taxation on various sectors are disturbing. Enhanced taxes will hurt the weak economy and re-

duce revenue rather than increase it, she said. Samina Fazil demanded that the obstacles in the way of women's development be removed, and they should be provided with a better environment for business so that they can play their positive role in the development of the country. She further said that the taxable income limit of women should be increased from five hundred thousand to fifteen hundred thousand to encourage them to become part of the document economy. In addition, women entrepreneurs should be

given a 30% share in the fund allocated for the development of exports so that they can develop their businesses, she added. She said that every year millions of girls complete their education, but there are fewer employment and business opportunities for them, which should be given attention for rapid national development. Women entrepreneurs should be facilitated in business knowledge, affordable finance, skill development, and digital technology so that they can play their due role in economic development.

Those who tried to isolate Pak isolated themselves

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain on Wednesday said those who plotted to provoke people against army have miserably failed. The politicians who were trying to isolate Pakistan have been isolated for which credit goes to patriot Pakistanis who love their army, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the army has made a few mistakes, but their sacrifices and martyrdoms are above all. Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that the bravery, professionalism, and high performance of the armed forces in the war against terrorism and in dealing with earthquakes, floods, and other calamities are etched in the hearts of the people, and due to this institution, they can sleep peacefully. The business leader said that relations between Pakistan and China are deeper than the sea and higher than the Himalayas, and both countries have the same position on international and regional issues. At the behest of some powers, a conspiracy was hatched to create cracks in the relations between friendly countries, which has been successfully countered, and now work on the CPEC has started again, Chinese banks have also rolled over loans forwarded to Pakistan, and they are cooperating in all fields. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the destruction of national assets and damaging relations with friendly countries should not be allowed for the political interests of some failed politicians. Failed politicians should not be given importance, and the people should be shown their real face, he said, adding that political stability is coming in the country and the confidence of the business community is also being restored. However, he said, authorities should take steps to provide immediate political and economic stability and relief to the people; otherwise, the situation in the country will never improve. There is an urgent need for the government to take tough decisions, widen the tax net, sell failed enterprises, control circular debt, reduce business costs, and do other necessary reforms to improve exports and cut inflation and the trade deficit.

PTI shying away from accountability

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on Wednesday said that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's government in the last four years made the worst victimization of the PML-N leadership and now its own leadership was shying away from accountability. "The entire PML-N leadership had faced the fabricated cases and appeared in courts but nothing was proved," he said while talking to a private news channel. "The politics of the PTI was all about leveling baseless accusations against the opponents", Abbasi added. Those who were involved in torching and other miscreant activities on May 9 should be dealt with iron hands according to the law and the constitution, he demanded. "It is Imran who is responsible for the downfall of his own party," he said and alleged that the PTI chairman used different tactics to spread anarchy in the country.

Flour getting expensive, size of roti shrinking

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt said on Wednesday that flour is getting more expensive across the country while the size of roti sold in ovens and hotels is getting smaller. If the private sector is allowed to import cheap wheat, it will reduce the price of flour in the market, providing relief to the masses facing merciless inflation, he said. Shahid Rasheed Butt said in a statement issued here today that food items are up to 70 percent cheaper in India and imports from neighbouring country can substantially reduce food inflation and provide relief to the people. He said that imports from India should be allowed, and the ban should be imposed again when inflation is controlled in the country. He demanded that the government should import food from India to overcome the food security problem and end all taxes until the

country's agricultural production situation improves and returns to normalcy.

The business leader said that since the Russian attack on Ukraine, European and other countries have been imposing sanctions on Russia, providing financial support and military hardware to Ukraine, but at the same time, they are also doing business with Russia. Shahid Rasheed Butt said that due to record inflation in the country, millions of people have given up one meal and put other important issues like health and education on the back burner. The prices of food items are increasing, but instead of giving any relief to the people, the rulers remain stubborn, which is unfortunate, he observed.

In the last ten months, the government has spent one billion dollars on the import of wheat and 818 million dollars on the import of pulses, but the price of these items could not be reduced in the market because the mafia is controlling the whole system.

Seafood exports increase by 16.22% to \$406 mln

ISLAMABAD: The exports of fish and fish preparations increased by 16.22 percent during the first ten months of the current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding period of last year, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. The country earned \$406.090 million from seafood exports during July-April (2022-23) against the exports of US \$349.429 million in July-April (2021-22), showing growth of 16.22 percent, PBS reported.

In terms of quantity, the exports of fish and fish preparations increased by 32.58 percent going up from 131,776 metric tons last year to 174,703 metric tons in the first ten months of last year. On a year-on-year basis, seafood exports increased by 26.62 percent to \$51.052 million in April 2023 as compared to exports of \$40.321 million during April 2022.

In terms of quantity, the exports witnessed a 53.35 percent increase going up from 15,443 metric tons last year to 23,681 metric tons this year. On a month-on-month basis, the seafood exports declined by 6.66 percent when compared to the exports of \$54.694 million in March 2023, according to PBS data.—APP

Chinese investors exploring investment opportunities

ISLAMABAD: Chinese companies have shown their interest in investing in different sectors in Punjab including steel, agrochemicals, spinning machinery, chicken farms, meat and processing factories, etc. In this regard, according to Gwadar Pro, different delegations visited the Punjab Board of Investment and Trade (PBIT) and discussed different investment opportunities with Pakistani officials. A delegation comprising six members from China led by Cheng Xiaonong, Vice-President, Pakistan Shandong (China) Chamber of Commerce visited PBIT to explore investment potential in Punjab for establishing warehouses of steel products, the establishment of chicken farms and meat processing factory and opportunities of petrochemical related industry. The head of the China Desk shared the investment infrastructure and SEZ framework of Punjab and assured full support and facilitation of PBIT at each step to establish a footprint in Punjab. Earlier, a nine-member Chinese delegation also visited PBIT to have a briefing on investment opportunities in Punjab. The Chinese delegation was led by Wang Zihai, the former President of Pakistan China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) and Honorary Investment Counsellor of Pakistan in China. "The Chinese delegation sought to explore investment opportunities in various sectors," reads an official statement of PBIT.—DNA

C919: China's rise as global player in aviation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The first successful commercial flight of home-made C919 passenger aircraft on May 28 marked a new start of China's civil aviation commercial operation. When the world is influenced by Airbus and Boeing's duopoly in decades, C919 took the first step to challenge the existing situation. The strenuous devotion that led to the development of the C919 aircraft has been a demonstration of China's unwavering commitment to achieving technological superiority in aircraft manufacturing. Over the course of the past



half century, Beijing has invested a significant amount of time and energy in the homegrown production of big passenger aircraft. China's technical capabilities have been progressively improved as a result of the country's policy of placing a high priority on research and development in critical sectors such as the production of new materials, electronic information, machinery manufacturing, automation, and high-end equipment. China

has ensured that the C919 must adhere to stringent international airworthiness standards by harnessing the knowledge of both domestic and international suppliers, including well-known corporations such as General Electric, Honeywell, and Rockwell Collins. This allowed China to meet the stringent requirements for international aviation standards. In addition, C919 anticipated annual manufacturing capacity of 150 planes during the next five years. Besides, it already has an excellent order book of over 1,200 aircraft. The successful maiden flight of the C919 passenger plane and the growth of China's aviation industry serve as

significant contributors to the goals outlined in the Made in China 2025 policy. The C919's development showcases China's commitment to innovation and the use of advanced technology in manufacturing. China's commitment to enhancing its aviation infrastructure is evident in the rising number of airports. As of last year, the Chinese mainland boasted 254 commercial airports, marking a growth of six airports from the previous year. Additionally, the number of general airports increased by 29 to reach a total of 399. This expansion not only facilitates domestic connectivity but also strengthens China's position as a global aviation hub.



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Pandemic: forgotten, but not gone

Once we could talk of nothing else. Now we barely speak of it at all. A leading Chinese epidemiologist has warned that there could be up to 65m cases of Covid-19 a week in his country by the end of June. Yet there appears to be little concern within China, and there is certainly little attention outside it. When the World Health Organization (WHO) declared earlier this month that the Covid pandemic was no longer a global health emergency, the announcement was greeted with cheers or even muted celebration, but with what seemed to be utter indifference. To some it may have seemed a statement of the obvious. Vaccines and treatments have made the disease far less dangerous and frightening to most. A disease that claimed millions of lives, ravaged economies and upended societies has become an afterthought – though as the WHO's director-general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, pointed out, it is still killing someone every three minutes.

But the silence is also, perhaps, a reflection of the pandemic's enduring impact. It dominated our lives for so long that for many the instinctive reaction is to try to put it from their minds. For those who lost a loved one, or battled to save lives in ICUs, the subject may be too traumatic to revisit. Some may feel embarrassed to discuss the lingering effects of unemployment, loneliness, or concerns about elderly parents or stressed children, when for others life was even worse. The cost of living crisis, the war in Ukraine and the growing impact of the climate emergency have brought new worries. To others, this silence can seem uncanny, even incomprehensible. Some are living with the pandemic's consequences in the most literal sense: on one estimate, 65 million people worldwide have experienced long Covid, though most have recovered. For those who are clinically vulnerable, the abandonment of precautions and lack of discussion of risks may make them feel less safe. Health systems are struggling to recover. Tens of millions of children have missed routine vaccinations. And economic consequences have played out around the world – bearing out a 2020 IMF analysis which found that social unrest often arrives around a year after pandemics, because of lower economic growth and increased inequality. Amid the immense costs, there are perhaps some small gains. While mothers took on a disproportionate share of household labour in the pandemic, there are some signs that it may have encouraged a long-term shift towards greater paternal involvement in caregiving in the UK. Remote working has been a true boon to some employees. Talking about what went right and wrong matters not only in trying to fix some of the ongoing damage from this pandemic, but also in preparing for the next one. It might allow us to better protect health workers or safeguard vulnerable children, minimise disruption to schooling or find better ways to ensure elderly people don't lose essential social ties. Covid is still costing us. We should at least heed its lessons.

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US seeks to smear China's peace brokering

While China's special representative for Eurasian affairs Li Hui was shuttling from Ukraine to Poland, France, Germany and Russia to thread the needle for a peaceful resolution to the Ukraine crisis, some media outlets in the United States kept pouring dirty water on his efforts in a bid to smear China's pro-peace efforts by claiming he was doing Moscow's bidding. The propaganda was typified by a Wall Street Journal report on Friday, which claimed to be based on the comments of "Western officials familiar with talks in capitals across the continent". According to the report, Li was urging the countries to "leave Russia in possession of the parts of its smaller neighbor that it now occupies". Yet Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba posted a video on social media the same day, saying that he immediately contacted the diplomats of the European countries Li had visited to verify that message after seeing the report. None of them could confirm the report. Kuleba said the diplomats told him that the issue of recognition of Russian possession of occupied territories of Ukraine was not discussed in their meetings with the Chinese envoy. The top Ukrainian diplomat has urged all parties to remain calm, think with common sense and not react emotionally based on one article. He said that Ukraine maintains a relationship of trust with all its key partners, including China, and stressed that Kyiv will continue to maintain communication and dialogue with Beijing. Despite this, it is predictable that those US media organizations that have no price to pay for publishing such fake news will continue to fabricate such reports based on anonymous sources "familiar with the matter". China's neutrality on the issue has been questioned from day one by the US and some of its key allies. Yet there is no more neutral party than China on the issue. It is the US-led club that defines those supporting the Ukrainian side and opposing the Russians as "neutral", and led by Washington the members are pushing the proposition that only these "neutral" parties are suitable to act as fair peace brokers. But the US and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization it dominates never mention that it is NATO's continuous eastward expansion over the past decades that has broken the delicate security equilibrium in Europe, a root cause of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Nor does Washington want the world to realize that it is the US itself that has been drawing tremendous benefits from the crisis in its bid to maintain its hegemony by tightening its control over Europe, weakening Russia and isolating China. Not to mention that the US is making huge profits from energy and arms deals. As the US is paying almost no cost in this profit-making process, Washington will continue to prolong the conflict for as long as it can under the banner of defending sovereignty and freedom. Peace-loving nations should offer their support to China's mediation endeavors, as these will gradually show their worth.

Good and bad news?

Waheed Hussain



But dear, it's unfortunately not happening in our country in the coming days and months. Such good news is still far away from us, we will continue reporting-analyzing the bad news. Bad news is that the Supreme Court of Pakistan is divided, unable to implement its orders regarding the elections in the two provinces within the 90 days deadline given in the constitution, which has already expired. Honorable judges of the supreme court had been moving

Day in day out, the crisis remains on the political horizon of Pakistan. I wish I could have been writing about the establishment of new industrial zones, local and foreign investment in the advance Information Technology or other sectors, creation of jobs, increase in exports, demand for the Pakistani products in the foreign markets, end to budget and current account deficit, no more loans and finally saying goodbye to IMF. But dear, it's unfortunately not happening in our country in the coming days and months. Such good news is still far away from us, we will continue reporting-analyzing the bad news. Bad news is that the Supreme Court of Pakistan is divided, unable to implement its orders regarding the elections in the two provinces within the 90 days deadline given in the constitution, which has already expired. Honorable judges of the supreme court had been moving into different directions on the issue of article 184 (3) jurisdiction of Suo Moto regarding decision on the Punjab and KPK elections, as four judges of the supreme court had recorded dissenting note which the government's legal team claim as 4/3 judgement/decision. On issue of Suo Moto and formation of benches in Supreme Court, the government has passed a Supreme Court of Pakistan Practice and Procedural Act 2023, with the view that Suo Moto and supreme court benches formation powers should not be exercised by a single judge (Honorable Chief Justice) rather be decided by three senior most judges' committee headed by the Chief Justice of Pakistan. The implementation of the new legislation is stopped by an 8-member larger bench of the Supreme Court headed by Chief Justice under the review jurisdiction. The address of Justice Qazi Faiz Essa in the National Assembly was taken as a surprise

by many as the judges are supposed to avoid such political gatherings they always speak through their judgements.

On the other hand, the PDM government, particularly the PML (N) bitterly criticized the Chief Justice of Pakistan Umer Atta Bandal and some other judges for favoring PTI chairman Imran Khan. The phrase "good to see you" is being regularly used by the Nawaz League leadership on all public platforms to castigate and taunt the CJP and his other like minded colleagues.

There is a background to PML (N) bitterness about judges who served in the past and some of them are still sitting in the superior judiciary. Former PM Nawaz Sharif and his daughter Maryum Nawaz were punished to keep them out of the 2018 elections process and give free hand to Imran Khan who became the prime minister. The PML (N) leadership believes that there was a preconceived plan by some powerful people in the country who used the judiciary against Nawaz Sharif and his daughter in 2018. With this mindset the present government has launched an open confrontation with the Judiciary, bringing them under pressure to delay the elections and get relief for Nawaz Sharif. Recently, the government has passed a review law to end the lifelong disqualification of Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. One thing must be brought on the record that Nawaz was sidelined by certain forces for personal reasons. Lifelong disqualification is unjustified, he must be given a chance to play a role in parliamentary politics. The fight between the Government and the superior Judiciary is less for rule of law and more for personal interests and inner satisfaction.

The bad news is the government has refused to hold talks with Imran. As the PM Shahbaz and his cabinet ministers knew that Imran Khan is in great trouble after May 9 violent protests by

his party workers and leaders, dozens have left him and hundreds of others in the pipeline to disconnect with Khan. The irony of the situation is that in the recent past Khan has been refusing to speak with PDM leadership declaring them thieves and dacoits. So, the message is very clear that there will be no talks, but just a fight.

The bad news is that Imran is still in the mood to fight with the establishment. The leaders take decisions, the next step, according to the circumstances or situation, Imran does not want to learn anything from his past conduct and approach, he wants to clash-fight-and keep on blaming others for his miseries and failures.

The bad news is that political instability is continuously damaging the economy. Our political and other powerful players have made mockery of themselves. They don't want to learn from the past. The country total debts are over 68 thousand billions rupees, every day the government adds to loans, IMF is reluctant to release further loans, industries are being shut down, millions losing jobs, energy crisis still there, government owned organizations like PIA-Railways bleeding, people are leaving the country, the brain-drain, resources and money is being shifted to other countries for better future, in short the nation is disappointed and confused.

What might have been the circumstances, the honorable Prime Minister of Pakistan Shahbaz Sharif, known as a good administrator and efficient politician, unluckily could not deliver. The Finance Minister Senator Ishaq has been struggling to manage the economy. In short, if we really want good news to come we must bring a permanent stable government after holding free and transparent elections providing all political parties and leaders an equal opportunity.

Media manipulation and political Chaos: Unraveling the link

Muhammad Shahid Rasheed



There are various reasons for political instability. One significant reason is the lack of accountability within the government. When those in power are not held responsible for their actions, it undermines the stability of the political system. Corruption is another major factor contributing to political instability. When officials engage in corrupt practices

Political instability refers to the unstable structure of a government and its inclination to collapse quickly due to an unstable political structure. It can manifest as regular or irregular changes in the government, leading to numerous problems for a country. When a government is not allowed to complete its full term of five years and is changed prematurely, it creates political instability. This instability occurs when the government fails to ensure essential services such as security, food, and shelter, which are crucial for the well-being of its citizens. As a result, the government loses its ability to enforce laws, leading to a state of political instability often associated with a failed state. There are various reasons for political instability. One significant reason is the lack of accountability within the government. When those in power are not held responsible for their actions, it undermines the stability of the political system. Corruption is another major factor contributing to political instability. When officials engage in corrupt practices, it erodes public trust in the government and creates a sense of instability. Internal conflicts within a country, as well as external conflicts involving other nations, can also lead to political instability. Additionally, when foreign countries interfere in the politics of a nation, it further exacerbates the instability. The effects of political instability are far-reaching and impact various aspects of a country. One of the primary

effects is on the economy, as political instability increases uncertainty about future economic situations and policies. This uncertainty hampers economic growth and development. Political instability also disrupts the peace within a country, often leading to protests and blockades that can paralyze daily life. The currency of a country may depreciate rapidly in the face of political instability, causing economic hardships for the population. The educational system of a nation can suffer as well, with instability affecting educational institutions and hindering access to quality education. Furthermore, political instability can have adverse effects on a country's import and export activities, hampering international trade. Investors are reluctant to invest in countries experiencing political instability, which further hinders economic growth. In such situations, the lack of safeguards against abuse and market volatility poses additional challenges. The media also plays a significant role in political instability. In some cases, media outlets have deviated from their role of serving the public interest and instead contribute to political and social chaos. The nature and direction of the media have become a concern for policymakers, academia, and civil society. Surveys have shown that a significant portion of the population blames the media for political instability. Media can create political instability through sensationalism, propaganda, character assassination, biased

reporting, emotional manipulation, unprofessional journalism, and criticism without constructive purpose. This manipulation by the media undermines the credibility of the profession and jeopardizes the freedom of the press.

Media in Pakistan, for instance, has become an industry with its own agenda. Many media organizations are owned by influential private investors who utilize these platforms to pursue their personal economic and political interests. Print media, electronic media, and social media are the different types of media used to influence political stability. Print media in Pakistan has played a critical role in politics, with newspapers often launched to support specific political parties and publish news against opposing parties. Columnists also openly support different political parties, further contributing to political polarization. Electronic media, including television channels, has gained popularity in Pakistan and has become a powerful tool for creating political instability. Talk shows on electronic media often lack responsible journalism, fairness, objectivity, and differentiation between facts and speculation.

They can manipulate public opinion and fuel political tensions. Social media, on the other hand, has emerged as a significant tool for creating political instability through the spread of rumors, slander, backbiting, and disinformation. The absence of clear rules to combat cybercrimes exacerbates the impact of social media on political stability.

Political instability has been a recurring issue in Pakistan's history. The country has experienced internal political instability, regime instability, political emergencies, and constitutional deadlocks for a significant portion of its existence. Both democratic and military governments have ruled Pakistan, with repeated failures of democratically elected civilian governments leading to military takeovers. The constant upheaval and economic hardships have hindered the nation's progress. Pakistan has witnessed dismissals and resignations of prime ministers, military takeovers, and a switching between authoritarian military rule and political democracy throughout its history.

In conclusion, political instability arises from an unstable political structure and the premature change of governments. It is caused by factors such as lack of accountability, corruption, internal and external conflicts, and foreign interference. The effects of political instability are detrimental to a country's economy, peace, education, and international trade. The media's role in creating political instability through sensationalism, biased reporting, and manipulation of public opinion is a concerning issue. Print media, electronic media, and social media all contribute to the influence on political stability. In the case of Pakistan, the country has a history of political instability, with a constant struggle between democratic and military rule.

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Briefs

Pak slams IMF's 'intervention' in internal...

FROM PAGE 01
Dr Pasha confirmed reports that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif contacted IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva, adding that the premier assured the fund's chief that Pakistan will meet all its obligations. On May 27, PM Shehbaz contacted Georgieva, requesting her to help Pakistan revive the stalled \$6.5 billion facility.

The minister, in response to a question regarding Pakistan's plan of action in case it fails to convince the fund before the expiry of the programme – June 30 – said: "The Ministry of Finance is not sitting with its eyes closed, there is always a Plan B but our priority is to revive the IMF programme." Commenting on the upcoming budget, the state minister assured the masses that the finance bill will aim at providing relief to the people as this will be an "election year budget".

UK CGS lauds Pak Army's...

FROM PAGE 01
"The visiting dignitary acknowledged the sacrifices and achievements of the Pakistan Army in the fight against terrorism and efforts for bringing peace and stability in the region," the ISPR said. The statement added that Gen Sir Sanders also called on Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Sahir Shamshad Mirza at the Joint Staff Headquarters in Rawalpindi earlier today. The British army chief arrived in Pakistan on Monday for a five-day "defence engagement" visit.

Commission objects to bench...

FROM PAGE 01
Defending the commission, the response said that it had no personal interest in the inquiry and had been given this responsibility under the law. "The commission will fulfil its responsibility according to the constitution and law," it stated, further pledging that any objections raised by the parties concerned would be taken into account. Moreover, the commission also objected to the procedure in which the 5-member bench was formed. "The matter of bench formation was not placed before the Judges Committee," the response said. In light of these points, the commission asserted that it would be better if the 5-member bench postpones the hearing till the formation of the bench by the Judiciary Committee. The Registrar's Office returned the federal government's petition objecting to the involvement of CJP Bandial, Justice Ijazul Ahsan and Justice Munib Akhtar in the five-member bench. Citing "conflicts of interest", the government had requested that they recuse themselves from the bench.

CJP consults SJC...

FROM PAGE 01
Enquiry Rules 2005, "once any information in respect of enquiry into the conduct of a judge is received by any member or the council, it shall be presented to the chairman of the council, who; shall (a) refer the same to any member of the council to look into the said information; and to express his opinion in relation to the sufficiency or otherwise of the information; (b) if the council is satisfied that the information prima facie discloses sufficient material for an enquiry, it shall proceed to consider the same". It added that "the member, to whom the chairman has referred the information, will examine the same and ascertain if the information so received discloses specific particulars of misconduct, and provides factual details necessary to form prima facie opinion in respect of the guilt of the judge".

Under Pakistan's Chairpersonship
Silver Jubilee of G-77
Vienna Chapter celebrated

The chairpersonship of the G-77 Vienna Chapter rotates on annual basis among its member countries and is presently held by Pakistan with Ambassador Aftab Ahmad Khokher, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN in Vienna, serving as the chairperson for 2023

DNA

VIENNA: The completion of 25 years of the establishment of the Vienna Chapter of the Group of 77 (G-77) was celebrated today at the Vienna International Centre. The event was attended by the Permanent Representatives of the G-77 member countries, executive heads and representatives of the Vienna-based UN and multilateral organisations and the diplomatic community. The chairpersonship of the G-77 Vienna Chapter rotates on annual basis among its member countries and is presently held by Pakistan with Ambassador Aftab Ahmad Khokher, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN in Vienna, serving as the chairperson for 2023.

A video message by Foreign Minister of Pakistan Mr. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari was screened at the opening of the event in which he paid

tribute to the role of the G-77 as an effective platform for developing countries to claim their rightful role in global decision-making, articulate their aspirations and protect their collective interests within the UN system. He said that the G-77 had helped developing countries translate their political freedom into meaningful social and economic progress by enhancing their influence in shaping the global development agenda. Underscoring Pakistan's commitment to the common interests of developing countries, he thanked members of the G-77 in reposing their trust in Pakistan and its Permanent Mission in Vienna led by Ambassador Aftab Ahmad Khokher. In his remarks as the G-77 Chairperson, Ambassador Khokher said that the founding of the G-77 Vienna Chapter in 1998 was an important milestone in institutionalizing the presence of the G-77 countries' Perma-

nent Missions accredited to the Vienna-based organizations. With the setting up of the permanent liaison office of the Vienna Chapter, G-77 in Vienna was brought at par with other chapters in New York, Geneva, Rome, Paris and Nairobi. He said that the Group's diversity was its strength and its unity and solidarity sprang from the shared historical experiences and future aspirations of its members. He added that as the Group celebrated its successes in Vienna over the previous 25 years, it also needed to reflect on the continued challenges ahead including poverty and underdevelopment, food and energy insecurity, drug abuse and organized crime, climate change and conflict as well as the migration crises they triggered. He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to working closely with fellow members of the Group, its external partners and the Vien-

na-based UN Organizations in dealing with these challenges. Present on the occasion were Ms. Ghada Fathi Waly, Director General, UN Industrial Development Organization, Vienna and Executive Director of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime; Mr. Gerd Muller, Director General, UN Industrial Development Organizations, Mr. Hua Liu, Deputy Director General, Head of the Department of Technical Cooperation, International Atomic Energy Agency; Mr. Junan Zhang, Director Legal and External, Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization; Ms. Anna Joubin-Bret, Secretary, UN Commission on International Trade Law; and Mr. Niklas Hedman, Acting Director, UN Office for Outer Space Affairs. In their remarks, they reaffirmed their respective organizations' commitment to working closely with the G-77 in the pursuit of common objectives. The first founding chairperson

of the G-77 Vienna Chapter, Ms. Nozopho J. Mxakato-Diseko (Ambassador at Large for Peace and Security, South Africa), joined the event virtually. A commemorative plaque marking 25 years of the G-77's Vienna Chapter was unveiled by Ambassador Aftab Ahmad Khokher. It will remain at permanent display at the Vienna International Centre which serves as the headquarters of Vienna-based UN organizations. The G-77 is a grouping of 134 developing countries which strives to take common negotiating positions across the UN system to protect and promote the interests of the Global South. Its cross-regional membership makes it an authentic articulator of the greatest coalition of humanity in the UN system. Pakistan has traditionally been one of the G-77's most active members including in Vienna where, in addition to holding its Chairpersonship, it has also led the Group's various Task Forces.

French sports minister condemns Djokovic message on Kosovo

PARIS: France's sports minister condemned Novak Djokovic on Wednesday after he wrote a message saying Kosovo was at the "heart of Serbia" following his victory in the opening round of Roland Garros. The Belgrade-born tennis superstar scrawled "Kosovo is the heart of Serbia. Stop the violence" on a camera on Monday in Paris amid clashes between ethnic Albanians and Serbs in the territory. Kosovo, mostly populated by Muslim ethnic Albanians, broke away from the then-Yugoslavia in the late 1990s and declared independence in 2008, in a move that has never been accepted by neighbouring Christian-majority Serbia or its ally Russia. French Sports Minister Amelie Oudea-Castera told broadcaster France 2 that Djokovic's message was "not appropriate, clearly". "There's a principle of neutrality for the field of play. When you carry messages about defending human rights, messages that bring people together around universal values, a sportsperson is free to express them.

"But in this case it was a message that is very activist, that is very political. You shouldn't get involved, especially in the current circumstances, and it shouldn't happen again," added Oudea-Castera, who is the former head of the French tennis federation. She added that the director of Roland Garros, Amelie Mauresmo, had spoken to Djokovic and his entourage. Thirty peacekeepers from a NATO-led force in Kosovo were injured in clashes with ethnic Serb demonstrators on Monday during protests about the installation of ethnic Albanian mayors in northern Kosovo. – Agencies

Ball in govt's court over Pakistan's World Cup participation

SPORTS DESK

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has informed the International Cricket Council (ICC) Chairman Greg Barclay and Chief Executive Geoff Allardice that the country's participation in the World Cup in India later this year was dependent on the government's permission. The officials of PCB held a crucial meeting with top officials from the ICC, who arrived in Lahore for a two-day visit on Tuesday. They were received by Najam Sethi, who is the chairman of the PCB Management Committee. It has been learnt that the PCB made it clear that it would follow the directives of the Pakistani government regarding the World Cup if the Indian team did not visit Pakistan for the Asia Cup. While the meeting addressed the PCB's share in ICC revenue and matters concerning the Asian Cricket Council (ACC), an agreement was not reached. As a result, negotiations between the PCB and ICC officials are set to continue for another day before the ICC officials leave. According to ESPNcricinfo, if the proposed revenue model is approved, India's new revenue share would stand at 38.5 percent, while England and Australia would bag 6.89 and 6.25 percent respectively. Meanwhile, Pakistan is set to earn 5.75 percent of the ICC's projected earnings, which will come primarily through ICC's \$3 billion media rights deal for 2024-27. It will be voted on at ICC's next board meeting in July in Durban. While Allardice has regularly visited Pakistan, first as ICC General Manager – Cricket and then as ICC Chief Execu-



tive, this will be Barclay's first visit to Pakistan. Barclay will be the first ICC Chairman to tour Pakistan since ICC President Ray Mali's visit in 2008. This will also be the first time since October 2004 when both the top two ICC officials will together visit the Pakistan cricket headquarters.

Klopp pays glowing tribute to Keita

LONDON: Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp lauded Naby Keita after the midfielder decided to leave the club after five years. During his time with the Reds, Keita won the UEFA Champions League as well as the Premier League. "Naby is an exceptional footballer, what a player he is. Maybe one or two injuries too many just hindered him from getting really through," Klopp was quoted as saying by liverpoolfc.com. "But if you go through – and I would really recommend that – if you go through our really big games of Liverpool FC you might be surprised how often Naby was in the starting line-up and how often he

played incredibly well. "It was a bit of a shame, when it was really going well then a little injury here, a little muscle thing there. That was not too cool and that is probably what people might remember as well, but in his moment he is world-class, without a shadow of a doubt. "And I wish him the best of luck because he as well won absolutely everything here at Liverpool, which not a lot of people can say." Klopp also recalled his favourite moments involving Keita, which included club's fastest ever goal in the Premier League with his 2019 strike against Huddersfield Town netted just 15 seconds after kick-off. "For sure [against] Hudders-

field, a very early goal in the game – a high press, going there and going between and finishing the situation off," the manager said. "It was a high-press situation and in the end Naby finished it off. It must have been at that time one of the really earliest Premier League goals I think, that's at least how it is in my mind. "A lot of other goals [were] fantastic shots, funny celebrations when everybody looked really surprised – Naby, this little man shooting like a real thunderbolt and you see him just standing there and smiling. It was absolutely great. "Again, just the best of luck for the rest of his life because he deserves it. – APP

Martial ruled out of FA Cup final

LONDON: Manchester United forward Anthony Martial will miss Saturday's FA Cup final against Manchester City due to a hamstring problem. The Frenchman sustained the injury after coming off the bench against Fulham on Sunday in United's final game of the Premier League season. "Anthony Martial is out of Saturday's FA Cup final against Manchester City due to injury," United said in a statement Tuesday. "The France international strained his hamstring towards the end of Sunday's 2-1 win against Fulham at Old Trafford. "Assessments have since revealed a muscle tear that rules the 27-year-old out of the Wembley showdown. – APP

Home favorite Garcia beaten by Blinkova at French Open

PARIS: Home favourite Caroline Garcia became the highest-ranked women's player to exit the French Open so far with a second-round loss to Anna Blinkova. Fifth seed Garcia saved eight match points before succumbing to a 4-6 6-3 7-5 defeat by the Russian. Garcia is the 16th seed to exit the women's draw as the second round got under way on Wednesday. It came after former champion Jelena Ostapenko suffered a shock defeat by tournament debutant Peyton Stearns. Latvian 17th seed Ostapenko, the 2017 champion at Roland Garros, lost 6-3 1-6 6-2 to the American. Stearns, 21, is playing in her first overseas Grand Slam after making her major debut at last year's US Open. Her first-round victory over doubles world number one Katerina Siniakova was her first at a Grand Slam. She will face ninth seed Daria Kasatkina next, after the Russian breezed past Marketa Vondrousova 6-3 6-4. Third seed Jessica Pegula advanced as Italy's Camila Giorgi withdrew through injury after losing the first set 6-2. American Pegula will next play Belgian 28th seed Elise Mertens, who defeated Colombia's Camila Osorio 6-3 7-6 (7-3). Earlier, Ukraine's Elina Svitolina recovered from a shaky start to beat Australian Storm Hunter 2-6 6-3 6-1. Three-time French Open quarter-finalist Svitolina, making her Grand Slam return after becoming a mother in October, will play Blinkova next. – Agencies

Imran says PTI doesn't need...

FROM PAGE 01

the party as several senior PTI leaders – including Fawad Chaudhry, Shireen Mazari, Aamir Kiyani, Memood Moulvi, Saifullah Niayzi, Ali Zaidi, and Imran Ismail – have announced to part ways with Imran Khan and condemned May 9 events. The PTI chief, however, claimed that Pakistan Democratic Movement's (PDM) vote bank has fallen and whenever elections are held, the PTI will win. "We have given tickets to more than 300 people, the rest are hiding." Meanwhile, an accountability court in Islamabad granted Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan bail in the infamous £190 million settlement case till June 19 (20 days). The PTI chairman had approached the accountability court after IHC had directed him to seek bail in the settlement case from an accountability court.

PTI deserters meet Qureshi

FROM PAGE 01

Imran Ismail, Mahmood Moulvi and Aamir Kiyani met Qureshi in the prison and tried to convince him to part ways with the deposed prime minister, who was removed from office via a vote of no-confidence in April last year, the well-placed sources confirmed. Addressing a press conference following a meeting with detained PTI leader, Fawad – once a close aide of Khan – said that 250 million people could not be left at the mercy of component parties of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) – a multi-party ruling alliance led by Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JULF) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman. "250 million people can't be left at the mercy of [Pakistan Peoples Party co-chairman] Asif Ali Zardari and [Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz supremo] Nawaz Sharif," he added.

China blames US for...

FROM PAGE 01

The Chinese plane "flew directly in front of and within 400 feet [122 metres] of the nose of the RC-135, forcing the US aircraft to fly through its wake turbulence" on Friday, the Indo-Pacific Command said in a statement. "The RC-135 was conducting safe and routine operations over the South China Sea in international airspace, in accordance with international law," it added. The incident comes at a time of frayed ties between Washington and Beijing over issues including Taiwan, which China regards as its territory, and the shooting down of an alleged Chinese spy balloon that flew over the US this year. The Pentagon said the incident was part of a pattern by China.

2 terrorists killed in N. Waziristan

FROM PAGE 01

resulting in the killing of two terrorists," the ISPR said. It added that weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the terrorists. The military's media wing further said that the terrorists were "actively" involved in activities against "security forces and killing of innocent citizens". The sanitisation of the area is being carried out to eliminate any terrorists found in the area. It also said that "locals of the area appreciated the operation and expressed their full support to eliminate the menace of terrorism".

Australia supports...

FROM PAGE 01

Lahore to underline Australia's support for a stable, prosperous and democratic Pakistan that protects fundamental freedoms. He urged leaders to work towards 'Ijma' (consensus) at this difficult time. The Australian envoy used Arabic word 'Ijma' because he is very well conversant with the Arabic language. Neil Hawkins met with PML Senior Vice President Maryam Nawaz, PTI Chairman and former Prime Minister Imran Khan and Jehangir Tareen.

Jose Mourinho downplays Sevilla fear factor

DNA

BUDAPEST: Jose Mourinho said Tuesday that "history does not play" as he prepares his Roma team to face Europa League specialists Sevilla in the final in Budapest. The Italian side, who can finish no higher than fifth in Serie A, meet the six-time winners at the Puskas Arena, just 12 months after they won the inaugural Europa Conference League. Mourinho said Roma deserved to be in the showpiece match in the Hungarian capital after an arduous journey. "It has been a long journey, different from our opponents, who dropped into this competition from the Champions League," he told his pre-match press conference on Tuesday. Mourinho said he was aware of the Spanish club's perfect record in finals in Europe's second-tier competition – they have won all six they have played. But the Portuguese coach downplayed the relevance of that achievement. "History does not play," he said. "My colleague (Sevilla coach Jose Luis Mendilibar) thinks otherwise – I have respect for him. "He believes that history makes Sevilla favourites, I respect that. We are in the final because we deserve to be here.

"They have a history that we do not have, they have experience that we don't have, they have the normal for us extraordinary event but row when starts we will be

there." Mourinho left Inter Milan for Real Madrid shortly after winning the 2010 Champions League final and he was asked whether he could do the same this year, potentially taking the joy out of the event. "There's a big difference with the situation I had when I was at Inter," he said, addressing speculation over his future. "I hadn't actually signed a contract with Real Madrid at that stage even though the deal was done but at this moment in time I've had no contact with any other clubs and that's why we're talking about a completely different situation. "But I'm not bothered about that.

his coaching career. The 60-year-old played down the idea that his extra experience at the European level compared with that of Mendilibar, 62, could be decisive. "I've had more chances to play in Europe but we're talking about two coaches who belong to the same generation, with the same amount of years of experience and the same kind of grey hair, so I think we are pretty much level, in a similar situation," he said. Mendilibar, who only took charge in March after a turbulent season for the Spanish club, and who has never won a major trophy, said he was appreciative of Mourinho's comments.

"I'm really grateful for his words but history does not win games and sweet-talking does not win games either," said the Spaniard, whose team beat Manchester United and Juventus on the way to the final. "It's going to be super-complicated. We've eliminated great teams but the most difficult one is ahead of us." Mourinho, as he left his press conference, suggested that Argentine forward Paulo Dybala, who has been struggling with injury, could be fit enough to play for 20 to 30 minutes.



Briefs

PNRA awards
OL to K-3

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA) on Wednesday granted Operating License (OL) to Karachi Nuclear Power Plant Unit-3 (K-3) upon completion of the licensing process under regulations PAK/909 and demonstration of safe operation of the plant.

The licensing process for OL includes review of licensing submissions, inspections during initial fuel loading, initial criticality, low power and power ascension tests, and operation at full power, said a press release issued here on Wednesday.

K-3 is a Chinese designed (Hualong One) Pressurized Water Reactor (PWR) of 1100 Megawatt electric (Mwe) and it is the second such unit deployed at the Karachi site adding 1100 MWe to the national grid. Earlier in June 2022, PNRA also granted Operating License to Karachi Nuclear Power Plant Unit-2 (K-2) with an installed capacity of 1100 Mwe.

The site for K-3 was registered in May 2014 and Construction License was awarded in November 2015. PNRA issued Fuel Load Permit (FLP) to K-3 in December 2021 following the completion of review & assessment of Final Safety Analysis Report (FSAR) and other relevant documents. After successful completion of criticality and pre-operational tests, K-3 submitted the application for issuance of Operating License in October 2022.—APP

Ahmed
Ghulam
Ali Chagla
remembered

ISLAMABAD: Renowned musician Ahmed Ghulam Ali Chagla, who wrote the score for the national anthem of Pakistan, in 1950 was remembered on his birth anniversary.

Ahmed Chagla was born into a prominent Karachi family on May 31, 1902.

He attended the Sindh Madrassat-ul-Islam in Karachi and took lessons in classical Indian music in 1910 and western musical composition in 1914. After the creation of Pakistan in 1948, Chagla was chosen as a member of the National Anthem Committee (NAC) of Pakistan, chored with creating a fresh national anthem. The NAC examined several different tunes and selected a tune presented by Chagla which was submitted for formal approval. Chagla then produced the musical composition in collaboration with other committee members including Radio Pakistan's first director-general Zulfikar Ali Bukhari and musician Nihal Abdullah and assisted by the Pakistan Navy band. He was also an author, journalist and writer with most of his articles written prior to the partition of India in 1947. He also composed music for numerous Urdu Gujarati Sindhi and English plays and composed music on Eastern and Western instruments for different films.—APP

07 proclaimed
offenders held

RAWALPINDI: The police during a crackdown here on Wednesday, arrested seven proclaimed offenders wanted in various heinous crimes. Rawat police held Malik Ali who was wanted in the case of attempted murder. He shot and injured Asad Ali and Usman along with other accomplices over a property dispute. Similarly, Naseerabad police nabbed Ghulam Rasool who was involved in a kidnapping and rape case. While Pirwadhai Police arrested two wanted criminals Umar Hayat and Saeed ur Rahman in a fraudulent case.

Following the operation, New Town Police netted Kamran in fraudulent case and the same police held Taimur Fayyaz on violation of renting laws while Waqas Mazhar was also arrested for misguiding police in the case. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Investigation Zunaira Azfar hailed the performance of police teams and said, "Strict action will be continued on such anti-social elements."—APP

US envoy slaps sanctions on
Kosovo over recent tensions

NEWS DESK

BELGRADE: US Ambassador to Kosovo Jeffrey Hovenier has said that the US will impose sanctions on Kosovo over recent tensions in the north.

Speaking to reporters on Tuesday in the capital Pristina, Hovenier said the Kosovo government did not coordinate with the US regarding the actions carried out in the north where ethnic Serbs are protesting the election of Albanian mayors. Defender Europe 2023, the largest military exercise of NATO allies in the Balkan region, has come to an end for Kosovo and this will be the first of the sanctions, said Hovenier. He added that this crisis will affect the relations between Kosovo and the US.

"We think this is a very urgent situation. The comparison I made is that you need to put out the fire, just like your house is on fire. Therefore, in terms of our expectations for the government to take action to pacify the situation in the north, we think that this is a very urgent situation. I don't think you'll see

much patience," said Hovenier. In addition, Hovenier announced that sanctions such as blocking Kosovo leaders' visits to the US and stopping US lobbying activities against countries that do not recognize Kosovo's independence could be imposed. Hovenier asked Kosovo's Prime Minister Albin Kurti to not insist that controversial mayors work in municipal buildings and that the police units be withdrawn from these buildings. "We believe that the government should not insist that mayors work in municipal buildings. The government managed to find alternative locations where they took their oaths. We do not understand why they could not use these alternative locations or other public buildings to perform administrative functions," said Hovenier. Hovenier said that the US wants the mayors of the four majority Serb municipalities to perform only administrative functions because they do not have strong mandates. "There is a need for elected officials to proceed very cautiously, to accept that they do not have a large political man-

date to bring about changes," said Hovenier. Kosovo prime minister backs new mayors Prime Minister Kurti on the other hand said that the new mayors have the government's full unconditional support along with the police units. "The Kosovo Police and the NATO-led international peacekeeping mission in Kosovo (KFOR) in the north of Kosovo are the border between violent extremists and peaceful institutions," he said. Kurti claimed that the elected municipal presidents are the only ones with the legitimacy to be in municipal buildings and at the service of citizens. "Therefore, they have our full, unconditional and unwavering support," said Kurti. The remarks came despite condemnation by the EU, US, NATO, and China as well as Germany and many other countries. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken demanded that Kosovo halt the violent measures. China on Tuesday put its weight behind Serbia amid the Balkan nation's renewed conflict with neighboring Kosovo. At least 30 soldiers of the NATO-led international peace-

keeping mission in Kosovo (KFOR) were injured on Monday in clashes with protesting Serbs. Tensions have gripped Kosovo with protesters and security forces clashing in the country's northern Serb-dominated municipalities over the election of ethnic Albanian mayors. Meanwhile, more than 53 civilians suffered injuries from shock bombs and tear gas, hospital sources said. Since Monday morning, Serb protesters have gathered outside the Serb-dominated Zvecan Municipality in northern Kosovo to bar newly elected Albanian mayors from entering municipal buildings. The protesters attempted to breach the police cordon in front of the town hall, the police said in a statement, adding that they used tear gas to disperse the crowd. KFOR units also used tear gas and stun grenades to disperse the protesters, who did not retreat and responded with stones and sticks. Last month, Kosovo Serbs boycotted extraordinary local government elections for four municipalities in the country's north. Only 3.47% of eligible voters cast ballots.

NATO-led
peacekeepers
step up security

NATO has decided to deploy hundreds of reinforcements to strengthen Kosovo's international peacekeeping mission (KFOR) after Monday's violence in the town of Zvecan. Hundreds of ethnic Serbs rallied outside Zvecan's town hall on Wednesday for a third consecutive day and held aloft a huge Serbian flag that stretched over 200 meters (660 feet) from the municipal building to the town centre. KFOR soldiers encircled the town hall, additionally securing the building with a metal fence and barbed wire, an AFP journalist said. Kosovo's ethnic Serb minority boycotted local elections in the north last month, allowing ethnic Albanians to take control of local councils despite a turnout of less than 3.5 percent. Many Serbs are demanding the withdrawal of Kosovo special police forces, as well as the ethnic Albanian mayors they do not consider their true representatives. Hundreds of ethnic Serbs gathered outside Zvecan town hall in northern Kosovo on Wednesday. The demonstrators decorated the fence - erected by KFOR soldiers - with Serbian flags. They also carried a flag dedicated to Belgrade-born tennis star Novak Djokovic, who wrote a message on a TV camera at the French Open on Monday calling Kosovo the "heart of Serbia". Three vehicles of ethnic Albanian Kosovo special police - whose presence sparks controversy in Serb-majority northern areas - remained parked outside the town hall. On Monday, NATO-led peacekeepers used shields and batons in a bid to disperse the crowd but were met by a hail of rocks, bottles and Molotov cocktails.—Agencies

Pak lauds ICNA for promoting Islam,
offers thanks for flood donation

DNA

WASHINGTON: Pakistan Ambassador to the US, Masood Khan, has praised the role of the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA), an organization that promotes the Islamic way of life among American Muslims, and thanked it for mobilizing \$15 million to help Pakistani flood victims. We will always remember ICNA for generating \$15 million to help victims of floods and its leaders for visiting flood areas during the height of the catastrophe, he said in the course of a discussion on Scholars and Community Leaders Recognition Lunch at ICNA's annual held in Baltimore, Maryland, this year. The same spirit of humanitarianism drove ICNAs campaign to collect funds



for the victims of devastating earthquakes in Turkey and Syria early this year, raising more than \$10 million, the ambassador said. More than 25,000 people attended the three-day convention during which 160 speaking sessions were held, addressed by more than 100 distinguished

speakers. American Muslims from across the US and different parts of the world along with their families participated. Senator Mushtaq Ahmed from Pakistan and the Turkish Ambassador to the United States, Hasan Murat Mercan, were also present. In his remarks, Ambassa-

dor Masood Khan said that ICNA has, over the years, raised awareness about the tenets and practices of Islam anchored in humanitarianism. "In doing so, ICNA has contributed to individual self-development and community connectivity," he added. Paying tributes to Dr Mohsin Ansari, the President of ICNA, he said that this organization had advocated the protection of the rights of Muslims and non-Muslims alike to create a harmonious society. On his part, Ansari highlighted the organization's achievements, and briefed the participants about a range of humanitarian services that ICNA was rendering to the people regardless of any consideration whatsoever. During the convention, Mercan, the Turkish ambassador, was awarded the Community Service Award by ICNA for his untiring efforts.

Unilateralism
in decline on
global stage

TEHRAN: Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi has said unilateralism is in decline on the global stage, underlining how it is rather the regional countries and establishments, which are coming to the fore in determining international equations and future developments. Raeisi made the remarks on Tuesday, meeting with Kairat Sarybay, the visiting secretary general of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA). Since the establishment of CICA by Kazakhstan in 1992, the body has been serving as an inter-governmental forum striving to enhance cooperation toward the promotion of peace, security, and stability in Asia. Russia and China as well as countries like Iran, the United Arab Emirates, and Turkey are members of CICA. Raeisi judged the course of international developments to be headed towards multilateralism, stating, "With the [underway] decline of unilateralism in the world, it is [rather] the countries of the region and regional organizations that determine the future of [both] the region and the world." The Iranian chief executive noted that CICA holds profuse and manifold capacities that could be used towards the enhancement of interaction among its members. He also laid emphasis on the need for the existence of sustainable communication among the body's member states. Raeisi hoped that the member states' contribution and expansion of the activities of the body's secretariat would give way to further fortification of CICA's standing.—APP

Musk talks
'new energy
vehicles' with
Chinese
minister

BEIJING: Elon Musk and China's industry minister discussed ways to develop new energy vehicles Wednesday, a day after the Tesla CEO flew into Beijing and declared he wanted to expand his business in the world's second-largest economy. The mercurial billionaire, one of the world's richest men, is on his first trip to China in more than three years. On Wednesday he met Jin Zhuanglong in Beijing to discuss "the development of new energy vehicles and intelligent connected vehicles", the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology said in a readout.

It did not share further details. Tesla representatives did not respond to AFP requests for further information on Musk's itinerary. Musk has extensive business interests in China and on Tuesday told foreign minister Qin Gang that his firm was "willing to continue to expand its business in China", according to a foreign ministry readout. Chinese media reported Tesla welcomed its CEO to Beijing on Tuesday with a 16-course dinner that included seafood, New Zealand lamb and traditional Beijing-style soybean paste noodles.—APP

NATO
condemns
N. Korea's
satellite
launch

BRUSSELS: The NATO secretary general on Wednesday condemned North Korea's military satellite launch, calling on the country's leadership to "cease these provocative actions" "I strongly condemn the attempted military satellite launch by the DPRK, using ballistic missile technology," Jens Stoltenberg said in a statement. He stressed that North Korea's move "raises tensions," risks the region's security, and constitutes a "blatant breach" of UN Security Council resolutions. Calling on North Korea to return to dialogue in order to achieve "the complete and verifiable denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula," Stoltenberg said: "We stand together with our close partners" in the region - South Korea and Japan. Launched earlier on Wednesday, North Korea's satellite "crashed into the West Sea of Korea as it lost momentum due to abnormal start-up of the two-stage engine after one step separation while flying normally," the Korean Central News Agency announced. Based on ballistic missile technology, the satellite was believed to be built to gather military intelligence for North Korea.—Agencies

Britain 'de
facto' at war
with Russia

MOSCOW: Former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev has described the UK as waging an "undeclared war" against Russia. The comment came after Britain's foreign secretary condoned a large-scale drone attack on Moscow earlier this week. In a Twitter post on Wednesday, Medvedev accused London of being Moscow's "eternal enemy." The former leader, who currently serves as deputy chair of Russia's Security Council, claimed that based on international law, "including the Hague and Geneva Conventions with their additional protocols," Britain "can also be qualified as being at war." The former president argued that by providing Ukraine with weapons and training, the UK "de facto is leading an undeclared war against Russia." Medvedev hinted that this could have direct ramifications for "public officials" in Britain. His tweet cited remarks made on Tuesday by UK Foreign Secretary James Cleverly, who said Ukraine has the right to "project force beyond its borders to undermine Russia's ability to project force into Ukraine itself." Cleverly further claimed that striking "legitimate military targets" in Russia is an acceptable part of Ukraine's self-defense.—DNA

China tells Pentagon
Dialogue
important but not
sans principles

BEIJING: China's Defense Ministry on Wednesday acknowledged the importance of maintaining communication with its US counterpart but said the "principles" guiding bilateral relations could not be ignored. "China attaches great importance to the development of Sino-US military relations and communication at all levels," said Tan Kefei, spokesman of China's Defense Ministry. Tan said in a statement that dialogue "cannot be without principles, and communication cannot be without a bottom line." "The current difficulties in the exchanges between the two militaries are entirely on the US side. "On the one hand, the US keeps saying that it wants to strengthen communication, but on the other hand, it ignores China's concerns and artificially creates obstacles, seriously undermining the mutual trust between the two militaries," said the Chinese Defense Ministry spokesman. The Defense Ministry statement came after the Pentagon requested a meeting of the defense chiefs of the two countries on the sidelines of an annual security forum in Singapore. Beijing declined the request. Chinese State Councilor and Defense Minister Gen. Li Shangfu is attending the 20th Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore from May 31 to June 4. Lloyd Austin, the US defense secretary, is also attending the dialogue, where global leaders and policymakers will come together to discuss important issues. On Tuesday, China's Foreign Ministry asked the US to create a "necessary atmosphere" for bilateral dialogue.—Agencies



ASTANA: Pakistan ambassador to Kazakhstan, Naumab Bashir Bhatti presented his Letter of Credence to Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan.— Dna

Brazil's Lula calls for South American unity

This is the first summit of regional leaders since 2014 in Ecuador, at a gathering of UNASUR, a continental bloc launched in 2008 by Lula and Maduro's mentor, late Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez. That was the moment of Latin America's so-called "pink tide" of left-wing governments in the region

BRASILIA: Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva called for South American unity Tuesday as he hosted fellow leaders for a regional "retreat," but drew barbs for his warm welcome of Venezuelan socialist Nicolas Maduro. Veteran leftist Lula, who returned to office in January after leading Brazil from 2003 to 2010, is looking to strengthen diplomatic ties in a region where left-wing governments are newly back in style. But he faced criticism for hosting Maduro, a pariah in some quarters for his government's alleged human-rights violations and crackdown on political dissent - a depiction Lula questioned Monday as a hostile "narrative." The issue exposed fissures at what was meant to be a display of South American diplomatic goodwill and cooperation. "I was surprised to hear what's happening in Venezuela described as a 'narrative,'" said Uruguay's center-right President Luis Lacalle Pou, who has labeled Maduro a "dictator." "The worst thing

we can do is try to sweep that under the rug," he told the summit. "Human rights must be respected everywhere, always, no matter the political colors of the leader in power," said Chile's left-wing President Gabriel Boric. However, Boric backed the Venezuelan government's call for Washington and the European Union to lift sanctions on Maduro and his inner



circle. Maduro responded by saying Chile and Uruguay "have one vision" and Venezuela, "another." "The most important thing is that there has been a debate," he said, announcing "a new stage" of South American integration. Lula defended Maduro, whose country he said was experiencing a period of "tranquility." He had warmly welcomed Maduro to Brasilia Monday, reversing the policy of his far-right predecessor, Jair Bolsonaro (2019-2022), who had cut ties with Venezuela's socialist government and joined a US-led group of more than 50 countries in recognizing opposition leader Juan Guaido instead. Lula, who greeted Maduro with a hug, hailed it as a "new moment" in the countries' relations. Eleven of South America's 12 heads of state attended the Brasilia summit, the first of its kind in nearly a decade, which Lula said turned the page on an era of divisions. The only absence was Peruvian President Dina Boluarte. "We let ideology divide us and interrupt our efforts to

integrate. We abandoned our channels of dialogue and our mechanisms of cooperation, and we all lost because of it," Lula said in his opening remarks. The 77-year-old took a jab at Bolsonaro, saying his predecessor - who closely allied himself with US ex-president Donald Trump - had "closed our doors to historic partners." This is the first summit of regional leaders since 2014 in Ecuador, at a gathering of UNASUR, a continental bloc launched in 2008 by Lula and Maduro's mentor, late Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez. That was the moment of Latin America's so-called "pink tide" of left-wing governments in the region. Now, some political analysts are talking of a "new pink tide" with the elections of Lula, Boric and Colombia's Gustavo Petro. Lula wants to get the region cooperating again. His government has touted projects such as a "Bi-Oceanic Corridor," a transportation artery to enable countries to ship goods across the continent overland instead of by sea.—Agencies

Briefs

UAE withdraws from US-led maritime coalition

WEB DESK

DUBAI: The United Arab Emirates has withdrawn from a United States-led maritime coalition after an extensive evaluation of its security needs, its Ministry of Foreign Affairs says.

"As a result of our ongoing evaluation of effective security cooperation with all partners, two months ago, the UAE withdrew its participation in the Combined Maritime Forces," the ministry said on Wednesday in a statement quoted by state news agency WAM.

The UAE also said it was committed to dialogue and diplomatic engagement to advance regional security and stability as well as ensuring navigation safety near its shores in accordance with international law. The decision marks a pivotal moment in the region's geopolitical landscape, altering the dynamics of international cooperation in maritime security.

The 34-nation task force headquartered at the US naval base in Bahrain was formed to counter terrorism and piracy in the Red Sea and Gulf areas. The region contains some of the world's most important shipping routes, and since 2019, there have been a series of attacks on vessels at times of tension between the US and Iran.

Centre-right lawmakers quit EU talks on nature law

DNA

BRUSSELS: The biggest lawmaker group in the European Parliament on Wednesday walked out of negotiations on a landmark EU law to protect nature, dealing another blow to the contested proposal. The European Commission is attempting to salvage the planned law, which would set binding targets to restore damaged natural environments - hoping to reverse the rapid decline in species and health of ecosystems across the continent.

Political backlash against the proposal has mounted, however, with some governments and farming groups citing concerns about excessive red tape and the impact on farmers. French President Emmanuel Macron has suggested a pause on new EU environment legislation, while Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo questioned whether the nature law is needed. Meanwhile, the European People's Party - EU Parliament's largest lawmaker group - has called to reject it. EPP lawmakers on Wednesday walked out of negotiations on the law.

Abbasi against minus formula

DNA

KARACHI: Former premier Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on Wednesday spoke against the "minus formula" and said only voters would decide about the reality of PTI. Amid all the talk that PTI Chairman Imran Khan may face trial in a military court after the May 9 Mayhem and his party can be banned, Abbasi told reporters in the port city that the minus formula had never worked in Pakistan.

Mr Abbasi, however, said the PTI chairman considered himself above the law and did not even appear before any court. Law would take its course whether it was the attack on GHQ, setting ablaze the corps commander's house or any other incident, he made it clear.

The former prime minister recalled that he faced a trial for three years in a NAB case in Karachi, which was absurd in nature. "The court sent back this case to NAB yesterday. Imran now says that [former army chief was behind this [practice]]." He also said that those committing injustice to Nawaz Sharif must apologise and called for learning from the mistakes made in the past.

MoU signed with AKAH

Serena Hotels commitment to responsible tourism above board

Ready to set new benchmarks in green building practices and providing our guests, says Aziz Boolani

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels, a leading hospitality group committed to sustainable tourism, has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat (AKAH) to pursue IFC EDGE (Excellence in Design for Greater Efficiencies) Building Certification for its two upcoming hotels, Hunza Serena Hotel and Sost Serena Hotel. The signing ceremony took place at Islamabad Serena Hotel on May 31, 2023.

The MoU signifies a significant milestone for Serena Hotels as it further strengthens the company's commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainable practices in the construction and operation of its properties. The collaboration with the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat Pakistan, (formerly known as Aga Khan Planning and Building Service, Pakistan or AKPBS), a global leader in promoting resilient and sustainable habitat solutions, will technically assist that the new hotels are designed and built to the highest international standards of energy efficiency and resource conservation.

EDGE Certification is a globally recognized green building rating system developed by the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group. It promotes sustainable practices in the building industry by incorporating measures for energy efficiency, water conservation, and the use of environmentally friendly materials. By pursuing this certification, Serena Hotels aims to minimize



ISLAMABAD: CEO Serena Hotels South and East Asia Aziz Boolani, Ms. Nusrat Nasab, CEO AKAH exchange documents after signing the MoU for IFC Edge Building Certification, at the Islamabad Serena Hotel. - DNA

Speaking about the collaboration, Mr. Aziz Boolani CEO Serena Hotels, South and Central Asia said, "We are delighted to partner with the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat in our pursuit of IFC EDGE Certification for our new hotels. Sustainability lies at the heart of Serena Hotels' ethos, and this collaboration will enable us to enhance our commitment to responsible tourism. We look forward to setting new benchmarks in green building practices and providing our guests with an unforgettable and environmentally conscious stay."

Ms. Nusrat Nasab, CEO AKAH Pakistan stated, "Our collaboration with Serena Hotels will contribute towards the AKDN's Environment & Climate Commitment and our net-zero carbon emission goal. AKAH brings technical expertise in green buildings, climate smart initiatives and nature-based solutions. Hotel industries that are environmentally responsible, culturally sensitive, and aesthetically pleasing will definitely promote eco-friendly sustainable tourism and employment opportunities in the region".

The Hunza Serena and Sost Serena hotels, currently under construction, are strategically positioned in the breathtaking landscapes of Hunza and Sost in Pakistan. These properties are designed to blend harmoniously with the surroundings, taking inspiration from local architectural traditions and incorporating modern sustainability principles. Once completed, Hunza Serena and Sost Serena hotels will join Serena Hotels' portfolio of environmentally conscious properties, which have been recognized globally for their sustainable practices and commitment to community development.

5 Palestinian fighters killed in Lebanon blast

DNA

BEIRUT: The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - General Command (PFLP-GC) has blamed Israel for the killing of five of its members in a blast in eastern Lebanon, near the Syrian border. Anwar Raja, a PFLP-GC official, said an Israeli strike on Wednesday hit positions in the Lebanese town of Qusaya. He said 10 people were wounded, of which two were in critical condition.

However, unnamed Israeli sources told news agencies that Israel was not involved in the attack. No official comment came from Israel, nor from the Lebanese army or the Iran-backed Hezbollah group.

There were conflicting reports from Lebanese and Palestinian sources that the blast was a result of an old rocket going off in an arms depot or mines exploding while they were being moved. Another PFLP-GC official, Lebanon-based Abu Wael Issam, said his group will retaliate "at the suitable time". He added the strike would not deter his group from "escalating the fight against the Israeli enemy".

Wagner boss blasts Russia's elite following drone attack

DNA

MOSCOW: The head of Russia's Wagner mercenary force has again criticised the Russian military and political elite following the drone attack on Moscow that injured two people, damaged property and left some furious the Kremlin had not better protected the capital city.

In an expletive-drenched statement posted on Telegram by his press service on Tuesday, Yevgeny Prigozhin - whose mercenary fighters have played a key role in the war in Ukraine - blamed the drone attack on out-of-touch officials living in Moscow's affluent suburb of Rublyovka. "You, the Defence Ministry, have done nothing to launch an offensive," Prigozhin said. "How dare you allow the drones to reach Moscow?" "And what do ordinary people do when drones with explosives crash into their windows?"



LAHORE: Advisor to PM for Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan Affairs, Qamar uz Zaman Kaira calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Lahore on 31st May, 2023. - DNA

IHC wants to know 'who records audios'

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) Wednesday asked the government to inform it about the elements responsible for recording audios and stopped the special parliamentary body from proceeding against former chief justice (CJP) Saqib Nisar's son. Justice Babar Sattar made the remarks while hearing a plea filed by Najam Saqib, son of ex-CJP Nisar, against a special committee formed by National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf to probe audio clips allegedly featuring his voice. Moreover, Justice Sattar suspended the summoning notice issued to Najam by the special committee and removed the Registrar's Office's objections to the application. The court also issued notices to the federal government, asking it to appraise the court on the origins of the audios by June 19. "Who records these audios?" Justice Sattar asked, seeking a response from the federal government, further wondering under what authority the special committee took notice. - DNA

North Korea says spy satellite launch crashed into sea

NEWS DESK

PYONGYANG: North Korea has said an accident happened as it planned to send up its first space satellite, causing it to crash into the sea. Pyongyang announced earlier it planned to launch a satellite by 11 June to monitor US military activities. It now says it will attempt a second launch as soon as possible. The launch sparked a false alarm in the South Korean capital Seoul, while in Japan a warning was issued to residents of Okinawa, in the south. There was chaos and confusion in Seoul as people awoke to the sound of an air raid siren and an emergency message telling them to prepare for an evacuation - only to be told 20 minutes later it had been sent in error. The stakes are high on the Korean Peninsula, where tensions have existed between the two countries for 70 years, and this false alarm could seriously damage people's trust in the alert system.

Sudan's military suspends talks with rival paramilitary

Sudan descended into chaos after fighting erupted in mid-April between the military, led by Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan, and the RSF, commanded by Gen. Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo

NEWS DESK

CAIRO: Sudan's military suspended its participation in talks with a paramilitary force it's been battling for weeks for control of the northeastern African country, a military spokesman said Wednesday. Brig. Nabil Abdalla, a spokesman for the Sudanese armed forces, told media that the move is a protest against the Rapid Support Forces' "repeated violations" of the humanitarian cease-fire, including their continued occupation of hospitals and other civilian infrastructure in the capital, Khartoum.

Sudan descended into chaos after fighting erupted in mid-April between the military, led by Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan, and the RSF, commanded by Gen. Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo. The fighting has killed at least 866 civilians and wounded thousands more, according to the Sudanese Doctors' Syndicate, which tracks civilian casualties. The toll could be much higher, the medical group had previously said. Abdalla, the spokesman, said the military wants to ensure that the terms

of a US-Saudi-brokered truce "be fully implemented" before discussing further steps. He did not elaborate.

On May 21, both sides signed a cease-fire agreement allowing for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the restoration of essential services destroyed in the clashes. They also agreed to stop the looting of residential properties and humanitarian aid, as well as the taking over of civilian infrastructure such as hospitals and power plants.

So far, there have been seven declared cease-fires in the country, all of which have been violated to some extent. Responding to the military's move, the RSF said it "unconditionally backs the Saudi-US initiative."

On Tuesday, the military released footage that showed Burhan inspecting troops. The army chief warned that the military would resort to "full lethal force" if the RSF "doesn't respond to the voice of reason." The military's aircraft were also seen flying over the capital. Residents, meanwhile, reported clashes late Tuesday in parts of Khartoum and its neighboring city of Omdurman. Both sides traded blame for violating the cease-fire.

DeSantis bashes Trump as 2024 campaign swing begins

CLIVE: Florida Governor Ron DeSantis stepped up his attacks on Republican rival Donald Trump on Tuesday as he kicked off his first campaign swing as a presidential candidate in Iowa. While DeSantis rarely alluded to the former president during remarks at an evening rally, he showed less restraint afterward when taking questions from the media. DeSantis bashed Trump on issues such as immigration, COVID policy and federal spending, suggesting that he had drifted away from conservative principles as president. "Unfortunately, he's decided to move left on some of these issues," DeSantis said. Trump, the front-runner in the Republican race, recently assailed DeSantis' handling of the COVID pandemic, when DeSantis resisted federal mask and vaccine mandates. DeSantis called Trump's criticisms "detached from reality" and argued Republicans would respond by supporting him. "I think he's doing it in a way that the voters are going to side with me," DeSantis said. "Hell," he added, "his whole family moved to Florida under my governorship." Trump has been a Florida resident since leaving office and several of his children live in the state. Trump has repeatedly denigrated DeSantis' record and has argued that he has the best chance of defeating President Joe Biden in next year's election. - Agencies

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