



# Islamabad POST

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**Wagner group boss denies coup news in Russia**

Detailed News On Page-07

**Kyrgyz envoy for promoting capital market**

Detailed News On Page-08

**Mourinho eyes sixth European title**

Detailed News On Page-06



## Briefs

**Public relief a priority in budget: PM**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday said the provision of maximum relief to the masses and economic development would be among the Federal Government's priorities in the upcoming budget for fiscal 2023-24. The prime minister, chairing a meeting to discuss the budget proposals for the industrial sector, said the federal budget would also encompass the measures to enhance industrial growth as well as exports. He said he would personally make sure that the proposals coming for the industrial sector were incorporated into the budget.

**May 9 rioters also attacked police**

DNA

LAHORE: Caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday shared that those who attacked the police in Zaman Park on March 8 were also involved in the rioting that took place on May 9 after Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan's arrest. On March 8, the PTI chief planned to launch a rally in Lahore but things turned sour when the interim government-imposed Section 144 within the provincial capital. Following this, there was a clash between the police and PTI workers.

**Pak values contribution in peace-keeping**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar says Pakistan's contribution in UN peacekeeping missions across the world is reflective of its commitment to international efforts for peace. She was addressing an event titled '75 years of UN peacekeeping and Pakistan's contribution' held at Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Islamabad on Tuesday, in connection with UN Peacekeepers Day.

## 'Planning May 9 riots' Imran can be tried in military courts

**Rana Sanaullah accuses Imran of personally carrying out the planning of the attacks**

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah on Tuesday said PTI Chairman Imran Khan will be tried in a military court for the events of May 9 when violence erupted following his arrest and military installations came under attack. At least eight people were killed, as many as 290 were injured, and over 1,900 enraged protesters were rounded up in running battles with law enforcers across the country on May 9 when an accountability court in Islamabad handed over the custody of Imran to NAB in connection with the Al Qadir Trust case. The protesters had also stormed the residence of the corps commander in Lahore — also called Jinnah House — and tore down a gate of GHQ in Rawalpindi. In an appearance on TV show, Sanaullah accused Imran of personally carrying out the planning of the attacks on military installations before his arrest on the day, adding that there was evidence to prove the claim as well. When asked if Imran would be tried in the military court, Sanaullah said: "Absolutely, why shouldn't it. The program that he made to target the military installations and then had it executed, in my understanding it absolutely is a case of military court." The interior minister accused the PTI chief of

Continued on Page 06

**Parliament to retaliate if authority challenged**

**Wants three judges to recue from the bench**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Tuesday excoriated Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial for his inclusion in the five-member larger bench to hear petitions against the inquiry commission probing audio leaks involving judges. "Parliament will retaliate if its authority is challenged and if our writ comes under attack, the house will counterattack," the defence minister told the top

Continued on Page 06

**'Difficulties unprecedented'**

**Party members being tortured for standing with PTI, claims Imran**

**Seeks video link facility to join JIT probe**

DNA

LAHORE: PTI Chairman Imran Khan has alleged that many of those who left the party were now lobbying for further breakup. Addressing a speech via video link, the deposed premier alleged that many people, including party leaders, were tortured for standing with the party. "Ten thousand people, including workers and our supporters, were put in jails. Not only that, but they tortured many of them," he added. Mr Khan said, "Ejaz Chaudhry, Mian Mehmoodur Rasheed were subjected to torture. And then all our leadership is either in jail or people are hiding." Mr Khan underscored that party leaders are being tortured just because they make a statement that they stand with the party. Taking a swipe at the political opponents, Mr Khan claimed, "Now the incumbent government is

Continued on Page 06

**Non-bailable arrest warrants against Azam Swati**

ISLAMABAD: A lower court on Tuesday issued non-bailable arrest warrants against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) leader Azam Khan Swati in a controversial tweet case. The special judge of Central Islamabad heard the case against Azam Khan Swati. The court had summoned the accused for indictment in the case. However, Swati skipped his appearance triggering the court to issue non-bailable arrest warrants against him. It may be mentioned here that a first information report (FIR) was registered against Azam Khan Swati for tweeting a controversial statement about the state institutions. — APP

## IMF in touch with Pakistan authorities

**PM Shehbaz talks to IMF chief**



SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission chief has said that the International Monetary Fund continues engagement with Pakistani authorities, to pave the way for a board meeting before expiry of financing programme. The Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif talked to the IMF chief and asked her to facilitate Pakistan in getting the 9th review. The current IMF program expires at the end of June 2023. Talking to foreign media, the IMF mission chief Nathan Porter said that "the engagement will

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**Dar says 'IMF deal's 9th review not yet finalised'**

KHAYAM ABBASI

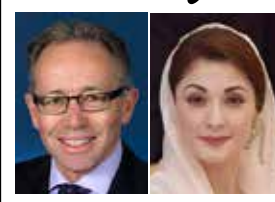
ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said on Tuesday that Pakistan's agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the programme's 9th review has not been finalised yet. While addressing an event at the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) headquarters, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said that everyone is aware of the country's situation and discussions regarding Pakistan's default had also happened in the past. "During [the previous tenure of] PML-N government, we stabilized the national economy within three years. Rupee was stable and

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister of Belarus Sergei Aleinik meets with Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari at the Foreign Office. — DNA

**Maryam meets Australian envoy**



DNA

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) senior vice-president Maryam Nawaz, held a meeting with Australian High Commissioner Neil Hawkins on Tuesday to discuss matters of mutual interest. During the meeting, Maryam Nawaz expressed her gratitude to Australia for its humanitarian assistance to Pakistan during the COVID-19 pandemic. She acknowledged the valuable

Continued on Page 06

## Pakistan-Belarus agree to beneficial partnership: FM

**Visas relaxation for holders of diplomatic, official passports announced**

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD,— Pakistan and Belarus have aspired to build a comprehensive and mutually beneficial partnership that contributes to the prosperity and wellbeing of the people of both the countries. Addressing a joint press conference along with his Belarusian counterpart Sergei Aleinik, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that we are mutually agreed to undertake practical measures in transforming the profound goodwill shared between our governments and people into a tangible cooperation across various domains. The Pakistan Foreign Minister said the long term goals for Pakistan-Belarus partner-

ship include strengthening economic ties, expanding trade and commerce, fostering scientific collaboration, enhancing defence cooperation, promoting cultural exchange and deepening people to people contacts. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said one key outcome of this visit is the signing of an agreement between the governments of Pakistan and Belarus on the abolition of visas for the holders of diplomatic and official passports. He said this landmark agreement will facilitate travel and exchanges between our countries. He further said that an agreement was also signed between the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad and Belarus Institute of Strategic studies.

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Sports activities lead to healthy living: President — Page 06

Over 30 peacekeepers injured in clashes in northern Kosovo — Page 07

Kyrgyz envoy stresses need to promote capital market — Page 08

LALA

Cultural PATTERNS AND MODERN HUES

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# Islamabad Chamber is trying to promote tourism

ICCI High level delegation visit Skardu to review the arrangements of Tourism Summit 2023

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Chamber of Commerce high level delegation visit to Gilgit-Baltistan. The delegation was headed by President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari. During the visit, the delegation met with the high officials of Gilgit government, security agencies and administration officers. The delegation reviewed the arrangements for the first ICC Tourism Summit 2023 scheduled for the promotion of tourism in the northern regions organized by the Islamabad Chamber in July. The delegation was also made to visit various tourist points and briefed about the business activities in the area. Speaking in a meeting with the President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce, Provincial Tourism Minister Raja Nasir Ali Khan said that the activation of Islamabad Chamber for tourism in the region is very welcome. The Gilgit Government will provide full cooperation regarding

the organization of the conference. He said that Islamabad Chamber should cooperate for the improvement of dry fruit industry in Gilgit-Baltistan. Due to lack of proper storage and supply system, crores worth of dried fruit is lost every year. Investment is also needed in the hotel industry in Gilgit. Speaking on the occasion, President Islamabad Chamber Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that I am grateful to the provincial government for its co-operation in organizing the summit. Islamabad Chamber is trying to promote tourism. The northern regions of Pakistan can become the central points for tourism in the region. We need to improve the infrastructure, hoteling industry, roads and other facilities are necessary for the promotion of tourism. Launching of international flights is indispensable in the promotion of tourism. Govt should develop Skardu airport as per international standards. He said that tourism is the most profitable industry in the world, unfortunately Pakistan is still far behind in this sector compared to its

potential. We need branding of tourist destinations to attract foreign tourists. I hope the Summit will improve the soft image of Pakistan. During the visit, Commandant Officer ASF Syed Yasin Shah, Station Commander Skardu, DIG Gilgit-Baltistan Flight Lieutenant (Rtd) Farrukh Rashid and Assistant Commissioner Skardu also met the President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce. During the visit, Commandant Officer ASF Syed Yasin Shah, Station Commander Skardu, DIG Gilgit-Baltistan Flight Lieutenant (Rtd) Farrukh Rashid and Assistant Commissioner Skardu also met the President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce. The officers of the security agencies assured him that all the agencies will play their role as hosts for the summit. Fool-proof security will be provided to the guests coming to attend the summit. During the visit, the delegation was also visited other tourist places including Kachura Lake, Cold Desert, Shangri-La Fort, Deosai. The tour was organized by the Tourism Committee of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce.



QUETTA: President Dr. Arif Alvi in a meeting with the Governor of Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Kakar, at Governor House, Quetta. — DNA

## No corrupt element to be tolerated in Population Welfare

DNA

PESHAWAR: Advisor to the caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Population Welfare Sayyed Jarrar Hussain Bukhari on Tuesday said no corrupt element would be tolerated in Population Welfare Department. Chairing a meeting of the departmental affairs here, the advisor also issued directives for initiating disciplinary action against those employees of Population Welfare who remained absent from their duties. The meeting was also attended by DG Population Welfare Ayesha and officers of the department. The DG Population Welfare gave a detailed briefing to the advisor on administrative affairs. Bukhari directed the authorities of Population Welfare to pay constant visits to the welfare centers across the province and besides ensuring the presence of the staff to review official affairs there. He said no corrupt official or officer should be allowed to work in the department. He also directed for not allowing additional charge to the officers of the Population Welfare Department and ordered the abolishment of all such additional appointments of the officers.—APP

## Four die, three injured in bridge incident Muzaffarabad

MUZAFFARABAD: Four people including technical experts and labourers died and three workers sustained injuries after the under-construction Bailey Bridge slipped and fell while being placed on the pillars with the help of heavy machinery in Dhani area of Naseerabad tehsil in Muzaffarabad district. According to police, the Bailey Bridge was being constructed to connect Dhani and Ghandi areas in the lower Neelam valley when it slipped and fell while being placed on the pillars, a private news channel reported. The injured were shifted to the Combined Military Hospital, Muzaffarabad. The locals blamed the contractor for the accident, said that the accident took place due to the negligence of the contractor and incomplete safety arrangements. They also protested by blocking the main Neelam Highway at Dhani and demanded that the incident be investigated.—APP

## SSP Anooch reiterates proper care of incarnated women

DNA

LAHORE: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Investigation Anooch Masood on Tuesday said that 15 women had been arrested in Punjab, addressing a press conference, she dismissed reports of ill-treatment of women prisoners as "absolutely false" and "unnecessary". "No man can enter the premises [where they are kept]," she said, assuring that they were being provided with all necessary

medical treatment. Ms Masood also clarified that among them, PTI leader Dr Yasmin Rashid was being allowed to meet the visitors as she was on judicial remand, but the rest could not be allowed as they were "jailed for identification parades". On Monday, Ms Masood quashed the PTI's allegation about misbehaviour with women in jail. Ms Anooch vehemently denied any mistreatment of women prisoners, stressing that every

woman in their custody was being taken care of. She stated, "There is no question of misbehaving with women in jail." Ms Anooch assured the public that she had met the women individually and provided necessary facilities, particularly addressing the concerns of Khadija Shah, who reportedly had medical issues. "We have met Khadija Shah, who has medical problems, and facilities have been provided to those who require assistance," she stated.

## CPO/DIG operations lay foundation stone of PS Sangjani new building

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad capital police took a significant step towards enhancing security and serving the public by laying the foundation stone for the construction of a new building for Police Station Sangjani, a police public relations officer said. He said that, the ceremony was graced by CPO/DIG Operations Syed Shahzad Nadeem Bhukhari, while DPO Sadder Zone, a large number of police officials and community leaders were present on the occasion. Under the visionary leadership of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad capital

police remains steadfast in their commitment to safeguarding the lives and property of citizens within the federal city. The foundation stone-laying ceremony for the new Police Station Sangjani was conducted on the special orders of the IGP Islamabad, signifying the department's unwavering dedication to public service. With the introduction of the new police station, the demarcation of boundaries has also been adjusted. As per the revised demarcation, the area along both sides of the road from Tarnol Phatak to Sangjani Picket will now fall under the jurisdiction of Police Station Sangjani. "The Islamabad Capital

Police is resolute in its pursuit of public service and resolving the issues faced by the citizens," affirmed the CPO/DIG Operations Islamabad. "The safety and security of the public, as well as their valuable assets, remain our topmost priority." The establishment of new police stations not only ensures improved investigation procedures and reduced burden on existing police stations but also facilitates the effective reduction of crime. By strengthening law enforcement efforts and expanding their presence, the Islamabad Capital Police aims to ensure the effective protection of citizens' lives and property.



## NAB files list of team members to IHC

ISLAMABAD: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on Tuesday filed a list of fourteen members special legal team to Islamabad High Court (IHC) for issuance of entry passes during hearing on bail petition of PTI's chairman Imran Khan in Al-Qadir Trust case. The NAB prosecutor submitted the list to the registrar office IHC and said that the team members were not issued passes during last hearing. It would include Sardar Muzafar Abbasi, Muhammad Rafay, Naem Tariq Sangra and others.—APP

## KU organizes Takreem-e-Shuhada seminar

KARACHI: University of Karachi organized a Takreem-e-Shuhada seminar at the Karachi University Business School here on Tuesday. KU Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Khalid Mahmood Iraqi, Registrar Dr Imran Ahmad Siddiqui, deans, chairperson, and teachers of various faculties, students, staff, and employees attended the event. Prof. Dr Khalid Mahmood Iraqi said that our military forces and intelligence agencies are fighting against the internal and external elements which are involved in trying to destabilize, demoralize and destroy our beloved country. He further said that due to the sacrifices of our armed forces, we are able to defeat such miscreants and enemies.—APP

## First national medical research conference ends at AM Abbottabad

ABBOTTABAD: Professor Dr. Shahzad Ali Khan Vice-Chancellor of Health Services Academy Islamabad Tuesday said that the special aspect of the first national medical research conference is group discussions on identifying and addressing critical health issues in Pakistan which is a need of time. He expressed these views while addressing the concluding ceremony of the first national medical research conference organized by the Ayub Medical College Abbottabad. In the conference, various activities were showcased including poster competitions, research quizzes, and research paper reviews. Additionally, research skill stations, workshops, and presentations were also in-

cluded. Dean Ayub Medical College Dr. Umer Farooq while speaking on the occasion said that the purpose of the conference held for the first time at Ayub Medical College was to provide a platform for healthcare professionals, researchers, and students from all over the country to share their valuable research findings and promote collaboration in the field of medical science. Chief Organizer Dr. Ruqaya Sultana stated, "We are enthusiastic about the tremendous response and success of the First National Medical Research Conference, this conference has provided a platform for participants to present their work and advance medical science. We are grateful to all the participants and es-

teemed guests who made this event possible, adding she said. Dr. Ruqaya the First National Medical Research Conference held at Ayub Medical College has undoubtedly set an example for future scientific and research gatherings. It has proven to be an important platform for the exchange of knowledge, ideas, and research findings, ultimately contributing to the advancement of healthcare in the country. A larger number of participants from all government and private medical and dental colleges, as well as allied health sciences institutions across the country, including professors, medical experts, and students were present at the conference.—APP

## Man claims son 'abducted, shot' by police in fake encounter

DNA

KARACHI: A citizen of Karachi claimed that his son was shot by police in fake encounter after being abducted from North Karachi area. According to details, the Sindh High Court conducted a hearing on the cases of missing persons, during which it was revealed that the young man, Muhammad Ali, was allegedly shot

during a police encounter the day after he was reported missing. Ali's father, Akbar, revealed that his 27-year-old son was taken from their home by the North Karachi police. The father pleaded in court that he waited for his son for three days before filing a petition in the Sindh High Court for the recovery of his son and the very next day, a police encounter was happened near Baba

Wilayat Shah's shrine in Malir in which Muhammad Ali got wounded. Mohammad Idris claimed that his son was shot in the leg, causing a fracture, during a 'fake encounter'. The advocate of Mohammad Idris stated that the police fired 17 shots during the encounter. After hearing the both sides the court ordered a transparent investigation to the investigation officer.

## Modern drug rehabilitation centre in Sindh

The awareness campaign will encompass various communication channels, including media, community outreach programs, educational institutions, and social media platforms

ISLAMABAD: A three-member delegation led by United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Country Representative Jeremy Milsom called upon the Chief Secretary Sindh Dr Mohammed Sohail Rajput to hold discussions regarding the establishment of a model drug rehabilitation centre in the Sindh province. The proposed facility will be fully funded and operated by the Sindh government with technical assistance from the UNODC, adhering to international best practices in drug rehabilitation. The meeting was attended by Arsalan Malik

head of Sub Office (UNODC), Secretary Home, Aijaz Ali Shah, Secretary of Social Welfare Dr Sher-een Mustafa, Secretary of General Administration Muhammad Ali Khoso, Secretary of Health Zulfiqar Ali Shah. During the meeting, the Chief Secretary Sindh Dr. Muhammad Sohail Rajput apprised the UNODC delegation of the efforts made by the Sindh government in collaboration with the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF). As a result of this collaboration, two drug rehabilitation centres have been successfully established in Maghopir and

Malir having the capacity to accommodate 300 individuals seeking recovery. He further stated that the UNODC rehabilitation centre will serve as a benchmark for private rehabilitation centres in the region. The centre's operations, protocols, and service standards will be designed to reflect global best practices in drug addiction treatment. Private rehabilitation centres will be encouraged to follow it, thereby ensuring uniformity and excellence in the provision of drug rehabilitation services. Jeremy Milsom said that the establishment of the UN-

ODC drug rehabilitation centre marks a significant milestone in the ongoing efforts to address the scourge of drug addiction. This joint endeavour will not only help individuals in their journey towards recovery but also contribute to the greater goal of creating a healthier and drug-free society. He further informed the meeting that the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is a global leader in the fight against illicit drugs, organized crime, corruption, and terrorism. The organization works closely with governments

and international partners to strengthen legal frameworks, promote justice and security, and provide technical assistance in tackling these complex challenges. The meeting also decided to launch an awareness campaign throughout the province of Sindh with technical assistance from the UNODC Office in Pakistan. The awareness campaign will encompass various communication channels, including media, community outreach programs, educational institutions, and social media platforms.—APP

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## National Days and Armed Forces Days

### MAY

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



### 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  
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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



ISLAMABAD: Students perform during a cultural show on the occasion of prize distribution ceremony held at Sheikh Zayed International Academy.—DNA

## Work on IJP beautification project continues

He also checked the illegal transport terminals near Pirwadhai, General Bus Stand on IJP Road and inspected tree plantation after removal of encroachments.

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader, Muhammad Hanif Abbasi and Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Liaquat Ali Chhatta during a visit to IJP Road directed the authorities concerned to accelerate work on beautification project and complete it within shortest possible time frame. According to a Commissioner Office spokesperson, Deputy Commissioner, Rawalpindi Hasan Waqar Cheema, PML-N leader, Zia ullah Shah, DG PHA,

DG RDA, CEO Municipal Corporation Rawalpindi, Secretary RTA and other officers concerned were present on the occasion. They visited IJP Road to Ghosia Bus Terminal area and also inspected water level in Nullah Lai beneath Katarian Bridge. Commissioner directed the authorities concerned to complete Nullah Lai cleanliness work before start of Monsoon rains. The small drains on both sides of the IJP Road should also be cleaned so

that water in the Nullah Lai during monsoon rains could flow smoothly. He ordered to grow ornamental plants and saplings on IJP Road on both sides of the road. Faulty street lights should also be repaired besides installing iron grills at bridges of the nullahs. The commissioner instructed the officers to completely eliminate encroachments and illegal bus terminals near Pirwadhai Mor and warned that negligence on part of

officials concerned would not be tolerated. Complete elimination of encroachments and illegal bus terminals is important to ensure smooth flow of traffic and facilitate the passengers, he said adding, all available resources were being utilized to facilitate the citizens. He also checked the illegal transport terminals near Pirwadhai, General Bus Stand on IJP Road and inspected tree plantation after removal of encroachments.—APP

## Dar felicitates President Erdogan on historic victory

Best wishes for good health & happiness of President @RTErdogan and for the people of Türkiye. Love Live Pak-Türkiye brotherhood," he tweeted

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Tuesday felicitated Recep Tayyip Erdogan on his historic victory in the recent elections for the President of the Republic of Türkiye. In a Tweet, the minister said that his re-election for the third consecutive term is a testament to the trust and confidence of the people of Türkiye in his leadership. "Heartiest felicitations to H.E. President @RTErdogan on his historic victory in the recent elections for the President of the Republic of Türkiye. His re-election for the third consecutive term is a testament to the trust and confidence of the people of Türkiye in his leadership," he tweeted. He said, Türkiye, under his leadership, would soon recover from the effects of the recent earthquake and will emerge a more prosperous and stronger country. Dar expressed best wishes for the good health and happiness of President Erdogan and for the people of Türkiye. "Türkiye, under his leadership, will soon recover from the effects of recent earthquake & will emerge more prosperous and stronger country. Best wishes for good health & happiness of President @RTErdogan and for the people of Türkiye. Love Live Pak-Türkiye brotherhood," he tweeted.—DNA

## CPO directs cops to immediately net culprits

RAWALPINDI: City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Syed Khalid Hamdani here on Tuesday taking notice of dacoity and murder in Bahria Town, Phase-8 directed the police officers to immediately net the culprits.

The CPO also sought a report of the incident from the Superintendent of Police, Saddar. According to a preliminary investigation, five dacoits entered the residence of Sardar Amjad Ishaq, the judge of Azad Kashmir Accountability Court on Monday night, where they opened fire on resistance. Sardar Amjad Ishaq was killed as a result of the firing of the accused during the dacoity. An injured dacoit was arrested on the spot. On information of the incident, SP Saddar, Muhammad Nabeel Khokhar, ASP Sardar and local police immediately reached the spot and started an investigation. Evidence has been obtained from the spot while the body was shifted to the hospital for post-mortem. SP Saddar said that the incident is being investigated from different angles. He said that other accomplices of the arrested accused would also be arrested soon and brought to justice.—APP

## DC extends Section-144 till June 4; Imposes ban on pillion riding

RAWALPINDI: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi, Dr Hassan Waqar Cheema, in view of the law and order situation has extended Section-144 in the district till June 4 besides imposing a ban on pillion riding.

Earlier, Section-144 was imposed in Rawalpindi district from May 15 to May 28. Under an order issued by the DC Office, all kinds of assemblies, gatherings, sits-in, rallies, processions, demonstrations, 'jalsas, dharnas', protests and other activities have been banned.

The order further stated that carrying weapons, spikes, laden batons, ball bearings, petrol bombs, improvised explosives or any other instrument that could potentially be used for violence is also not allowed.

Attempting to remove any restriction imposed by a police officer to regulate the assembly of persons or movement of traffic will not be tolerated, the order stated, adding the use of loudspeakers without permission of lawful authority (except for azaan) will also not be permitted. There is also a ban on pillion riding within the jurisdiction of Rawalpindi district and this order shall not apply to armed forces.—APP

## US, China, UK remained top 3 destinations of Pak exports

ISLAMABAD: The United States (US) remained the top export destination of Pakistani products during the ten months of the current fiscal year (2022-23), followed by China and the United Kingdom (UK). Total exports to the US during July-April (2022-23) were recorded at US\$ 4990.562 million as opposed to the exports of US\$ 5618.857 million during July- April (2021-22), showing a decline of 11.18 percent, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). This was followed by China, wherein Pakistan exported goods worth US\$ 1700.955 million compared to the exports of US\$ 2342.887 million last year, showing a decrease of 27.39 percent. UK was the third top export destination, where Pakistan exported goods worth US\$ 1643.864 mil-

lion during the months under review against the exports of US\$ 1851.812 million during last year, showing a decline of 11.22 percent, SBP data revealed. Among other countries, Pakistani exports to Germany stood at US\$ 1366.068 million against US\$ 1432.029 million last year, showing a decrease of 4.60 percent while the exports to UAE were recorded at US\$ 1206.639 million opposed US\$ 1550.022 million last year. During July- April (2022-23), the exports to Holland were recorded at US\$ 1211.647 million against US\$ 1217.163 million whereas the exports to Afghanistan stood at US\$ 435.682 million against US\$436.423 million. Pakistan's exports to Italy were recorded at US\$ 951.447 million against the exports of US\$

857.219 million while the exports to Spain were recorded at US\$ 1154.633 million against US\$ 940.808 million last year. Whereas, the exports to Bangladesh stood at US\$ 644.104 million against US\$ 720.509 million. Similarly, the exports to France during the months under review were recorded at US\$ 487.194 million against US\$ 430.134 million while the exports to Saudi Arabia stood at US\$ 404.767 million against US\$ 345.720 million. Pakistan's exports to Türkiye were recorded at US\$ 269.833 million during the current year compared to US\$ 266.452 million last year whereas the exports to Canada stood at US\$ 369.702 million against US\$ 328.420 million, and Australia stood at US\$ 254.942 million during the current year against US\$ 239.333 million during last year.—APP

## No dialogue with PTI: MNAs

ISLAMABAD: The members of the National Assembly (MNAs) on Tuesday clearly rejected the probability of dialogue with the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) after its chairman extended an offer of talks to the coalition government and claimed that his party had lost majority of its party leadership after the members tendered resignations publicly in the news conferences. Talking to APP outside the Parliament, Parliamentary Secretary for Railways, Kiran Imran Dar said dialogue was the ultimate solution to all the crisis but it was only held with political parties and not violent goons as the PTI's conduct on May 9 damaged the prestige of the state institutions and the country. She said the coalition government should hold talks with whom as the PTI Chairman Imran Khan's arrogance was despicable towards his political opponents and he spewed hatred against all the leaders of his rival political parties. MNA, Mehnaz Akbar Aziz of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) said the PTI as a political party had finished and nothing was left in its tank so the coalition government could not hold talks with it. She alleged that the hatred, polarization and divide created by Imran Khan among the masses was unprecedented as there was no such thing even at the martyrdom of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto. Aziz said Imran Khan had spewed violence in children's brain and he was a dangerous man brainwashing youth and the country should get rid of him. She regretted that Imran Khan and his party leadership was not able to spend a few days in jail but he detained his political rivals for longer durations. MNA, Qaiser Sheikh of PML-N said there was no possibility of dialogue with the PTI as it was not possible to negotiate with those who attacked the state and public installations.

## Gang busted; two dacoits arrested

RAWALPINDI: In an operation against criminal elements, Rawalpindi Police have busted a gang and arrested two dacoits including a ringleader besides recovering cash Rs 65,000, four snatched motorcycles, weapons and other items from their possession. According to a police spokesman, Airport Police arrested two accused namely Usman Khan, ringleader and Usman Ali, who were allegedly involved in various dacoity cases. He informed that the police team constituted under the supervision of SHO Airport Police Station.—APP

### TENDER NOTICE

**HIRING OF SERVICES FOR REPAIR & RETROFITTING OF OVER HEAD WATER TANKS, & ALLIED FACILITIES INCLUDING ELECTRICAL & PLUMBING WORKS IN PIA PREMISES, KARACHI.**

PIA intend to hire the Services for Repair & Retrofitting of Over Head Water Tanks, & Allied Facilities Including Electrical & Plumbing Works in PIA Premises, Karachi. Hence invites sealed bids from interested firms licensed by the Pakistan Engineering Council for the year 2023-24 in Category C-4 or above.

#### Submission of Bids:

The bidding process shall be carried out on "Single Stage, Two Envelop" basis as per PPRA rules #36 (a). A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by an interested eligible bidder on submission of a written application from Assistant Manager Projects, Flight Operation Building PIA HEAD OFFICE KARACHI on payment of a non-refundable fee of Rupees 5,000/-.

All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security of fix amount (Refundable) Rs. 1,000,000 (Rupees One Million) in the form of pay order in the name of Pakistan International Airline, (failure to do so the bids will be rejected). Tender should be addressed to General Manager (Facilities Management) and must be dropped in GM FACILITIES MANAGEMENT OFFICE 1st floor Flight Operation building, PIA Head Office, Karachi Airport, Karachi at or before 15:00 hours, on 14-6-2023. Bids will be opened at 15:30 hours on the same day in the presence of bidders representatives who choose to attend, at the same address.

PIA reserves the right to reject anyone or all bids as per PPRA rules # 33.

**General Manager**  
Pakistan International Airline  
Pakistan International Airlines Tel: 021- 99044640  
Email: gm.facilitiesmanagement@piac.aero

PIA K 3429



ISLAMABAD, MAY 30: Yasumitsu Kinoshita, Chief Representative, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Pakistan Office meets Iftikhar Ali Shallwani, Federal Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Works at his office.—DNA

## Gang busted; two dacoits arrested

RAWALPINDI: In an operation against criminal elements, Rawalpindi Police have busted a gang and arrested two dacoits including a ringleader besides recovering cash Rs 65,000, four snatched motorcycles, weapons and other items from their possession. According to a police spokesman, Airport Police arrested two accused namely Usman Khan, ringleader and Usman Ali, who were allegedly involved in various dacoity cases. He informed that the police team constituted under the supervision of SHO Airport Police Station on the directives of SP Potohar Muhammad Waqas Khan conducted a raid and managed to net the criminal record holder gang members including the ringleader.—APP

## Briefs

## Chinese collaboration in Agri sector to improve food security in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has signed MoUs with 325 Chinese universities under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) while 581 Pakistanis have availed Chinese scholarships under the mega initiative.

This was disclosed by Dr Saifdar Ali, Director General CPEC Cell at the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC), according to Gwadar Pro. He was addressing inaugural session of 3-day international conference on sustainable food security solutions, at University of Agriculture, Faisalabad (UAF), being held in collaboration with the South China Agriculture University (SCAU), Guangzhou and the University of Karachi, under CPEC Consortium of Universities. Dr Saifdar said that collaboration with China in agriculture sector will improve food security in Pakistan. He said that under CPEC, 113 trainings have been conducted with Chinese Universities and 19,000 individuals have been trained in Chinese language. Prof Chen Letian, Director International Affairs, SCAU said that agricultural ties with Pakistan are being expanded, with food and environmental crisis as the areas of major concern.—DNA

## China-Central Asia Summit and Role of BRI &amp; CPEC and Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: The recently held China-Central Asia Summit has introduced new concepts of regional connectivity, socio-economic cooperation, and industrial development which are holistic and harmonious.

It rightly showcased the real secret of modern mutual human survival, economic stability and sustainability along with mutual respect, sovereignty and territorial integrity between both the sides. According to a report carried by Gwadar Pro, during the summit it was agreed that political consultations, common economic development plan, common human development cooperation, common anti-terrorism strategies and above all common regional connectivity under the flagship project of BRI would be right giant leap in right direction.

According to official data, trade volume between China and Central Asia countries in 2022 hit a historic high of \$70.2 billion up by over 100 times since diplomatic ties were established about three decades ago. China has now become the biggest investor, trading partner, industrial development stimulator, green transition & transformation supporter, human development's initiator and last but not least, champion of greater regional connectivity in all the five Central Asian countries through BRI.—DNA

## Rupee gains 06 paises against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani rupee gained 06 paises against the US Dollar (USD) in the interbank trading on Tuesday and closed at Rs285.35 against the previous day's closing of Rs285.41.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollars in the open market stood at Rs313 and Rs316, respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by 97 paises to close at Rs305.02 against the last day's closing of Rs305.99, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs2.03, whereas an increase of 38 paises was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs352.58 as compared to its last day's closing of Rs352.20. The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal came down by 03 paises and 02 paises to close at Rs77.69 and Rs76.08; respectively.—APP



ISLAMABAD: A vendor displaying bouquet of flowers at his shop to attract customers at Jinnah Super Market.—APP

## China Pakistan Vocational Training Cooperation launched

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China are steadfastly strengthening their collaboration through the inclusion of technical education and training including dual degree programs and initiatives under the CPEC framework to build Pakistan's strength to fight back poverty. Luban Workshop, a collaborative initiative between the Punjab Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) in Pakistan and the Tianjin Modern Vocational Technology College in China, is playing a pivotal role in this regard by empowering the local youth with essential technical knowledge to earn a better living and contribute towards overall economy.

As part of a broader international vocational education project initiated by China, with numerous workshops established in

19 countries across Asia, Africa, and Europe, this initiative is playing an important role in helping youth in Pakistan. Through this endeavor, colleges in Tianjin are empowering local youth to acquire cutting-edge technological skills, enabling them to contribute significantly to the development and progress of their respective nations. The workshops serve as vibrant platforms for knowledge exchange and capacity building, fostering an environment where state-of-the-art technologies are learned, harnessed, and leveraged to drive positive change and socioeconomic advancement. The impact of this program is evidenced by the achievement of 33 Pakistani graduates who have successfully acquired both Pakistani vocational training certificates and Chinese academic certificates, showcasing their dual expertise. The comprehensive approach of the initiative involves

a six-month course at the Luban Workshop, followed by a 24-month study focused on electrical automation at the Tianjin Modern Vocational Technology College. To further enhance their practical skills, students engage in a six-month internship with enterprises aligned with the workshop. Eight enterprises in Pakistan have forged industry-education alliances with the Luban Workshop, thereby creating valuable employment opportunities for the students. In a country where approximately three million young individuals enter the job market each year, the lack of access to technical training and outdated training agendas pose significant obstacles to securing employment and hinder the modernization of the agricultural and industrial sectors. This progressive step of collaboration between Pakistan and China under the broader CPEC framework demonstrates

their shared commitment to addressing the imperative need for skilled manpower and preparing the youth for gainful employment within the industrial sector. Jointly operated vocational institutes in Pakistan serve as platforms where the burden of imparting essential knowledge and training to the burgeoning workforce can be shared effectively. This strategic partnership not only facilitates the acquisition of marketable skills but also bolsters the foundation of mutual prosperity and socio-economic development for both nations. Pakistan, with its burgeoning population of youth, holds immense potential for labor productivity. However, the country faces the challenge of low productivity levels despite operating several vocational institutes aimed at generating a skilled workforce. To bridge this gap, it becomes imperative for Pakistan to not only fulfill industrial bench-

marks in terms of both quality and quantity but also enhance its competitiveness on a global scale. The Luban Workshop initiative has emerged as a transformative force, revolutionizing the labor market and technological landscape in both industrial transformation and agriculture mechanization. Recognizing its success, multiple industrial players are actively establishing industry-academia linkages to impart the necessary skills to the workforce and enhance employee retention within the sector. This collaborative effort significantly boosts efficiency and productivity throughout the entire industrial cycle, particularly benefiting economies like Pakistan. To ensure the resounding success of this initiative, Pakistani and Chinese instructors have joined forces to develop comprehensive resources, including simulation software, 160 academic and experimental curriculum components.

## Efforts needed for ending combustible smoking

DNA

ISLAMABAD: As Pakistan continues to grapple with the endemic of combustible smoking, the country needs to review, debate and adopt the groundbreaking advances in safer nicotine alternatives to achieve smoke free future sooner than later.

"Today more than ever the government needs to take along all stakeholders in planning for and achieving a smoke free Pakistan," said Arshad Ali Syed, Project Director of Alternative Research Initiative (ARI), on the occasion of World No Tobacco Day (WNTD). This year's theme for WNTD is "We need food, not tobacco".

He added that May 21, 2023 marked the 20th anniversary of the WHO's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). "It is high time to see how far we have come in achieving the aim of tobacco control. Unfortunately, we have not come that far."

Today Pakistan has more than 29 million adults (15 years and above) who are tobacco users. On average a smoker consumes 13 cigarettes a day. Worryingly the implementation of laws and regulations regarding remains weak. At least 30% of smokers have reported buying loose cigarettes. The sale of loose cigarettes is prohibited.

Arshad added that today science is offering solutions that are helping developed countries set deadlines for completely ending combustible smoking over the next two decades. "Tobacco harm reduction is an important part of these countries' smoke-free strategies."

Sweden is set to become the world's first "smoke-free" country, which is defined as less than 5% of the adult population smoking. Sweden is going to achieve the target 17 years ahead of the European Union's 2040 target, as smoking prevalence rate has come down to 5.6% from 15% over the past 15 years.

## No concession for those who attacked state

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Saifuddin Sheikh, Executive Director of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Tuesday said that those who attacked the state and insulted martyrs for their petty political gains do not deserve any concession.

The leaders who instigated the youth and planned the attacks should be tried in a military courts, he said. Saifuddin Sheikh said that the global establishment bet on the wrong horse to turn Pakistan-China friendship into enmity and impose an economic blockade on the friendly country, which doomed them to failure.

He said that the military leadership foiled this heinous conspiracy by taking timely action, for which they deserve all the praise. The business leader said

that the desperate politician, who has caused irreparable damage to the country, is not responding to the charges of planning to roll back the nuclear programme which has exposed his reality to the public.

He demanded that none of the military and political leadership should meet the head of gang who have become enemies of the country and should not be given any concession.

All the files of corruption worth billions of rupees should be opened without delay so that masses can see his real face, he added. He said that they have failed in their intended objectives, but if any concession is made from them, this process of harming country can continue in the future.

The people are indebted to the Pakistan Army and the army is indebted to the people, and there is an

unbreakable bond of trust between the two, which should further strengthened, he said, adding that the people across the country are showing their love for the army which is not going down with some enemies.

The enemies of Pakistan have lost sanities due to the reaction of the people in favour of army, and they are now looking for new tactics to achieve their goals. Saifuddin Sheikh said that the previous government took a record foreign loan of fifty-two billion dollars in a few years, while a record was also set by taking loans worth Rs9136 billion from local sources.

Despite the record debts, no development work was done, instead, all the capital was wasted, the purpose of which was to fill their coffers, bankrupt the country and weaken the army.

## PTI bad governance caused Rs 987bln deficit

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi on Tuesday said that the total deficit of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) stood at Rs 987 billion in the last nine years of rule of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in the province. Speaking in the National Assembly, the minister said the total deficit of KPK was a mere Rs 27 billion which now surged to Rs 987 billion due to bad governance and corruption of the PTI government. The public health department has not even repair and maintenance funds, he added. He said around 335 tube wells run by Public Health Department in district Haripur were not operational. The power supply to these tube wells has been disconnected due to non-payment of electricity bills, he added.—APP

## Karandaaz launches report on private healthcare

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Karandaaz is a leading impact investor in Pakistan with the aim to promote access to finance for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSMEs) and financial inclusion of unbanked individuals. Karandaaz conducted a highly anticipated webinar

to unveil the findings of its groundbreaking report titled "Private Healthcare in Pakistan - Gaps, Opportunities, and Possibilities." The report, comprising Volume 1 & 2, is now available to the public on Karandaaz's website. The webinar commenced with welcome remarks from Mr Waqas ul Hasan, CEO, Karandaaz followed

by opening remarks by Dr Shmshad Akhtar, Chairperson, Karandaaz Board. Ms Fatima Sheikh, Special Secretary (Health), Govt of Punjab delivered the keynote address, highlighting the initiatives being taken in the public sector for health delivery, significance of the report and its potential impact on the healthcare sector.

## BRI agri institute launched

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a bid to turbocharge the potato industry, 11 Belt and Road (BRI) countries including China and Pakistan have joined international universities, companies and organisations to launch an international network on the potato industry at a forum held at China's Southwest University.

A collaborative effort led by the Southwest University, the Belt and Road potato network is designed to enhance the quality and efficiency of the potato industry in BRI countries through multi-level cooperation, including academic exchanges, joint research, and technology transfer. Prof. Lyu Dianqiu, dean of the Agronomy and Biotechnology College at Southwest University told China Economic Net (CEN) in a phone interview.

Specifically, the innovation institute will serve as a platform to facilitate research and promote advancements in potato breeding, ger-

mplasm creation and utilisation, and construct potato cultivation demonstration bases. Prof. Lyu told CEN reporter. The potato expert noted that the breeding-oriented cooperation arises from a detailed study conducted to scrutinise the challenges and potential in the potato industry in the BRI countries. "We found BRI countries such as Pakistan and Kazakhstan are plagued by a lack of quality potato seeds," Prof. Lyu told CEN, adding that as a token of support, each

country was gifted 100 sets of germplasm rapid diagnostic kits at the forum. As a first step, training sessions will be organised to impart breeding knowledge to the members, Prof. Lyu said. To this end, the participants signed a strategic cooperation agreement at the forum and released a proposal for the shared construction and utilisation of the "Belt and Road" International Potato Germplasm Resource Bank. In an encouraging sign, the participating universities

and enterprises have already established close ties with each other during the forum, and "this serves as an inspiring start to deeper technological cooperation," he said. The BRI potato network partners include the CIP-China Center for Asia and the Pacific (CCAP), Leling Xisen Potato Industry Group Co. Ltd, and many other enterprises, universities, research institutes including the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, S. Seifullin Kazakh Agrotechnical University.



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## Erdogan gets another 5 years

Recep Tayyip Erdogan will begin another five years as Turkey's president after winning a divisive election that at one point seemed to threaten his hold on power. The 69-year-old, who has dominated his country's politics for two decades, was set to win the runoff vote by 52 percent to 48 percent, with more than 99 percent of ballot boxes counted, beating opposition candidate Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, according to preliminary official results from Turkey's Supreme Election Council. Erdogan declared victory in front of his residence in Istanbul, singing his campaign song before his speech. "I thank our nation, which gave us the responsibility of governing again for the next five years," he said. "We have opened the door of Turkey's century without compromising our democracy, development and our objectives," he added. The triumphant president continued his campaign tactic of targeting LGBTQ+ people. "Can LGBT infiltrate AK Party or other members of the People's Alliance [the broader coalition backing Erdogan]? Family is sacred to us," he said. Erdogan's supporters celebrated in the streets of Turkey's major cities and towns. Tens of thousands gathered in Ankara at the palace later in the night to hear him speak again. Turkey's place as a key NATO power at the junction of Europe and the Middle East has made the election one of the most closely watched political contests in the world this year. With Erdogan embarking on another five-year term, he is in a powerful position to influence not only the future direction of democracy in the 85 million strong country but also to shape politics in the region and beyond. Turkey's pivotal role in negotiating the Black Sea grain deal, which allowed Ukraine to resume shipping wheat to a hungry world, highlights Erdogan's impact on international affairs. He is rare among NATO leaders in maintaining good relations with Russia's President Vladimir Putin, even after Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. On Sunday night, Putin and French leader Emmanuel Macron were among those to congratulate Erdogan on his victory. Putin told Erdogan the outcome was "a natural result of your selfless work" and "clear evidence" that voters backed Turkey's "independent foreign policy." U.S. President Joe Biden was also quick to offer his congratulations. "I look forward to continuing to work together as NATO Allies on bilateral issues and shared global challenges," Biden tweeted. Erdogan's victory followed a bitter and closely fought campaign in which he accused his rival of being linked to terrorism and argued that the country faced chaos if the six-party opposition alliance came to power. He has ruled Turkey since 2003, first as prime minister and then as president, and the election has been widely seen as a defining moment for the country.

## Beijing making pro-peace efforts

In an interview with New Statesman magazine last week, it was put to ambassador Fu Cong, head of the Chinese Mission to the European Union, that "there is this opinion in Europe that China is on Russia's side". "Frankly speaking," he responded, "I don't agree with that assessment." While acknowledging that Europe has some misgivings about the proposition, he said, "I don't see how you can have durable peace if the legitimate security concerns of all sides are not taken fully into consideration." Pointing out that China has good relations with both Russia and Ukraine, Fu talked about China's stance, stressing it was trying to seek a way to put a stop to the fighting. Citing a report which said that the average survival time of a Ukrainian soldier on the battlefield in Bakhmut is four hours and pointing out that it is probably not any better for the Russian side, he stressed that the first imperative has to be to stop the fighting, which has become like that of World War I – thousands killed to advance a few inches. China has been talking to both Russia and Ukraine, consistently urging both sides to put an immediate stop to the fighting and start negotiations on a political settlement. It is to this end that China's special representative for Eurasian affairs Li Hui has just concluded his visits to Ukraine, Poland, France, Germany and Russia. In stark contrast to China's approach, the United States and some of its allies have been constantly prolonging the fighting by supplying Ukraine with evermore sophisticated weapons and military equipment and other assistance. At the same time, they are also targeting Russia on the economic front by continually intensifying sanctions. Soon after their summit in Japan, in which they re-called behind the United States, the G7 countries approved new sanctions against Russia, and the EU is mulling its 11th round of sanctions against the country this week. With the US' proxy war against Russia now one of attrition, the longer the crisis continues, the more bloodshed both sides will have to endure and the higher the cost all parties involved will have to pay. There are also signs that the conflict is exacerbating the divisions in the EU as it is proving to be increasingly difficult for it to gain unanimous support from its members for the sanctions against Russia. The EU should recognize that sanctions and military aid will only prolong the senseless killing and reduce the space for diplomatic efforts to broker negotiations on the complicated issues that need to be resolved for an enduring peace settlement.



# Justice for whom? Hypocrisy of the ICC

Ziyad Motala

Since its inception, the ICC has predominantly focused its attention on the Global South. Every single one of the 31 defendants in active and past cases on the ICC website is from Africa. Except for five indictments against Russian leaders in 2022 and 2023, all 52 public impeachments – in a period spanning 18 years – are against Africans. At least 17 investigations – with the exception of investigations into abuses in Georgia, Ukraine, and Palestine – are targeted at perpetrators who are not white. In the wake of mass atrocities by Western powers – including an American torture and extraordinary rendition programme worldwide, British war crimes in Iraq, and French atrocities in Mali – one must ask

Many African countries vigorously participated in the Rome Diplomatic Conference in 1998, culminating in the treaty creating the International Criminal Court (ICC). The late minister of justice, Dullah Omar, represented South Africa in Rome as an enthusiastic participant. I recall his excitement at the prospect of creating an impartial court to ensure that serious violations of international criminal law would not go unpunished. Fast forward two decades later, and many are severely disappointed at how this vision has played out. The integrity of the ICC lies severely eroded. Instead of a global forum where the most severe crimes against the international community would be held to account, the ICC has instead entrenched the status quo world order and insulated war criminals from the most powerful nations while selectively prosecuting leaders from others. Today, South Africa is talking about exiting the ICC. Since its inception, the ICC has predominantly focused its attention on the Global South. Every single one of the 31 defendants in active and past cases on the ICC website is from Africa. Except for five indictments against Russian leaders in 2022 and 2023, all 52 public impeachments – in a period spanning 18 years – are against Africans. At least 17 investigations – with the exception of investigations into abuses in Georgia, Ukraine, and Palestine – are targeted at perpetrators who are not white. In the wake of mass atrocities by Western powers – including an American torture and extraordinary rendition programme worldwide, British war crimes in Iraq, and French atrocities in Mali – one must ask, is this a case of justice for thee, but for me? A Western institution? Perhaps this was by design. One of the ways an indictment is brought is through the referral of the UN Security Council, which consists of global superpowers keen to preserve their power and punish those who interfere with their interests. Some have argued that the US's fixation on atrocities in Darfur when Sudan was ruled by Omar al-Bashir was essentially a ruse to draw the world's attention away from mass casualties and failures in Iraq. As a result, the US played a significant role in pushing the Security Council to refer Sudanese leaders to the ICC. Professor Mahmood Mamdani, a reputed scholar from Uganda at the Columbia University, has noted that the "ICC is dancing to the tune of Western States. Given Africa's traumatic experience with the very same colonial powers that now, in effect, direct the ICC, it is an unfortunate case of *déjà vu*." Some African countries have since reported that they were pressured to sign the Rome Statute by the EU as a precondition to joining the Cotonou Agreement, an EU-Africa trade pact. Alas, the Western countries never intended to be subject to ICC investigations. A former British Foreign Secretary was blunt – the ICC was not designed to investigate Western countries. Kenneth Roth, the former Executive Director of Human Rights Watch, goes further – European states never intended for the ICC to prosecute crimes in their jurisdictions. The US famously signed the Rome Statute but refused to ratify it, thereby endorsing its message and avoiding accountability. Attempts to hold Western countries and their allies to account have thus far

failed. For those committed to an unbiased international rule-based system, realising and implementing a global rule of law have proved impossible to achieve where the mighty powers or their favourite allies have yet to be held accountable. US hypocrisy Take the attempts to hold America accountable. In 2017, ICC chief prosecutor Fatou Bensouda formally requested to launch an official investigation into the "serious crimes" conducted by the US in the context of its Afghan invasion, including its widespread black site programme. In an unprecedented move, in 2019, the ICC denied the authorisation, citing the "political climate" surrounding the investigation. The decision was successfully appealed in March 2020, but it resulted in the Trump administration taking drastic measures to send a message to the ICC and its enablers that international accountability is not for Americans. The US government imposed sanctions on Bensouda, other ICC officials and their families for investigating US personnel. The US even banned the ICC officials and their families from entering the country, and their assets in the US were frozen. Under the ban, US parties were prohibited from trading or offering any services to any of the listed persons. The sanctions were lifted in April 2021, but the message was loud and clear. As an aside, many developing countries have faced the wrath and pernicious consequences of US sanctions when they do not kowtow to Washington's foreign policy interests. Many in the developing world seek to end this economic coercion. The draconian response to the ICC is not an invention of the Trump administration. The US has long sought to punish those who seek to bring them and their allies to justice. American Service-Members Protection Act (ASPA), often referred to as the 'Hague Invasion Act', has been in effect almost as long as the Rome Statute. This legislation prohibits any American party from cooperating with the ICC, providing any information to the court, or deporting anyone from the US to the ICC. The statute gives the President the authority to use military force to free US service members or members of allies detained by or on behalf of the ICC. The President is also authorised to use military force to halt the investigation of US personnel and its allies. Let that sink in for a moment. The US allows for military force against anyone who seeks to bring its partners to justice on the world stage. Undoubtedly, Israel was at the top of the drafters' minds when writing this legislation. The US has entered into Status of Force Agreements (SOFAs) with many countries, particularly African countries, that preclude the handing over of US personnel to the ICC. The SOFA violates the ICC statute, which does not allow the conclusion of new agreements by state parties contrary to the Rome Statute. Moreover, the SOFA is a precondition to these countries receiving US financial assistance – a further manifestation of economic coercion against vulnerable states. These actions clearly influenced the ICC. Early in his tenure, and citing the limited resources of the ICC, chief prosecutor Karim Khan decided to restrict his investigation into atrocities in Afghanistan to only those committed by the Taliban and Daesh. Therefore, US atrocities – including torture, maintenance of 'black sites', extrajudicial

killings, and drone strikes against civilians that fall within the jurisdictional ambit of the ICC – were not considered worth the expense to the ICC to investigate and punish. In December 2020, the previous ICC chief prosecutor took the same decision against Britain, despite a 180-page report detailing British abuses in Iraq that amounted to war crimes. As with the US, domestic accountability and prosecution are lacking, which should trigger an investigation by the ICC. Most tellingly, human rights advocates have called out Khan's bias seen in how he sees his mandate shifting back to the "war on terror" as constituting "a global threat to international peace and security". Yet, nowhere in the statute of the court does one find any reference to terrorism. Israel, a darling of the US and the European Union, has also evaded ICC accountability. The ICC prosecutor started an investigation into Israel's actions in 2021. Unlike Russia or Libya, where warrants of arrest were issued with unprecedented speed, no warrant of arrest has been issued for any Israeli official. Chief ICC prosecutor Karim Khan from Britain visited Ukraine four times in one year. After his last visit, he proclaimed, "The situation in Ukraine must also set a new standard for concerted action to achieve global accountability for international crimes. From Kharkiv to Khartoum, from Kiev to Cox's Bazar, survivors should feel this sense of collective urgency and benefit from the innovation we see we are now capable of." No similar visit has been made to Palestine or Guantanamo Bay, nor have any grand statements made to hold the US, British, or Israeli officials accountable for international crimes. A few days ago, EU president Ursula von der Leyen proclaimed Israel a vibrant democracy. She extolled the 75 years of dynamism that made the "desert bloom", a racial trope used against Palestinians. Her account of Israel is another among the litany of Western leaders' grotesque and perverse inversion of truth that negates the reality of settler colonialism, massive human rights violations and international crimes in what human rights organisations have called the 'apartheid state of Israel'. Her statement comes against the backdrop of images a few weeks ago of Palestinian worshippers being assaulted and tied with their hands to their backs while offering prayers in occupied East Jerusalem. International law must not be viewed as the outcome of powerful political actors to achieve political ends. The ICC has proved to be neither neutral nor impartial. It functions in a partisan and political manner against the shadow of big-power politics. It is time to disengage from the ICC in its current form. In its implementation, the ICC is not about international justice. Justice morphs and bends. African and developing countries are called to supinely accept the assumption – what furthers the power politics of the West must be good for the rest of the world. We need to go back to the drawing board and produce a truly independent institution that does not fashion justice based on the whims of powerful political actors to achieve political goals or shield favourite allies. –Courtesy: TRT World

# Biden's five mistakes in Ukraine

Marwan Bishara

Yet, he pleaded with world autocrats to join the crusade and disregarded America's own illegal wars. He underestimated the power of Russian nationalism and rejected Moscow's fears of NATO expansion towards its borders as baseless excuses for Russian imperialism. In the months leading up to the war, Biden undermined efforts to implement the Minsk agreements signed in 2014 and 2015 to end the conflict in the Donbas region. They were meant to pave the way

Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine last year, much has been said about Russian President Vladimir Putin's miscalculations. Last October, I wrote about Putin's vanity and megalomania which led him to overestimate Russian military capabilities, underestimate Ukrainian capacity for resistance, and miscalculate NATO's unity and America's strategic resolve. But the Russian president is not the only one making bad judgements with devastating consequences in Ukraine and beyond. As the war drags on with no end in sight, it is important to address US President Joe Biden's – and his Western allies' – miscalculations in Ukraine as well. These, unsurprisingly, mirror Russia's own failures, as both leaders prove incapable of learning the lessons of imperial hubris. From the start, Biden took the moral high ground, framing the conflict in Ukraine as a global one between democracy and autocracy, between respect for international law and national sovereignty and the scourge of Russian aggression. Yet, he pleaded with world autocrats to join the crusade and disregarded America's own illegal wars. He underestimated the power of Russian nationalism and rejected Moscow's fears of NATO expansion towards its borders as baseless excuses for Russian imperialism. In the months leading up to the war, Biden undermined efforts to implement the Minsk agreements signed in 2014 and 2015 to end the conflict in the Donbas region. They were meant to pave the way for the creation of two autonomous Russian areas in eastern Ukraine and stave off the expansion of Russian intervention in the country. Both Ukraine and Russia had signed on, but France and Germany, which helped conclude and refine these agreements, failed to push hard enough for their implementation. Despite having much to lose from a devastating European war, European powers did little to stop the escalation. Biden also underestimated Russia's military endurance, betting on Ukrainians defeating it just as the Afghans defeated the Soviet Union with help from the United States. But for Moscow, Ukraine is

far more important and strategic than Afghanistan, considering its shared history and geographic proximity. From Putin's perspective, Ukraine is vital for Russia's national security and his regime's survival. Clearly, he would rather have it destroyed than see it join a Western alliance. During the first year of the war, Russian setbacks from Kyiv to Kharkiv demonstrated Ukraine's resolve and resilience. But the tide of war began to change this year. As the fall of Bakhmut after months of vicious fighting has shown, Russia is no less resilient or determined to win. That is a recipe for a devastating stalemate. Biden has also overestimated Ukraine's capacity for war. This is not to be confused with courage and steadfastness, of which the Ukrainians have demonstrated plenty, and which allowed them to launch a successful counter-offensive last year. But the war has thus far been fought conventionally on Ukrainian territory, allowing the greater Russian firepower to overwhelm Ukraine's smaller military and destroy much of its economy. These setbacks have not deterred the US and its allies from doubling down. On May 19, the US-led G7 countries meeting in Hiroshima vowed to renew their "commitment to provide the financial, humanitarian, military and diplomatic support Ukraine requires for as long as it takes". This is yet another indication that the US and its allies are getting bogged down in "mission creep". What began with sending ammunition to Ukraine, expanded to supplying artillery and American and German tanks, Patriot defence systems, and drones, which allow Ukraine to take the fight into Russian territory. Most recently, the US has agreed to the transfer of F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine to challenge Russia's air superiority. Moscow has warned that providing Kyiv with this aircraft will lead to a dangerous escalation, while experts have questioned its immediate utility for the Ukrainian army without outside help manning it. From the looks of it, any future victory on the battlefield may prove to be a pyrrhic one, with the costs by far outweighing

the gains. If the much-awaited Ukrainian counter-offensive somehow succeeds in extracting a dramatic victory from the jaws of defeat, this could push Russia to use nuclear weapons in response, wreaking havoc in Ukraine and the rest of Europe. Even if Moscow resorts to deploying tactical nuclear weapons, which have smaller explosive power and are meant for use on the battlefield against enemy bases and troops, the ramification of such a move for European – indeed world – security and peace, cannot be overstated. Some in the US administration consider the Russian threats of nuclear retaliation as no more than a bluff to deter further Western intervention. I hope they are right. I think they are wrong. Since 2000, the Kremlin has lowered the threshold for the use of nuclear weapons, stating that they may be used not only in case of a threat to the country's very existence, but also "to repel armed aggression if all other means of resolving a crisis situation have been exhausted or turn out to be ineffective". Lastly, just as Putin underestimated Western unity in their support of Ukraine, Biden underestimated the rest of the world's indifference to what appears – from the perspective of the Global South – as a protracted European conflict that is Europe's problem. As the rest of the world continues to trade with Russia, Western sanctions are failing to change Moscow's calculus. In sum, both Russia and the West have failed to pursue diplomacy as purposefully and stubbornly as they have pursued war. Both sides are digging in for the long haul, stacking the decks, stoking fears of nuclear annihilation, and framing the conflict as a "win or die" situation. Considering the irreconcilable differences between Russia and the West, the war is not likely to end in a peace agreement, at least not in the foreseeable future. Ultimately, the conflict may reach a stalemate and a long-term cessation of hostilities, similar to the 70-year-long ceasefire between North and South Korea, in which Russia may insist on a demilitarised zone that cuts through Ukraine from Kharkiv in the north to Kherson in the south. Meanwhile, as the war takes its toll on Russian and Western security and stability, China emerges unscathed. And to US displeasure, it is becoming a more powerful and credible world leader than ever before. –Courtesy: Al Jazeera

## Briefs

## Imran can be tried in military courts

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personally orchestrating the May 9 riots. "They (PTI supporters) chanted a slogan that 'Imran Khan is our red line', and the planning and preparation was done on Imran Khan's initiative and instigation. "He carried it all out. He is the architect of all this discord," adding that there was evidence present to back the accusation as well. "The evidence is documented, it is in tweets and his messages," he added. When asked how Imran was able to communicate with his party leaders even from jail, the interior minister replied: "All this [planning] was decided before he went [to jail] that 'who will do what and where. And when he is arrested, what would be the strategy and duties. All of this was decided.'" Sanaullah's remarks come a day after Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said that there was no decision yet on Imran's trial under the Army Act, adding, however, that he could not "rule out" such a possibility.

## Parliament to retaliate if authority..

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judge while speaking in the National Assembly. He said that the government had formed a commission and it was stopped from operating by the chief justice. "The judiciary cannot dictate the parliament as it is independent," he added. "It was expected that the chief justice would leave this matter to the commission as it also involved his mother-in-law," said the defence minister, who is also a senior leader of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). Talking about the Arsalan Iftikhar case, he said that the former chief justice Iftikhar Chaudhary had recused himself from the bench at that time and distanced himself from his son's case. "If Iftikhar Chaudhary can separate himself from the bench then the incumbent chief justice should also be separated," he said, adding, "It seems like good traditions are being abandoned." Speaking about the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Bill, 2023, the seasoned politician said that the top court took notice of the bill before it even became an act.

## IMF in touch with Pakistan..

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focus on the restoration of foreign exchange, the passage of a FY24 budget consistent with programme goals and adequate financing." The staff-level agreement over the 9th review of IMF has been delayed since November, with more than 100 days gone since the last staff-level mission to Pakistan. Ordinarily, a board meeting on a review of the programme would require a prior staff-level agreement, which would unlock \$1.1 billion in financing for Pakistan as part of a \$6.5bn IMF package. Finance Minister Ishaq Dar had earlier said that Pakistan will not default and overcome the economic crisis with or without the International Monetary Fund (IMF). He added that foreign powers are surprised that Pakistan does not default so far.

## Dar says 'IMF deal's 9th review..

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financial institutions acknowledged the economic status of Pakistan. In 2017, Pakistan was going to become the 24th strong economy in the world which unfortunately fell to 47th number in 2022. "We do not have to fall into a blame game but we have to take the country forward. The previous government reversed the economic progress. We are trying to finalise a public and business-friendly budget. We were bound to take tough decisions due to the wrong policies of the PTI government."

## Sports activities lead to healthy living: President

The president further stressed that for physical health, regular exercise and other sports activities must be made a part of life as they were vital for healthy living

QUETTA: President Dr Arif Alvi on Tuesday said that sports activities always led to healthy competition by promoting discipline and character building, especially among the young people. Addressing the concluding ceremony of 34th National Games, the president said that by holding national sports event, a message was given to the entire world that Balochistan was a peaceful province. The president observed that different genres of games always helped in promotion of mental health, character building, team work, and healthy competition at different levels. He said Quaid e Azam and Fatima Jinnah always encouraged young people of the country to take part in healthy activities and stressed upon imbuing the spirit of unity, faith and discipline in all walks of life. Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah paid special focus on girls guide to strengthen the organizational discipline, he added.



About Balochistan, the president said the province was rich with natural and mineral resources and commended all the governments for their efforts to utilize them for the progress and prosperity of the province. The president further stressed that for physical health, regular exercise and other sports

activities must be made a part of life as they were vital for healthy living. He also appreciated all the stakeholders for the excellent arrangements and sportsmen for competing in the games. He termed holding of national games in Quetta as 'another feather in province's cap'. The president urged the youth to follow Quaid's three guiding words 'unity, faith and discipline' as beacon for achieving success in future. The president said the country's youth should have faith in their talents as no power in the world could hamper their quest for success in life. The president expressed his hope that young people would utilize their capabilities for the progress and development of the province. He also recollected his childhood and youth's days when sports activities were regularly held at the educational institutions. The president said at the global level, TV channels promoted games across the world. - APP

## Svitolina hoping to 'bring joy' to Ukraine

PARIS: Elina Svitolina said she wanted to "bring joy" to people in Ukraine after she marked her comeback to Grand Slam tennis with a first-round victory at the French Open on Monday. The former world number three beat last year's semi-finalist Martina Trevisan 6-2, 6-2 in her first match at a major tournament since the 2022 Australian Open. Svitolina recently returned to the tour following maternity leave, having previously taken a break from the sport citing health problems and mental exhaustion following Russia's invasion of her home country Ukraine. The 28-year-old also won her 17th WTA title in Strasbourg last weekend. "I want to do it for myself. I have some goals that I want to complete before I retire completely," she said when asked what motivated her to return to the WTA Tour in April. "Of course, for my country, as well, to bring these little moments like, for example, winning Strasbourg, starting well here, as well. "These kind of moments, these little wins... on a level, which is very low, but these moments

bring joy to people of Ukraine, to the kids as well - the kids who loved to play tennis before the war and now maybe they don't have the opportunity. "These moments that can motivate them to look on the bright side and see these good moments and enjoy themselves as much as they can in this horrible situation." Svitolina has reached two Grand Slam semi-finals and six quarter-finals, including three times at Roland Garros. She will face Australian qualifier Storm Hunter in the second round, with a possible rematch of the Strasbourg final



against Russian Anna Blinkova up for grabs. Svitolina's compatriot Marta Kostyuk was booed by the Court Philippe Chatrier crowd on Sunday for refusing to shake hands with Belarusian Aryna Sabalenka after their match.

Belarus is a key military ally of Russia. "A lot of rubbish is happening around the situation where we have to focus on what the main point of what is going on, a lot of people, Ukrainian people, need help and need support," said Svitolina, who donated her Strasbourg prize money to help Ukrainian children. "We are focusing on so many things like empty words, empty things that are not helping the situation, not helping anything." Ukrainian foreign minister Dmytro Kuleba also supported Kostyuk on Monday, writing on social media: "Those who bood need to visit Bucha, where the Russian army came from Belarus and massacred civilians. Or run to a shelter when a Russian jet takes off in Belarus. Then, boo." Svitolina's fellow Ukrainians Anhelina Kalinina, Lesia Tsurenko and Kateryna Baindl all start their French Open campaigns on Tuesday. - APP

## Djokovic courts controversy at French Open

PARIS: Novak Djokovic courted controversy Monday when he wrote "Kosovo is the heart of Serbia. Stop the violence" on a camera at the French Open after clashes flared in northern Kosovo amid ethnic tensions. The Belgrade-born tennis superstar wrote the message in Serbian after his opening round victory over Aleksandar Kovacevic on the showpiece Philippe Chatrier Court at Roland Garros. "Kosovo is our cradle, our stronghold, centre of the most important things for our country... There are many reasons why I wrote that on the camera," 36-year-old Djokovic told Serb media at the tournament. NATO-led peacekeepers on Monday dispersed Serb protesters who again clashed with police in northern Kosovo to demand the removal of recently elected Albanian mayors, as ethnic tensions flared in the Balkan nation. Around 25 soldiers were injured during the clashes, along with over 50 demonstrators. Kosovo's Serbs had boycotted last month's elections in the northern towns, which allowed ethnic Albanians to take control of local councils despite a minuscule turnout of under 3.5 percent of voters. Kosovo's Prime Minister Albin Kurti's government officially installed the mayors last week, defying calls to ease the tensions by the European Union and the United States, which have both championed the territory's 2008 independence from Serbia. "I am not a politician and I have no intention to engage in political debates, it is a very sensitive topic," added Djokovic. "Of course it hurts me very much as a Serb to see what is happening in Kosovo and the way our people have been practically expelled from the municipal offices, so the least I could do was this. "As a public figure but also a son of a man who was born in Kosovo I feel additional responsibility to express my support to our people and Serbia as a whole. "I have no remorse and would do it again as my stance is clear. I am against war, violence and conflict of any kind and I have always publicly shown that. - Agencies

## Maryam meets...

FROM PAGE 01  
support provided by Australia and emphasized the importance of the historic partnership between the two countries. Later, the Australian High Commissioner also called on PTI Chairman Imran Khan. Matters of mutual interest came under discussion during the meeting. Maryam Nawaz specifically highlighted Australia's significant role in the education of Pakistani students and stressed the need for further collaboration in sectors such as education, culture, trade, and investment. In response, Australian High Commissioner Neil Hawkins congratulated Maryam Nawaz on her party post within the PML-N. He commended her on her new role and expressed his optimism for a productive collaboration between Pakistan and Australia. Maryam Nawaz underscored the potential of bilateral trade to enhance the relationship between Pakistan and Australia. She highlighted that increased trade ties could lead to stronger bonds between the two nations.

## Pakistan-Belarus..

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The Pakistan Foreign Minister was of the view that such agreements facilitate exchanges and research and lay the foundation of stronger academic cooperation between the two nations. He said Pakistan is committed to maintaining high level engagements and visits with Belarus to further strengthen our bilateral relations and building trade as economic ties remains a priority area for us. He recalled that the two countries recently held sixth ministerial commission, which explored cooperation in a number of areas, particularly industrial production and agricultural equipment and science. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said the two countries continue to build on these discussions to add more substance to their relations. He said in 2024, both Pakistan and Belarus will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations and to commemorate this momentous occasion we will collaborate on the development of the comprehensive plan of actions. He said these planned events will be held in both Pakistan and Belarus, offering an opportunity to celebrate the bond between our two nations, while fostering relations in diverse spheres.

## Party members being...

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after the ticket holders to somehow separate them from the PTI and many have already happened. "There is no example of the kind of pressure being mounted on his party at the moment, except for a few people," Mr Khan rued. "A new drama of a new party is being staged and the game is on to take [the PTI] in that direction. The homes of those who are hiding are being attacked and demolished," he added. Speaking about the superior judiciary, Mr Khan claimed. "I know that there is a lot of pressure on my superior judiciary. I know that judges are also receiving phone calls from unknown [numbers] and threats". Apparently quoting the authorities, he claimed that PTI workers were being threatened that "women will be taken away from their homes. "They have stooped to this level. No one could imagine stooping to this level in the country's politics. They (authorities) are afraid to release the women. They know that none of the women were involved in the arson acts. They know that hardly 100 to 150 people will be [involved in rioting]. The rest were protesting peacefully," Mr Khan asserted. On Monday, Mr Khan said that the country continues to witness economic woes since the incumbent government came into power. Taking to Twitter, he said the current fascist government was leaving no stone unturned to oppress the opposition adding even the regimes of martial law were not as oppressive.

## Juventus seeks plea deal with authorities

MILAN: Juventus will propose a plea bargain with Italy's soccer authorities on Tuesday over a case involving alleged irregularities in its payment of players' salaries, a source close to the matter told Reuters. A hearing with a court at the Italian Soccer Federation (FIGC) has been brought forward to Tuesday, the source added. It had initially been scheduled to be heard on June 15. The plea bargain would mark an attempt by the most successful club in Italian soccer to clear the slate with the soccer authorities before the end of the current Serie A season. Several Italian newspapers on Tuesday said the club will propose paying a fine and being penalised another two or three points in this season's Serie A championship, on top of the 10 points it has already been docked for a separate case regarding its accounting. The plea bargain as described in the newspapers would mean that Juventus would finish seventh in Serie A which concludes this weekend, and qualify for a place in next season's European Conference League. However, it is likely to have to forfeit that place because of sanctions that could be imposed following a separate probe by UEFA, European soccer's ruling body, the newspapers said. Juventus officials were not immediately available for comment on Tuesday. The club has previously denied wrongdoing and said its accounts are in line with soccer industry practice. Inquiries by sports authorities were triggered by investigations from criminal prosecutors in Turin, where the club is based, in a case regarding alleged false accounting. As part of this case, former Chairman Andrea Agnelli, 11 other people and the club itself risk standing trial. - APP

## History-maker Zhang makes China proud

PARIS: Zhang Zhizhen on Monday became the first Chinese man in 86 years to win a match at the French Open. The world number 71 was leading Dusan Lajovic 6-1, 4-1 when his Serbian opponent retired with an injury. It was a first main draw win at the majors for Zhang who had been an opening round loser in his three previous appearances at the Slams. The 26-year-old is getting used to making breakthroughs for China. In 2021, he was the first Chinese man to play at Wimbledon while earlier in May at Madrid, he became the first to reach the quarter-finals of a Masters event. He will now face Thiago Agustin Tirante, the world 153 from Argentina, who defeated Dutch 25th seed Botic van de Zandschulp. Zhang was the only one of three Chinese men to survive the first round in Paris after Shang Juncheng and Wu Yibing both missed out. - APP

## Rameez becomes youngest bodybuilding judge from Pakistan

LAHORE: Pakistani bodybuilder and international judge Rameez Ibrahim Pakistani bodybuilder Rameez Ibrahim has now become the youngest international judge from the country. Rameez, 32, served as a judge during the recently concluded Amateur Asia Bodybuilding and World Powerlifting Championship in Bangkok, Thailand. The Karachi-born bodybuilder also won life time achievement award. Speaking to GeoSuper.tv, Rameez shared his excitement and said it is indeed a proud moment for the whole country. "I am overwhelmed on this achievement. This is a proud moment for my country and also my family who supported me throughout," he said. "Bodybuilding is my passion and I gave my whole life to it. I will now keep on grooming youngsters in this field," added Rameez. It must be noted here that Pakistan bagged 14 Gold medals in the Asian event. Mohammad Noman bagged most (3) Gold medals in the event. Mohammad Uzain Mirza, Mohammad Mubashir and Wasim Bashir bagged two Golds each.

## ALL MEDALS LIST

Mohammad Noman (Jr powerlifting world champion)  
Bench press - Gold  
Deadlifts - Gold

Squats - Gold  
Nasir Khan  
Men's physique master - Silver  
Fashion model - Bronze  
Mohammad Uzain Mirza  
Jr bodybuilding 60 kg - Gold  
Jr classic physique - Gold  
Jr men's physique - Bronze  
Mohammad Mubashir  
Jr bodybuilding 65kg - Gold  
Jr classic physique - Gold  
Waseem Bashir  
Jr bodybuilding 70 kg - Gold  
Jr classic physique gold medal  
Mohammad Zeeshan  
Sr men's bodybuilding 60 kg - Bronze  
Sr classic physique - Gold  
Khizer Butt  
Sr men's bodybuilding 85 kg - Gold  
Sr classic physique - Silver  
Wajahat  
Jr men's physique - Gold  
Shahzaib durrani  
Fashion model - Gold  
Adnan Sheikh  
Sr bodybuilding 70 kg - Silver  
Sr classic physique - Silver  
Sr men's physique - Gold

## Jose Mourinho targets 6th European title

Inter Milan became champions of Europe on his watch for the first time in 45 years in 2010 and he celebrated his fourth continental trophy during his spell at Manchester United in 2017, winning the Europa League

BUDAPEST: Roma manager Jose Mourinho has never lost a European final while Sevilla are six from six in Europa League finals. Something has to give in Budapest on Wednesday. Portugal's Mourinho has five major continental titles to his name - two Champions League wins, two Europa League trophies and last year's triumph in the inaugural Europa Conference League with the Italian side. The 60-year-old announced himself on the big stage in 2003 when he led Porto to the UEFA Cup, the Europa League's precursor, and the following year he won the

Champions League. Inter Milan became champions of Europe on his watch for the first time in 45 years in 2010 and he celebrated his fourth continental trophy during his spell at Manchester United in 2017, winning the Europa League. Twenty years on he is defying the naysayers who said his career was on the wane after a disappointing spell at Tottenham. If Roma lift the trophy in Hungary, Mourinho will pull clear of Giovanni Trapattoni, who also won five major European trophies in his coaching career. The much-travelled Mourinho is in no doubt he

is improving with age and experience. "Better coach, better person, same DNA," said the Portuguese. "The DNA is motivation, is happiness. Desire for these big moments, and these are the feelings that I try to pass to the boys. "I think you can be better and better with your experiences. I think your brain becomes sharper and the accumulation of knowledge is better with the years. "I think you stop when you lose motivation. My motivation grows up every day. I think I am better now." Roma, who edged past Bayer Leverkusen in the semi-finals, finished sixth in Serie

A but victory against their Spanish opponents this week would be a passport into the Champions League. Mourinho's future beyond this season is uncertain but he says for now his only focus is on Wednesday's match at the Puskas Arena. Europa League kings In order to achieve his target, Mourinho must get past Sevilla, who are kings of Europe's second-tier competition - their tally of six wins is double that of Inter Milan, Liverpool, Juventus and Atletico Madrid. They are 11th in La Liga but have turned on the style in Europe, coming from 2-0

down at one stage in the first leg against Manchester United to see off the English giants before beating Juventus in the semis. It is a remarkable end to the season for the club, who flirted with relegation for much of the campaign, sacking Julen Lopetegui and then Jorge Sampaoli, before Jose Luis Mendilibar steadied the ship. Veteran wing-back Jesus Navas is aiming to win the Europa League for the fourth time, just two months after Mendilibar took charge. "We transform (on Europa League nights) and it's incredible how we come out

in every match," said the former Manchester City player. "It's a competition that has given us a lot, and the joy it provides us every time we take part in it drives us to go as far as possible. "What Jose Luis has done with us has been fundamental. He has brought the best out of us, and when you look at the teams we have eliminated, it's something to be very proud of. He deserves to stay with us for a long time. "He's a coach who always pushes us, and who has that work ethic to train hard and get the best out of us. His arrival has coincided with an incredible turnaround in our season."

## Briefs

NHMP  
recovers  
stolen car

ISLAMABAD: The National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP) have recovered a stolen car and handed over two runaway children of a seminary to Child Protection Bureau Rawalpindi. According to a press release issued Tuesday, the Motorway Police recovered a vehicle stolen from Hekla-D I Khan Motorway. The owner of the vehicle was contacted and information was provided about the recovery of the vehicle. Later the vehicle was handed over to Daudkhel police station for further legal action. The search for the car lifters was going on. Meanwhile, the Motorway Police found two children near Chakri Interchange. The children aged about 8 and 9 years respectively, could not satisfy answers when questioned. The children were transferred to Chakri camp. During investigation, it was found that they were studying in a seminary in Islamabad and belonged to Karachi. But the children could not provide the address or contact number of their family and the seminary. In this situation, the children who had run away from the seminary were safely handed over to the Child Protection Bureau Rawalpindi.—APP

ANF seizes  
over 23 kg  
drugs

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in their ongoing operations against drug smugglers managed to recover over 23 kg of drugs and 8160 intoxicated tablets besides netting two accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Tuesday. He informed that in an operation near Islamabad Tarnol, 3.3 kg charras was recovered from the possession of an accused resident of Nowshera. In the second operation at Karachi International Airport, ANF recovered 8160 intoxicated tablets from the trolley bag of a Bangkok-bound passenger going on flight no TG-341. In the third operation conducted near Dalbandin Sirgil, Balochistan 20 kg charras concealed in bushes was recovered. Separate cases have been registered against the accused while further investigations are under process.—APP

'India playing  
politics to  
spoil Asian  
Cup spirit'

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) Ehsan Ur Rehman Mazari has said that India must not play politics in cricket especially when other sports contingents are visiting Pakistan. Talking to APP here on Tuesday the minister said that 'Pakistan verses India' is the most watched cricket match in the world and if India plays Asia Cricket cup in Pakistan, then there is no doubt in that Pakistan would visit India as well to play the cricket World Cup. He said, "We need to keep sports and politics separate", adding that sports is beyond boundaries.

The minister stated that Indian Baseball team recently played a tournament in Islamabad in which more than thirty members contingent played along with other nations. He said that an Indian contingent also participated in Bridge Federation of Asia and Middle East (BFAME) Championship organized in Lahore. He said the reluctance and promotion of Cricket remains a question mark. Mazari said that government is working on a comprehensive 'National Sports Policy' to uplift the sports in the country. He said all stakeholders including Pakistan Olympic Association has been taken on the board and the policy would be implemented in true spirit after the approval of the cabinet. He lauded the efforts of Balochistan government on successfully organizing the 34th National Games, after 19 years. He also extended greetings to the winning teams including Army, Wapda and others.

Over 30 peacekeepers injured  
in clashes in northern Kosovo

Kosovo unilaterally declared independence from Serbia in 2008, and Belgrade and its key allies Russia and China have refused to recognise it, effectively preventing Kosovo from having a seat at the United Nations

ZVECAN: Over 30 peacekeepers deployed in a NATO-led mission in Kosovo were injured Monday in clashes with Serb protesters who demanded the removal of recently elected ethnic Albanian mayors, as tensions flare in the Balkan nation. The KFOR mission said it had faced "unprovoked attacks" while countering a hostile crowd, after demonstrators clashed with police and tried to force their way into a government building in the northern town of Zvecan. Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic said 52 Serbs were hurt, three seriously, while one was "wounded with two gunshots by (ethnic) Albanian special forces".

Hungary's defence minister said on Facebook that "more than 20 Hungarian soldiers" were among the wounded, with seven in a serious but stable condition. Italy's foreign minister said three of its soldiers were seriously wounded, and the country's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni joined NATO in calling for "all parties to take a step back to lower tensions". Kosovo's Serbs had boycotted last month's elec-

tions in northern towns, which allowed ethnic Albanians to take control of local councils despite a minuscule turnout of under 3.5 percent of voters. Kosovan Prime Minister Albin Kurti's government officially installed the mayors last week, defying calls to ease the tensions by the European Union and the United States, which have both championed the territory's 2008 independence from Serbia. Many Serbs are demanding the withdrawal of Kosovo police forces - whose presence in northern Kosovo has long sparked resistance - as well as the ethnic Albanian mayors they do not consider their true representatives. - Fractures and burns -

Early Monday, groups of Serbs clashed with Kosovo police in front of the municipal building in Serb-majority Zvecan and tried to enter, after which law enforcers responded by firing tear gas, according to an AFP journalist at the scene. NATO-led peacekeepers in the KFOR mission at first tried to separate protesters from the police, but later started to disperse the crowd using shields and batons, an AFP journalist saw.

Several protesters responded by hurling rocks, bottles and Molotov cocktails at the soldiers, but were quickly repelled a few hundred meters away from the Zvecan municipal building. "While countering the most active fringes of the crowd, several soldiers of the Italian and Hungarian KFOR contingent were the subject of unprovoked attacks and sustained trauma wounds with fractures and burns due to the explosion of incendiary devices," KFOR said in a statement. Eleven Italian soldiers were injured with "three in a serious condition", Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani said. "We will not tolerate further attacks against KFOR," said Meloni. "It is essential to avoid further unilateral actions by the Kosovo authorities and for all parties to take a step back to lower tensions".

NATO strongly condemned the "unprovoked" attacks against KFOR troops, adding that such actions were "totally unacceptable". "Violence must stop immediately. We call on all sides to refrain from actions that further inflame tensions, and to engage in dialogue," NATO said in a statement.

The Commander of the KFOR Mission, Division General Angelo Michele Ristuccia, slammed the "unacceptable" attacks and underlined that KFOR will "continue to fulfil its mandate impartially". Kosovo police said "organised" demonstrators rallied in northern Kosovo towns, home to many ethnic Serbs who reject Kosovo's independence from Serbia. "The protesters, using violence and throwing tear gas, tried to cross the security cordons and make a forced entry into the municipality facility" in Zvecan, Kosovo police said in a statement. "Police were forced to use legal means, such as (pepper) spray, to stop the protesters and bring the situation under control."

Kosovo unilaterally declared independence from Serbia in 2008, and Belgrade and its key allies Russia and China have refused to recognise it, effectively preventing Kosovo from having a seat at the United Nations. Serbs in Kosovo remained largely loyal to Belgrade, especially in the north, where they make up a majority and reject every move by Pristina to consolidate its control over the region.—Agencies

China backs Serbia's  
territorial integrity amid  
tensions with Kosovo

ISTANBUL: China on Tuesday put its weight behind Serbia amid the Balkan nation's renewed conflict with neighboring Kosovo. "China pays close attention" to escalating tensions in Kosovo and clashes between NATO soldiers and Serb protesters, said Mao Ning, spokeswoman of China's Foreign Ministry. China "supports Serbia's efforts to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and opposes unilateral actions taken by the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government in Pristina," said Mao, according to the Chinese daily Global Times. Mao said Beijing "calls for the implementation of the obligation to the establishment of an association/community of Serb-majority municipalities." She urged NATO to "earnestly respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of relevant countries and truly do things that are conducive to regional peace." Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic said Monday that a police officer in Kosovo opened fire on protesting Serbs with an assault rifle before clashes broke out in Kosovo's ethnic-Serb-dominated northern municipalities. Vucic, however, denied reports of shots being fired by the NATO-led peacekeeping mission Kosovo Force (KFOR). "A Kosovo police officer opened fire with an automatic rifle at the Serbs, hitting at least one person before the Serbs responded with stones," he said. He added that 52 Serbs were injured in the clashes, three of them seriously. Earlier, NATO, the European Union and the US urged the Kosovo authorities to withdraw the special police units from the northern municipalities. At least 25 KFOR soldiers were injured Monday in clashes with protesting Serbs.—Agencies

IESCO issues  
power  
suspension  
programme

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Tuesday issued a power suspension programme for Wednesday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 09:00 AM to 02:00 PM, Rawalpindi City Circle, Kayani Road, Tench Bhatta, Service Road, Muslim Town Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, 22 No. Chongi, Army Flats, RA Bazar, Chahan, Chontra, Rajar, Chakri, SPD, SPP, IST, New Rawat Feeders, Islamabad Circle, Anguri, NCP, Mengyal, Shahdara, Shahpur, Khayaban Iqbal, Pir Suhawah, Quid-e-Azam University, Punjab House, Bri Imam, Mandala, Athal, NIH, New PTN, Capital Steel, Industrial, Fazl Rubber, FHS, I/4, Feeders, Jhelum Circle, Sarai Alamgir, Shukri, Mandi Bhalwal, Military College, Shamsabad, Chapran, Riaz Shaheed feeders, From 08:00 AM to 01:00 AM, Attock Circle, Khanabad, Lal Zar, Lal Rukh, Small Industrial, Purniana, Garhi Afghan, Main-awala feeders and surrounding areas.—DNA

Senators  
denounce  
PTI violence  
of May 9

ISLAMABAD: Independent Senators Dilwar Khan and Hilal-ur-Rehman on Tuesday denounced the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) protesters' vandalism of state and public installations of 9th May and termed it as an unprecedented act of predicament. Addressing a joint press conference outside Parliament here, the Senators expressed solidarity and support with the Armed Forces of the country and categorically rejected the violence of May 9 by the PTI under the garb of a political party. Senator Dilwar Khan said the PTI leaders who did violence were presenting themselves as innocent and aggrieved.

He said, "I salute the Armed Forces for their restraint on that day (May 9) and we are standing besides our Armed Forces and will render every sacrifice for their prestige and honour. I strongly condemn the incident of May 9." He added that he and other senators went to Jinnah House under the leadership of Chairman Senate and the situation they saw there were two portraits of Father of the Nation Quid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and his sister Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah and rest were lying there. "Even the enemy forces did not go inside the GHQ or the Corps Commander's House. These people should be severely punished," Dilwar Khan said. Shaheed Colonel Sher Khan's statue was desecrated, and his pictures were trampled, he grieved.—APP

AIOU to offer  
course on  
'Solid Waste  
Management'

ISLAMABAD: Considering the wide scope and excellent teaching methods of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Akhtar Hameed Khan Memorial Trust (AH-KMT) wishes to introduce a course titled 'Waste Management' in collaboration with the Department of Environmental Sciences in the campus.

These words were expressed by CEO, AHKMT Sumaira Gul in her address at the inaugural session of the three-day training workshop held in Islamabad. She said that Akhtar Hameed Khan Trust has been working on solid waste management for a long time. This training workshop is an orientation session, after this, the students will be able to get training for six months. Chairman, AHKMT, Fayyaz Baqir in his online address, spoke about the importance of solid waste management. He said that the government cannot do anything without the participation of its citizens, keeping the country clean is a common responsibility of all of us. Social life training is lacking.—APP

## Including Pakistan

Acute food insecurity to rise  
in 22 crises-hit countries

UNITED NATIONS :Some 22 countries, including Pakistan, will see an increase in acute food insecurity over the next six months, according to a new early warning report issued by two Rome-based U.N. agencies. The report by the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) calls for urgent attention to save both lives and livelihoods. It covers the period from June to November 2023. Called 'Hunger Hotspots WFP-FAO early warnings on acute food insecurity', the report identified 18 hotspots with Afghanistan, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen placed at the highest alert

level and Haiti, the Sahel (Burkina Faso and Mali) and Sudan elevated to the highest concern levels. Business-as-usual pathways are no longer an option in today's risk landscape if we want to achieve global food security for all, ensuring that no one is left behind, QU Dongyu, FAO Director-General, said in a statement. We need to provide immediate time-sensitive agricultural interventions to pull people from the brink of hunger, help them rebuild their lives, and provide long-term solutions to address the root causes of food insecurity. Investing in disaster risk reduction in the agriculture sector can unlock significant resilience dividends and must be

scaled up, he added. The report also highlighted the risk of a spill-over of the Sudan crisis raising the risk of neighboring countries to negative impacts. "Not only are more people in more places around the world going hungry, but the severity of the hunger they face is worse than ever. Cindy McCain, WFP's Executive Director, said in a statement. This report makes it clear: we must act now to save lives, help people adapt to a changing climate, and ultimately prevent famine. If we don't, the results will be catastrophic, McCain warned. In addition, global economic shocks and stressors continue to drive acute hunger across almost all hot-

spots, the report said. With unusually high global food prices, low to middle-income countries will likely be driven further into a deep crisis, it added. Pakistan, the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Syria and Myanmar, which has been included in the latest report for the first time, were described as hotspots of very high concern. All these hotspots have a large number of people facing critical acute food insecurity, coupled with worsening drivers that are expected to further intensify life-threatening conditions in the coming months, the report warned.—Agencies

US debt crisis,  
ball is in  
lawmakers' court

WASHINGTON: The bill hammered out by US leaders to prevent the country from a catastrophic default on its debts will face one final and potentially perilous hurdle this week: Passing a divided Congress. Lawmakers return Tuesday from a holiday weekend with precious few days to review, debate and ultimately greenlight a measure intended to extend US borrowing authority in exchange for White House policy concessions, notably caps on federal spending. Top Republicans and Democrats have scrambled to secure congressional support for the measure, with President Joe Biden saying Monday he feels "very good" about its prospects despite having just days left before the government starts running out of money. The weekend deal, reached by Biden and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy after weeks of frantic negotiations, faces opposition from the progressive and hard-right wings of their respective parties. Ultra-conservative Republicans feel McCarthy should have secured far deeper spending cuts in exchange for raising the debt ceiling and allowing the government to keep borrowing money. The left wing of the Democratic Party is equally unhappy that Biden agreed to any spending limits at all. The House Rules Committee meets Tuesday, a crucial test to see whether McCarthy's own party, which controls the panel, can agree on a full chamber vote on the bill, now anticipated on Wednesday.—Agencies

Wagner boss  
denies coup news  
in Russia

The leader of Russia's Wagner mercenary group has denied accusations they could stage a military coup against the Kremlin, according to the Institute for the Study of War (ISW). The US-based think tank reported Yevgeny Prigozhin argued his mercenary force could not topple the Kremlin because it lacked the manpower, following a claim by former Russian military commander Igor Girkin it wanted to do so. Prigozhin and the Wagner group he founded have gained notoriety fighting in Ukraine, especially amid the bloody battle for Bakhmut. The outspoken mercenary leader has openly criticised the Russian military and Kremlin over its campaign, with some suggesting he is eyeing up political power. Speaking to Euronews in April, two experts ruled out his chances of becoming president, with Russian politics analyst Mark Galeotti saying it was "dangerous" to be talked about this way. Prigozhin's political enemies - especially those in the military establishment - are "very happy" to encourage such ideas to drive a wedge between him and Russian President Vladimir Putin, he added. The mercenary leader said on Monday there are many types of coup around the world, such as the "chaotic" one in Sudan, which take too long and result in a major conflict, reported the ISW.—APP



ROME: Pakistan's Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman and Italy's Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Maria Tripodi co-chaired the 5th meeting of the 'Pakistan-Italy Joint Economic Commission' (JEC). DNA

## Expert emphasizes balance approach towards Aghan govt

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East & Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) organized 'A Conversation with Ms. Bette Dam, author of Looking for the Enemy: Mullah Omar and the Unknown Taliban. Diplomats, academics and students attended the event. During her introductory remarks, Ms. Amina Khan, Director of CAMEA, highlighted the distinctiveness of Ms. Dam's work as a Western author, offering a fresh perspective on the subject matter. She emphasized that Ms. Dam's nuanced approach of exploring all sides of the story contributes to a comprehensive and unbiased analysis, enabling readers to gain deeper insights into complex issues. Ms. Khan noted that this ability to embrace different viewpoints enhances the resonance and relevance of Ms. Dam's writing in the region. DG ISSI, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, delivered welcome remarks. He appreciated Ms. Dam's work, stating that her work had helped demystify many aspects of Mullah Omar's life and mission which had remained shrouded in mystery. In particular, her research had provided fresh perspective on the indigenous origins of the Taliban movement, factors for its rise in the peculiar circumstances of the civil war-ridden Afghanistan of the mid-1990s, the handling

of 9/11 and its aftermaths by Taliban leadership, the troubled relationship between Mullah Omar and Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, and the last days of Mullah Omar and his demise in Afghanistan. He stated that Ms Dam's work is a comprehensive and independent analysis that allows readers to gain profound insights into the complexities of the issues at hand. He expressed the hope that this book would inspire more scholars to further pursue the themes Ms. Bette Dam had highlighted. Ms. Bette Dam gave a brief presentation on her journey as an investigative journalist in particular. During the discussion, Ms. Bette



Dam highlighted the extensive research that had been undertaken to delve into the intricacies of Mullah Omar's life, encompassing his upbringing, formative years, development as a leader, the inception of the Taliban movement, and the final moments of his life. Ms. Bette Dam also talked about Mullah Omar's perspective on the Taliban, revealing that he viewed the group as a neutral peacekeeping force with the intention to halt the ongoing conflict and chaos in Afghanistan. Contrary to prevailing beliefs, as highlighted in her book, Ms. Bette Dam challenged the narrative by emphasizing that Mullah Omar, the former Taliban leader, remained in Afghanistan until

his death, refuting the misconception that he died in Pakistan. Ms. Dam went on to assert that the realities surrounding Afghanistan have been distorted by Western media's narrative. She stressed that the complete picture is rarely presented, suggesting that a more comprehensive understanding is necessary to grasp the complexities of the situation. During her discourse, Ms. Bette Dam shed light on the dominance of the Western narrative in media coverage, noting that this perspective has influenced approximately 80 percent of the portrayal. She emphasized the need for a more balanced and nuanced approach, as the media has tended to focus on violence and portrayed only one side of the story. Ms. Dam also revealed that in 2001, the Taliban had written surrender letters to the then-Afghan leader Hamid Karzai, which were unfortunately dismissed and thus an important opportunity for peace was conceivably lost. Furthermore, she highlighted that the refusal by Rumsfeld, the United States Secretary of Defense at the time, played a significant role in the subsequent unfolding of events. Her remarks were followed by an interactive discussion. The participants' comments focused on her key findings as well as problems related to the dominance of the Western narrative and the difficulties it posed for objective journalistic reporting. —DNA

## Briefs

### EU 'discomfort' at Hungary chairing bloc meetings

BRUSSELS: EU ministers expressed "discomfort" on Tuesday at political outlier Hungary taking on the bloc's rotating presidency next year, but Budapest vowed nothing could prevent it filling the prominent role. The European Parliament is to vote on a non-binding resolution on Thursday urging European Union capitals to deem Hungary unfit to assume the EU presidency in the second half of 2024.

This will be a crucial period just after European elections that will determine the bloc's next legislature and its next executive, the European Commission.

Hungary is viewed in Brussels as a black sheep in the EU - a backslider on democratic norms and one that obstructs some EU deliberations, including sanctions on Russia, to try to gain national advantage.

"Discomfort is what we all feel" at the looming Hungarian EU presidency, Dutch Foreign Minister Wopke Hoekstra. He was speaking ahead of an EU ministers' meeting looking at a long-running procedure against Hungary and Poland for breaching European rule of law. - APP

### Afghan numbers involved in Imran Riaz case: IG

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Inspector General Dr Usman Anwar on Tuesday told the Lahore High Court (LHC) that phone numbers which had been traced back to Afghanistan were involved in the case of anchorperson Imran Riaz Khan, whose whereabouts remain unknown since his arrest on May 11.

He made the remarks as the court resumed hearing a plea seeking to find the anchorperson, who was among the individuals apprehended in the wake of protests that erupted in the country after the arrest of PTI chairman Imran Khan.

Later, his lawyer said that a writ petition was filed on May 12 over the anchorperson's arrest and the LHC directed the attorney general to present him before the court the same day. But, after its orders were not followed, Sialkot police were given a 48-hour deadline to find Imran. A first information report (FIR) pertaining to the matter was registered with Civil Lines police on May 16 on the complaint of the anchorperson's father, Muhammad Riaz.

The FIR was registered against "unidentified persons" and police officials for allegedly kidnapping Imran, invoking Section 365 (kidnapping or abducting with intent secretly and wrongfully to confine person) of the Pakistan Penal Code.

At the previous hearing, the LHC had directed "all the agencies" to work together to find Imran and produce him before the court on May 30 (today).

# Kyrgyz envoy stresses need to promote capital market

## Invites the Pakistani side to visit Kyrgyzstan for the purpose

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan H.E. Mr. Ulanbek Totuaev met with Mr. Zahid Latif Khan, Chairman ISE Towers REIT Management Company Limited and Chairman Asian Institute of Eco-Civilization, Research and Development, Mr. Farrukh H. Khan, Chief Executive Pakistan Stock Exchange, Mr. Badiuddin Akber, Chief Executive Central Depository Company of Pakistan and Mr. Muhammad Lukman, Chief Executive National Clearing Company of Pakistan in ISE Towers, Islamabad. The representatives of Kyrgyz Stock Exchange and Kyrgyz Central Depository Company also joined the meeting virtually. The meeting was organized by Mr. Zahid Latif Khan. Ambassador Mr. Ulanbek Totuaev informed about the commitment of Government of Kyrgyzstan for developing the capital market



of Kyrgyzstan through information sharing and introduction of automated systems. He expressed his interest in developing comprehensive cooperation and assistance with the Pakistani side for promoting the capital market in his country. He also invited the Pakistani side to visit Kyrgyzstan for the purpose. Mr. Zahid Latif Khan suggested the conclusion of Memorandum of Understanding between the Pakistan Stock Exchange and Central Depository Company of Pakistan Limited with their respective counterparts in Kyrgyzstan. Mr. Farrukh H. Khan and Mr. Badiuddin Akber presented a briefing on the statutory and operational areas of PSX and CDC. They also discussed the areas of mutual interest including dual listing. The participants agreed to enter into a MoU and also to organize bilateral visits. At the end, Mr. Zahid Latif Khan placed its gratitude to Ambassador Ulanbek Totuaev. The participants also thanked Mr. Zahid Latif Khan for organizing the meeting.

## China has sent over 50,000 troops for UN

BEIJING: Over the past three decades, China has sent over 50,000 peacekeepers to participate in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKOs) in more than 20 countries and regions, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Mao Ning said on Tuesday. She made the remarks at the regular press conference when she was asked about China's participation in the UN peacekeeping missions, as May 29, 2023 marked the 21st International Day of UN Peacekeepers. The UN had conducted over 70 missions over the past seven decades or so, making outstanding contributions to safeguarding regional peace and assisting in the resolution of regional conflicts, Mao said, adding the Blue Helmets had become a symbol of peace and hope. She noted that China sent military observers to the UN in 1990, which marked the beginning of its participation in UNPKOs, and in 1992, it dispatched its first formed military unit of Blue Helmets to participate in UNPKOs. China was the second largest contributor to UN peacekeeping assessments and the largest troop contributor to peacekeeping operations among the five permanent members of the Security Council, she said. - APP

## DeSantis to mount first campaign swing through key states

DNA

DES MOINES: Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, following his presidential campaign debut online, will dive into old-school retail politicking in key early voting states this week, his first chance to connect with voters since announcing his bid for the 2024 Republican nomination. DeSantis will campaign in Iowa for two days and then move on to New Hampshire and South Carolina on a tour that will be closely watched to see if the buttoned-down, policy-minded governor can flash interpersonal skills that some critics have said he lacks.

Former President Donald Trump, the front-runner in the Republican race, will be right behind him. Trump will hold events in Iowa the day DeSantis stumps in New Hampshire, a sign the battle for the nomination is about to enter a more intense phase. DeSantis will hold a kickoff event in Des Moines, Iowa, on Tuesday, the kind of old-style campaign rally he eschewed in favor of announcing his candidacy in a virtual forum on Twitter with its owner, Elon Musk, that was plagued by technical issues. The fiasco drew mockery from Trump and other rivals.

the daily argument over the issue comes to an end," the Awami Muslim League (AML) chief remarked but added that the former premier had missed the train. He was of the opinion that there would be no need to explain the state of affairs to the masses when the dollar was available for Rs312 and 1.8 million flour bags had gone missing. The 70 million youth with mobile phones had the wisdom to make their own decisions and they could not be fooled, the AML chief remarked. Later in the day, Mr Rashid posted another tweet in which he shared a copy of his reply to the NAB notice, asking him to appear as a witness in the Al-Qadir Trust case. Meanwhile, Sheikh Rashid has said that neither he has any proof nor any document pertaining to the Al-Qadir Trust case, involving former prime minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan.

# Ukraine war comes to Moscow as drones strike both capitals

CENTRELINE REPORT

MOSCOW: Ukrainian drones struck wealthy districts of Moscow on Tuesday, Russia said in what one politician called the most dangerous attack since World War Two, while Kyiv was also hit by air for the third time in 24 hours. Since Russia sent troops into its neighbour in February last year, the war has largely been fought inside Ukraine, though Moscow has reported some attacks on its territory and said one was an assassination attempt against President Vladimir Putin. Tuesday's early morning raid targeted some of Moscow's wealthiest areas including where Putin and the elite have residences. He was later in the Kremlin and received a briefing on the attack, a spokesman said. Russia's defence ministry said eight drones sent by Kyiv and targeting civilians were shot down or diverted, though Baza, a Telegram channel with links to the security services, said more than 25 were involved. Two people were injured while some apart-

ment blocks were briefly evacuated, according to Moscow's mayor. Residents said they heard loud bangs followed by the smell of petrol. Some filmed a drone being shot down and a plume of smoke. Lawmaker Maxim Ivanov called it the most serious assault on Moscow since the Nazis, saying no Russian could now avoid "the new reality". Earlier this month, two drones exploded over the Kremlin in an attack Russia also blamed on Kyiv and said was aimed at Putin. "The sabotage and terrorist attacks of Ukraine will only increase," said another Russian lawmaker, Alexander Khinshtein, who called for a radical strengthening of defences. "Do not underestimate the enemy!" Ukrainian presidential aide Mykhailo Podolyak denied Kyiv was directly involved in Tuesday's attacks, though he said "we are pleased to watch" and forecast more.

At a messy stalemate for most of 2023 with Russian troops entrenched in some eastern Ukrainian regions, the war has killed tens of thousands, uprooted millions, reduced cities to ruins and caused havoc in the global economy. Kyiv said four people died around Ukraine in Russia's latest attacks on Tuesday, with 34 wounded including two children. "Russia is trying to break us and break our will," said Ukraine's Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko. In the capital, Ukraine said it shot down more than 20 Iranian-made Shahed drones. Eleven people were hurt. A 33-year-old woman died on her balcony when debris from a destroyed Russian projectile hit a Kyiv high-rise, officials said. Two upper floors were destroyed with people possibly still under rubble and flames engulfing the top. Russia has attacked Kyiv 17 times in May with drones or missiles, mostly at night, in an apparent attempt to sap morale. But Ukraine says U.S.-supplied Patriot anti-missile defences are achieving a 100% interception rate. Kyiv is promising a counter-offensive backed with Western weapons to try to drive Russian occupiers from territory seized in Moscow's self-styled "special military operation" to "denazify" its neighbour.

## N. Korea to launch first military spy satellite in June

SEOUL: North Korea will launch its first military reconnaissance satellite in June for monitoring U.S. activities, state media KCNA reported on Tuesday, drawing criticism over its potential use of banned missile technology. Ri Pyong Chol, vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission of the North's ruling Workers' Party, denounced ongoing joint military exercises by the U.S. and South Korea as openly showing "reckless ambition for aggression." U.S. and South Korean forces have carried out various training exercises in recent months, including the biggest-ever live-fire exercises last week, after many drills were scaled back amid COVID-19 restrictions and diplomatic efforts with North Korea. Ri said the drills required Pyongyang to have the "means capable of gathering information about the military acts of the enemy in real time." "We will comprehensively consider the present and future threats

and put into more thoroughgoing practice the activities for strengthening all-inclusive and practical war deterrents," Ri said in the statement carried by the KCNA news agency. Nuclear-armed North Korea has said it has completed development of its first military spy satellite, and leader Kim Jong Un has approved final preparations for the launch. The statement did not specify the exact launch date, but North Korea has notified Japan of a planned launch between May 31 and June 11, prompting Tokyo to put its ballistic missile defences on alert. Japan has said it would shoot down any projectile that threatens its territory. "Even if North Korea might call it a 'satellite', this is a violation of relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions that prohibit North Korea from all launches using the ballistic missile technology," Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi told a news conference on Tuesday.

South Korea's foreign ministry also slammed the North's use of ballistic missile technology as a clear violation of the U.N. sanctions, saying Ri was making a "farfetched excuse" to bolster its weapons programmes. "It is a nonsense to use our legitimate joint training and combined defence posture with the U.S., which were to respond to North Korea's advanced nuclear and missile threats, as an excuse for launching a reconnaissance satellite," ministry spokesman Lim Soo-suk told a briefing. - Agencies

# Malaysia detains ship suspected of looting WW2 ship wrecks

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia has detained a Chinese-registered vessel suspected of looting two British World War Two ship wrecks. The bulk carrier was seized on Sunday for anchoring illegally at the site in the South China Sea. Ammunition believed to be from the HMS Prince of Wales and HMS Repulse, which were sunk by Japanese forces more than 80 years ago, was then found on board. The UK Ministry of Defence had earlier condemned the alleged raid as a "desecration" of maritime war graves. Old shipwrecks are targeted by scavengers for their rare low-background steel, also known as "pre-war steel". The low ra-

diation in the steel makes it a rare and valuable resource for use in medical and scientific equipment. The British vessels, on the bed of the ocean some 100km (60 miles) off the east coast of Malaysia, had been targeted for decades. The Royal Navy battleships were dispatched to Singapore during the war to shore up the defence of Malaya. They were sunk by Japanese torpedoes on 10 December 1941. The strike - which occurred just three days after the attack on the US fleet in Pearl Harbour - killed some 842 sailors and is considered one of the worst disasters in British naval history. Fishermen and divers first reported the pres-

ence of the foreign vessel to Malaysia authorities last month.

Local maritime police detained the Chinese ship on Sunday. The ship, registered in Fuzhou, had 32 crew on board, the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) said in a statement. Cannon shells "suspected to be from World War Two" were uncovered during a search of the vessel. Malaysian agencies are also investigating the provenance of the ammunition. The MMEA added that it is linked to a cache of unexploded artillery, said to be from the two sunken vessels, that police seized from a private scrap yard in the southern state of Johor earlier this month. - Agencies

## PTI leader Shehryar arrested again

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Shehryar Afridi, who was released from Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail Tuesday, was rearrested immediately afterwards. The former federal minister was taken into custody from Islamabad's Sector F-8 under Section 3 of Maintenance of Public Order (MPO).

According to deputy commissioner Rawalpindi, the PTI leader has been put under house arrest for another 15 days under Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) section 3. The Islamabad High Court (IHC) today ordered his release after declaring his arrest 'illegal' under 3MPO.

Violent clashes broke out across Pakistan after the former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chief Imran Khan was arrested from the premises of Islamabad High Court (IHC) on May 9. The protests were held in remote and major cities as the party workers are agitated due to their chairman's arrest, with Balochistan, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Islamabad summoning the armed forces to ensure law and order.

## AI could lead to extinction, experts warn

DNA

CALIFORNIA: Artificial intelligence could lead to the extinction of humanity, experts - including the heads of OpenAI and Google DeepMind - have warned. Dozens have supported a statement published on the webpage of the Centre for AI Safety.

"Mitigating the risk of extinction from AI should be a global priority alongside other societal-scale risks such as pandemics and nuclear war" it reads. But others say the fears are overblown. Sam Altman, chief executive of ChatGPT-maker OpenAI, Demis Hassabis, chief executive of Google DeepMind and Dario Amodei of Anthropic have all supported the statement.

Dr Geoffrey Hinton, who issued an earlier warning about risks from super-intelligent AI, has also supported the call. Yoshua Bengio, professor of computer science at the university of Montreal, also signed.

Dr Hinton, Prof Bengio and NYU Professor Yann LeCun are often described as the "godfathers of AI" for their groundbreaking work in the field - for which they jointly won the 2018 Turing Award, which recognises outstanding contributions in computer science.

But Prof LeCun, who also works at Meta, has said these apocalyptic warnings are overblown. Many other experts similarly believe that fears of AI wiping out humanity are unrealistic, and a distraction from issues such as bias in systems that are already a problem.

# New law can lead to minus Imran, plus Nawaz formula: Rashid

The former interior minister said the entire nation condemned the May 9 episode but the ruling alliance comprising 13 parties should not make that a political narrative

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Sheikh Rashid - the chief of his own faction of Muslim League - said on Tuesday the law that came into effect a day earlier could result in minus Imran Khan and plus Nawaz Sharif formula.

In a series of tweets, Sheikh Rashid said he was submitting a reply to the NAB notice received last night. He said he wasn't present at the time the Al-Qadir Trust agenda was tabled (before the then federal cabinet) because he never had any [proper] interaction with Shahzad Akbar - the accountability czar in the Imran government. The former interior minister said the entire nation condemned the May 9 episode but the ruling alliance comprising 13 parties should not make that a political narrative. He said the Supreme Court of Pakistan was of a stance that no legislation could be made to benefit some specific persons and one would have to see what the apex would do on June 1 - the day it resumes the hearing of the matter concerning the Punjab Assembly elections. "Mr Sharif should return so that

the daily argument over the issue comes to an end," the Awami Muslim League (AML) chief remarked but added that the former premier had missed the train. He was of the opinion that there would be no need to explain the state of affairs to the masses when the dollar was available for Rs312 and 1.8 million flour bags had gone missing. The 70 million youth with mobile phones had the wisdom to make their own decisions and they could not be fooled, the AML chief remarked. Later in the day, Mr Rashid posted another tweet in which he shared a copy of his reply to the NAB notice, asking him to appear as a witness in the Al-Qadir Trust case. Meanwhile, Sheikh Rashid has said that neither he has any proof nor any document pertaining to the Al-Qadir Trust case, involving former prime minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan.

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