



# Islamabad POST

Monday, May 22, 2023

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**Trump victory would be the end of Ukraine, says Hillary Clinton**

Detailed News On Page-06

**France offers educational opportunities**

Detailed News On Page-08



**Giroud keeps Milan in top four hunt**

Detailed News On Page-08



## Briefs

**India can't suppress Kashmiris**

STAFF REPORT

MUZAFFARABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari said on Sunday that India would not be able to "suppress the voices of the people of occupied Kashmir" by holding the G20 moot in the disputed region. Talking to the media after landing in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) on a three-day visit, FM Bilawal said: "It is not possible for India to play an important role in the world by violating UN resolutions." "At a time when India is holding a conference in occupied Kashmir, I have been invited to deliver an address to the AJK Assembly," minister said.

**Nothing yet from govt on attack**

BUREAU REPORT

QUETTA: Jamaati-Islami (JI) Amir Sirajul Haq has said that the government has yet to update on whether an investigation has been opened on the recent suicide attack on him. In a statement issued from Quetta on Sunday, the JI leader reminded that it is the responsibility of the incumbent government to investigate the attack on him and lay out the facts before the public. He expressed hope that the government will fulfill its responsibility. Commenting on the prevailing political situation in the country, Haq informed that his party has joined hands with PTI Karachi wing.

**PTI Karachi president bids adieu**

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Aftab Siddiqui, PTI Karachi chapter president, has announced parting ways with the former ruling party and also quitting politics in protest against May 9 vandalism triggered following the arrest of former prime minister Imran Khan. Siddiqui, who is a MNA from Karachi's NA-247 constituency, in a series of tweets on Sunday said that he was left dismayed after party workers resorted to violence on May 9.

## This is no joke: PM Culprits to face military court, ATC

"The protesters turned into 'enemies of the country' and carried out the attack on the GHQ" says PM

ABID RAZA / DNA

**'No 'new' military courts'**

KHAYAM ABBASI

LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday announced that miscreants involved in attacks on army installations and civil properties during the May 9 violent protests will be tried in military courts and anti-terrorism courts (ATCs), respectively.

The violent protests were triggered almost across the country after Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan's arrest in £190 million Al-Qadir Trust case on May 9 which led to the deaths of at least 10 people and injured several others, prompting the authorities to arrest thousands of PTI workers. During the protests, the miscreants attacked the civil and military installations including - Corps Commander's House (Jinnah House) in Lahore Cantt and the General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi.

The military called May 9 "Black Day" and has decided to try the protesters under the Army Act, with Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir saying that the legal process in this regard has already begun. Chairing a meeting on the law and order situation in Lahore today, PM Shehbaz said everyone who is involved in the incidents of May 9 will be dealt with iron hand. He added that the day will always be remembered as a "black day" in the history of Pakistan. He went on to say that the rioters "turned into enemies of the country"

Continued on Page 06

Continued on Page 06

## Tank IBO 2 soldiers martyred, 3 terrorists killed

The killed terrorists remained involved in terrorist activities

NEWS DESK

RAWALPINDI: Two soldiers embraced martyrdom and three terrorists were killed during an intelligence-based operation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Tank district, the army's media wing said in the wee hours of Sunday. According to a press release issued by Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the killed terrorists remained actively involved in "numerous terrorist activities against security forces as well as innocent citizens".

The statement said the martyred soldiers, identified as 39-year-old Naik Muhammad Atiq from the Chakwal district and 36-year-old Naik Rajab Ali hailing from Attock, fought gallantly. "Sanitisation of the area is being carried out to eliminate any terrorists found in the area," the ISPR said. "Security forces of Pakistan are deter-



mined to eliminate the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve," it added. A day earlier, a terrorist was killed and three soldiers were martyred when security forces retaliated to an attack on one of their posts in the Zarghoon area of Balochistan. Pakistan has seen an uptick in terror activities, especially in KP and Balochistan, after the outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) ended its ceasefire with the government in November.



LAHORE: PM Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on law and order. - DNA

**Commission to probe tapers, leakers of calls**

Rana says Govt was under pressure to investigate

DNA

ISLAMABAD: After Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan questioned powers of commission investigating audio leaks pertaining to judiciary, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah confirmed the judicial body will have authority to investigate those involved in taping and leaking the calls. A day earlier, Khan had pointed towards a "deliberate omission" in the commission's Terms of Reference seeking accountability of those behind the surveillance.

"The commission, headed by Justice Qazi Faez Isa, will possess the power to probe into who is taping the audios and who is leaking them," the minister said, speaking during Geo News programme 'Naya Pakistan' on Saturday. The interior czar, during the show, spoke about Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif-led government's decision to constitute a three-member commission to conduct an investigation into the audio leaks pertaining to the judiciary.

In an announcement made a day earlier, the government notified a high-powered judicial commission to be headed by senior puisne judge of Supreme Court Justice Qazi Faez Isa, while Balochistan High Court Chief Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan and Islamabad High Court (IHC) CJ Aamer Farooq are named as members of the judicial body. "The government was under pressure from the civil society and others to

Continued on Page 06

**'Unpredictable time'**

## Imran claims 80pc chances of his arrest on Tuesday

Terms the article's claim regarding him, Gen. Asim 'completely false'

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: PTI Chairman Imran Khan has claimed that there "are 80 per cent chances of my arrest in Islamabad on Tuesday". "Everything is being done to dismantle our democracy. So right now, over 10,000 workers have been arrested, my entire senior leadership is in jail. "On Tuesday, I am to appear in Islamabad for bail and there are 80pc chances I will be arrested." PTI Chairman Imran Khan, in an interview with foreign media, asked how could someone win by "taking on your own army". "In such a situation, even if you win, the country loses," the ex-premier said, as he emphasised the need for a strong army. "I am a firm believer that Pakistan needs a strong defense system." Imran also said that he did not have any problem with the army "knowing they have been entrenched", recalling that he had worked with former army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa before "he switched horses".

Continued on Page 06

## JUI-P delegation meets Imran

STAFF REPORT

LAHORE: A high-level delegation of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Pakistan (JUI-P) headed by Maulana Khan Muhammad Sherani held a meeting with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan at his Zaman Park residence on Sunday and strongly condemned Imran's abduction and the unabated state oppression and against PTI and its allied parties. During the important meeting, the delegation expressed grave concern over the prevailing country's political situation, the government's invasion against the Constitution and the judiciary, and the massacre of democracy and democratic values. The delegation strongly condemned

Continued on Page 06

## Erdogan eyes third decade of power

Secular leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu gave the opposition's best performance

NEWS DESK

ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan cruised on Sunday into the final week before an historic runoff election as the big favourite to extend two decades of his Islamic-rooted rule until 2028.

Continued on Page 06

the opposition's best performance of Erdogan's dominant era in May 14 parliament and presidential polls. The retired bureaucrat of Kurdish Alevi descent broke ethnic barriers and Erdogan's stranglehold on the media and state institutions to win almost 45 per cent of the vote. But Erdogan still came within a fraction of a point of topping the 50 per cent threshold needed to win in the first round.

Continued on Page 06

## Unfortunate times in Pakistani politics

COMMENT

ANSAR M BHATTI

**P**OLITICS in Pakistan has always been turbulent. Or maybe it is so in the rest of the world as well. Pakistan's case turns out to be unique in the sense that when politics gets rough it affects everything. In such scenarios people happen to be the worst-hit species. And so is the case with economy as well. The ongoing tug-of-war among various political parties has unequivocally led the country towards political and economic chaos. The PTI-PDM tussle is taking a heavy toll on the hapless people. So much so, those who cannot make their both ends meet are left with no option but to either kill their children or do away with their own lives simply because they cannot see their family dying of hunger. Not only this, the graph of crimes linked to social injustices and poverty has swelled to abnormal proportions. But the priority of our so-called political

leaders is how to bring their opponents down. Look at the press conferences and talks of the government functionaries, ministers and even the prime minister, it seems as if Imran Khan and PTI happen to be the number one problem of this country. This is indeed a grim scenario from the point of view of the people especially. On the other hand the PTI Chairman too tends to conduct himself as a 'spoiled child' who is ready to ruin everything in case his wishes are not fulfilled. He too seems excessively obsessed with his opponents. Had it been in his purview he would have eliminated all of them in one go. During his speeches even he only focuses on the PDM and the Establishment. We are still anxiously waiting for his speech in which he would give a future road map as to how he would like to steer the country out of existing crises. But unfortunately not a single word about his future plans.

Now having said that it is also a fact that efforts are being made to wipe out PTI from the political scene or cut it to size in order to make sure that it does not perform well in the next elections. Despite all ifs and buts, PTI happens to be a leading political party having roots among the masses therefore it

won't be possible to eliminate it altogether. Nevertheless, its wings can certainly be clipped, a process for which has already kick-started. PTI MPs and ordinary members are gradually jumping out of the bandwagon. The biggest blow was caused when heavyweight Amir Kiani from Rawalpindi decided to call it a day. He not only left the party but politics as well. Imran Khan himself expressed his disappointment when Kiani announced his decision. In the coming days it is expected that more such announcements may be made by other senior leaders thus further denting the party's vote bank. It may be recalled that more or less similar scenes were witnessed in 2018 when the project PTI was launched. Since the idea was to bring the PTI into power therefore the powers-that-be decided to clip the wings of the PML N. The strategy had worked quite well as a result of which the PML N was cut to a small size. Consequently it lost elections. The similar process is in progress right now however the ultimate beneficiary may not be the PML N, rather it may be the PPP. As per the scheme of things, PPP and its leader Bilawal Bhutto have been tipped as the new rulers of this country. At the moment the PPP is not

in a position for performing well in general elections therefore it is very much likely that those who are leaving the PTI and even the new ones would be encouraged to join the PPP. The PTI is being taken to task for May 9 incidents. A number of leaders and workers have already been arrested while hunt for others is on. There is no denying the fact that whatever happened on May 9 would go down in the annals of Pakistani history as a dark chapter. The incidents earned a bad name for the country and provided the enemies with an ample chance to laugh at us. But, it seems a bit unfair to make arrests on such a large scale on the basis of mere assumptions. The PTI senior leadership including Imran Khan has called for setting up an independent commission to probe the matter and then punish those responsible for these violent acts. Once found guilty, the perpetrators then must be penalized ruthlessly so that no such incident takes place in future. We have to keep in consideration that even in the past all efforts meant to eliminate or even bully the political parties proved counterproductive in the long run.

**As regards the way forward, one thing is for sure the elections are not going to take place as per the**

wishes of the PTI or the order of the apex court. The deadline of 90 days has already expired and the Supreme Court is yet to announce its verdict in this case. It would be in the best interest of this country and democracy that the PTI is allowed to return to the National Assembly in the light of the May 19, 2023 verdict of the Lahore High Court and make part of the legislation process. A caretaker setup then may be agreed upon that would take charge when the incumbent government finishes its term in August and the elections are held in October. Any other arrangement or plan may be a recipe for further instability and chaos. Endnote: The IMF is not ready to bail out Pakistan by releasing the tranche anytime soon. There is a view within the Fund that Pakistan intends to settle Chinese loans from the IMF grant. It may not be the case however the Pakistani side probably has not been able to address IMF concerns regarding Chinese debts. This is a fact that Pakistan has to pay back a hefty amount to China. We all know that in the Chinese system there is no provision of debt rescheduling so either Pakistan has to pay or ask for a roll-over.

## Inside...

May 9 attacks on Pakistans national interests: Ahsan - Page 02

CDA Chairman announces incentives for industrial sector - Page 03

Film production institute to help promote filmmaking - Page 04

A comparative analysis of Iqbal and Karl Marx - Page 05

Ex-Olympians want players to be well-resourced - Page 06

Business Community expects growth oriented budget: RCCI - Page 07

France to offer more educational opportunities to Pak students - Page 08

# May 9 attacks on Pakistans national interests: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Sunday termed the Pakistan Tehrik-i-Insaf workers' May 9 vandalism of sensitive state installations as the "9/11-type" attacks on Pakistans national interests.

The minister in an exclusive interview with APP said it was regrettable that a political party's (PTI) workers on May 9 stormed and destroyed many symbols of Pakistan's pride that include Jinnah House, Yadgare Shuhada, fighter jets of the famous 1965 war and Chagai mountain model.

He said this reaction to their leader's (Imran Khan) arrest over corruption charges was unprecedentedly irrational, unacceptable and not less than the 9/11 attacks carried out in the US in 2001. The May-9 incident for Pakistans Armed Forces was equivalent to the September-11 of America. The violent workers of a political party attacked Pakistan's heritage and the pride of the security departments. The 'Jinnah House' was not only the residence of a Corps Commander rather a heritage of the founder of the country, he observed. He regretted that the PTI workers broke the statue of Captain Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed, a symbol of courage and bravery demonstrated by the Martyr in the Kargil battlefield and even admitted by the arch-rival India. If they have broken the fighter jets of 1965 war, [it means] they have attacked the pride of Pakistan Air Force attained by defeating



the enemy in the air war.

The minister said the model of Chagai Mountain, which reminded the nation of nuclear tests carried out by its scientists that made the country's defence impregnable, was also set on fire. There seems a scheme/method behind this madness as all such symbols were targeted selectively which had a link either with national heritage or pride of the Armed Forces.

Ahsan Iqbal said such serious offences could not be tolerated and forgiven by any country, reminding that charges were framed against all those who attacked the United States Capitol Hill at the behest of ex-president Donald Trump; and UK courts opened at the night for giving exemplary punishment to those involved in street riots, loot and plunder. So, these people too do not deserve any mercy as they have attacked the national heritage and pride of the Armed Forces, he said, adding that ev-

idence-based legal proceedings would be initiated against those involved in the subversive activities. Those who caused destruction in civil areas will be prosecuted under the civil law, while those who attacked military installations, will be tried under the Army Act.

He said the enemies of Pakistan kept celebrating the subversive activities of the PTI. Thus we made our enemies happy and brought tears to the eyes of our nation. Answering a question, the minister said when the coalition government came into power last year; the national kitty was empty and the Finance Ministry was unable to release development funds for the last quarter of the fiscal year 2021-22, which happened for the first time in the country's history due to failed economic policies of the past regime of PTI. He said the PTI leadership was expecting that there would be a Sri Lanka-like situation within a few days, but the incumbent government under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif took bold steps, faced the crisis, and streamlined the affairs to a great extent. The tough decision taken by the government has started yielding good results. Last year, he said the country faced devastating floods in the majority districts of the country that caused around \$ 30 billion loss to the national exchequer, but despite all the financial constraints, the government initiated reconstruction and rehabilitation work in the affected areas.—APP



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah meets with Ambassador of UAW, Hamad Odaid Ibrahim Alzaabi at CM House.—DNA

## KP Governor visits burnt Jinnah House Lahore

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Ghulam Ali on Sunday visited Jinnah House Lahore after it was burnt down by miscreants and inspected it. He also visited Corps Commander Lahore House. The Governor expresses expressed grief over the burning of Jinnah House Lahore and expressed solidarity with the people of Punjab and the Pakistan Army. The Governor said that he was grieved after seeing the destruction of Jinnah House Lahore and strongly condemned it on behalf of the people and the Government of KP.

He said that after seeing the devastation of the Jinnah House it was cleared that an organized conspiracy was made against the country and Pakistan Army and suggested strong action against the miscreants. He suggested disassociation from a political party for its violent thinking, adding that even the enemy could not dare the way Jinnah house was vandalized.—APP

## Integrated programme of hepatitis soon in Punjab

LAHOR: Punjab Caretaker Health Minister Dr. Javed Akram said on Sunday that the provincial government was going to start an integrated programme for hepatitis treatment under the guidance of Professor Ghiyasuddin Nabi Tayyab. He was speaking as the chief guest at a ceremony, organised at a local hotel here in honour of Professor Nusratullah Chaudhry, who was honored with 'Tamgha-e-Imtiaz'. The minister said the government was trying its best to provide better health facilities to people. He said it was a matter of great pleasure that robotic surgery had been successfully launched at the PKLI. Vice-Chancellor Fatima Jinnah Medical University Professor Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal told the ceremony that he had the opportunity to learn a lot from Professor Nusratullah Chaudhry.—APP

Cheema and Deputy General Secretary Usman Malik said that let the truth come out through forensic audit of the alleged audios. They said that people, who used national judicial system for personal or political gains, did not deserve any leniency.—APP

## PAF pays tribute to 1965 war hero MM Alam

DNA

While paying tribute to it's Ghazis and Martyrs, Pakistan Air Force has released a promo on 1965 war hero Air Commodore Mohammad Mahmood Alam (Late). Alam achieved the remarkable feat of downing 5 Indian Air force jets in under one minute during the 1965 war - A record that remains unbeaten till date. The legendary PAF pilot shot down five Indian fighter jets piloting his F-86 Sabre jet plane, becoming an "Ace in a Day"



on 7th September 1965. In total he achieved a feat of 09 confirmed kills and 02 probables during a period of 11 days. The war hero was honored with the prestigious 'Sitara-e-Jurat' with BAR for his outstanding performance in the 1965 war.

## PPP leader demands strict punishments for May-9 culprits

LAHORE: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Lahore chapter President Chaudhry Aslam Gill has demanded strict punishments for those involved in attacks on the military installations and the martyrs' memorials. In a statement issued here on Sunday, he demanded military court trials of those character who were behind the May-9 incidents. He said the person who first waved American cipher was now seeking the US interfere in Pakistan's internal affairs. He alleged that Imran Ahmad Niazi had weakened diplomatic relations with the friendly countries like China, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and others. Aslam Gill said that prisons and torture had to be faced like Bhuttos to become a real leader. He demanded filing of a reference against three judges who were facilitating the 'Niazi project'.—APP

## GAUP holds awareness session for students

PESHAWAR: The Department of Plant Breeding and Genetics of Agriculture University Peshawar (GAUP) held an awareness session for the students intended to study abroad, admissions guidance and scholarship opportunities. The brain behind organizing awareness sessions regarding study abroad, admissions guidance and scholarship opportunities was Prof. Dr. Rozina Gul. She got support from the Chairman of the Department of Plant Breeding and Genetics Prof. Dr. Ifikhar Hussain Khalil. The awareness session provided essential information about the process of getting admission in the best universities of the world. Among the speakers were Director Global Education Foundation UK Sunil and Assistant Professor, Department of English and Applied Linguistics University of Peshawar Arif Khan.—APP

## Marwat National Jirga supports peace in country

ISLAMABAD: Former federal minister and member of Pakistan Peoples Party's central executive committee (CEC) Anwar Saifullah Khan on Sunday demanded an intelligence-based targeted operation against the hideouts of terrorists in Lakki Marwat area. The Marwat National Jirga under his supervision opposed general operation against terrorist in the area for the safety of innocent children and the peace loving residents of the area.

He also announced that the terrorist would surrender their weapon on the guidelines of Jirga and their cases would be tried in the court of law. "We want peace in Lakki Marwat", said the head of jirga adding that the elders and notables of Lakki Marwat always supported the country's interest and raised their voices against criminal elements. He said the Marwat National Jirga will take a stand against those who will stand against

the country's valiant forces. The Jirga, he said, was constituted to ensure peace in the area in the best national interest and to sensitize the people of the area on living in harmony with peace. The jirga also strongly condemned the terrorist activities against the forces and its installations. The jirga also demanded for providing fool proof security to the lives and properties of the residents of the area during an operation against terrorists.—APP

## Creating a rift between the army and masses is an unforgivable crime

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The businessmen of Islamabad have said that the conspiracy to create a divide between the army and the people to pave the way for conflict is an unforgivable crime. Those who tried to tarnish the reputation of the army and attacked its installations do not deserve any mercy, the said. Strict action should be taken against them so that the series of targeting national institutions for political purposes can be ended, they said. Speaking to a hurriedly called meeting Islamabad Industrial Association (IIA) President Mohammad Ahmed, SVP Karim Aziz Malik, VP Usman Shoukat, Mian Akram Farid, Khalid Javed, Tariq Sadiq, Nasir Khan, Zakaria Usman, Mian Waqqas Masood, Mahmood Waraich, Umair Khattak,

Tahir Ayub, Convener Co-ordinator IIA Malik Sohail Hussain and the business leaders representing different markets of including I-8, I-10, I-11 and Blue Area said that we are indebted to those who sacrificed their lives for the motherland and will not hesitate to make any sacrifice for them. The business leaders said that they will stand by the army to thwart the evil intentions of the enemies of the country. Vandalising of the army and private property across the country was unjustified, which caused a loss of billions of rupees to the economy, while the country's reputation was also affected, they said. IIA leaders called it an attack on the integrity of Pakistan and noted that every patriot of Pakistan is worried about these incidents. Some divisive politicians are trying to get away with these incidents despite the clear

evidence, which is reprehensible, they observed. The army has shown exemplary discipline and restraint during vandalism, but this should not be done in the future, but they should be crushed with full force, otherwise, the miscreants will be encouraged. The business leaders noted that the country's economy can afford another MQM and country should not be pushed to a civil war in the name of democracy. Malik Sohail said that the army, with the help of the business community, should clean the country from all the selfish and self-interested politicians who are putting the integrity of the country at stake. Political stability is the pre-requisite for the strengthening of the economy and a must for the survival of the country and the current loathsome drive is actually aimed at creating chaos and uncertainty in the country.

## PPP Punjab welcomes judicial commission on audio leaks

LAHORE: Pakistan People's Party Central Punjab leadership has welcomed the audio leaks judicial com-

mission, headed by Justice Qazi Faez Isa, and termed it a right move to clean the judiciary of political dirt.

In a joint statement issued here on Sunday, PPP Central Punjab Information Secretary Shehzad Saeed

## Direct flights between Baku, Sialkot within two months

Adnan Jalil said that Azerbaijan and Pakistan have extensive cooperation opportunities in various fields including textile and agriculture and industry and trade

DNA

PESHAWAR: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan, Khazar Farhadov has said that direct flights between Baku and Sialkot will be started during the next two months to increase both bilateral and trade relations between the two countries. He was talking to KP Caretaker Minister for Industries, Trade and Technical Education, Mohammad Adnan Jalil, who called on him on Sunday. He said that direct flights between Baku and Sialkot, an industrial city of Pakistan will

strengthen bilateral relations. He said that earlier weekly flights have already been started between Lahore and Baku, which are operating successfully, saying such connectivity is extremely important for the strengthening of economic and trade relations. The Ambassador said that he is in constant contact with the business community of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and had visited Peshawar Chamber of Commerce several times. He said that Peshawar is an important city from an economic and historical point

of view, which has historical relations with Azerbaijan and Central Asian states. Khazar Farhadov said that Peshawar of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has a very crucial role in trade with Central Asian countries including Azerbaijan. He said that Peshawar and Azerbaijan have similarities in culture and food, which can make the historical relationship between the two countries more sustainable in the present era. He said that last year 53,000 Pakistanis visited Azerbaijan, which speaks of the volume of the people to people contact between

the people of both countries. He was hopeful that the number of visitors from Pakistan to Azerbaijan will further increase during the current year. He said that he will play his due role in increasing economic and trade relations between Azerbaijan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He said that tourism is another potential sector for promotion of bilateral relations between both countries. He said that the private sector, including the chamber of commerce, will play an important role in the economic and trade relations between Pakistan and Azer-

baijan and the business community of Peshawar is preparing to play its role in this regard. On this occasion, the provincial minister of commerce and industry Adnan Jalil invited the ambassador of Azerbaijan to come and discuss investment and trade relations with the business community. He said that he will soon lead a trade delegation to Azerbaijan. Adnan Jalil said that Azerbaijan and Pakistan have extensive cooperation opportunities in various fields including textile and agriculture and industry and trade.

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## National Days and Armed Forces Days

### MAY

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



### Hotels & Restaurants

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



### Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....8494949
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### Emergency

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



### Enquiry

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



### Hospitals

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



### Departments

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

### Islamabad Metropolitan

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

### Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480
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## CDA Chairman announces incentives for industrial sector

There is no room for occupation mafia in Islamabad, there should be an industrial zone in Islamabad: Noor Ul Amin Mengal

### DNA

ISLAMABAD: CDA Chairman Noor Ul Amin Mengal has announced several concessions and facilities for the industrial sector and said that serious efforts are being made to solve the problems of the business community of Islamabad, to give minimum inconvenience to the investors. They want and are trying to solve their problems immediately, the private sector is the only one who will save the country, the CDA was abused that its part of the money was invested in mega projects, which stopped the development work of the sectors. All the ongoing mega projects including the pass will be completed within two months, Dhokki Chowk plans to construct a single underpass in



front of Serena Hotel which will help maintain the flow of traffic, improve the provision of facilities in the vegetable market. There is no room for occupation mafia in Islamabad, there should be an industrial zone in Islamabad, Noor Ul Amin Mengal expressed these views while addressing the event organized under the auspices of Islamabad Industrial Association, Chairman CDA Noor Ul Amin. It was further said that CDA will ensure the provision of full facilities to the business community,

being an important stakeholder, President Islamabad Industrial Association and President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry can participate in the board meetings of CDA. Yes, this will help to resolve all the issues in a transparent manner, NOC will

be issued within one month after completion of all the paperwork for IT. NOC will be issued within one month after completion of all the papers for IT, after more than one month the relevant officials will be suspended, on this occasion Chairman CDA Noorul Amin Mengal told the industrialists. Issued immediate on-the-spot instructions to solve the problems and suggestions presented by the government, including the provision of land for the dispensary within two months. Paying homage in wonderful words, earlier President Islamabad Industrial Association Muhammad Ahmed and President Islam Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtavari informed Chairman CDA about the problems faced by the industrialists.

## CCP to proceed with three major cases

### DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Lahore High Court, Multan Bench, has granted authorization to the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) to recommence proceedings in three cases involving allegations of Deceptive Marketing Practices. This decision comes as a result of the court's recognition of the CCP as the primary authority responsible for addressing competition-related matters, affirming its status as the original forum for such issues.

The cases originated from enquiries initiated based on formal complaints lodged by

three companies including M/s. Ismail Industries, M/s. Hilal Foods, and M/s. English Biscuit Manufacturers against M/s. S.M. Food Makers Limited and M/s. Volka Foods. The complainants accused the latter parties of engaging in deceptive marketing practices, contravening Section 10 of the Competition Act, 2010.

The CCP's investigation concluded that SM Foods and Volka Foods had engaged in the practice of free riding by utilizing trademarks, product labelling, and packaging of the complainants without authorization. This act of unauthorized usage, prima facie, violated Section 10 of

the Act. Subsequently, CCP, relying on the findings and recommendations of the Enquiry Reports, issued Show Cause Notices to S.M. Food Makers Limited and Volka Foods.

Upon receiving the Show Cause Notices, S.M. Food Makers Limited challenged the legality of the notices before the Lahore High Court, Multan Bench Multan. Subsequently, three separate writ petitions were filed by S.M. Food Makers, urging the court to nullify the Show Cause Notices.

After thorough deliberation and hearing arguments from all parties involved, the Honourable Lahore High Court,

Multan Bench Multan, dismissed all the constitutional petitions and referred the matter back to the CCP, recognizing it as the original forum responsible for addressing competition-related issues. The court directed the petitioner, S.M. Food Makers Limited, to file a response to the Show Cause Notices within 30 days and raise all objections before the CCP.

Additionally, the Honourable Court emphasized that competition laws offer a remedy through the appellate forum, which possesses the competence to address all factual and legal disputes related to the case.

## RBISE sets up 196 centers for HSSC annual exams 2023

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (RBISE) had set up 196 centers for Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC) annual exams started in the Rawalpindi division on Saturday (May 20), said a RBISE spokesman. He informed that the board had completed foolproof arrangements before the start of HSSC annual exams 2023. According to Chairman RBISE, Muhammad Adnan Khan, the best possible arrangements were made for the HSSC annual exams. Controller Examinations RBISE Prof. Sajid Mehmood Farooqi informed that the roll number slips of regular students had already been sent to the concerned institutions and those of the private students were uploaded on the board's website /http://www.biserawalpindi.edu.pk besides dispatched at the addresses mentioned in their admission forms. He said that the board on the directives of Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Liaquat Ali Chatha, had made the best possible arrangements for the exams. The date sheets of the exams, lists of the examiners and the examination centers and other officials had been sent to all the Deputy Commissioners of the division, District Police Officers, and to the special branch. Apart from the board's office at Morgah near Attock Oil Refinery Rawalpindi, the students could also contact at phone number 051-5450917-18, Assistant Controller Inter Branch Rana Ilyas on cell phone 0333-5464775, focal person Inter Branch, Riasat Abbasi on 0332-8500846 and 051-5450920 in case of any problem, he added. He said, 196 examination centres had been set up in the division, including 33 in Attock, 40 in Chakwal, 26 in Jhelum, 47 in Rawalpindi district, and 50 local centers. He said, strict monitoring of the examination centers would be ensured by the board and the district administration. Action in accordance with the law would be taken against the 'Boti' mafia, he added. The district vigilance committee, chairman squad, special squad and mobile inspectors would visit the examination centers to check the exam process and send their reports to the board on a daily basis. A central control room had also been set up to monitor the examinations, he said adding, all the officials concerned were directed to ensure the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures issued by the board. Negligence on the part of the officials concerned would not be tolerated, he added.—APP

## Gwadar transforming into regional economic engine

ISLAMABAD: After stagnant progress on our future lifeline project during past four years - the China Pakistan Economic Corridor and important segment of Road and Belt Initiative of the Chinese government, is once again on way to taking strides. The deep seaport of Gwadar, a crucial component of CPEC, has a special strategic significance as a facility not simply ensuring Pak-China connectivity but hyperlinking Central Asia, South Asia and the Middle East, making it a center of future economic activities. The project envisaged and executed during the PPP and the PML-N governments suffered a snail pace progress during Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf regime due to reasons well known to Imran Khan led coalition. But now after the collective efforts of the civilian government as well as the establishment, it is once again inching closer step by step, to turning into a game-changer monetary hub for Pakistan and regional countries as well.

In line with its method to operationalize the seaport and deliver financial benefits to capture the alternate boom, the authorities in recent past imported around 450,000 Metric Tons (MT) wheat through nine vessels anchored at this newly-built facility. "The initiation of trade activities with the import of wheat via Gwadar Port has marked the beginning of a new era of business, trade and commercial activities that would significantly benefit underprivileged Balochistan, especially Gwadar and Makran," said an official at Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives. "All the contractors, workforce, customs clearing agents, shipping agents, labor contractors and food suppliers etc. engaged in operation of Gwadar port for imports by TCP (Trading Corporation of Pakistan) are 100% from local population . . . and it will definitely help uplift living standards of the people of Balochistan," the official said. In the second week of the current month, the ministry also announced the completion of the China Exhibition and Trading Center in a record time of six months at the Gwadar deep-sea port with the cost of \$12 million. The project was completed by the China Offshore Ports Handling Company (COPHCL). Meanwhile, Minister for Planning Professor Ahsan Iqbal has directed to conduct third International Expo Gwadar June 2023 at the newly established EXPO center. This Expo would coincide with the 10-year celebrations of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in July this year. The development under CPEC aims to transform Gwadar into a major trade and economic hub, facilitating regional connectivity and enhancing Pakistan's maritime trade. The port's potential to become an energy and transport corridor, coupled with its strategic location, makes it a focal point for international investment and economic cooperation, driving economic growth and regional integration.

## Cattle market at Bhatta Chowk

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) has finalized all the arrangements to set up grand cattle market at Bhatta Chowk to facilitate the citizens to purchase sacrificial animals for Eid ul Azha. According to RCB spokesman, the board had awarded the contract to establish the city's largest cattle market at Bhatta Chowk at the intersection of the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad for Rs89.5 million. The board auctioned the contract for the Bhatta Chowk Cattle Market well before Eid ul Azha to prevent the sale of sacrificial animals in residential areas. He informed that the auction process continued for three days and the highest bid was offered on the third day of the auction. The cattle market would be established for 15 days and would remain open on Eid days at the junction of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The successful contractor, Syed Mudassar Shah, token no-4 made an offer of Rs89.5 million. A committee formed by Cantonment Executive Officer (CEO) Imran Gulzar under the chairmanship of Revenue Superintendent Rana Saleem awarded the contract for the cattle market.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Senator Talah Mahmood hosted dinner for the visiting Road to Makkah delegation, which was also attended by Ambassadors of Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Iraq, Malaysia and others.—DNA

### Court Notice

In the Court of Mohsin Ali Civil Judge Gujrat

Title: Asim Rasool. Versus Manzoor Hussain etc..

Notice to: Manzoor Hussain, Shahid Hussain, Muhammad Akram S/o. Allah Diitta R/o. Ghansia Tehsil & District Gujrat. Asmat Rasool Son, Rabia Kousar, Shubana Kousar, Raqia Kousar, Farzana Akhtar D/o. Ghulam Rasool, Sardar Begum W/o. Ghulam Rasool R/o. Loor PO Sehna Tehsil Kharian District Gujrat.

### Suit for Permanent Injection

Whereas in the above mentioned case it has been proved to the satisfaction of the court that the above mentioned defendants are not served in ordinary way. It is therefore proclaimed under order 5 rule 20 CPC that if the said defendants will not appear personally or through a duly authorized agent or pleader in court at 8 AM on 24-05-2023, otherwise case will be decided ex party.

### Court Notice


In the Court of Ch. Khalid Mehmood Naib Tehsilard Gujrat

Title: Syed Saeed Hussain. Versus Syeda Sagheera Ejaz etc..

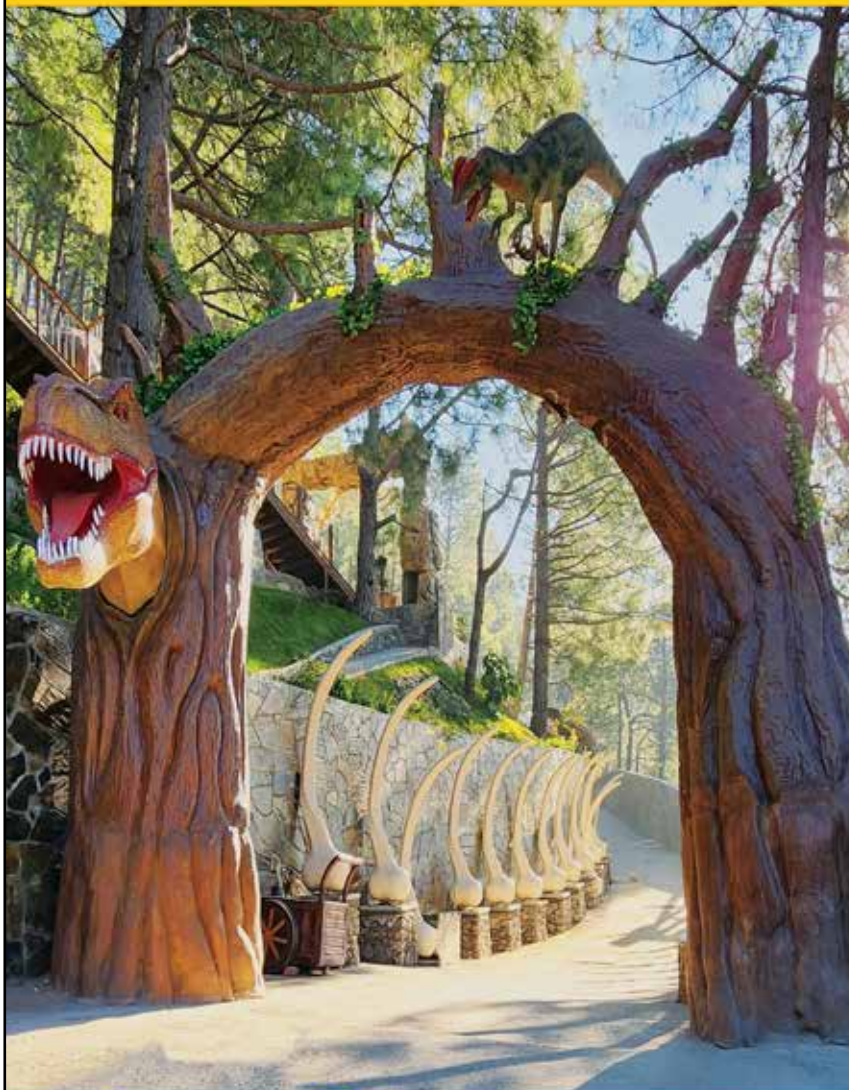
Notice to: Syeda Sagheera Ejaz Daughter, Shabbir Hussain Shah Son, Suraya Begum widow of Syed Ejaz Hussain Shah, Syed Adeel Abbas S/o. Saeed Ahmad, Muhammad Asghar, Afzaal Ahmad Son Bashir Ahmad, Zulfiqar Ali S/o. Muhammad Ashiq, Ishfaq Husain S/o. Altaf Hussain, Bashir Ahmad, Zulfiqar Ali S/o. Zafar Iqbal S/o. Ghulam Rasool, Tariq Javed S/o. Muhammad Hayat, Basharat Ali S/o. Muhammad Anayat R/o. Kang Sahari, Tehsil & District Gujrat.

### Suit for Partation of Land Kang Sahari

Whereas in the above mentioned case it has been proved to the satisfaction of the court that the above mentioned defendants are not served in ordinary way. It is therefore proclaimed under order 5 rule 20 CPC that if the said defendants will not appear personally or through a duly authorized agent or pleader in court at 8 AM on 27-05-2023, otherwise case will be decided ex party.



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## Briefs

## World Bee Day celebrated

DNA

ISLAMABAD: World Bee Day was celebrated on Saturday across the world including Pakistan under the theme "Bee engaged in pollinator-friendly agricultural production".

The world Bee Day 2023 called for global action to support pollinator-friendly agricultural production and highlights the importance of protecting bees and other pollinators, particularly through evidence-based agricultural production practices. On the occasion of World Bee Day, various programs and events were organized by government, semi-government and private organizations in small and big cities and towns across the country.

Each year, around the globe 'World Bee Day' is celebrated on 20th of May with a sole motive to acknowledge the role of bees and other pollinators for the ecosystem. It all started in 2009 by a small group of beekeepers who petitioned for and obtained a formal proclamation by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) honoring honey bees and beekeeping.

In 2010, a non-profit, Pennsylvania Apiculture Inc. was organized to facilitate and promote the observance better. The original observation date was August 22, 2009 (the fourth Saturday of August), but later on it settled permanently on the third Saturday of August. The UN Member States a proved Slovenia's proposal to proclaim 20 May as World Bee Day in December 2017. The date was chosen as it was the day Anton Janša, a pioneer of modern apiculture, was born. Janša came from a family of beekeepers in Slovenia, where beekeeping is an important agricultural activity with a long-standing tradition.

The day every year is celebrated with a particular theme highlighting the importance of these creatures in our lives and in our environment. The theme for the year 2023 World Bee Day is 'Bee engaged in pollinator-friendly agricultural production' as decided by Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN).

The theme thus calls for global action to support pollinator-friendly agricultural production and the importance of protecting bees and other pollinators, particularly through evidence-based agricultural production practices.

Beekeeping is a sustainable activity since it provides nutritional, economic and ecological balance, while providing employment and income. Pakistan has good potential for beekeeping and to become a major honey exporting nation.

'More concession likely for intending Hujjaj'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Senator Talha Mehmood has said that Rs55,000 for Eidul Azha sacrifice have been returned to Hujjaj before they leave for Hajj, adding that the Ministry of Religious Affairs have been trying to return more money to Hujjaj by reducing expenses. While talking to a private news channel, he said that the money had been transferred to the accounts of Hujjaj. He also announced not to perform Hajj for free. "I will go on Hajj at my own expense. I will also pay for my employees who are going on Hajj with me," he stated. "There is a lot of pressure on me, but I will not let anyone to go on Hajj for free," he pledged. "For God's sake, everyone going on Hajj should go as a Muslim and represent his country instead of showing his affiliation with PML-N, PTI and JUI," he appealed. "Politics can be done after coming back from Hajj. But there one should be a Pakistani only," he added.

## Film production institute to help promote filmmaking

Glad to see that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's vision of a training institute for film production was going to become a reality: Information Minister

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb said on Sunday that establishment of the National Film Production Institute will prove helpful in the promotion of filmmaking in the country. Addressing the inaugural ceremony of PTV's National Film Production Institute here, she said she was glad to see that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's vision of a training institute for film production was going to become a reality.

She said that due to their historic contribution, Pakistan Television and Radio Pakistan had heritage value in the history of the electronic media industry of the country. The minister said that unfortunately in the recent past film making had been reduced to only one class. However, she said it was a good sign that filmmaking trend in private TV channels was increasing. The objective of National Film, Culture Policy 2018, revived by the present government last year, was not only to revive films but also to promote Pakistan's narra-



tive all over the world through screen tourism. Marriyum Aurangzeb said that film policy 2018, entertainment was given the sta-

tus of the industry and given tax amnesty. She said that in the film policy, attention has also been paid to restore the cinema houses in the country which were demolished when the industry deteriorated in the 1990s. The establishment of the Film Institute, she continued was part of the vision of the development of this sector. "Due to our initiatives, recent films have done good business both at local at the global level," the minister remarked. "As far as electronic media is concerned, the PTV and Radio Pakistan have the biggest in-

frastructure," she said adding that steps were being taken to utilise that infrastructure for the betterment of the entertainment industry. The minister said that PTV Academy should also create awareness among the children about the Constitution, democracy, and politics as well. Earlier Marriyum Aurangzeb inaugurated the National Film Production Institute. Secretary Information and Managing Director PTV Sohail Ali Khan and senior officers for the MoIB and PTV attended the ceremony.

## International Biodiversity and Forest Days Devcom webinar suggests nature conservation emergency

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The unsustainable housing policies and timber mafia are the biggest threats to the green and agricultural land of Pakistan, causing immense threats to ever rapidly decreasing forests and biodiversity. The Pakistan government shall impose emergency nature conservation to protect green and agricultural lands to protect 260 million people from climate impact, water and food insecurity. Mountain resources are threatened particularly despite several sustainable development and conservation. Pakistan needs to eliminate the highhandedness of the mafias that are over-exploiting the natural resources, chopping off forests and damaging ecological habitats and systems. Strict implementation of the legislation urged to wipe off the hindrances to nature conservation.

The national webinar on "The State of Pakistan's Forests and Biodiversity and the way forward" was organized by the Development Communications Network (Devcom-Pakistan) on Saturday. The keynote speakers included Pakistan's well-known and oldest biodiversity scientist ZB Mirza, WWF-International Senior Expert on Area-based Conservation Rab Nawaz. Other guest speakers were Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed, Director Cholistan Institute of Development Studies (CIDS) at Islamia University Bahawalpur Dr. Muhammad Abdullah, AJK conservation expert Aftab Hussain Bokhari, marine biodiversity expert Moazzam Khan, eco-conservation expert Azhar Qureshi and National Defense University graduate Mahrukh Khan. ZB Mirza said Pakistan water resources are depleting fast with degradation for forests and biodiversity despite several conservation efforts and best practices. The conflicts between the stakeholders

have added to the vulnerability of the natural resources. The timber foresters and ecologists need to resolve their conflicts on sustainable approaches. The depletion of forests is causing soil erosion, diminution of microbes, reduced fertility, and subsoil water and biodiversity. Rab Nawaz from WWF, commenting on the progress that Pakistan has made on Convention of Biological Diversity said that there have been some great successes on bending the curve such as the Indus Blind Dolphin where the population is recovering slowly but surely. The national animal of Pakistan, the Kashmir Markhor has been brought back from the verge of extinction. He continued to point out that this is only possible when departments, civil society organizations and communities come together and join hands. Highlighting the challenges, he pointed out that though some species are doing well, there are few that are dangerously close to extinction such as the Great Indian Bustard and the Arabian Humpback Whale and encouraged everyone to join resources

to ensure that these species are around for future generations. Munir Ahmed said Pakistan's all ecological zones are suffering because of the rapid urbanization and unsustainable development, and by the nexus of unwise influential. It's the time to voice the conservation emergency all over the country including AJK and Gilgit-Baltistan. Dr. Muhammad Abdullah said Cholistan desert is facing the challenge of ever fast increasing population, livestock and permanent housing. The government and private sector are converting barren desert into cultivable land that would wipe off all the desert species. To explore and conserve natural resources and to alleviate the sufferings of inhabitants of Cholistan desert, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur has established the Cholistan Institute of Desert Studies (CIDS). The Institute has initiated many useful projects pertaining to the exploration and utilization of desert's resources such as climate change, desert agriculture, biodiversity conservation, and natural hazards with an impact on legislation.

## ICCI urges steps to overcome economic crisis

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) said that Pakistan needs a strong economy to get its due place in the international community, and emphasized that all the stakeholders should work for steering the economy out of troubled waters and put it on the path of sustainable growth. He said that Pakistan is endowed with a lot of natural sources, which have not been utilized yet due to lack of good governance. Resultantly, Pakistan is still far behind in the race of development and the whole nation is suffering due to this situation. He said that there is a greentide to create a conducive environment for business and investment in the country so that investors from all over the world are encouraged to do business and invest in Pakistan, which will improve the economy and bring prosperity to the nation. Expressing his serious concern over the recent vandalism of government and military installations in recent days, he said that Pakistan is currently going through a difficult economic situation and it is the need of the hour to end the politics of division and promote national unity. Let's work together to make Pakistan strong because an economically strong Pakistan can provide a bright future to our generations. Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari expressed regret over the desecration of martyrs' memorials and destruction of various properties including Jinnah House. He said that the whole nation including the business community strongly condemns such incidents. He said that Pakistan is currently facing challenges on its borders including terrorism and Pakistan's armed forces are sacrificing their lives on the front line for national defense. In these circumstances, we need to strengthen our forces. He said that any kind of campaign against the defense forces means weakening Pakistan, so every member of the nation should avoid any activity that damages our defence forces. —DNA

## Pak can earn Rs 50 billion through halal meat export

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Livestock experts believed that Pakistan could earn Rs 50 billion foreign exchange annually by exporting halal meat and Rs40 billion by exporting sacrificial animals on Hajj. According to the Wealth Pak report, the global halal market was currently worth \$3 trillion, which was \$635 billion in 2010 and was expected to reach \$3.2 trillion by the end of this year. According to the Pakistan Halal Authority, the livestock sector in Pakistan was an important source of income and livelihood for millions of people. Pakistan country has a strong infrastructure for the production and export of halal meat with a large number of slaughterhouses and processing plants.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor is arranging mangoes on his hand cart at Fruit and Vegetables Market to attract customers and earn daily wages for his family. —Online

## Impending debt default in the US

ISLAMABAD: As US President Joe Biden prepares to reengage in negotiations with House Speaker Kevin McCarthy and other influential Republicans on the critical issue of the debt ceiling to find common ground amidst a landscape riddled with challenges, constitutional experts warn of the potential ramifications should they fail to forge an agreement on this matter. According to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Sunday, the stakes are high. Inaction or an impasse in these deliberations would catapult the United States perilously close to defaulting on its debt obligations. Such a scenario, once unthinkable, would have far-reaching consequences, reverberating across financial markets worldwide and threatening to upend the delicate balance of the global economic order. The intricate negotiations taking place within the hallowed halls of Congress carry profound implications for the US and the world. The outcome will determine whether the United States treads a path of fiscal responsibility or inches closer to the precipice of a potential default. President Biden's leadership and the engagement of Speaker McCarthy and other congressional leaders will be pivotal in charting a course forward that avoids the impending danger. The eyes of the world are fixed on this crucial juncture, cognizant of the potential reverberations that could ensue from a failure to reach a consensus. Their ability to rise above political divides and find common ground will determine not only the economic fate of the United States but also its standing on the global stage. The world awaits the outcome with bated breath, hopeful for a resolution that will avert financial calamity and reaffirm the strength and resilience of America's democratic institutions. If the US defaults on its debt, it will significantly diminish the dominance of the US dollar in the global financial landscape and weaken the country's ability to shape international affairs. —DNA

## Road Safety Workshop for school students

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad capital police is striving to minimize the road accidents ratio by educating road users and ensuring strict implementation of traffic rules on roads. It was mentioned by education wing Sub Inspector Muhammad Shafique Bajwa addressing in the concluding ceremony of one day road safety education workshop organized by Islamabad capital police education wing with the Cooperation of Road Safety Council of Pakistan at Al farabi Islamic School and Colleges, a police public relations officer said. He said that approximately 250 students and staff members participated in the workshop. The School administration appreciated the efforts of Islamabad capital police in maintaining traffic discipline in the federal capital. The special message of Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanweer was also quoted on the occasion that valuable lives of citizens can be saved by obeying traffic rules. The education team also revealed that the aim of holding such programs is to create traffic sense and sense of responsibility among the students and citizens, advising them to avoid underage driving, yielding right of ways on junctions and roundabouts and pedestrians while crossing roads. Students in the workshop were also urged to avoid using mobile phones while driving, fastening seat belts for safety in case of road crash.

## Four absconders held

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad capital police Tarnol, Aabpara and Khanna Police teams have arrested four absconders involved in heinous crime, a police public relations officer said. He said that, following the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, special tasks were assigned to all police officials to ensure the arrest of proclaimed offenders and absconders involved in heinous crimes. During the crackdown, the Islamabad capital police Aabpara, Tarnol and Khanna police stations teams arrested four absconders involved in heinous crime. The Islamabad capital police is taking all possible steps to eradicate crime from the city and those involved in heinous crimes and illegal activities will be dealt with iron hands. Safety to the lives and property of the citizens is the foremost priority of Islamabad capital police, he added. CPO/ DIG (Operations) Islamabad Syed Shehzad Nadeem Bukhari directed all senior officials for effective crackdown against the accused involved in heinous crimes. "Safety and security of the citizens is our foremost priority and no laxity will be tolerated in this regard" he added.

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## G7 or G1

The communique issued at the conclusion of the G7 summit in Hiroshima, Japan, shows the extent to which the other members are in thrall to the United States. As the China-related parts of the document make clear, Washington has successfully imprinted its disposition to act as the common will of the group.

The so-called regional issues the G7 group took advantage of to smear and attack Beijing, ranging from the Taiwan question to the situations in Hong Kong, Tibet and Xinjiang, are all China's internal affairs.

While jointly affirming the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait as "indispensable" to security and prosperity in the international community, they said nothing about the need to oppose "Taiwan independence", even though they said their one-China policy had not changed. Upholding the one-China principle is a prerequisite for diplomatic relations with Beijing.

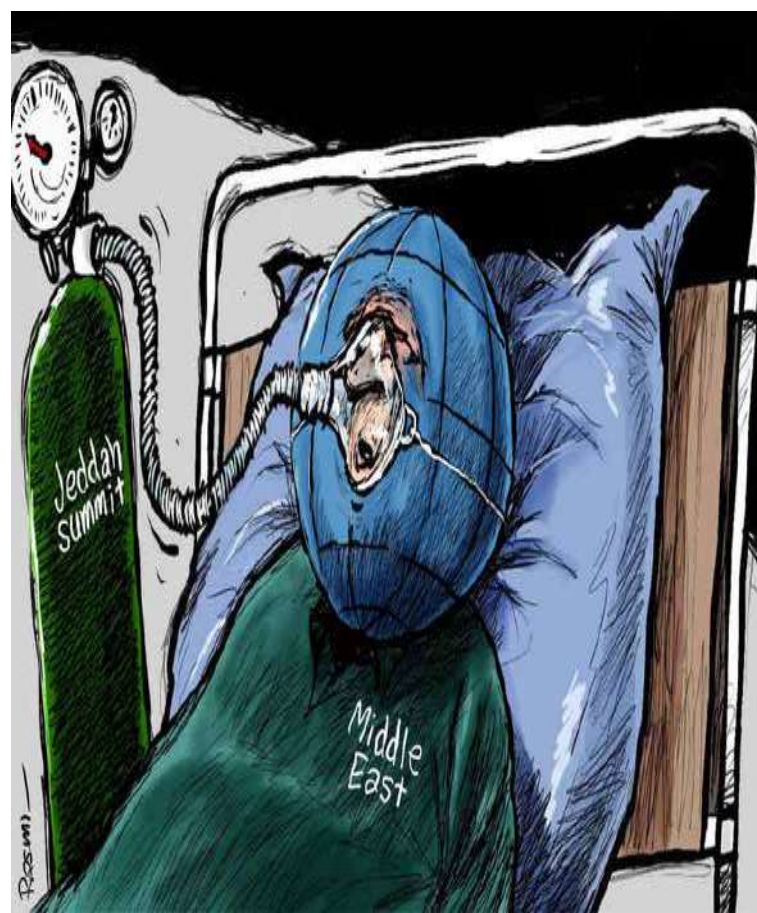
The other six countries of the group are well aware that it is Washington that is playing the "Taiwan card", which has triggered waves of tensions across the Strait. And it is the secessionist-minded authorities in Taipei, with the collusion of Washington, that seek to change the status quo of the Strait. What consolidates the collective will of the group is that, as loyal acolytes of the US, the other six countries enjoy privileged status in its invited-members-only club. Should they choose not to follow Washington's lead, they risk punishment and expulsion from the group as happened to Russia which led to eight becoming seven. That in turn has enabled Washington to plan, orchestrate, manipulate and prolong the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

The other six members, by surrendering their strategic autonomy, have exposed the hollowness of the "democratic values" that Washington claims is the common bond among the members of the group.

Instead, "the values" the group upholds are now military suppression, diplomatic coercion and trade bullying, all carried out under the banner of "democracy" in a bid to obstruct reform of the international order so that it is more representative of the emerging market economies and less-developed countries. While claiming "to keep the door open to cooperation", the communique made it quite plain that contrary to its claims, the G7's policy approaches are designed to harm China and to thwart the country's economic progress and development.

As all the members know, including the US, that does not serve their interests. Yet the notion of American exceptionalism now has such a hold on Washington, it has become a psychosis. In its delusion, it is trying to impose that notion on others.

As such, although the G7 makes high-sounding claims about "promoting a peaceful, stable and prosperous world", what it does is the US' bidding. That in effect does the contrary, undermining peace, sabotaging stability and stifling the development of other countries.



## Zelenskiy's shuttle diplomacy

Volodymyr Zelenskiy's shuttle diplomacy to marginalise Moscow is a necessary step to convince nations with longstanding Russian relationships that there are superior deals on offer. The moral case against Russia is unambiguous. Vladimir Putin has blood on his hands. This argument is better coming from President Zelenskiy than his backers in the west, whose actions from Vietnam to Iraq reveal a spotty record on matters of morality in foreign policy. His pitch will be that Ukraine will be on the right side of history: as a victim of imperialism but an eventual victor against aggression. It would be unthinkable for western leaders to endorse the Arab League's shameful decision to welcome Syria's tyrant Bashar al-Assad back into its fold. Mr Zelenskiy is attending the Jeddah meeting despite Moscow's backing of Mr Assad's brutal suppression of a pro-democracy uprising. The Ukrainian president is not seeking the Syrian president's approval. He has made a pragmatic decision: to win over other leaders who have remained largely neutral on Russia's invasion, he will need to accept their norms rather than condemn them. This leaves a bitter taste in the mouth. But the bigger prize would be tangible support beyond the west for Kyiv ahead of its military counteroffensive. History has often been enlisted in the service of politics. At the G7 meeting of industrialised countries, Joe Biden became the second sitting US president to visit Hiroshima's Peace Memorial, built on what remains of the only building to survive the first US atomic bombing in 1945. To this day, controversy has raged about whether dropping this weapon on Japan was necessary to end the second world war quickly. But it will be the Ukrainian president's arrival that will be steeped in symbolism after Mr Putin last year raised the threat of a nuclear response to anyone who tried to "stand in" Russia's way. To avoid a direct confrontation between Nato and Russia, the Biden administration initially limited military aid to Ukraine to "defensive weapons". However, Russia's gains on the battlefield have led to cruise missiles and tanks being delivered. New sanctions to starve Russia's war machine will help too. Chinese bellicosity in the Indo-Pacific will also be under discussion at the G7. The importance of the global south in containing the partnership between Moscow and Beijing means some of the world's biggest non-aligned powers – Brazil, India and Indonesia – have been invited to Hiroshima along with Mr Zelenskiy. These nations have continued or even increased trading with Russia. The growing divide between Beijing, Moscow and the G7 has provided such countries with an opportunity to negotiate sweeter deals from the west. Their gamble appears to be paying off. This week the EU's top diplomat, Josep Borrell, said that Europe "can't take for granted" that Latin America, Africa and the Indo-Pacific are on its side, and must demonstrate support for their development needs. But roughly half the economic heft in the G7 comes from the US and there have been few carrots on offer from Washington.

## A comparative analysis of Iqbal and Karl Marx

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



Allama Iqbal, also known as Muhammad Iqbal, was a philosopher, poet, and politician from British India. He is widely regarded as one of the greatest Muslim philosophers of the 20th century

Allama Iqbal and Karl Marx were two influential thinkers who shaped the course of history with their ideas. Although they lived in different times and contexts, their ideas have left a lasting impact on human thought.

Allama Iqbal, also known as Muhammad Iqbal, was a philosopher, poet, and politician from British India. He is widely regarded as one of the greatest Muslim philosophers of the 20th century. His ideas were heavily influenced by his Islamic faith, and he believed that Islam was not just a religion but a complete way of life.

One of Iqbal's central ideas was the concept of the "Khudi." He believed that human beings were not just physical bodies, but also possessed a spiritual dimension. According to Iqbal, the true purpose of human life was to achieve a higher level of consciousness by connecting with one's spiritual Self. He believed that this could only be achieved through a deep understanding of Islam and the teachings of the Quran. Iqbal was also deeply concerned

with the decline of Muslim civilization and the rise of Western imperialism. He believed that Muslims had become complacent and lost their sense of identity and purpose. He argued that Islam needed to be revitalized and that Muslims needed to embrace their cultural heritage and reject Western cultural imperialism.

Karl Marx, on the other hand, was a German philosopher and economist who lived in the 19th century. He is best known for his theories on communism and his critique of capitalism. Marx believed that capitalism was inherently unjust and that it exploited workers for the benefit of the wealthy elite. Marx's central idea was the concept of class struggle. He believed that throughout history, society had been divided into two classes: the ruling class and the working class. The ruling class controlled the means of production and exploited the working class for their own gain. Marx argued that this exploitation would eventually lead to a revolution in which the working class would overthrow the ruling class and

establish a communist society in which everyone would be equal.

Despite their differences, there are some similarities between the ideas of Allama Iqbal and Karl Marx. Both believed in the importance of the individual and the need for human beings to achieve a higher level of consciousness. They also both believed in the need for change and for society to reject the status quo.

However, there are also significant differences between their ideas. Iqbal's ideas were heavily influenced by his Islamic faith and he believed that Islam was the solution to the problems facing Muslim society. Marx, on the other hand, was an atheist and believed that communism was the only solution to the problems of capitalism.

In conclusion, the ideas of Allama Iqbal and Karl Marx were influential in shaping the course of human history. Both believed in the importance of the individual and the need for change. However, their ideas were also shaped by their different cultural, religious, and historical contexts.

## Sudan cannot afford to reject foreign help

Abdelwahab El-Affendi

The declaration was welcomed internationally as a good step forward, but many in Sudan were sceptical. A sarcastic Sudanese commentator remarked: "We thought the two belligerents would agree to leave Khartoum; it turned out that they have agreed to let us leave." On the same day, the Sudanese foreign ministry, supported by Arab members in the United Nations Human Rights Council, objected to a British motion calling for closer monitoring of the human rights situation in Sudan and urging an unconditional cessation of hostilities. The resolution was passed by 18 (mostly European) votes to 15, with 14 abstentions. When I expressed surprise on my Facebook page at the position of Sudan, given that the Jeddah Declaration had just been signed, committing the warring sides to humanitarian principles, almost all the responses

On May 11, representatives of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) militia reached an agreement in Jeddah, brokered by the United States and Saudi Arabia. The Jeddah Declaration of Commitment to Protect the Civilians of Sudan committed both parties to respect international humanitarian law and vacate residential areas.

The declaration was welcomed internationally as a good step forward, but many in Sudan were sceptical. A sarcastic Sudanese commentator remarked: "We thought the two belligerents would agree to leave Khartoum; it turned out that they have agreed to let us leave." On the same day, the Sudanese foreign ministry, supported by Arab members in the United Nations Human Rights Council, objected to a British motion calling for closer monitoring of the human rights situation in Sudan and urging an unconditional cessation of hostilities. The resolution was passed by 18 (mostly European) votes to 15, with 14 abstentions.

When I expressed surprise on my Facebook page at the position of Sudan, given that the Jeddah Declaration had just been signed, committing the warring sides to humanitarian principles, almost all the responses echoed narratives about the duplicity of the West on international law. Indeed, there are problems with the international humanitarian regime, and it is in need of serious scrutiny and radical rethinking. However, humanitarian emergencies are not the time for indulgence in the populist rhetoric of mistrust and scepticism. Doing so now would only raise the already high human cost of this conflict. At the same time, a standard humanitarian response in Sudan's situation would not be adequate. When addressing the crisis, the international community needs to take into account the specifics of this conflict and its own past humanitarian failures. Deliberate insecurity The ongoing conflict, which lacks clear territorial boundaries of control, necessitates a different humanitarian response than usual. The country faces multi-level insecurities due to constant fighting everywhere, the inability of any side to enforce its rule anywhere, and persistent uncertainty about what direction the conflict will take. The current humanitarian crisis in Sudan is the direct outcome of this uncontrollable level of insecurity, compounded by the desperate quest for havens by the randomly dispersed RSF fighters. The latter have barricaded themselves in hospitals, ministries, private homes and anywhere else they can find, using these as hideouts and sniper positions.

The SAF has used the standard military tactic of attacking RSF camps and positions all over Khartoum. However, rather than resulting in territory acquisition, the dispersal of the enemy and its tactics created a new reality, with the militia adopting a strategy of maximising insecurity and making normal life impossible for everybody. By spreading terror on the streets and inside homes, the RSF has forced people to flee; its ubiquitous presence has impeded the functioning of public services, including healthcare, food distribution and transportation. The aim of all this is to put pressure on the SAF, neighbouring countries and the international community to accept RSF demands. Traditional humanitarian strategies for

delivering aid in this situation of heightened insecurity would not work. Without restoring some level of security, aid cannot be delivered. Thus, the call by the Human Rights Council for an unconditional ceasefire is anti-humanitarian, especially in light of the commitment in the Jeddah Declaration by both parties to vacate hospitals and stop impeding the functioning of essential civilian facilities. A ceasefire that leaves RSF in occupied hospitals, usurped homes and other civilian buildings, would do nothing to help restore normality. That is why any cessation of hostilities must start by releasing abducted civilians, and evacuating hospitals, private homes and essential civilian installations. A firm message needs to be sent to the militias to implement these requirements and desist from looting, rape, forcible recruitment and other violations, as a condition for a ceasefire. Credible threats of sanctions or even limited intervention should also be deployed to ensure compliance.

A different humanitarian response

When security is restored, international aid agencies need to carefully consider the type of aid the Sudanese people would need. In the current situation, half the population of Khartoum needs food aid. Due to the looting of banks, shops, homes and private property (mainly by the RSF, but also unruly mobs), few people can lay their hands on cash. But if insecurity is reduced, life could return to normal. If fighters withdraw from civilian areas, public transport would be able to resume and necessary facilities and public services would be able to operate again. In this case, food may not be the biggest necessity for people; there is no shortage of food around Khartoum. So the importing by aid agencies of food and aid workers does not make sense, when the job can be done at just a fraction of the cost by employing local resources and labour. At the same time, public sectors have been hit hard. Take healthcare, for example. Due to the security situation, many medical professionals have left Khartoum, and even the country. The RSF has also been abducting doctors and other health workers to enlist them as part of their informal "medical corps". They have also occupied and destroyed many hospitals in the capital.

So priority should be given to restoring security in the shortest possible time, in addition to providing emergency field hospitals and emergency housing for health workers to enable them to return to their duties. In charting the response to the crisis in Sudan, humanitarian agencies should also consider their own past failures. The ill-fated UNAMID peacekeeping mission in Darfur (2007-2020) is a textbook case of how the structures of UN operations can subvert the very humanitarian purpose of the organisation. It failed to protect civilians despite the deployment of some 26,000 troops. What UNAMID has shown is that the mere deployment of peacekeeping troops in a complex war zone is no substitute for addressing the causes and consequences of the conflict itself. A fraction of the cost of the mission would have helped resolve the crisis if it had been spent on reconciliation and the resettlement of displaced people.

'Western double standards' An interesting side-effect of the crisis in Sudan has been the revival of some of the familiar populist rhetoric of "Western double

standards" and ulterior motives with regard to humanitarianism and peace-making. This began with anger at the way foreign countries made such a fuss about evacuating their citizens and international workers, while completely neglecting the affected Sudanese citizens; it continued with the Jeddah declaration and the UNHRC's resolution.

This is a reflection of Sudan's own chequered history of responses to humanitarian crises. Over the past five decades, the country has experienced a series of major disasters, mainly famines exacerbated by war and at times droughts and floods. During the famines of 1973-74 and 1984-85, President Jaafar Nimeiry refused to declare an emergency or even admit hunger was happening. When he was challenged by a journalist on the issue, he claimed that it was "shameful" in Sudanese culture to beg for food. Nimeiry's regime fell in 1985, partly due to his failure to address the famine. Another major emergency happened in 1988, when two years of drought were followed by massive floods. The democratically elected government of the time accepted foreign aid, but it was too little, too late, and the delivery was chaotic. The rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army refused to allow aid into the south. As a result, over a quarter of a million people died, causing an international outcry, and forcing the parties to accept in 1989 a pioneering UN initiative, called Operation Lifeline Sudan. The operation delivered aid directly to the south, without government scrutiny. The military regime of Omar al-Bashir repeatedly complained about the abuse of the operation, especially the use of relief planes by rebel commanders, but allowed it to run until the end of the war in 2005. However, the regime refused to acknowledge a famine in 1990-91 in another part of the country and kept obstructing relief operations in certain areas.

Then when the crisis in Darfur erupted in 2003, al-Bashir put restrictions on aid and increased controls on aid workers, who had trouble obtaining visas or even permits to leave Khartoum. NGOs were regularly expelled. The regime used the same populist narratives about aid being part of foreign machinations of control, accusing aid workers of being spies; it also criticised aid as a dependency-creating strategy. There is a danger of a return to that rhetoric of condemning aid in the name of anti-colonialism and national sovereignty. This could be detrimental to the victims of the current conflict. The arguments about the duplicity of major international powers regarding humanitarianism and human rights should be taken seriously. The economic structure of rewards for international workers indeed remains a corrupting influence on the profession. However, humanitarian organisations still provide much-needed help for the disadvantaged and continue to attract dedicated idealists. Whatever the misgivings about international humanitarianism, the focus should be on delivering aid to those whose life depends on it.

There is a saying by Prophet Muhammad that a woman was sent to hell because she allowed a cat to starve to death. She neither fed it nor set it free to find its own food. If starving a cat can earn eternal damnation, how about starving scores of human beings?

—Courtesy: Al Jazeera

## Briefs

## Culprits to face military court, ATC

FROM PAGE 01  
and carried out the attack on the GHQ. He said that the miscreants also burned Jinnah House and public properties on the same day. PM Shehbaz said that those who are involved in attacking the military installations will also be brought to book. Berating Khan, the incumbent prime minister said: "May 9 was the darkest day in the history of Pakistan when PTI Chairman Imran Khan Niazi led miscreants torched Quaid's (Corps Commander's) House in Lahore like the terrorists had set on fire Quaid's Residency in Ziarat during 2013." He added that the PTI chief and his followers stoked terrorism and violence that amounted to anti-state acts. They caused damage to such a huge extent that even the enemies of Pakistan could not do it in the last 75 years, he added. "Such agonising incidents will continue to haunt the nation."

## 'No 'new' military...

FROM PAGE 01  
Terming the May 9 protests as an attack on the "integrity and existence of Pakistan", the minister strongly condemned the acts of "terrorism". He hailed the security forces of Pakistan, including police and rangers, for their "unrelentless" efforts in countering terrorism.

## JUI-P delegation...

FROM PAGE 01  
Imran's abduction from the premises of Lahore High Court (LHC) and the oppression and tyranny of the government against PTI leaders, workers and supporters as well as its allied parties. Maulana Sherani stressed the need for a comprehensive and independent investigation into May 9 incidents to bring to book those involved in damaging and public property, killing of 25 innocent Pakistanis and injuring over 700 others. During the meeting, PTI and JJULP also fully agreed to expand and mobilise their mutual political cooperation. The abduction of Chairman Tehreek-e-Insaf from the premises of the High Court by Rangers is also strongly condemned

## Erdogan eyes third...

FROM PAGE 01  
The 69-year-old leader did it despite Turkey's worst economic crisis since the 1990s and opinion surveys showing him headed for his first national election defeat. Kilicdaroglu will now need to rally his deflated troops and beat the odds yet again to wrest back power for the secular party that ruled Turkey for most of the 20th century. The Eurasia Group consultancy put Erdogan's chances of winning next Sunday at 80 per cent. "It will be an uphill struggle for Kilicdaroglu in the second round," Hamish Kinneer of the Verisk Maplecroft consulting firm agreed. Erdogan rode a nationalist wave that saw smaller right-wing parties pick up nearly 25 per cent of the parallel parliamentary vote. Kilicdaroglu is courting these voters in the second presidential round. The 74-year-old revamped his campaign team and tore up his old playbook for the most fateful week of his political career. He has replaced chatty clips that he used to record from his kitchen with desk-thumping speeches and pledges to immediately rid Turkey of millions of migrants.

## Commission to probe tapers...

FORM PAGE 01  
pursue inquiry on the matter of audio leaks," the minister said, adding that the government requires material to take the matter into the Supreme Judicial Council. "Crime cannot take the shield of privacy," Sanaullah said, warning against using privacy for committing crimes as revealed in the alleged audio leaks.

## AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER IN ACTION



ISLAMABAD: Australian High Commissioner Neil Hawkins posing for a picture with the players of the Nishtar Hockey Club. Neil Hawkins joined the team as a player. The Australian envoy also took part in the match and praised the hockey skills of especially the youngsters. – DNA

## Ex-Olympians want players to be well-resourced

Star Olympian Shahnaz Sheikh pleads to blend young players with experienced hands for forming a squad that owns the potential to beat any team in the world

ISLAMABAD: With rapid changes taking place in international hockey, Pakistan's hockey legends believe there was need to educate players with modern techniques and skills, as to bring the national game back on track. There were times when Pakistan was the most successful team in World Cups, Olympics and Champions Trophy with winning four World Cups in 1971, 1978, 1982 and 1994. Pakistan also has three gold medals in Olympic Games field hockey tournaments in Rome 1960, Mexico City 1968 and Los Angeles 1984. Then the downfall began and an always-winning team that played all World Cup editions, could not qualify for 2014 and 2023 mega

events. Star Olympian Shahnaz Sheikh pleads to blend young players with experienced hands for forming a squad that owns the potential to beat any team in the world. Players need to improve their movements and points marking in the D area. They should avoid counterattacks and improve the conversion of penalty corners. If we get three to four penalty corners at least two must be utilized, Shahnaz told APP. We need to strongly work on all these things if we want to improve our game. Our players must play with unity and avoid individual point scoring in any game, he commented. At present, the Pakistan national hockey team holds the 16th spot in International

Hockey Federation (FIH) rankings. Further suggesting measures for improvement, he said, there were around 28 Education Boards in the country with hundreds of schools affiliated with each Board. Therefore, if each government school is allowed to participate in tournaments, the total number of participating teams would be in hundreds. This practice would be a sort of talent hunt bringing new players to the national squad. He also suggested designated hockey fields to promote the game as he recalled, in our times plentiful of national and district tournaments were held annually for improvement of players mental and physical strength. Then

there were different departments, offering jobs to players. But, rapid changes in the hockey setup affected the game badly, he said. Meanwhile, legendary hockey player and Olympian Shehbaz Ahmed Senior emphasised the need to educate players with modern techniques and skills and provide them jobs that would help in bringing the national game back on track with proper planning from the grassroots to the top level. There is also a need to build four to five hockey centres in the country directly operated under the federation, he said. Youth must be spotted from grassroots, educated and fed properly and trained at these centres according to international stand-

ards. Shahnaz further pleaded that Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) must have a proper annual budget. Every time we have to request for grants to participate in national and international championships or preparation of training camps abroad. He said, Young players must also be offered regular jobs as was happening during our times when all players had jobs in different departments. Shahnaz advocated organizing Pakistan Hockey League (PHL) as he believes it would prove a key step towards reviving the national game. Besides providing financial support to PHF, the league will help explore new talent for regaining our lost glory, he said. – APP

## Imran claims 80pc chances...

FROM PAGE 01  
Former prime minister Imran Khan also accused Army Chief Gen Asim Munir of stopping him from returning to power. "I have no problem with him, but he seems to have a problem with me," the PTI chief told Al-Jazeera. "I haven't done anything to antagonise the army chief, but there is something he has against me which I don't know." Imran said that the entire PTI leadership was behind bars and there were a total of 150 cases registered against him. "But the point is, you cannot arrest an idea whose time has come." PTI chief Imran Khan told US media that the situation in Pakistan was such that even the decisions of judges and courts were being discarded. "Recently one of the high court judges cried when a PTI leader he had given bail to was re-arrested," he said. "The Supreme Court chief justice when he says elections are to be held on May 14, his decisions are disregarded as well," the former prime minister said. Terming the current period an "unpredictable time", former prime minister Imran Khan has expressed his fear over the coalition government not holding the national elections later in October this year. "My worry now is that they won't hold the national elections even in October," he said. "I fear they will hold the elections until they are clear that PTI won't win." He said that his party had won by-elections and said that the PDM was therefore "petrified" of polls. "They fear PTI will come into power and everything is being done now to dismantle democracy." PTI Chairman Imran Khan has claimed that the govt wanted to "bump him off" because it was scared of losing elections.

## Trump victory would be 'the end of Ukraine': Clinton

WASHINGTON: If ex-US President Donald Trump is re-elected in 2024, it would be the downfall of both Ukraine and democracy in America, former Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton warned on Saturday. Speaking to the Financial Times, Clinton, who served as secretary of state under Barack Obama and lost to Trump in the 2016 election, said she does not believe that the former rival will be successful this time. However, she claimed that if Trump does win in 2024, it will be "the end of democracy in the United States" and the "end of Ukraine," as he will withdraw the country from NATO. Clinton went on to say that Russian President Vladimir Putin believed Trump would do so had he won the 2020 election. "Trump was the gift that kept giving to people like [Chinese leader Xi Jinping] and Putin," she said, accusing him of being "enamored of authoritarians" and "inept in any kind of strategic approach to China." Trump lays out timeline to end Ukraine conflict She added that Trump was "clear-

ly going to do whatever Putin wanted on NATO." Clinton also said she once believed that China was preparing to "make [a] move against Taiwan" within a few years, but the Ukraine conflict discouraged Beijing from attempting to reclaim the island, which it regards as part of its sovereign territory. She went on to address widespread concerns that the current president, Joe Biden, 80, who confirmed that he would run again in late April, is too old for the job. While acknowledging that age is "an issue," she urged voters to compare him to the man he is running against. Trump, who announced last November that he would run again in 2024, has been critical of Biden's approach to the Ukraine conflict. In January, he claimed that the president "is systematically, perhaps unknowingly, pushing us into what could soon be World War III." Trump has described himself as the "only candidate" capable of stopping the US from sliding into a global conflict, promising he would settle the conflict in Ukraine "very quickly" if elected. – Agencies

## Man City turn Premier League into procession

MANCHESTER: Manchester City's domestic dominance under Pep Guardiola has made a mockery of the Premier League's claim to be more competitive than Europe's other top leagues. City sealed a fifth title in six seasons on Saturday with three games to spare, having ultimately seen off Arsenal's challenge to win the league for the first time in 19 years with ease. Their dominance looks remarkably like that of Bayern Munich in Germany or Paris Saint-Germain in France, despite a clutch of hugely wealthy rivals in England. Guardiola's men can enhance their case to be considered one of the all-time great teams in the coming weeks by matching the achievement of Manchester United's treble winners of 1998/99 by adding the Champions League and FA Cup. But they have turned the world's richest league into a one-horse race. A takeover from Emirati royal Sheikh Mansour in 2008 has transformed City from also-rans in the shadow of their local rivals into the dominant force in English football. On the back of huge investment from the Abu Dhabi owners, City have won seven titles in the past 12 seasons. But they have gone up a level since the arrival of Guardiola, one of the most successful managers in football history. – Agencies

## DIPLOMATIC GOLF CUP 2023



ISLAMABAD: 2nd FTS (Friendship Through Sports) Diplomatic Golf Cup 2023 was held in Islamabad. Dean of Diplomatic Corps & Dean of Corps of Services Attaché Diplomats from 27 Different Countries Participated. – DNA

## Briefs

## G-7 summit concludes with deliberations on Russia-Ukraine war

HIROSHIMA: The Group of Seven (G-7) summit in Hiroshima concluded on Sunday with deliberations on the Russia-Ukraine war and other hot-button issues.

The participants expressed "unwavering support" to Kyiv, Japan's Kyodo news agency reported, citing a statement issued at the end of the summit.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, at a press conference at the end of the three-day huddle, further shared the aim to achieve a nuclear-free world free from threats.

Kishida, who was also the chair, said the G-7 leaders shared what he called the "idealistic" goal of ridding the world of nuclear armaments, adding that threats to use nuclear weapons "must not be accepted."

He said the leaders agreed to further tighten economic sanctions on Russia to "undermine the country's capacity to continue its aggression."

Kishida said the group was ready to establish "constructive and stable ties" with China, which has stepped up efforts in recent years to bolster its military influence in the region.

He urged Beijing to "act responsibly" in the international community, without elaborating further—DNA

## Sudan's army, RSF agree to 7-day truce

KHARTOUM: The Sudanese army and Rapid Support Forces agreed Saturday to a seven-day cease-fire, according to Al Jazeera, based on sources from the Saudi Arabian Foreign Ministry.

Saudi-funded Al-Arabiya television reported that the agreement between the army and the paramilitary group will take effect in 48 hours.

It includes allowing armed groups involved in the conflict to evacuate hospitals and facilitating the repair of facilities serving the public. The US State Department published joint statements signed by the Sudanese army and RSF on the short-term cease-fire and agreements.

"In Jeddah, the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces signed the first ceasefire since the conflict began. It is past time to silence the guns and allow unhindered humanitarian access. I implore both sides to uphold this agreement — the eyes of the world are watching," Secretary of State Antony Blinken tweeted.

At least 850 civilians have been killed and more than 3,300 injured in fighting between the army and the RSF since April 15, according to local medics.

After the first face-to-face talks in Saudi Arabia, the army and the RSF signed a declaration of commitment to protect civilians in Sudan on May 11.—Agencies

## US announces new military aid for Ukraine

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden on Sunday pledged a new package of military aid for war-torn Ukraine, including ammunition, artillery, and armored vehicles. The package was announced at a meeting with his Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelenskyy on the sidelines of the G-7 summit in Hiroshima, Japan's Kyodo news agency reported. Zelenskyy landed in Japan on Saturday for a surprise appearance at the summit, which has focused on Russia's war on Ukraine.

Biden told the Ukrainian leader that the US was doing all it could to strengthen Ukraine's defense.

"We have Ukraine's back and we're not going anywhere," Biden said. Zelenskyy, for his part, thanked the US president for Washington's support. "We are very thankful. We will never forget. Thank you," he said. The G-7 nations have already unveiled a string of new sanctions and other measures aimed to punish Moscow and hamper its war effort.—APP

## Business Community expects growth oriented budget: RCCI

RCCI has always been vocal and demanded that the tax net has to be broadened and in order to meet the budget targets; there is a need to bring non-tax paying sectors into the tax net: Sakib Rafiq

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has pinned high hopes and the expectation that the upcoming budget 2023-24 will be growth oriented and industry friendly.

RCCI President Saqib Rafiq while addressing the 8th executive committee meeting at chamber house, said that the business community expects a comprehensive industrial package so that the ailing economy can be put on the right track. The time has come to take hard decisions and adopt an export promotion strategy, set the right direction and we strongly demand that the basis of Pakistan's economy shall be on exports instead of imports, said Saqib Rafiq. We expect that the Finance Minister will introduce measures that support and promote exports. This can include incentives for export-oriented industries, facilitation of trade agreements, provision of export financing, and the development of export-related infrastructure, he added. He said that RCCI has always been vocal and demanded that the tax net has to be broadened and in order to meet the budget targets; there is a need to bring non-tax paying sectors into the tax net. He said that the stakeholders shall be taken on board for devising any policy framework and added that we expect that the Finance Minister Ishaq Dar will engage chambers of commerce prior to finalizing the budget document. We want to present and discuss budget proposals, key measures and recommendations on various sectors ranging from trade, taxation, tourism, SME, agriculture, livestock, IT, non-conventional sectors, Gems stone, and smuggling etc. RCCI strongly desires



to implement policies that promote macroeconomic stability, control inflation, and ensure a stable exchange rate. This stability provides a conducive environment for businesses to plan their investments and operations effectively, he added. There are three major challenges

where the government must take immediate steps, these are: High Interest rate, steep devaluation of Pak Rupee, and skyrocketing inflation that has increased the cost of doing business manifold, he added.

Due to restriction of opening of LCs industries are running out of

raw materials, and many have already shut down their operations as they are dependent on commercial importers for supply of raw materials, he further added. He said that the business community expects the government to introduce policies and reforms aimed at improving the ease

of doing business in Pakistan. This may include streamlining bureaucratic procedures, reducing red tape, implementing online systems for registration and approvals, and enhancing investor protection mechanisms. The government must introduce investment incentives and measures

that encourage both domestic and foreign investments. This may include tax breaks or exemptions for specific industries, subsidies for research and development, access to credit facilities, and measures to promote entrepreneurship and innovation, he added.

## China, Pak to set up agriculture coop

DNA

BEIJING: China and Pakistan have decided to set up agriculture cooperation arrangements, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Sunday. China-Pakistan Apiculture Forum was held at Changsha two days ahead of the World Bee Day which falls on Saturday.

The forum is also a core part of the Training Course on Beekeeping and Honey Processing Technology for Pakistan which was undertaken by an agricultural group in Hunan Province, China and takes place from May 10 to May 23, 2023.

On the forum, Pang Chunxue, Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy of the PRC in Pakistan shared that Chinese government is happy to share the advanced technology

of beekeeping and honey-processing with Pakistani people to promote the beekeeping industry and improve people's lives.

The honey produced in Pakistan enjoys a good reputation for its unique taste and high quality for a long time, but has been suffering from problems of low production, low price, and small scale. China has a history of beekeeping for more than 2,000 years and is one of the earliest countries in the world to raise bees, she introduced.

Both China and Pakistan possess rich beekeeping traditions and have the potential to revolutionize this sector through collaborative efforts.

In 2019, each beekeeper brought 11.7 kg of honey in Pakistan on average, while the world average is 20.6 kg. FAO statistics

show that about 390,000 people in Pakistan are involved in beekeeping and produce over 4,000 tons of honey annually. However, if modern production technologies and standard production procedures are adopted, the country's honey production is expected to surge to 70,000 tons a year and create about 87,000 green jobs. According to Ms. Nadia Rehman, Member Food Security and Climate Change, Planning Commission of Pakistan, both countries can engage in knowledge exchange, research partnerships, and technology transfer to fully realize the potential of apiculture cooperation. China's expertise can be shared with Pakistan in terms of large-scale beekeeping practices, honey production, and value addition.

## Iraq pledges to disarm terrorist groups

TEHRAN: Iran said Saturday that the Iraqi government has vowed to disarm and expel terrorist groups from its territories. Iran is "waiting for the Iraqi government to live up to its commitment and we have given them a chance," Gen. Mohammad Pakpour, commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) ground forces, said in statements carried by the semi-official Tasnim news agency. "Otherwise, if nothing happens, the IRGC attacks will continue," he added. There was no comment from the Iraqi authorities on the report. In November 2022, the IRGC launched missile and drone attacks against positions of armed Kurdish groups stationed in northern Iraq. Iran classifies both the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (IKDP) and the Komala Party as terrorist groups.—Agencies

## Black Sea grain deal keeps global food supplies flowing

NEW YORK: The Black Sea grain deal, which was set to expire May 18 but was extended for two months, is important to keep global food supplies flowing and stabilize markets for all customers, according to the World Food Programme (WFP). "We don't see prices rising again and hitting the poorest people the hardest," the UN organization told Anadolu, underlining that the continuation of the initiative was good news for the entire world.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan confirmed the deal's extension earlier this week after talks with Kyiv and Moscow. Türkiye, the UN, Russia and Ukraine signed the initial agreement in Istanbul last July to resume grain exports from three Ukrainian Black Sea ports, which were halted after the Russia-Ukraine war began in February 2022. A Joint Coordination Center with officials from the three countries and the UN was set up in Istanbul to oversee the shipments. More than 30 million tons of grain have been transported by more than 950 ships as part of the deal. Russia aims to boost grain exports by preventing Ukraine. The continuation of the deal is important for the uninterrupted operation of global food supply chains.—DNA

## BMP calls for growth-oriented Budget

KARACHI: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industries Businessmen Panel (BMP) has called for a growth-oriented Budget 2023-24 for the trade and industry, suggesting the government to make visible reduction in taxes, helping revive the businesses in the country, urging the government to hold thorough consultations with all stakeholders including the business community on the upcoming federal budget. FPCCI former president and Businessmen Panel (BMP) Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar said that his group in consultation with business community across Pakistan has finalized its budget proposals, which have been sent to the relevant departments and called upon the government to incorporate them in the Federal Budget 2023-24 as their implementation would address the key issues of trade and industry, facilitate better growth of business activities, improve tax revenue of government and help in revival of economy. He stressed the need for reforming and simplifying the taxation system in consultation with the real stakeholders. Dilating upon the key features of proposals, he said that the impact of political uncertainty has badly affected business and industrial sector and stressed that government should bring down GST and policy interest rate in order to ease the difficulties of business community. In a joint meeting of various trade and industrial sectors held to review the budget proposals for the upcoming fiscal year, Mian Anjum Nisar appreciated the government for its commitment of providing tax relief in the budget 2023-24, urging it that the major focus should be on greater relief to especially documented and registered SMEs rather than new taxation measures. Mian FPCCI former president said that BMP, in consultation with the FPCCI has finalized its budget proposals, also sent to the relevant departments, urging the authorities concerned to incorporate them in the Budget 2023-24, as their implementation would address the key issues of trade and industry. The BMP chairman said that the Businessmen Panel has taken all trade and industry associations on board for preparation of proposals for the upcoming budget. He said that efforts were made to give government a set of suggestions for upcoming budget to make it business-friendly. He said the business community understands that government was utilizing its abilities to overcome economic challenges but at the same time the private sector considers itself duty-bound to point out the government hitches for speedy economic recovery.—DNA

## Italy's flood-ravaged region still on red alert

ROME: Italy's northern Emilia-Romagna region, hit by torrential rains earlier this week, is still on red alert for extreme weather as its struggling population tries to recover from the worst floods in about a century. Heavy rainfall, which came after months of scorching drought, pushed more than 20 rivers out of their banks and caused up to 300 landslides in the highly-populated region, killing at least 14 people and leaving tens of thousands displaced.

Dozens of cities and small towns were pummeled by rivers of mud, forcing people to leave their homes as rescuers kept searching for the missing ones.

In the Ravenna area, a rescue helicopter crashed on Saturday during efforts to fix the local electric grid, wounding at least four people, according to reports.

The heavy death toll and devastation in the area, which includes damage worth billions of dollars in the agricultural and business sectors, has sparked a new political controversy around the response by Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's far-right government. The premier, who has called an emergency Cabinet meeting on Tuesday, is now expected to return earlier than planned from the ongoing G-7 meeting in Japan.—APP

## 72nd anniversary of establishment of Sino-Pak diplomatic relations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: On the occasion of the 72nd anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan, Chinese Embassy held the reception on China-Pakistan Unbreakable Friendship and the Bright Future on May 19. H.E. Ms. Pang Chunxue, Charge d'Affaires of the Chinese Embassy, the chief guest, H.E. Dr. Asad Majeed Khan, Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, H.E. Mr. Mazhar Javed, Director General of Foreign Service Academy spoke at the reception, which were attended by former Pakistani Ambassadors to China, officials from MFA and Pakistani young diplomats along with Chinese diplomats. Ms. Pang welcomed friends old and new to the Chinese Embassy, emphasized that the China-Pakistan relationship has profound historical roots, solid public support and strong practical needs. Under the

strong leadership of President Xi Jinping, China is steadfastly advancing the process of Chinese modernization. China will

provide new opportunities for the development of countries including Pakistan, with new accomplishments in Chinese

modernization. As developing countries, both China and Pakistan are constantly exploring development paths that suit

their own national conditions, and are actively committed to maintaining world peace and stability. Ms. Pang stated that this year marks the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative proposed by President Xi Jinping, and the 10th anniversary of the launch of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. With the joint efforts of both sides, CPEC has achieved fruitful outcomes covering areas of industry, agriculture, IT, disaster prevention and mitigation, etc., which made significant contributions to promoting Pakistan's economic and social development, upgrading Pakistan's infrastructure, improving Pakistani peoples well-being, enhancing people to people contact and deepening regional connectivity. CPEC has become well-known hallmark of China-Pakistan cooperation. Ms. Pang said that on 5th May to 6th May, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Qin Gang paid a successful visit to Pakistan, which is of tremendous significance in solidifying

and deepening the China-Pakistan all-weather strategic partnership of cooperation. She conveyed great appreciation to successive generations of diplomats from the two countries for their painstaking efforts and contributions, and asserted that China will join hands with Pakistan to implement the consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries in real earnest and continuously promote the great cause of China-Pakistan friendship with great strides. Pakistan Foreign Secretary Dr. Asad Majeed Khan applauded the contribution of generations of the two countries diplomats to the achievements of China and Pakistan unbreakable friendship and cooperation. The change of the compound of Chinese Embassy in Pakistan itself is the witness of the development of friendship with its previous compound being handed over to Pakistan government and became the Foreign Service Academy and the new compound became the biggest one in all Chinese Embassies abroad.



## Briefs

### Pak condemns Iran Sarawan County attack

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan strongly condemns the terrorist attack in the Sarawan County of Iran on 20 May 2023, resulting in the loss of lives of six Iranian security personnel. The government and people of Pakistan express their deepest condolences to the bereaved families of the martyrs as well as to the Iranian government over this tragic incident. As reaffirmed during the recent meeting between Prime Minister of Pakistan and the President of Iran, we stress upon the need for mutual efforts to eliminate the terrorism on both sides of the border. Pakistan views Pak-Iran border as a border of peace and friendship; and remains committed to working with Iran towards that end. Five Iranian border guards were killed in a clash with an unknown armed group trying to enter the country near the border, state TV reported Sunday. The fighting happened in the town of Sarawan in the southeastern province of Sistan and Baluchistan, some 1,360 kilometers (850 miles) southeast of the capital Tehran. The report said the militants fled the area with casualties, but did not elaborate.

### Rs72 billion authorised to ministries, divisions

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP), the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives authorised Rs72 billion for various ministries and divisions in the fourth quarter (April-June) of the current fiscal year 2022-2023, media reported Sunday. Various ministries and divisions have been authorised Rs566.85 billion by the planning ministry, which is Rs50 billion more as compared to the previous year, which was Rs516.31 billion. The Higher Education Commission (HEC) remained on the top as Rs42,928.91 million was authorised in the fourth quarter of the current year. The details of the amount authorised to ministries and divisions are as follows: Moreover, the ministry has authorised Rs91,845.22 million to the provinces. Furthermore, the National Highways Authority (NHA) was authorised Rs76,575.34 million, National Transmission and Despatch Company (NTDC)/Pakistan Electric Power Company (PEPCO) Rs20,209.83 million and Railways Division Rs25,818.80 million. Since taking charge, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal has held his stance that the federal government should not take projects related to the provinces. "The federal government should consider only high priority projects of the provinces based on 50-50 sharing," the minister said during the last meeting in which he reviewed the PSDP.

## France to offer more educational opportunities to Pak students

French Ambassador Nicolas Galey says role of alumni is essential because they are the best ambassadors of higher education in France and an aspiring source to explain educational and living experiences in France to their Pakistanis



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of France to Pakistan, Nicolas Galey has said that the French Embassy was keen to increase educational opportunities for Pakistani youth in France by providing more scholarships and strengthening the Campus France Pakistan office. Addressing the French Alumni Day in Islamabad, he said that the mission of the Campus France Pakistan office is to promote studies in France and help students find the establishment corresponding to their project among the vast offer of higher education in France, includ-

ing many taught in English. The role of alumni is essential because they are the best ambassadors of higher education in France and an aspiring source to explain educational and living experiences in France to their Pakistanis. He stressed that both countries are working to enhance bilateral relations and cooperation, particularly in higher education. The day was celebrated worldwide to reconnect the hundreds and thousands of people from all countries who got their higher education and professional training, or part of it, in French universities or other educational institutions, the Ambassador noted with pleasure.

He stressed that the French Alumni Pakistan was a Pakistani platform who have attended French universities and can inspire the younger generation to choose those prestigious institutions to build a successful career. He said that the relationship between Pakistan and France in higher education dates back to the early 1960s, adding that the number of Pakistani students recently decreased. Still, the French Embassy is determined to reverse this situation with the support of the Pakistani authorities. He said the efforts to enhance Pakistani students' number at French universities began in 2003 when the HEC launched a

scholarship program for PhDs in France. So far, 670 Pakistani students have received higher education in France. The Ambassador said the French government and universities fund 30 scholarships for Pakistani students annually. In European countries, too, dozens of students get scholarships each year, he said. Only last year, 170 students got scholarships to study in Europe; 40 started their Masters' degrees in France. More than 250 Pakistani students and researchers choose France annually for a semester exchange, an internship, a short course, a full master/Ph.D. degree, professional training, or a research study.

## Joe Biden says US, China ties should see a 'thaw very shortly'

Biden said relations had deteriorated in the months following his talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping at the G20 summit on the Indonesian island of Bali in November

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden said on Sunday that ties between Washington and Beijing should thaw "very shortly" after the United States shot down a suspected Chinese spy balloon this year. Biden said relations had deteriorated in the months following his talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping at the G20 summit on the Indonesian island

of Bali in November. Washington's decision in February to shoot down an alleged Chinese spy balloon that overflew the United States sparked a diplomatic spat between the world's two largest economies. A visit to Beijing by Secretary of State Antony Blinken that had been billed as a chance to improve relations was cancelled over the incident. On Sunday, at a press conference following the G7 summit in Hiroshima, Japan, Biden was asked why a planned hotline between the United States and China was not in operation. "You're right, we should have an open hotline. At the Bali conference, that's what President Xi and I agreed we were going to do and meet on," he said. "And then, this silly balloon that was carrying two freight cars worth of spying equipment was flying over the

United States," Biden added. "It got shot down and everything changed in terms of talking to one another. I think you're going to see that begin to thaw very shortly." Biden's administration has also infuriated China by targeting trade in advanced microchips, citing risks of military use. The president defended those actions on Sunday, a day after the Group of Seven leading economies warned China over its "militarisation activities" in the region. "It is building its military, and that's why I've made it clear that I am not prepared to trade certain items with China," he said. "We've now got a commitment from all of our allies that they're not going to do that either, provide that kind of material."

## Warring factions in Sudan agree to cease-fire

WEB DESK

WASHINGTON: Sudan's warring factions have agreed to a new short-term cease-fire, US and Saudi mediators announced on Saturday, after several previous attempts to broker a truce that holds have failed. Meeting in the Saudi port city of Jeddah, the Sudanese army and the Rapid Support Forces signed off on a seven-day cease-fire that is due to take effect on Monday 9:45 p.m. local time in Sudan, the US and Saudi Arabia said in a joint statement. The cease-fire could be extended if both

sides agree. "Both parties have conveyed to the Saudi and US facilitators their commitment not to seek military advantage during the 48-hour notification period after signing the agreement and prior to the start of the cease-fire," it said. The talks in Jeddah had previously produced an agreement between the two sides on protecting civilians and easing the flow of humanitarian assistance to those affected by the conflict. But, earlier cease-fire deals have foundered amid accusations by both of violations. "It is well known that the parties have previously announced cease-fires that have not been observed," the US-Saudi statement said. "Unlike previous cease-fires, the Agreement reached in Jeddah was signed by the parties and will be supported by a US-Saudi and international-supported cease-fire monitoring mechanism." The Monitoring and Coordination Committee is to be made up of three representatives each from the US and Saudi Arabia and three representatives from each party. Meanwhile, the Egyptian Red Crescent has begun transporting 27 tons of relief supplies to Sudan, in cooperation with the EU and the UN Development Programme.

## Israel far-right minister visits Al-Aqsa compound

MONITORING DESK

JERUSALEM: Israel's far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir has entered the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in occupied East Jerusalem and declared Israel was "in charge", drawing condemnation from Palestinians after months of escalating tension and violence. The comments during his early morning visit on Sunday to the compound came days after groups of Jewish youths scuffled with Palestinians and chanted racist slogans during the annual far-right "flag march" through the Old City. The event, held on "Jerusalem Day", which marks the 1967 capture and annexation of East Jerusalem, a move considered illegal under international law, has led to violence in recent years, as far-right Israelis shout provocative slogans and insults, as well as physically attack Palestinians and even journalists. "I'm happy to ascend the Temple Mount, the most important place for the people of Israel," Ben-Gvir said during his visit to the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, also known as Al-Haram al-Sharif by Muslims and the Temple Mount by Jews.

## Iran says it is strong enough to defend waters

TEHRAN: Iran has said it is fully capable of securing regional waters in cooperation with other regional actors after a move by Western allies in the strategic Strait of Hormuz that Tehran called "theatrical". The comment came on Sunday as Iranian officials held a ceremony near the country's southern waters to welcome back two Iranian warships after an eight-month trip around the world. Two days earlier, the Middle East-based navy commanders of France, the United Kingdom and the United States toured the Strait of Hormuz on the USS Paul Hamilton in a show of unity against Iran and to indicate oversight of the safety of ships traversing the waterway, through which a fifth of global oil supplies pass. Mohammad Bagheri, chief of staff of the Iranian armed forces, said Western countries need to explain what they are doing in the Strait of Hormuz, thousands of kilometres away from their territorial waters. - APP

## KSA condemns raid on Qatari embassy in Khartoum

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's on Saturday condemned and denounced the storming and vandalising of Qatar's embassy in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum, the Kingdom's foreign ministry said in a statement. "Ministry of Foreign Affairs expresses the Kingdom's total rejection of all forms of violence and sabotage toward diplomatic missions and representations," it added in a statement. The ministry called on all Sudanese parties to abide by the truce, in accordance with the results of the recent Jeddah talks, and to engage in the political path that seeks to reach a just and comprehensive solution to the crisis in Sudan. On Saturday, Qatar's embassy was the latest diplomatic mission to be attacked, following attacks on the embassies of Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey in recent weeks. Saturday's attack came a day after Arab leaders meeting at a summit in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, urged Sudan's feuding generals to halt the fighting. The Gulf Cooperation Council also strongly condemned the attack on the Qatari embassy, and all forms of violence and vandalism, especially those targeting the headquarters of diplomatic missions and their buildings recently. - DNA

## Ukraine says troops still fighting in Bakhmut

Russia claimed to have fully captured the smashed eastern Ukrainian city

KYIV: Ukrainian soldiers were still engaging Russian forces in fierce battles in and around Bakhmut on Sunday, military officials said, hours after Moscow and the private army Wagner announced that their troops had taken full control of the eastern city. The fog of war made it impossible to confirm the situation on the ground in the invasion's longest battle, and a series of comments from Ukrainian and Russian officials added confusion to the matter. Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Malyar even went so far as to say that Ukrainian troops "took the city in a semi-encirclement." "The enemy failed to surround Bakhmut, and they lost part of the dominant heights around the city," Malyar said. "That is, the advance of our troops in the suburbs along the flanks, which is still ongoing, greatly complicates the enemy's presence in Bakhmut." Her comments came after Ukrain-

ian President Volodymyr Zelensky, at the Group of Seven summit in Japan, appeared to suggest that Bakhmut had fallen. When asked if the city was in Ukraine's hands, Zelensky said: "I think no, but you have to - to understand that there is nothing. They've destroyed everything. There are no buildings. It's a pity. It's tragedy." Zelensky's press secretary later walked back those comments. And the spokesman for Ukraine's Eastern Group of Forces, Serhii Cherevaty, said that the Ukrainian military is managing to hold positions in the vicinity of Bakhmut. "The president correctly said that the city has, in fact, been razed to the ground. The enemy is being destroyed every day by massive artillery and aviation strikes, and our units report that the situation is extremely difficult. "Our military keep fortifications and several premises in the southwestern part of the city. Heavy

fighting is underway," he said. It was only the latest flip-flopping of the situation in Bakhmut after eight months of intense fighting. Only hours earlier, Russian state new agencies reported that President Vladimir Putin congratulated "Wagner assault detachments, as well as all servicemen of the Russian Armed Forces units, who provided them with the necessary support and flank protection, on the completion of the operation to liberate Artyomovsk," which is Bakhmut's Soviet-era name. Russia's Defense Ministry also said that Wagner and military units "completed the liberation" of Bakhmut. At the G-7 in Japan, Zelensky stood side by side with US President Joe Biden during a news conference. Biden announced \$375 million more in aid for Ukraine, which included more ammunition, artillery and vehicles. "I thanked him for the significant

financial assistance (to Ukraine) from (the US)," Zelensky tweeted later. The new pledge came after the US agreed to allow training on American-made F-16 fighter jets, laying the groundwork for their eventual transfer to Ukraine. Biden said Sunday that Zelensky had given the US a "flat assurance" that Ukraine wouldn't use the F-16s jets to attack Russian territory. Many analysts say that even if Russia was victorious in Bakhmut, it was unlikely to turn the tide in the war. The Russian capture of the last remaining ground in Bakhmut is "not tactically or operationally significant," a Washington-based think tank said late Saturday. The Institute for the Study of War said that taking control of these areas "does not grant Russian forces operationally significant terrain to continue conducting offensive operations," nor to "defend against possible Ukrainian counterattacks."