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Zelenskiy says counteroffensive actions underway

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Saudi Arabia seeks closer co-op with China

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India was not brave in WTC Final: Hafeez

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Briefs

Mariyum says Khan not democratic

SAIFULLAH



ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzeb has said there is no room for the constitution, law, humanity and morality in the mind of Imran Khan. In a tweet, she said on May 9, military installations and memorials of martyrs were also attacked because "they" did not agree with Imran Khan's mindset. She said that politicians and democrats talk only to politicians, not to people like Imran. She said that Imran Khan is still looking for a "shoulder" and "crutches" for coming back to power which is no longer available.

Zardari must accept PPP's defeat

DNA



KARACHI: Jamaat-e-Islami Emir Sirajul Haq said on Sunday that P a k i s t a n Peoples Party co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari should accept the defeat of his party as the people supported the JI. He said that Hafiz Naeemur Rehman would become the mayor of Karachi as he was the right choice for this post. Addressing the workers in Karachi, the JI Emir said the Jamaat wanted an Islamic system in the country, adding that the JI wanted to implement rule of law in the country. MrHaq said the progress of Pakistan was linked with the safety of Karachi.

Sindh budget for social protection

DNA



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah says the provincial budget centers around rehabilitation of flood affected people and providing social protection to the poor of province. Addressing post-budget news conference in Karachi on Sunday, he said in the over 2.247 trillion rupees budget, over seven hundred billion rupees have been earmarked for development expenditures.

'All conditions met' PM hopeful of reaching IMF deal soon

"No need to panic," PM says stall-level agreement this month

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday reiterated that Pakistan has already met "all" the preconditions of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to revive the stalled bailout programme of the global lender, adding that "no hurdle is now left" in the signing of a staff-level agreement between the cash-strapped nation and the fund. Addressing the inaugural ceremony of Sabzazar Sports Complex in Lahore, PM Shehbaz, while referring the government's plan B, said, "If the agreement with the IMF is [further] delayed, then I will address you." "No need to panic," the premier said, adding that Allah almighty will keep Pakistan safe. The premier hoped that the government and the IMF would reach a stall-level agreement this month. Stressing the need for political stability, the premier said that a country's economic stability is linked with its political stability. He vowed to bring economic stability in the country under the leadership of PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif. Berating the former ruling party, PM Shehbaz hold deposed prime minister Imran Khan responsible for the May 9 mayhem and vowed to bring all the miscreants involved in the violent protests and attacked on the civil and military installations to justice. The prime minister said that people attacked the public and private properties at the instigation of the PTI chairman.

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'Govt making efforts to re-negotiate with IMF'

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar says the government is taking necessary measures to re-negotiate with International Monetary Fund on more favorable terms and conditions. Talking to a private news channel, he expressed hope that the IMF would be satisfied with Pakistan's progress, as the country has fulfilled the necessary requirements. Ishaq Dar expressed optimism that Pakistan would achieve the growth rate set by the government, indicating a positive outlook for the nation's economic development in the coming year. The Finance Minister said the federal government has given a massive relief to the salaried class in the new budget by announcing 35 per cent

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3 soldiers martyred during fire exchange ISPR says 'sanitisation' ongoing after 4 others also injured

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Three soldiers embraced martyrdom during an operation targeting a terrorist location in the general area of Miranshah, North Waziristan district, the military's media wing reported on Sunday. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) stated that "on the night of June 9/10, an exchange of fire took place between the [Pakistani] troops and terrorists" as a result of which three terrorists were killed while four others were injured. "Weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the killed terrorists," the statement added. "However, during the intense exchange of fire, Subedar Asghar Ali (age 40 years, resident of LakkiMarwat District), Sepoy Naseem Khan (age 26 years, resident of LakkiMarwat District) and Sepoy Muhammad Zaman (age 22 years, resident of Abbotabad) having fought gallantly, embraced shahadat [martyrdom]," the ISPR said. The military's media wing also said that "sanitisation" of the area was underway "to eliminate any other terrorists found in the area". "Armed forces of Pakistan are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve," the statement stressed. Earlier this month, Security forces killed two terrorists during an exchange of fire in general area Dossali, North Waziristan district.



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Jakarta's Taman Mini Park; a must visit place

ANSAR M BHATTI in Jakarta

JAKARTA: Taman Mini Jakarta, the iconic cultural park located in the heart of Indonesia's vibrant capital city Jakarta, invites visitors to embark on an enchanting journey through the diverse and captivating tapestry of Indonesian culture. This most-sought-after tourist attraction showcases the Indonesia nation's cultural heritage, providing an immersive experience that celebrates the unique traditions, arts, and customs of the Indonesian archipelago. Taman Mini Jakarta, affectionately known as "Beautiful Indonesia in Miniature Park," encompasses an expansive area that encapsulates the essence of Indonesia's diverse regions. Designed as a microcosm of the entire country, the park offers visitors a remarkable opportunity to explore Indonesia's myriad cultural treasures in one place, said Ms Claudia Ingkiriwang, the President Director of the Park while briefing the Pakistani media delegation.



JAKARTA: Claudia Ingkiriwang, the President Director Tamin Mini talking to media delegation. - DNA

The Pakistan media delegation comprising senior journalists and a Vlogger is currently on a visit to Indonesia as part of the Indonesia Embassy Familiarization trip organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism of Indonesia. FAMTRIP is a regular feature of the Indonesian



JAKARTA: Natives from Papua region presenting a special performance for the Pakistani media delegation. - DNA

embassy's initiatives undertaken with a view to promoting the idea of "Wonderful Indonesia". It is a well-known branding campaign used by the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy to promote tourism in the country. Claudia Ingkiriwang further said

that Taman Mini is a place for all. She said visitors to Taman Mini Jakarta are enthralled by the park's architectural grandeur, as each pavilion represents the distinct cultural heritage of Indonesia's 36 provinces. From the ornate temples of Bali to the traditional longhouses of Kalimantan, the park authentically recreates the traditional architectural styles, showcasing the rich craftsmanship and architectural diversity that exists throughout the Indonesian archipelago. She said the park boasts an array of captivating museums, each dedicated to a specific facet of Indo-

nesian culture. Visitors can delve into the nation's history at the History Museum, admire the intricate craftsmanship of Indonesian textiles at the Textile Museum, or discover the unique flora and fauna of the region at the Indonesian Flora and Fauna Museum. Taman Mini Jakarta is not only a visual feast, but it also offers visitors a chance to witness the vibrant performing arts of Indonesia. The park regularly hosts cultural performances, including traditional dance, music, and puppet shows, showcasing the dynamic and diverse artistic expressions that thrive across the archipelago. In addition to its cultural attractions, Taman Mini Jakarta provides a range of recreational activities for visitors of all ages. The park offers various outdoor recreational facilities, including cycling tracks, boat rides, and a large lake where visitors can relax and enjoy the picturesque surroundings, she added.

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LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif being briefed about Sabzazar Sports Complex. - DNA

First Russian oil cargo arrives

Pakistan was initially expecting the vessel to arrive on May 27-28

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: In a first, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday announced that a vessel carrying Russian oil finally reached Karachi on Sunday and termed it a "transformative day" for the country. Taking to twitter, PM Shehbaz wrote, "I have fulfilled another of my promises to the nation. Glad to announce that the first Russian discounted crude oil cargo has arrived in Karachi and will begin oil discharge tomorrow." In April, Pakistan placed its first order for discounted Russian crude oil under a new deal signed between Islamabad and Moscow. Russian vessel Pure Point - a 183-meter-long oil tanker - carrying 45,000 metric tons of oil docked at birth number 2 at the port. Expressing his joys on the occasion, the premier said, "We are moving one step at a time toward prosperity, economic growth and energy security and affordability." He maintained that this was the first ever Russian oil cargo to Pakistan and the beginning of a new relationship between Pakistan and Russia. "I commend all those who remained part of this national endeavor & contributed to translating the promise of Russian oil import into reality," he added. Pakistan was initially expecting the vessel from Russia to arrive in Oman on May 27-28.

No one will cast vote for PTI chief, claims Maryam

Maryam Nawaz praises PM for presenting 'best budget'

DNA

SHUJAABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senior Vice President Maryam Nawaz on Sunday lambasted the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman, saying no one will cast vote for the latter now. Addressing a youth convention, Ms Nawaz took a swipe at the PTI chief, saying, "After losing the government, he resorted to vandalism and attacked military installations on May 9. Those who were involved in the May 9 vandalism deserve no sympathy or relief. The mastermind of the May 9 mayhem hides in his residence and lay blames at the workers". At the outset of her speech, Ms Nawaz said, "I have come to Shujaabad for the first time and would like to thank you for your support and love. PML-N leader Nawaz Sharif visited Shujaabad seven times".

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PML-N all set to launch campaign

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) on Sunday decided to start its election campaign. PML-N Senior Vice President Maryam Nawaz met Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, in which she conveyed the message of PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif to the PM. The former prime minister directed the party to expose the PTI performance in the election campaign. Mr Sharif also directed the party to form a committee for the purpose of the election manifesto and to include the action plan of providing easy

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High alert as Cyclone Biparjoy likely to hit

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has put the authorities concerned on high alert as Cyclone Biparjoy is gaining strength and now turned into an Extremely Severe Cyclonic Storm (ESCS), likely to affect Sindh's coastal areas on June 13 (Tuesday). In its update on Sunday, the NDMA said the cyclone may intensify in the next 24 hours and is likely to affect the south and south-eastern parts of Sindh on Tuesday. It said the cyclone can cause strong winds, torrential rains and floods in coastal areas of the province. The NDMA directed the authorities

concerned to run awareness campaign in local language to inform residents of the coastal areas on weather conditions and advise them against visiting the shorelines. "Fishermen should avoid boating in the open sea. Follow and cooperate with local authorities in emergency situation," it added. The NDMA said, in close coordination with PMD, Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Sindh & Balochistan, Pakistan Navy, Pakistan Maritime Security Authority (PMSA), Pakistan Coast Guards (PCG) it is issuing advisories and guidelines to all concerned stakeholders at national and provincial levels to undertake proactive preparedness and mitigation measures.

Crimes rates increases by 136pc in Peshawar

PESHAWAR: The crime rates increased by 136 percent in Peshawar, a report prepared by City Police revealed here Sunday. Increasing crimes and incidents of terrorism are challenges, CCPO Syed Safar Anwar told the media men. He said that improvements would be made through technology and better investigation. The report further revealed that 232 people were killed in Peshawar this year with an increase of 136 percent while 170 people were killed in the first five months of last year. There is also an increase in the incidents of murder as 360 incidents were reported and in the first 5 months of last year, 310 cases of attempted murder were reported. A total of 216 people were injured in the city this year. Similarly last year, 224 people were injured in different crime incidents. However, 102 percent increase in the incidents of robbery in Peshawar city was reported as in the first five months of last year, 39 cases of rape were reported.—APP

Balochistan govt to unveil growth-oriented budget

QUETTA: The Balochistan government is probably to unveil its balanced, growth-oriented and pro-people budget for the upcoming fiscal year, with a total outlay of more than Rs 700 billion. The Balochistan government, led by Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) would present its 5th budget for the fiscal year 2023-24 in the Provincial Assembly on June 16 with an expected deficit of around Rs150 billion. The government is expected to announce an over Rs 200 billion development budget under Public Sector Development Programme. According to finance department sources, more than 5,000 new posts would be created in the new budget. A major chunk of the budget would be allocated for health, education, agriculture, food, rural development, communication, law and order, irrigation and drinking water and other sectors which will change the destiny of the people of Balochistan.—APP

Sale of sacrificial animals starts

RAWALPINDI: The sacrificial animals have started arriving in Rawalpindi division for farflung areas of the country for sale ahead of Eid-ul-Azha. These animals can be seen in Raja Bazaar, Bara Market, Fawara Chowk, Dengi Khoi, Waris Khan, Naz Cinema, College Road, Benazir Bhutto Road, Bakra Mandi, Lal Kurri, Dheri Hassanabad and Saddar Bazaar.

A visit to different sale points revealed that the animal prices are quite high and beyond the reach of the common man. Majority of the sellers of sacrificial animals are demanding very high prices as there is no price regulatory mechanism introduced by the city government. Price of a normal size goat/sheep/lamb ranges from Rs 60,000 to Rs 80,000 whereas a cow/calf from Rs120,000 to Rs 4,00,000.—APP

Ulema-Mashaykh conference calls for stability in Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Ulema-Mashaykh and the leadership of the religious, political and the minority organisations from all across Pakistan have demanded that the elements accomplice in the May 9 tragedy, and its perpetrators, facilitators and all the individuals who masterminded the attacks on Pakistan Army and the security agencies of the country should be exposed before the nation.

The representatives of religious, political and minorities bodies while addressing with "Pakistan Stability, Ulema-Mashaykh Conference" which held in the chair of Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, Chairman Pakistan Ulema Council also rejected the campaign against Pakistan and Pakistan's security forces in the name of human rights and demanded action as per law and constitution of Pakistan against the elements fanning baseless propaganda towards state institutions. Joint Declaration issued at "Pakistan Stability Ulema-Mashaykh Conference", which held in aegis of Pakistan Ulema Council in view of 9th May's tragic incident said that Pakistan Ulema Council has decided to call an all-party conference immediately after the Hajj in the context of the current situation in the country.

The Ulema-Mashaykh Conference was presided over by Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, Central Chairman of Pa-



kistan Ulama Council and President of International Interfaith Harmony Council. Leading renowned religious scholars from all over Pakistan including Allama Abdul Haq Mujahid, Maulana Muhammad Rafiq Jami, Maulana Nouman Hasher, Maulana Muhammad Shafi Qasmi, Maulana Asad Zakaria Qasmi, Alama Tahir Al Hasan, Maulana Muhammad Aslam Siddiqui, Maulana Muhammad Ashfaq Patafi, Maulana Tahir Aqeel Awan, Maulana Abdul Hakeem Athar, Maulana Obaidullah Ghormani, Maulana Aziz Akbar Qasmi, Maulana Abu Bakr Hameed Sabri, Maulana Saadullah Shafiq, Maulana Anwarul Haq Mujahid, Maulana Ghulam Mustafa Haidari, Maulana Zubair Khatana, Hafiz Saqib Munir,

Maulana Muhammad Aslam Qadri, Maulana Aqeel Zubiri, Maulana Aqeel Naqshbandi, Maulana Ibrahim Hanafi, Maulana Qari Mubasher Rahimi, Maulana Abdul Ghaffar Farooqi, Maulana Nasir Haqqani, Qari Faisal Amin, Qari Sajid and others also addressed while more than 1,000 representatives of all the religious schools of thought, religious sects and the representatives of different religions and different sections of the society also participated in the conference. The Joint Declaration of Pakistan Stability Ulema-Mashaykh Conference states: 1. The Pakistan Stability Ulema-Mashaykh Conference strongly condemns the events of May 9 and expresses full solidarity with the families of the

martyrs and announces to stand by the families of the martyrs of Pakistan. The Joint declaration assures Chief of the Army Staff General Syed Hafiz Asim Munir and the respective leadership and soldiers of the Pakistan Army full cooperation and demands the arrest and punishment of all the criminals involved in the events of May 9. May 9 is a black day for the Pakistani nation and no criminal involved in these events should be spared and also demand of the government and the military leaders of the nation that the same action should be taken against the criminals who attacked and similar action should also be taken against the facilitators and their masterminds and those who motivate them and in any case no crim-

inal who is in any way involved in these incidents should be spared and no innocent person should be arrested. The law and the constitution should prevail and the requirements of the law should be fulfilled. The nation should be fully informed about the cases being tried against the criminals of May 9, whether they are under the Army Act or in other courts, and all legal proceedings should be clear and in accordance with the Constitution of Pakistan. The Ulema-Mashaykh conference does not consider the unjustified opposition of the cases conducted under the Army Act to be valid in any case. Courts under the Army Act are correct according to the constitution and law, and all the cases should be conducted according to the law and constitution of Pakistan and the rights of any individual should not be violated at any level. 2. The Ulema-Mashaykh Conference completely rejects the propaganda relating misuse of the law of blasphemy on account of desecration of religion by certain elements in the name of human rights and wants to make it clear that in any case the blasphemy law will not be allowed to be used for personal and political purposes, nor any such step will be supported or endorsed. The blasphemy law is not being misused against any political party. We want to make it very clear to the United States, United Kingdom, European countries and all human rights institution.

May-9 perpetrators should be brought to book

LAHORE: Federal Minister Mian Javed Latif stressed on Sunday that perpetrators of the May-9 sorrowful incidents should be brought to book so that people could differentiate between a political party and a terrorist group.

Addressing a press conference at Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) secretariat at Model Town, he said the unfortunate incidents taking place in the guise of protests on May 9 by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf were an attempt to weaken the state. He said there was ample evidence of foreign conspiracy behind the attacks on that fateful day.

He demanded that perpetrators of the May-9 incident should be exposed before the nation to avoid such an incident in future. State properties including military installations were damaged by the protestors under a planning, he added. The federal minister said that facts about the conspiracy under which elected Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was ousted in 2017 should also be made public so that people could be made aware of facts. The fact had already been related by many retired people of state institutions, he said and demanded that people of the country should also be told the facts about the conspiracy.—APP

Due to IMF curbs

Govt not successful to present growth-oriented budget

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF), while commenting on the federal budget 2023-24, has said that it is apparently a mixed budget, as the finance minister has not been fully successful to present a business-friendly budget due to IMF conditions, as the government is caught between a painful fiscal adjustment reforms agenda set by the IMF, and to make room for any relief to the people ahead of the elections. PIAF Chairman Faheemur Rehman Saigol said that the government has imposed new taxes of almost Rs200 billion without bringing more sectors into tax net, implying burdening those who are already paying taxes. He noted that there was no mention of reduction in en-

ergy tariff, adding that the federal government would fail to reach the targets set in the budget. He said that the country's exports will likely be less than \$30 billion, adding that the target of Federal Bureau of Revenue (FBR) will not be achieved. Faheemur Rehman Saigol said that the present budget lacks major objective of giving a long-term direction to economy, as no visible reduction in cost of doing business or cut in taxes in budget has been announced to speed up the growth or create new jobs in the country. He said that Pakistan needed millions of jobs annually but the government had not taken any concrete step in federal budget for job creations for the unemployed youth. Although details are still to come out, the budget vibes seem positive, he said.

The PIAF Chairman stated that the businessmen had demanded of the government to take concrete steps in the upcoming Federal Budget 2023-24 to keep industrial wheel running especially of SMEs, saving the livelihood of millions of workers associated with the small industries. The major focus should have been on greater relief to the documented and registered SMEs. In this budget too, the government attempted to squeeze the neck of old taxpayers instead of taking efforts to bring new taxpayers into tax net. Budget FY24 is an attempt to satisfy IMF on key matters relating to revenue collection, subsidy reductions, and attainment of fiscal discipline, he stated. He said government has announced some good steps towards agriculture sector. Agriculture is the

backbone of the country for food security. The announcement of conversion of 50,000 tube-wells into solar, duty reduction on the import of raw material of solar panels, batteries, and inverters are right steps towards energy mix in the country. Announcements related to education and youth skill development program, etc., are the goods steps the government is taking. However, he said that it was not an export-oriented budget. The finance minister did not announce any concrete steps towards exports enhancement. Our cost of doing business is going up due to high electricity rates and unfriendly business environment in the country. He said that except agriculture, nothing was there in the budget speech for the rest of sectors.

IGP KP inaugurates modern CTD Regional HQ Dera

PESHAWAR: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Akhtar Hayat Khan Gandapur Sunday inaugurated the newly constructed modern Regional Headquarters CTD Dera Ismail Khan building. During the inauguration ceremony Additional IGC TD Shaukat Abbas, Regional Police Officer Dera Abdul Ghafoor Afridi, District Police Officer Dera Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani, SPCTD Region-II Fazal Wahid, SPCTD-II Izzar Shah and CTD officers and district police officials were also present. Regional Police Officer Dera Abdul Ghafoor Afridi gave a detailed briefing to Inspector General of Police KP Akhtar Hayat Khan Gandapur about the CTD building. During this, IGP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Akhtar Hayat Khan Gandapur reviewed the internal and external securi-

ty of the police station CTD and while visiting different parts of the Police Station building, the CCTV cameras there. IGP KP also inspected the electronic monitoring system. The IGP visited the Regional Headquarters CTD offices, Hawalat, Investigation Cell and various counters and reviewed the performance of each department in detail. On this occasion, he said that modern equipment, weapons, ammunition and vehicles have been provided to the CTD police, the purpose of establishing the CTD is to completely eradicate terrorism from this province. He said that the close and friendly relationship between the police and the public can eliminate crime, so there is a need to increase bilateral cooperation in the current situation. IGP Akhtar Hayat Khan also presided over a high-level meeting with police officials at Police Club Dera in

which Additional IGC TD Shaukat Abbas, Regional Police Officer Dera Abdul Ghafoor Afridi, District Police Chief Dera Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani, DPO Tank Waqar Ahmed, DPO South Waziristan Upper Niaz Mohammad, DPO Lower Shabir Hussain, Additional SP Dera Ifthikhar Ali Shah, SP Investigation Dera Ifthikhar Khan, SP Investigation Tank Nasir Ali, SP Special Branch Tohid Khan, SP TD Region-I Fazal Wahid, SP Region-II Izzar Shah, SP FRP Iqbal Khan participated in the meeting. In the meeting, IG Khyber Pakhtunkhwa RPO asked about law and order, crime rate and police efficiency in Dera region and a detailed briefing was given on anti-crime operations. In the meeting, IG Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was also briefed on the steps taken, professional performance and important actions taken by the police in various districts of Dera region including tribal districts.—DNA

Electricity restored in most rains-storms hit areas

PESHAWAR: Adviser to the Prime Minister for Political and Public Affairs and National Heritage, Engr Amir Muqam here Sunday said that electricity system in most of the rains-storms affected areas in Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Karak and adjoining districts were restored in the province. Addressing a press conference here after presiding over a high level meeting about electricity losses and rehabilitation work on

non-workable feeders at the affected areas, the Adviser said a total of 300 feeders were found non workable out of which 236 were so far restored and work on remaining 64 feeders was underway, saying electricity of all hospitals in the affected areas were stand restored by the PESCO staff. He said that work on Miranshah and Razmak grid stations were in progress and would be restored within few days. Engr Amir

Muqam said that over 500 million electricity related losses occurred due to yesterday's hailstorms, rains and storms. The Adviser said the Prime Minister was closely monitoring restoration of electricity and rehabilitation works in the affected areas and directed all the concerned departments to work swiftly by providing relief to the affected people. Engr Amir Muqam said that 3,000 metric tons flour per day was being provided

to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from Punjab, adding free of cost flour worth Rs19 billion were provided to people during Ramadan. He announced Rs one million compensation for heirs of each dead, Rs three lakh for each injured and Rs50,000 for minor wounded victims of the rains and storms. Amir Muqam said that compensation for destroyed and damaged houses would be given after completion of the damages survey to be conducted by the Revenue Department. He said the erstwhile Fata and Pata were exempted from taxes for which the government deserved appreciation.—APP

CM reviews pace of development projects

LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi visited the sites of project to link main boulevard Gulberg with Walton, extension projects of Gulshan-e-Ravi T junction and Bund Road, multi level grade Shadara mor project, Lady Willingdon Hospital on Saturday and reviewed pace of work on the ongoing development projects. He issued necessary directions to the officials concerned to complete the public welfare projects within stipulated period of time. During his visit to the project site to link main boulevard Gulberg with Walton, reviewed the construction project and directed to complete the project in time. Caretaker CM Mohsin Naqvi directed that implementation on the alternate traffic plan should be ensured and the road should kept wide to the maximum extent keeping in view future needs and requirements. He stated that this project was of special significance for the citizens of Lahore and the citizens would have immense ease in transportation with the construction of this road. Directing the relevant officials with regard to early completion of the project, he remarked that all important matters regarding the project should be finalized and settled at the earliest. The CM was informed during a briefing that the fly over would also be constructed on the railway crossing. The proposal to increase lane of the fly over project would also be reviewed. Chief Executive Officer Punjab Central Business Authority gave a briefing about the project.—APP

Govt steers country's economy out of crisis: Governor

DNA

LAHORE: A delegation of the All Pakistan Business Forum (APBF), led by its President Syed Maaz Mahmood, called on Governor Balighur Rehman here at Governor's House, where economic situation of the country and the problems faced by the businessmen were discussed in details. The APBF President apprised the governor about the issues of the business community.

Governor Balighur Rehman, on this occasion, assured delegation of the APBF to resolve their all issues. The Punjab governor said that the government has steered the country's economy out of the crisis by making sincere efforts. He said that the country's economy was showing the signs of stability which bodes well for the development and prosperity of the country. The governor said that the

strengthening of the country's economy and promotion of trade and industry were the priorities of the government. He added that the government is also very much concerned about the trouble faced by the business community. He said that the government is engaged with the business community on the all trade-related matters through consultation. He appreciated the APBF for its services for the cause of

business community. He said that the business community is backbone of the economy and will be facilitated for sustainable economic growth of the country. APBF President Syed Maaz Mahmood said that the business community is backbone of the economy and is ready to supplement all efforts of the government aimed at economic revival of the country but the government will have to take the business community on

board while formulating the trade and industry related policies. Office bearers of the APBF expressed the hoped that the Governor Punjab will play an active role and will act as a bridge between the business community and the government. They said that it would also promote the idea of public-private partnership that is a key to success. They said that the inclusive policies should be formed in consultation with

the stakeholders that will help achieve the economic goals. The governor agreed with the proposal of the APBF office-bearers that a Charter of Economy should be signed in the larger interest of the country. They said that the taxpayers should be given respect and honor as they are backbone of the economy and are playing a key role to run the economic affairs of the country.



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TENDER NOTICE ADVERTISEMENT NO.27/2023

A. Offers are invited from manufacturers / suppliers for supply of the following:-

Sr. No.	Tender Enquiry No.	Description	Qty. (Nos.)	Opening Date
International Tenders				
1.	SN-4504/23	Pre-Fabricated Joints	31	14 Jul.23
2.	SN-4508/23	Check/Relief Valves	14	13 Jul.23
3.	SN-4509/23	Pressure Control Valves	04	13 Jul.23
4.	SN-4510/23	Moisture Analyzer	01	14 Jul.23
5.	SND-2406/23	Underground Detectable Tape	2,000,000 Mtrs.	25 Jul.23
6.	SND-2407/23	Plug Valves	70	18 Jul.23
7.	SND-2408/23	Welding Electrodes	15,000 Kgs.	19 Jul.23
8.	SND-2409/23	Capable Pressure Gauge	500	20 Jul.23
Local Tenders				
1.	LEP-025/23	Heavy Duty Angle Grinders / Welding Electrode Holder, Current Carrying Capacity 400 to 600 AMP	150 100	04 Jul.23
2.	LET-025/23	Mechanical Pipe Cold Cutter	04	05 Jul.23
3.	LET-037/23	1.Fire Extinguishers-DPC 12 Kgs. 2.Fire Extinguishers-AFFF 9 Ltrs. 3.Fire Extinguishers-CO2 30 Kgs. 4.Fire Extinguishers-CO2 5 Kgs. 5.Fire Extinguishers-DPC 5 Kg. 6.Fire Extinguishers-DPC 1 Kg.	40 13 15 40 06 73	11 Jul.23
4.	LET-038/23	Safety Equipment	17 Items	11 Jul.23
5.	LET-039/23	1.Safety Shoes 2.Safety Gum Shoes	650 Pairs 90 Pairs	12 Jul.23
6.	LET-040/23	Coverall/Dangaree	1,300	12 Jul.23
7.	FST/TE/029/2023	Electrical Material	---	27 Jun.23

Tender Documents for Tender Enquiry No. FST/TE/029/2023 can be obtained from Procurement Department, SNGPL's Office, Sargodha Road, Faisalabad. The tenders will close at 1530 hours and will be opened in public at 1600 hours, on the dates mentioned against each Tender at Gas House, 1st Floor, 21-Kashmir Road Lahore except Tender Enquiry No. FST/TE/029/2023 which will be opened in public at 1530 hours, on the date mentioned above at Procurement Department, SNGPL's Office, Sargodha Road, Faisalabad. Tender documents can be purchased, upto a day before opening date of each tender, from 1100 hours to 1230 hours on any working day. Local manufacturers/suppliers desirous of quoting for above tenders are required to provide a copy of valid Sales Tax registration, Income Tax, and latest Professional Tax Certificates along with their request for purchase of tender documents. For further information in International Tenders please contact Mr. Shahzad Rizwan Shamsi, at telephone # 042-99201449 and Syed Muhammad Haider Abbas for Local Tenders at telephone # 042-99085026. Tender fee is Rs.2,500/- (non refundable) each in shape of Pay order/ Demand Draft in favor of SNGPL. Amount of Bid Security is 2% (excluding GST) of estimated value as mentioned in the tender documents. Tender Notice is also available at www.ppra.org.pk & www.sngpl.com.pk

EXTENSIONS

B. The closing dates of following tender enquiries have been extended:

Tender Enquiry No.	Description	Extended Closing Date
SN-4490/23	Office Meter Run	12 Jul.23
SND-2393/23	Welding Plant	12 Jul.23
LED-044/23	SLA for Application Load Balancer	12 Jul.23
LED-050/23	1.Digital AC/DC Clamp on Meter 2.Portable Generator	04 Jul.23
LEP-014/23	Misc. Testing Tools	06 Jul.23
LEP-015/23	Workshop Machinery Repair Tools	06 Jul.23
LEP-016/23	Tyre Tubeless with Flap	06 Jul.23
LET-006/23	CCTV System with Display LED's Including Installation and Commissioning on Turn Key Basis	03 Jul.23

SAVE GAS - SAVE CASH

PID (L) NO. 3567

National Days and Armed Forces Days

JUNE

June 02/Italy
National/ Independence Day
June 04/Finland
Armed Forces Day
May 06/UAE
June 06/Sweden
National Day
June 10/Portugal
Portugal Day (National Day)
June 10/Jordan
Arab Revolution & Army Day
June 11/United Kingdom
Birth Day of Her Majesty The Queen Elizabeth
June 12/Philippines
Independence Day
June 12/Russian Federation
Day of Sovereignty of the Russian
June 13/Zambia
Armed Forces day
June 17/Iceland
National Day
June 18/Seychells
National Day
June 25/Croatia
National Day
June 25/Mozambique
National Day
June 26/Azerbaijan
Army Day

Hotels & Restaurants



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



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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



Enquiry

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



Hospitals

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



Departments

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

PIDE's 2nd regional 2-day conference on June 13-14

This remarkable two-day event will bring together over 400 participants from across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including renowned national experts, policymakers, development practitioners, entrepreneurs, students, and scholars

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Regional Conference on "Unleashing the Economic Potential of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa" to Take Place in Malakand The Pakistan Society of Development Economists (PSDE), in collaboration with the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) and the University of Malakand (UoM), is thrilled to announce the highly anticipated second Regional Conference. The conference, centered around the theme "Unleashing the Economic Potential of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa," will take place on June 13-14,

2023, at the prestigious University of Malakand. This remarkable two-day event will bring together over 400 participants from across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including renowned national experts, policymakers, development practitioners, entrepreneurs, students, and scholars. The Conference aims to provide a platform for vibrant discussions and insightful debates on key economic and social issues, contributing to the development and progress of the region. Under the overarching theme, the Conference will feature ten sub-themes, covering critical dimensions that shape the economic landscape of Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa. Topics such as sustainable development, entrepreneurship, innovation, infrastructure, human capital, and regional connectivity will be explored in-depth by esteemed speakers and panelists. One of the highlights of this year's Conference is the inclusive and diverse participation from universities across Pakistan. Vice-Chancellors, faculty members, and students from 20 provincial and federal universities will join hands with PSDE, PIDE, and UoM in a collective effort to foster a culture of nation-building and inclusive economic growth.

"We are excited to host this remarkable event that brings to-

gether the best minds in the field of development economics," said Spokesperson PIDE. "The Conference is not only an opportunity for robust discussions and knowledge-sharing, but it also serves as a catalyst for creating actionable solutions to the economic challenges Khyber Pakhtunkhwa faces. We are confident that the outcomes of this Conference will have a lasting impact on the region's economic development." he added With the physical presence of 400 participants each day, the Conference promises to create a vibrant atmosphere for networking and collaboration. Moreover, the event will be accessible

worldwide through online streaming and social media platforms, allowing thousands of individuals to participate remotely and benefit from the invaluable insights shared during the sessions. The choice of Malakand as the venue for this year's Conference is a testament to the commitment of PSDE, PIDE, and UoM to promote inclusivity and equal representation across regions. By bringing such a prestigious event to Malakand, the organizers aim to empower the local community and highlight the immense potential for economic growth in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

No respite for the multitude in budget

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In Pakistan, it has become commonplace for democratic governments to unveil populist budgets during election years, driven by the desire to secure victory in the polls. These budgets are crafted to lure voters through a range of incentives, including subsidies, increased spending on development programmes, a raise in salaries and prioritisation of glitzy schemes. The aim is to appease various interest groups such as officers, industrialists and the select few with the expectation of gaining their support at the ballots. However, these budgetary measures often exert additional strain on the nation's already fragile economy, potentially resulting in inflation and an accumulation of debt. Despite the associated risks, governments continue announcing such politically-motivated budgets in pursuit of widespread support, a private television channel reported. Pakistan's economic situation is deeply concerning which is evident by a 3% contraction in the growth sector and a meagre 0.3% growth in GDP. Moreover, the government is grappling with soaring debts, necessitating a massive inflow of \$24 billion to fulfill its external loan obligations. Astonishingly, despite the inefficiency and lack of productivity in the public sector, the cash-strapped federal government has chosen to increase salaries by up to 35%.

NDMA urges public to stay informed about BIPARJOY

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Sunday urged the general public to stay informed and follow the official updates and warnings issued by relevant authorities to protect themselves and their properties from the possible impacts of Tropical Cyclone BIPARJOY. In an advisory issued by the spokesperson for NDMA said according to the latest information gathered through monitoring of International forecasting models, Tropical Cyclone BIPARJOY, which was currently a Very Severe Cyclonic Storm (VSCS) would likely to intensify into an Extreme Severe Cyclonic Storm (ESCS) in next 24 hours. "It is located at 840 km south of Karachi and moving north-northeastward with winds of 130-140 km/h and gusts of 150 km/h. PMD reported that it is likely to follow one of three tracks and impact coastal areas of Pakistan," it said. The potential impacts included heavy rains, thunderstorms and winds in south and southeast Sindh (Karachi, Thatta, Sujawal, Badin, Tharparkar & Mirpurkhas) from evening of 13 June onwards.—APP

German Embassy hosts Annual Alumni gathering in Islamabad

A delightful dinner brought the evening to a close, leaving the attendees with fond memories of a memorable gathering

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The German Embassy in Islamabad hosted its annual Alumni gathering, bringing together a diverse group of scholars and fellows who have studied and conducted research in Germany. The event, attended by a large number of Alumni from prestigious programs such as the German Academic Exchange service DAAD, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation AvH, and the CrossCulture Program CCP, provided a platform for them to reconnect and

share their experiences. Ms. Dorota Berezicki, Head of Communications and Cultural Affairs, set the stage with welcome remarks. His Excellency Alfred Grannas, the German Ambassador to Pakistan, took the opportunity to acknowledge the significant contributions of the alumni in their respective fields. Ambassador Grannas emphasized, "I hold in high regard the friendships that our alumni have cultivated with Germany and its research landscape. It is truly gratifying to witness the mutual benefits that arise from these connections."

The highlight of the gathering was a thought-provoking panel discussion on Food Security in Pakistan, moderated by Dr. Abdul Wakeel. Esteemed panelists including Prof. Samina Mehnaz, Dr. Tahir Usman, Prof. M. Saqib, Dr. Nayer Iqbal, and Dr. Faisal Cheema engaged in an open and constructive dialogue, sharing insights and proposing strategies to address this pressing issue. To honour the valuable contributions of the alumni, Ambassador Grannas presented certificates of recognition to each of them, acknowledging their achievements and dedication. Adding an

enchanting cultural touch to the evening, "The Kabul Trio," an all-female musical band from Afghanistan, captivated the audience with their mesmerizing melodies. The band's performances were met with resounding applause and cheers, showcasing the power of music in fostering cross-cultural connections. The event concluded with a meet-and-greet session, allowing the alumni to reconnect and network with one another, forging new connections and renewing old friendships. A delightful dinner brought the evening to a close, leaving the attendees with fond memories of a memorable gathering.

Nine outlaws arrested; drugs and weapons with ammunition recovered

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad capital police apprehended seven outlaws from different areas of the city and recovered drugs and weapons with ammunition from their possession, a police public relations officer said. He said that, following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police officer (ICCPO) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad capital police has intensified crackdown against the criminal elements in order to eliminate the crime from the city. Following these directives, the Karachi Company police team arrested an accused namely Shan Masih and recovered 520 gram heroin from his possession. Likewise, the Koral police team arrested two accused namely Saim Ali and Muhammad Waseem involved in illegally selling petrol. The Sihala police team arrested an accused namely Abdul Rehman involved in selling illegal petrol. Moreover, the Humak police team arrested an accused namely Allah Baksh involved in illegally gas refilling. The Khanna police team arrested an accused namely Faraz Ahmed and recovered one 30 bore pistol with ammunition from his possession. During the ongoing crackdown against absconders and proclaimed offenders, the Islamabad capital police teams arrested three absconders from various areas of the city. Cases have been registered against the nabbed accused and further investigation is underway. CPO/DIG Operations Islamabad Syed Shehzad Nadeem Bukhari directed all senior officials for effective crackdown against the accused involved in drug peddling and possessing illegal weapons and said that the safety of the lives and property of the citizens is our prime responsibility.—DNA

Victim student family awaits justice

ISLAMABAD: In Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), justice continues to elude the family of a 12th-class student, Tufail Mattoo, for the last thirteen years. According to Kashmir media service, Tufail Mattoo was martyred on this day in 2010 after being hit by a tear-gas shell fired from very close range by Indian police near Ghani Memorial Stadium in Srinagar when he was returning home from tuition. His killing had triggered massive anti-India demonstrations in the territory and over 125 peaceful protesters were martyred by Indian troops, paramilitary and police personnel in just a few months in 2010. Tufail Mattoo's name is a synonym for the bloody summer of 2010 in IIOJK. Despite the passage of more than a decade, the family of the martyred student continues to await justice and his killers are still roaming scot-free while the blood-bath is going on unabated in the occupied territory. Srinagar-based political experts and analysts say that whether it is the killing of student Tufail Mattoo or other human rights violations by the Indian troops, India has never been serious to probe any crime in IIOJK and instead of punishing its troops, it is rewarding them for killing innocent people in the territory. They say that the killer Indian troops are enjoying impunity under the draconian laws in IIOJK but the Kashmiris will never forget the hot blood of their young martyrs and will continue their just struggle for securing their inalienable right to self-determination till complete success. Meanwhile, the All Parties Hurriyat Conference leaders and people on social media have paid rich tributes to Tufail Mattoo on his 13th martyrdom anniversary and all the martyrs of 2010 mass uprising.—APP

03 days sports event begins at Police Lines HQ

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a bid to foster healthy activities among Islamabad capital police officers and officials, the Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP), Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, kick-started a three-day games initiative at the Police Lines Headquarters, a police public relations officer said. He said that, the event witnessed an exhilarating football match between Islamabad Capital Police and the National Highway Authority, as well as a thrilling volleyball match between Islamabad capital police Security Division and Logistics Division. Islamabad Capital Police in the football match while the Logistics division was declared victorious in the

volleyball match. Following the directions of ICCPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad capital police has initiated this sporting extravaganza to motivate the police personnel and cultivate a culture of physical and mental well-being alongside their law and order responsibilities. By organizing such activities, the Islamabad capital police aims to engage its officials in healthy pursuits while developing their overall fitness and enhancing their job performance. Speaking about the importance of the games, the Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP), Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, highlighted the significance of encouraging the police personnel to adopt healthy activities and nurture their physical and mental development.



ISLAMABAD: Youngsters are taking interest in different traditional monuments of Pakistan's Culture, at Lok Versa Museum as the museum consists of several buildings as well as an outdoor museum which can accommodate up to 3000 visitors.—Online

Pakistani students of dual diploma program take online exams

The Sino-Pak joint education programmes currently operate across Pakistan with 21 partners, including TEVTA Punjab, TEVTA Sindh, the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, and the Karakoram International University, Gilgit

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The groundbreaking Sino-Pak joint diploma programmes, a new milestone in China-Pakistan education sector collaboration, saw its students taking their first online exams from affiliated Chinese colleges on June 10. Twenty-three students from the Govt. College of Technology, Printing and Graphic Arts, Lahore are pursuing a 3-year Sino-Pak dual diploma in Software Technology. They took their first-year annual exams from the Shenzhen Institute of IT. According to Gwadar Pro, simultaneously, 25 students from the Govt. College of Technology, Taxila, currently enrolled in a 3-year Diploma of Associate Engi-

neering (DAE) in Advanced Construction Technology, had their first exams from Guangdong Construction Polytechnic Institute. The historic online exams mark the completion of the first year of the 3-year programs, initiated in 2022 in partnership with TANG Int'l Education Group, Zalmi Foundation, TEVTA Punjab, and the Punjab Board of Technical Education. The Chinese colleges provided online instruction, with examinations being conducted through a patented Internet-based digital platform. Chinese teachers will oversee the grading process, which extends until June 20. The program's structure allows students to spend the initial two years at Pakistani colleges before completing a final year of

study at the Chinese partner colleges, with the costs for tuition, books, accommodation, and food covered by the Chinese institutions in the third year. Graduates of these programs will be equipped with modern education, globally-recognized higher diploma certificates, and an understanding of the Chinese language and culture, enhancing their employability, particularly among Chinese companies operating in Pakistan and the wider region. The Sino-Pak joint education programmes currently operate across Pakistan with 21 partners, including TEVTA Punjab, TEVTA Sindh, the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, and the Karakoram International University, Gilgit.

Pakistan Cricket Board

RADIO BROADCASTING (FM) RIGHTS FOR PCB EVENTS 2023-24

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) invites bids from interested parties who wish to acquire Radio Broadcasting (FM) Rights (Pakistan region only) in respect of various series and tournaments to be organized by the PCB during the period from June 2023 to June 2024.

All relevant details are contained in the Bid Document, which may be obtained from the undersigned on working days from 9 am to 5pm Pakistan Standard Time ("PST") on or before 23rd June, 2023

Queries may be addressed in writing to the below-mentioned email address. Information obtained from any other source shall not be deemed as official.

Technical and Financial Proposals should be submitted in the manner set forth in the Bid Document so as to reach the above address by or before 11:00 am PST on 26th June 2023. Technical Proposals shall be opened at 11:30 am on 26th June 2023 and Financial Proposals of only technically qualified bidders shall be opened. Financial Proposals of technically disqualified bidders shall be returned unopened.

Mr. Ahmad Raza
Manager Fan Activation
Pakistan Cricket Board
Gaddafi Stadium, Ferozepur Road
Lahore, Pakistan.
Tel: +92 42 3571231 to 34
Fax: +92 42 35711860

E-mail: bidding.commercial@pcb.com.pk
PCB reserves the right in its discretion to cancel or amend the entire bidding process at any stage and to reject any or all bids prior to accepting the same. PID L 3551



Briefs

China on world radar with 1st 5G tourist ship

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Since 2023, China continues to stay on world radar with breakthrough achievements and new global sensation attracting international attention. The world's first large cruise ship with 5G technology, known as Adora Magic City undocked on June 6. With the showcasing of it, China has become the fifth country able to build large cruise ships after Germany, France, Italy and Finland. It is substantial evidence of Chinese technology, compatibility and maneuverability, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Sunday. Cruise ship is the world's most complex single electromechanical vessel with more than 25 million parts, five times the number of individual parts used in China's first domestic aircraft the C919 and 13 times the number used in the fusing bullet train series. Having embodied China's strength in self-innovation, China's first home-grown tourist vessel shows China's determination to open further to the world-differently from the US which has pugnaciously pulled out all stops to hamper global supply chains by grouping its allies.

As country's cruise ship industry recovers from the pandemic, the addition of a domestically built giant cruise ship will promote the sector's growth and homegrown fleet and international cruise fleet will grow together and evolve on differentiated paths to cater to varying segment of consumer demand.

Seven gamblers held, bet money recovered

RAWALPINDI: Police have arrested seven gamblers and recovered stake Rs 46,750, 07 mobile phones from their possession during crackdown here on Sunday. According to police spokesman, Taxila police conducted a raid and held gamblers who were identified as Umeer, Tariq, Sarfraz, Javed, Zaheer, Khalid and Muhammad Amir. Police have registered separate cases against all of them and further investigation was in progress. SP Pothohar Muhammad Waqas Khan commended police team, he said that gambling is the root of other evils, the accused involved in such crimes cannot escape from the grip of the law, strict action against gamblers will be continued.—APP

New global milestone for PIPS

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) has been recognized as a center of excellence in Parliamentary Research amongst global mapping of research services around the world by the United Kingdom (UK) Parliament.

According to the latest issue of the Parliamentarian, the journal of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the UK Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology undertook a year analysis to identify 181 potential parliamentary research mechanisms and compare them for the last five years' standards, services and performance of these institutes across 125 countries.

The Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) has been recognized as the Top Tier of this global mapping of reputed worldwide institutions providing evidence-based policy synthesis, analysis and scrutiny as per the international standards to the parliamentarians. Dr Vicky Wardat from the University of St Andrews in Scotland and Dr Mark Monaghan from the University of Loughborough University in England, undertook a detailed comparative analysis of purpose, structure and performance in the last five years (2018-2023) for 181 institutes to shortlist top 41 parliamentary institutes worldwide placed in three tiers.—APP

Strict measures vital for environmental improvement

CDA Member Inspection Dr. Roomana Gul Kakar emphasized on the individual contribution by the citizens using less, reusing and recycling the resources

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Speakers urge government bodies to immediately take strict measures and engage citizens for improving environmental conditions. Combatting plastic pollution, solid waste management and water conservation shall be on the top priority. The incremental measures have failed to deliver results while the law enforcing agencies seem toothless as the legislations refrain from strict penalties. There are many examples to learn from the best practices available globally. A combo of activities including a seminar, planting of saplings, cleanup of the neighbourhood, art exhibition, speech and essay writing competitions was organized by the Women Welfare and Development Centre (WWDC G-7/2) of the Ministry of Human Rights, ICLC and Devcom-Pakistan on Sunday. Parliamentary Secretary MNA Naz Baloch was the chief guest. Other guests of honour included Capital Development Authority (CDA) Member Inspection Dr. Roomana Gul Kakar, Devcom-Pakistan Executive Director Munir Ahmed, Rural Development Foundation President Brig (Retd) Muhammad Aslam Khan, CDA Director Environment Asif Majeed, CDA Awaz CDS Chief Executive Zia ur Rehman, WWDC Director



Ismat Afridi, ICLC founding secretary Sibtain Raza Lodhi, development expert Jamil Bhatti, and Forum for Human Development and Prosperity (FHDP) Director Tahira Naimat. Parliamentary Secretary MNA Naz Baloch students have displayed their passion for the environment in their art, essays and speeches. This is the essence of the zeal and zest for environmental improvement that the government departments and organizations are striving hard for.

The experts and civil society shall keep the pace of public awareness while they may suggest improvement in the legislation governing the environmental conservation and management. CDA Member Inspection Dr. Roomana Gul Kakar emphasized on the individual contribution by the citizens using less, reusing and recycling the resources. The effort to combat plastic pollution begins at home that mainly comes from the single-use plastics such as disposables and light-weight polythene

bags used one-time. She urged the citizens to take care of their surroundings and report misuse of the garbage dumping in the open, burning of the waste, and chopping of trees. Development strategist and environmentalist Munir Ahmed said mainly the burden of environmental degradation is on the lame policies for the parliamentarians and bureaucracy shall work to improve the legislation including strict punitive measures. This is unfortunate that authorities

remain blindfolded on the havoc being played by the mafias. In the absence of strict legislation and lack of implementation of existing laws have resulted in irreparable loss. The city development authorities, district management, environmental protection agencies and relevant tribunal have key roles in the environmental protection and conservation of natural resources. But, unfortunately their work has not been to the mark. Other countries have efficient systems, legislations and strict penalties to combat environmental degradation. These best practices can help us too.

Brig. (ret) Muhammad Aslam said our women, children, marginalized and rural communities are more vulnerable. We lack resources to outreach to them. The big corporations shall come up to fund the grassroot interventions and capacity building of the communities to take measures to protect themselves and the natural resources around them. Director WWDC Ismat Afridi said their Women Welfare and Development Centre keeps on striving for their students' interaction with the experts to seek knowledge and best practices to adapt the environmental changes around themselves, and to be economically empowered to face the world. Some of the girls and women have launched their own startups after getting vocational training from the Centre.

BRI becomes an important engine of development in African continent

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Built and Road Initiative (BRI) has entered into its tenth year and has become an important engine of development and regional connectivity around the world especially in African continent. More than 150 countries have joined the BRI which is good omen for immense socio-economic integration, infrastructure development and regional connectivity, according to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Sunday.

It seems that two different forces are competing in today's African continent. China represents spirits of cooperation, coordination and collaboration whereas, the West stands for conflict, contradiction and conspiracy. According to Chinese official figures, China has been Africa's largest trading partner for 13 consecutive years since 2009, and the trade volume between China and Africa exceeded \$260 billion in 2022.

It seems that the BRI has positive economic implications for developing countries of the African Continent. Moreover, a total of 52 African countries and the African Union Commission have signed BRI cooperation documents with China. Despite false, fake and fictional western propaganda, BRI is now carrying out numerous mega projects of infrastructural development.

Death anniversary of Santosh Kumar observed

ISLAMABAD: The 41th death anniversary of actor Syed Musa Raza, popularly known as Santosh Kumar was observed on Sunday. Born on December 25, 1925 in Lahore he was active in Pakistani cinema during the 1950s and '60s and is considered to be the first romantic hero of Pakistan. His first film was 'Ahensa' made in 1947 in India and his first film in Pakistan was 'Beli'. Santosh Kumar also starred in the first ever silver jubilee Urdu film 'Dou Aansu' in 1950. He acted in a total of 92 films and also won three Nigar Awards for Best Actor.—APP

GPA plans 20 MW for Gwadar Port, both free Zones

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Gwadar Port Authority (GPA) has finalized plan to supply 20 MW to energize Gwadar Port, Gwadar Free Zone South and Gwadar Free Zone North. Around Rs 727.738 million has been earmarked under public sector development program (PSDP) in Federal Budget 2023-24 presented by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar on June 09. Quetta Electric Supply Company (QUESCO) has already okayed administrative and structural procedures to make sure power supply to all three entities, according to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Saturday. COPHC official told Gwadar Pro that COPHC has hired a consultant for designing of transmission line infrastructure. "As soon as the layout is finalized, electricity network, to be laid down within the premises of Gwadar Port, will be

connected to Main Gwadar Grid Station." In addition, he said GPA in collaboration with Quesco set in motion two packages of transmission lines. "One package includes around 12 kilometers transmission through Energy corridor (service road) along East-bay Expressway to outside the boundary of Gwadar Port. Second Package include around 350 meters transmission line from Gwadar Grid Station to Gwadar Free Zone North," he added. "It is highly likely that electricity tariff will vary between Rs 35 to Rs 45 for industrial purpose as per normal and peak hours with uninterrupted manner free from outage like 24 hours," he disclosed. The move will allow Gwadar Port and Gwadar Free Zones to liberate themselves from expensive electricity being produced by installed 8.5 MW diesel-powered generator. From 2015 to 2023, Gwadar port is using diesel-generator apparatus for electricity

purpose on bulky cost that has been taking a heavy toll on financial bill. GPA official said that 20 MW power supply will promise impetus to tenacious economic activities and acceleration of industrialization in Gwadar, Gwadar Port and Gwadar Free Zones. Gwadar port has continued to struggle to meet high cost of diesel generated electricity since 2015. Previously, Gwadar Port operator had to come up with a proposal to install a 50 MW Independent Power Producer (IPP)'s plant in collaboration with Chinese power producers. For long, Chinese companies are over-stressed by overpriced power production by 8.5 MW generators in Gwadar Free Zone against the backdrop of non-availability of power supply from government. After petrol prices soared, the cost of electricity shot up, putting extreme burden on corporate finance. "Gwadar Port used to

purchase diesel for generator at a cost of Rs. 20.3 million monthly. Chinese companies in Gwadar Free Zone were charged Rs. 49 per unit accordingly, which was very high. With dollar fluctuation and rising petrol price, the monthly purchase cost has soared to Rs. 40 million currently," a COPHC official said. COPHC official said "we cannot develop until enough electricity is available. At COPHC, we produce electricity by generators which is very expensive." Chinese investors are keen to shift their industries from China to Pakistan. Areas of investment are very diverse and include but not limited to refinery, assembly, petrochemical, and textile. Gwadar Port is poised to reshape the economic landscape of Pakistan in addition to opening multiple avenues for foreign direct investment. In this regard, Gwadar holds pivotal importance.

Rs. 5 billion earmarked for new Gwadar Int'l Airport

The NGIA will play a pivotal role in establishing Gwadar's strategic importance, meeting the forecasted increase in aviation activity

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's new Federal budget 2023-24 has allocated about Rs. 5 billion in the total cost of New Gwadar International Airport (NGIA). With the allocation, NGIA's total cost will be increased from Rs. 55.4 billion to Rs 60.208 billion. Ministry of planning has already approved the Rs. 5 billion in the meeting of Central Development Working Committee (CDWP), high-powered government decision-making body, on June 02 in Islamabad, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Saturday. The government had originally sanctioned the project's construction at a cost of PKR 7.5 billion in 2010. The first revision of PKR 22.5 billion was approved in 2015. Second revision occurred with revised PC-1 at a cost to Rs 51.298 billion in December 2021. Later Rs 55.4 billion was greenlighted October 12, 2020. The NGIA will play a pivotal role in establishing Gwadar's strategic importance, meeting the forecasted increase in aviation activity, and supporting the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. In relation to the New Gwadar International Airport (NGIA) project, the Planning Minister emphasized the importance of providing ample job opportunities to the local population of Gwadar. Furthermore, he emphasized that special attention should be given to prioritizing and expediting the completion of critical components of the Gwadar Airport project.—DNA

Pakistani handicrafts shine at int'l cultural industries fair

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The dazzle of Made-in-Pakistan handicrafts - including wood carving, bronze carving, carpets - won the hearts of visitors by its beautiful and artsy look and the deeply rooted tradition behind it at the 19th China (Shenzhen) International Cultural Industries Fair (ICIF) this week. Kicked off in Shenzhen, Guangdong, China on June 7, the 5-day national-level fair is expected to inject new impetus into the development of the country's cultural industry. China Economic Net (CEN) reported Saturday. Made-in-Pakistan handicrafts are internationally popular because of their striking

appearance, alluring hues and magnetizing textures. In addition, these unique works of craft add to Pakistan's name worldwide.

A visitor told the reporter that the handicraft industry of a country deeply reflects its culture. "Like other forms of arts, Pakistani handicrafts are the expression of the thoughts and feelings of artisans influenced by their environment, culture and social patterns," he said, adding that he and his friends are quite into such exotic handicrafts.

Since its founding in 2004, the cultural fair has seen a continuous expansion in its exhibition scale, visitor number and internationalization. It has become an important platform to promote the development and opening up of China's cultural industries.

Interior minister inaugurates e-passport facility in Islamabad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Rana Sanaulah on Saturday inaugurated Passport Processing Counter for inland online passport renewal facility and e-passport facility for the residents of the federal capital. Speaking on the occasion, he said the step would significantly reduce the risks of passport fraud and identity theft, which will strengthen international confidence in the country's passport system. Director General I&P Yawar Hussain and Chairman NADRA Tariq Malik were also present on the occasion. The minister said the e-passport facility included the advanced security features such as biometric data, digital sig-

nature, and encryption. He said under this facility, people would be able to renew their passports online without going to passport offices across Pakistan. The minister said the introduction of e-passports, an online passport renewal system within the country and passport processing counters would empower our citizens, streamline their travel and contribute to the overall development and prosperity of our nation. Efforts were being made to strengthen partnerships and cooperation with other countries to enhance facilitation, he added. Expressing his joy and pride, the interior minister highlighted the significance of this milestone in Pakistan's technological advancement public

service delivery. He said the initiative includes the establishment of 30 passport processing counters in NADRA offices located in areas where dedicated passport offices are not available besides the online renewal of passports within the country and the launch of the e-passport facility in Islamabad. Rana Sanaulah said that the accomplishment was the result of a collaborative effort between the DGI&P and NADRA and commended Yawar Hussain, Tariq Malik, and their dedicated teams for their hard work. Emphasizing the importance of these measures, the minister that they aim to enhance passport security and provide convenience to citizens. "



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Trump's indictment and Joe Biden

It is a measure of the topsy-turvy world of US politics that last week's first-ever federal indictment of a former president, Donald Trump, on criminal charges may help him win the Republican party's nomination in the 2024 race for the White House.

True to form, Trump's initial reaction to the US justice department's charges was to play the victim and proclaim his innocence on social media. The multimillionaire's next move was to appeal for cash donations from his adoring, ever-credulous Make America Great Again fanbase.

The subdued and awkward reaction to the charges of Trump's rivals for the nomination suggests they understand this political reality. Ron DeSantis, the Florida governor, is closest to Trump in the polls – yet he trails by about 30 points. He declined to defend the former president. But he did not criticise him either, merely repeating a familiar complaint about supposed “weaponisation of federal law enforcement” by Joe Biden's administration. DeSantis evidently believes kicking Trump at this point would alienate many party voters. True to form, Trump's initial reaction to the US justice department's charges was to play the victim. Other Republican hopefuls, such as Nikki Haley, former governor of South Carolina, and Mike Pence, the ultra-loyal vice-president who turned on Trump after the failed Capitol Hill coup, may be more inclined to confront their old boss. And it's early days. Perhaps they will benefit from Trump's travails. But at present, their poll ratings, and those of others such as Senator Tim Scott, are in single figures. Amazingly, Trump remains his party's clear favourite – although the impact of the case on his popularity among US voters in general could be much more negative. It's plain the federal indictments, like previous felony charges filed in New York state over alleged hush money payments to a porn star, will be used by Trump to reinforce his claims of political persecution. All such huffing and puffing aside, it remains entirely possible that Trump's proliferating legal problems will end his political career – and land him in jail. Justice department special counsel Jack Smith has accused him on 37 counts of criminal wrongdoing, including jeopardising national security by his retention of classified documents, false testimony and obstruction of justice. Boxes of secret papers relating to nuclear programmes, Iran, and allies' defence plans were found in Trump's bathroom, Smith revealed. Biden already faces numerous obstacles to his hopes of a second term, including concerns about his advanced age, relatively low approval ratings, and a vulnerable post-pandemic economy. He, too, is under investigation for his handling of classified documents. Now the president will also have to fend off claims he is conducting a politicised legal vendetta and abusing his power to eliminate his chief rival. The criminal indictment of Trump is welcome, fully justified by the facts, and long overdue. But the coming courtroom showdown will also put Biden – and a divided America – on trial.

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Europe is Europe, not the US

With her idea of “de-risking” now becoming the official trademark of the West's China policy, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen is now pushing for that to be translated into a tougher European policy on China.

As her leadership prepares the European Union member nations for what would be an early-stage road map for her “de-risking” crusade, however, representatives from several major EU members have reportedly expressed worries about Brussels “mimicking” Washington's “gung ho” approach. The EU chief may be confident she can finally bring all member countries on board as she did previously in maneuvering a Europe-wide reassessment of China policies, but abusive politicization does no good to European interests. It would be unfair to assume Von der Leyen's commission has no concerns about pragmatic European interests when it comes to relations with China, or that it has not tried to distance itself to a degree from Washington's all-out assault on China. Or it would not have come up with the proposal of “de-risking” instead of simply joining Washington's “decoupling” drive. But despite sounding less aggressive than Washington's initial concept of “decoupling”, the Von der Leyen-led “de-risking” is quite similar in that it attempts to “reduce dependencies” on China via trade and investment controls. And, as many have observed, she is increasingly focusing EU attention on China as a “systemic rival”, although officially it also identifies China as a “partner for cooperation and negotiation” and “an economic competitor”. In official EU narratives, cooperation with China is increasingly being reduced to such realms as climate change, just like in those of Washington.

No wonder there are reports that diplomats from France, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands have displayed reservations about Von der Leyen's road map last week. They are obviously not ready for the dramatic changes proposed. Echoing French President Emmanuel Macron's recent remarks on European autonomy and the need to avoid the scenario of Europe becoming a US pawn, the diplomats reminded Brussels that Europe is Europe, not the US. Europe's relations with China should be independent from those between the US and China. The China-EU relationship is not only a natural outcome of pragmatic mutual needs, but features long-standing mutual respect. Europe will naturally act in what it considers to be its best interests, but a clear-eyed review of EU-China relations will find the so-called risks from economic and trade ties with China have been disproportionately exaggerated. From Beijing's perspective, neither the differences on the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, nor disagreements on such topics as human rights and the Taiwan question need get in the way of China-EU cooperation. Europe should not swallow Washington's line lest it be drawn so tight that it ends up cutting off its nose and spiting its face.

Jahangir Tareen forms new party

Waheed Hussain



Jahangir Tareen is a prominent business man from South Punjab, who played a vital role in strengthening of the PTI after October 2011 public meeting at Minar-i-Pakistan Lahore, Punjab. He was bridge between then establishment and IK. He put lot of financial resources in holding hundreds of public meetings by the PTI from 2011 to 2018 elections. That is why he was always known as ATM of Imran khan and his party. Although PTI became the largest party in the NA after 2018 general elections

Istehkam-i-Pakistan (IPP) is the new Party of senior politicians who left the Pakistan Tehreek-i- Insaf (PTI) due to May 9, violent protest attacking on the military and civilian installations including monuments of Shuhadas in various parts of the country.

According to a former punjab minister over 150 former members of national assembly, provincial assemblies, former ministers and governor were part of the opening ceremony headed by former Federal Minister and close associate of Imran khan, Jahangir Khan Tareen.

Jahangir Tareen is a prominent business man from South Punjab, who played a vital role in strengthening of the PTI after October 2011 public meeting at Minar-i-Pakistan Lahore, Punjab. He was bridge between then establishment and IK. He put lot of financial resources in holding hundreds of public meetings by the PTI from 2011 to 2018 elections. That is why he was always known as ATM of Imran khan and his party.

Although PTI became the largest party in the NA after 2018 general elections result but it needed dozens of more members to form the government at center. Jahangir Khan brought independent MNAs and MPAs from Punjab to meet the magic number of 172 at center and 186 at Punjab. However, Imran and Jahangir developed differences due to principal secretary Azam Khan and some of the former PM's close associates. Later on, Jahangir Khan formed a group of MNAs and MPAs both at center and Punjab which played a vital role in removing the Usman Buzdar's government in Punjab and later removed Imran khan's government at the center. The second important person in the newly

formed Party is Aleem Khan. He was with Quid-i-Azam Muslim League during the tenure of former President of Pakistan and former Army Chief, late General Pervez Musharraf. Being a rich business man, he also funded Imran khan and his party. After 2018 elections he was an undeclared candidate for the post of Chief Minister Punjab, but Khan declined the idea and nominated Usman Buzdar as chief executive of the province. Aleem khan was appointed as cabinet minister of Buzdar's government.

On February 9, 2019, Aleem Khan was arrested by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Lahore, which was controlled by the then PM office through PM Advisor on accountability Shehzad Akber (man accused of finalizing the 190 million ponds deal and benefiting IK his wife etc). Many believed that Imran khan was involved in the arrest of Aleem Khan which damaged the relations between Chairman PTI and Aleem Khan. Establishment of Istehkam-i-Pakistan Party will definitely damage PTI both political and electoral point of view. Hundred and fifty electable will take away opportunity from the PTI to filed strong and influential candidates for the upcoming elections. Naturally this number is going to increase with the passage of time. Majority of the members of the new party belongs to Punjab which has maximum number of National Assembly seats in the country.

It is truly said that the party which wins Punjab forms governments both at center and in the province. Jahangir Khan effort is the bring maximum numbers of electable from South Punjab this new party to create a competitive situation for the next elections and government formations.

Besides, JKT, former President Asif Ali Zardari also trying to include maximum number of electable from South Punjab to lead in National Assembly and pave way for Bilawal to become next Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Pakistani electoral politics has different dynamics. The urban rural divide. In the big cities voters are educated they have access to social media and sometime party narratives influence their decision making. But still, they need prominent influential political personalities to lead them at the local level. In the rural constituencies, families, castes, money, religious scholars and personal relations play a decisive role in the elections.

The success of the Istehkam-i-Pakistan Party will depend who is actually leading the PTI in the next general elections. If Imran khan is arrested or through various cases stand disqualified by the courts and his party is led by second tier leadership, the voters's bank will be affected. As we have seen same situation with the PML (N) in 2018, when Nawaz Sharif was disqualified and put in jail during elections campaign.

The strong voices like Fayyaz ul Hassan Chohan has joined Istehkam-i-Pakistan Party who has been a strength of PTI for 15 years. He stood with the party in all difficult times. An educated politician from Rawalpindi, he has been serving people of his constituency over two decades. As a member of provincial assembly and minister launched many development projects for the uplift of the people. Leaving the PTI due to 9 May violent incidents and joining Jahangir's team will have great impact on the new party.

The importance of reputation management in the age of deception and propaganda

Imran Ghaznavi



Gone are the days when reputation management was only associated with public figures or corporate giants. With the rise of social media and the democratization of information, everyone now has a platform to express their opinions and influence public perception. However, this free flow of information has also led to a surge in misinformation, fake news, and malicious campaigns

In today's fast-paced and interconnected world, where information spreads at lightning speed, reputation management has become an essential tool for individuals, businesses, and even governments. The age of deception and propaganda presents significant challenges, making it crucial for entities to actively protect and cultivate their reputations.

Gone are the days when reputation management was only associated with public figures or corporate giants. With the rise of social media and the democratization of information, everyone now has a platform to express their opinions and influence public perception. However, this free flow of information has also led to a surge in misinformation, fake news, and malicious campaigns that can easily tarnish one's reputation. One of the key reasons why reputation management is paramount today is the potential impact on personal and professional lives. In a hyperconnected world, a single negative comment or false accusation can spread like wildfire, causing irreparable harm to an individual's reputation. Job prospects, business opportunities, and personal relationships can all be adversely affected. It is therefore vital to proactively manage and mitigate such risks. For businesses, reputation management has become even more critical. Consumers are no longer solely reliant on traditional advertising and marketing tactics to inform their purchasing decisions. They turn

to online reviews, social media discussions, and influencers for guidance. A negative online review or a viral social media post can have a lasting impact on a company's bottom line. Building and maintaining a positive reputation is vital for attracting and retaining customers, enhancing brand loyalty, and driving growth. Moreover, the rise of deception and propaganda on a broader societal level has highlighted the need for reputation management in the public sphere. Manipulative campaigns can shape public opinion, distort facts, and undermine trust in institutions. Political figures, organizations, and governments must be vigilant in countering such efforts by actively managing their reputation, dispelling misinformation, and promoting transparency. So, what can individuals and entities do to effectively manage their reputations in the age of deception and propaganda? First and foremost, it is crucial to monitor what is being said about oneself or one's organization. By staying informed and proactive, one can address issues promptly and take corrective action when necessary. Employing social listening tools, monitoring online reviews, and engaging with online communities can help identify potential risks and opportunities. Secondly, it is important to establish a strong online presence and actively manage digital assets. Building a reputable website, creating engaging content, and cultivating a positive social media presence can help shape public perception. Responding to feedback and engaging with stakeholders demonstrates transparency

and a commitment to open communication.

Thirdly, developing relationships with influencers, journalists, and industry experts can provide a shield against potential reputation attacks. Positive endorsements and media coverage from trusted sources can help counteract negative narratives and build credibility.

Furthermore, it is essential to have a crisis management plan in place. Reputation damage can occur swiftly and unexpectedly, so having a well-prepared response strategy is crucial. Identifying key spokespersons, monitoring media coverage during a crisis, and responding swiftly and honestly can help mitigate the impact on reputation.

Lastly, individuals and organizations must recognize the power of ethical behavior in maintaining a positive reputation. Upholding high ethical standards, delivering on promises, and being accountable for actions can foster trust and goodwill among stakeholders.

In conclusion, reputation management has become increasingly important in the age of deception and propaganda. With misinformation and malicious campaigns posing significant risks to individuals, businesses, and public institutions, actively managing and safeguarding one's reputation is crucial. By monitoring online conversations, maintaining a strong digital presence, cultivating relationships, and embracing ethical behavior, entities can navigate these challenges and protect their hard-earned reputation.

Briefs

PM hopeful of reaching IMF deal soon

FROM PAGE 01
Earlier, PM Shehbaz said that former prime minister was arrested on charges of "corruption and abuse of powers". In an interview with Haber Global — a Turkish TV channel — the premier said that the enhanced bilateral cooperation between Pakistan and Turkey through joint investment and ventures would prove "a win win" situation for the two countries. He highlighted that a target of bilateral trade to the tune of \$5 billion, in the next three years, between the two countries was very much achievable. The premier said that the areas of solar and hydro power energy in Pakistan possessed huge potential and the Turkish investors could avail of this opportunity.

"I want to assure as prime minister of Pakistan to do everything to facilitate Turkish investors. There is great scope between the two countries to make this wonderful journey more successful," he added. The premier opined that respective sectors of Turkey had potential in these areas of Pakistan and it could play its role.

"Our labour is more skilled and if they have Turkish investment, it will be a well combination, thus opening vistas of opportunities for joint ventures," he added.

To another query, PM Shehbaz said that the railroad network between Pakistan, Iran and Turkey could play a very important role which required improvisation. It would definitely result in reduction of the cost of transportation and making their production of goods very compatible in the global markets, he said, adding that his aim was to make this network more efficient.

'Govt making...

FROM PAGE 01
ad-hoc relief allowance for its employees in grade one to 16 and 30 percent for employees in grades 17 to 22. Reply to a question, he criticized the previous government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf for formulating weak policies. He said these policies caused significant difficulties for masses in their daily lives, leading to financial constraints for the country.

No one will cast vote...

FROM PAGE 01
"He should be ashamed to call himself a leader. This man has set this country on fire because his own children do not live here," she maintained. She heaped praise on the PML-N supremo, saying, "Nawaz Sharif never did politics of vandalism. The leader is the one who went to jail holding his daughter's hand".

"Despite the intention of breaking the PML-N, the party stood with Nawaz Sharif. But the PTI chief's own party has shrunk to today," she asserted. Speaking about the budget, Ms Nawaz praised Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, saying, "The premier presented the best budget despite the many challenges the country is facing".

PML-N all set to...

FROM PAGE 01
loans and employment opportunities in the party's narrative. In the meeting, PM Shehbaz and Ms Nawaz discussed the political situation in the country. The premier had asked the provincial presidents of the party to furnish a report regarding the election tickets in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Former Punjab chief minister Hamza Shehbaz and Suleman Shehbaz were also present on this occasion. On the other side, PML-N leader MianJaved Latif said his party will not make seat adjustments or alliances with any political party.

Addressing a press conference, Mr Latif said, "A line of demarcation needs to be drawn between a politician and a terrorist." He said that prosperity cannot come to the country by creating small groups and factions.

Ruthless Australia brush aside India in WTC Final

Australia bowled them out for 234 to secure a comprehensive 209-run victory

LONDON: It turned out to be completely one-sided on the last day of the World Test Championship final as a clinical Australian side made the most of India's largely self-produced batting capitulation to become the second team after New Zealand to lift the WTC mace. India started the day at 164/3 chasing 444, with their hopes resting on Virat Kohli and Ajinkya Rahane to extend their partnership and produce something magical. But it turned out to be yet another disappointment in a WTC final for India as Australia bowled them out for 234 to secure a comprehensive 209-run victory. Kohli and Rahane made a steady start on the fifth morning and

looked mostly untroubled before an eventful over from Boland powered Australia's march towards the WTC title. Kohli played and missed one delivery outside off and Australia ended up losing a review. But Boland, with his variations of grip, got the better of Kohli as the former India captain went after a delivery outside off but edged it to second slip where Steve Smith held on to a fine catch. The bowler then came round the wicket to Ravindra Jadeja and got him to nick to the 'keeper as India slipped to 179/5. KS Bharat too would have been a goner in the Boland over, poking at one outside off, but was saved as the ball went over the slip

cordon for a four. It was a jittery start for Bharat who was also struck on his helmet by a Cummins delivery and was beaten outside off multiple times. But he stuck around and assisted Rahane in building a partnership as India began a renewed attempt in challenging the hefty target. Rahane, meanwhile, appeared to be continuing from where he left off in the first innings as he played a couple of stylish drives past Mitchell Starc and a backfoot punch off Nathan Lyon. However, like some of the other batters before him, Rahane too threw his wicket away looking to go after a wishful delivery from Starc. Nathan Lyon ran through

the lower order quickly to bag a four-wicket haul to bring a quick end to India's agony. The foundation for the victory was set up by Travis Head's counter-attacking innings (163) and Steve Smith's dogged presence (121) as they helped their side recover from 76/3 after being asked to bat, to post 469. India's top order was a let down in their first innings but Rahane's 89 and Shardul Thakur's 51 helped them to 296. Australia, though, were well ahead with a 173-run lead, and their 270/8 declared in the second essay meant India needed to pull off a record chase to lift the title, which they were unable to

do as the WTC title evaded them for the second time. Apart from Smith and Head, Boland played a key role in Australia's victory with important strikes, while the rest of the bowlers also chipped in. Mohammed Siraj was the pick of India's bowlers but their attack largely lacked sting, another key reason for India finishing second. Brief scores: Australia 469 (Travis Head 163, Steve Smith 121; Mohammed Siraj 4-108) & 270/8 decl. (Alex Carey 66, Mitchell Starc 41; Ravindra Jadeja 3-58) beat India 296 (Ajinkya Rahane 89, Shardul Thakur 51; Pat Cummins 3-83) & 234 (Virat Kohli 49, Ajinkya Rahane 46; Nathan Lyon 4-41) by 209 runs. — Agencies

Anderson is getting better with age: Broad

LONDON: England pacer Stuart Broad believes that his fellow seamer James Anderson is still addicted to cricket at 40 and only getting better with age. The duo is likely to play a key role for England in the upcoming Ashes, which begins on June 16 at Edgbaston. Anderson is England's top wicket-taker in red-ball cricket with 685 wickets and became the oldest player to top the ICC Test rankings earlier this year. "Jimmy's incredibly competitive. That's his number one strength," Broad said on the Legends of the Ashes podcast, a 10-part series from Global launching on June 15. "He's probably the most competitive person I've seen bar Jos Buttler in any sport that he plays. But he's very driven. He's an addict to cricket, to be honest. He's an addict to training, an addict to getting better, improving all the time. — Agencies



LONDON: Victorious Australian players celebrating after winning the World Test Championship final against India. — DNA

Mauritius thump Pakistan in four-nation cup opener

SPORTS DESK

PORT LOUIS: Pakistan football team lost against Mauritius 3-0 in the opening match of the four-nation cup at the Anjalay Stadium Belle Vue Harel on Sunday. It was a disappointing start for the Men in Green as they conceded three goals within the first 25 minutes in the second half. Jeremy Robert opened the account for the hosts in the 53rd minute of the game. Ashley Nazira scored the second goal in the 63rd

minute meanwhile Pakistan's Mamoom Mosa scored an own goal in the 72nd minute of the game to extend Mauritius' lead. This was Mauritius' first international win after losing eight successive games. The former England youth team Captain Easah Suliman and Denmark-based defender Abdullah Iqbal missed the first game against Mauritius. They will join the team on June 12 according to the head coach of Pakistan's football team. Kenya and Djibouti are the other teams in the event

being held on the basis of single-league basis. The outfit, which will finish at the summit on points, will be declared the winners. Kenya are the highest-ranked side in the tournament with 102 ranking. They are followed by Mauritius with 180 ranking. Djibouti stands at 193 and Pakistan are the lowest-ranked side with 195 ranking. The current Pakistan team is dominated by diaspora players with some having good credentials. It will be a testing time for the foreign-based staff and will be

interesting to see how they perform for the country in this four-nation tournament which is a preparatory phase for the SAFF Cup where Pakistan will have to face tough India and Kuwait in their group. Pakistan will face their next game against Kenya on June 14 with their last to come up against Djibouti on June 17. Pakistan, if allowed by the state, will then move to India from Mauritius to feature in the SAFF Cup scheduled to be held in Bengaluru from June 21 to July 4.

Former coach Aikman's salary issue resolved

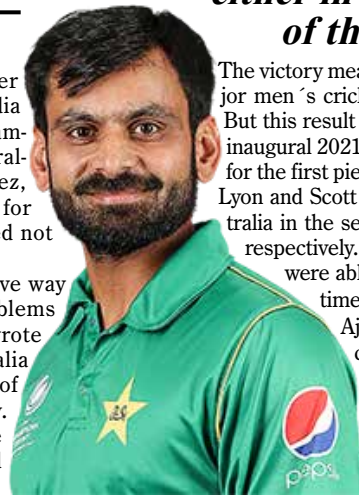
ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) issued a \$42,667 cheque in the name of former national hockey coach Siegfried Aikman as the long-awaited salary issue finally got resolved. 'The News' reported on May 31 that the dispute between the PSB, Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) and its former coach is expected to be resolved in June. "We have issued the cheque in the name of Siegfried Aikman which will be handed over to the PHF in the coming week (working days). According to our documents his pending amount with the PSB was more or less the same. We have stopped supporting all those foreign coaches which we thought did not contribute to the national teams' cause in the best possible way," a PSB official said. The Dutch national who took the Pakistan team to the Commonwealth Games without getting any favourable results has already resigned from his post due to non-payment. "Since the Ministry of Inter-provincial Coordination (IPC) is the final authority, the PSB recently forwarded a fresh request to the Ministry to clear Siegfried Aikman's pending dues as it is a liability requiring adjustment before the end of financial year (June 30)," the official told media. — DNA

Hafeez says India were not 'brave' in WTC Final

WEB DESK

LAHORE: Former Pakistani all-rounder Mohammad Hafeez has stated that India were not brave in the ICC World Test Championship (WTC) 2023 final against Australia which was played at The Oval. Hafeez, 42, believes that the problems started for India when they won the toss and decided not to start the game in a "brave" way. "Winning the toss but not taking the brave way to start with is actually caused all the problems for @BCCI #WTC2023Final," Hafeez wrote in a tweet. It must be noted that Australia defeated India by 209 runs in the final of the World Test Championship on Sunday. Chasing a target of 444 runs, India were bowled out for 234 runs in their second innings on the fifth day of the match.

It must be noted that India's last ICC trophy was in 2013 when they defeated England to win the ICC Champions Trophy. Since then, India have lost either in a semi-final or a final of the ICC tournament



The victory meant Australia had now captured the one major men's cricket title that had previously eluded them. But this result left India, defeated by New Zealand in the inaugural 2021 WTC final in Southampton, still searching for the first piece of global silverware in a decade. Nathan Lyon and Scott Boland were the chief destroyers for Australia in the second innings with four and three wickets, respectively. Indian batters got starts but none of them were able to stay at the wicket for a long period of time. Rohit Sharma (43) Virat Kohli (49) and Ajinkya Rahane (46) were the prominent contributors for India. It must be noted that India's last ICC trophy was in 2013 when they defeated England to win the ICC Champions Trophy. Since then, India have lost either in a semi-final or a final of the ICC tournament

Shadab Khan adds another feather to his cap in T20

LONDON: Pakistan all-rounder Shadab Khan, who is currently playing for Sussex in the ongoing T20 Vitality Blast, has achieved another milestone in the shortest format of cricket. At the age of 24 years and 247 days, Shadab has become the second-youngest player to complete 250 matches in T20 cricket. He achieved the milestone as he played a match against Middlesex earlier this week. In the 250 matches, the right-arm batter scored 2408 runs, including eight 50s. He also showed impressive game with ball as he took 280 wickets, including a five-wicket haul. While representing Sussex in a Vitality Blast game against Middlesex, he smashed a blistering knock of 59 runs from only 30 balls, including five sixes. He also displayed an economical bowling spell as he gave only 30 runs in his four overs. Later, he was named player of the match. — DNA

Djokovic claims record 23rd Grand Slam triumph

DNA

PARIS: Novak Djokovic created history on Sunday when he captured a record-breaking 23rd Grand Slam title with a third French Open triumph, reinforcing his case to be crowned the greatest player of all time. The 36-year-old Serb brushed off an early wobble to defeat Casper Ruud of Norway 7-6 (7/1), 6-3, 7-5 and snap the tie of 22 Slams he shared with career-long rival Rafael Nadal. Victory for the third time in Paris, after 2016 and 2021, adds to his 10 Australian Open titles, seven at Wimbledon and three at the US Open. Djokovic is the first man to win all four majors at least three times and is once again halfway to the first calendar Grand Slam since Rod Laver in 1969. Only Margaret Court and Serena Williams in women's tennis have managed to rack up 23 Grand Slam titles. Court's all-time mark of 24 will now be in his sights at Wimbledon next month. There is little sign of Djokovic slowing down. He is now the oldest French Open champion but 11 of his Slam trophies have now been won after he turned 30. On Monday, he will reclaim the world number ranking and start his 388th week in top spot. The sense of Sunday's occasion certainly attracted sports A-listers. NFL legend Tom Brady watched from the Djokovic box, football stars Kylian Mbappe and Zlatan Ibrahimovic sat side by side in the VIP area which also accommodated former world heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson, a regular this weekend.

It came at the end of a lung-busting 28-shot rally

FLORIDA: After the indictment of former US president Donald Trump in a case of keeping classified documents after leaving the Oval Office in 2021, his lawyer Alina Habba said the files were declassified and he had done nothing wrong, adding that "the accusations against the 76-year-old are politically motivated." Habba said the former president "would not take a plea deal to minimise the fallout" from the case as he seeks his Republican nomination for the 2024 election. The former president is scheduled to appear Tuesday in federal court in Miami on 37 charges, including violations of the Espionage Act, making false statements and conspiracy regarding his mishandling of classified information, in his second indictment since he left office. Earlier he was indicted regarding hush money payments he made to adult film star Stormy Daniels. He denies all the charges and also pleaded not guilty. "He would never admit guilt, because there was nothing wrong with declassifying documents," Habba told Fox News, adding that "this is completely politically motivated. It's election interference at its best." — Agencies

Nacho confirms Real Madrid stay for another season

MADRID: Real Madrid's centre-back Nacho Fernandez has announced that he is staying at the club for one more year. Despite having strong interest from Roma, Inter Milan and the MLS, the Spaniard has decided to stay in the Spanish capital till 2024, where he will wear the captain's armband. Nacho, 33, arrived in Real Madrid's youth system at just the age of 11 and made his debut as a left-back with the Los Blancos in a 6-3 away win against Valencia in 2011. He was promoted to Madrid's first team in September 2012 by Jose Mourinho. "I go hand in hand with my club & my family. There are always offers from outside, but I have decided to stay one more year. I'm very happy about it," Nacho confirmed. The 33-year-old has won 23 trophies with the Whites, including five UEFA Champions League titles and three La Liga. He has featured in 319 matches with Madrid's first team since 2010. He also scored 16 goals and provided nine assists during the process. — Agencies

SL likely Asia Cup venue after India-Pakistan row

The Pakistan Cricket Board had threatened to boycott the World Cup in India, which is due to start in October, if the BCCI refused to play Asia Cup in Pakistan a month earlier

DNA

DUBAI: Asia Cup matches involving India could be played in Sri Lanka after the country refused to visit arch-rival and official host Pakistan, a board official said on Sunday. The Asian Cricket Council (ACC) is due to make a formal announcement in the coming week after calls for a different venue for India's games in the 50-over tournament in September, a Sri Lankan official said. India and Pakistan have not

met on either side's soil in any version of the game since 2012, and only play each other in international tournaments on neutral grounds. "It is very likely that some of the matches will be in Sri Lanka," the board official said, asking not to be named. "But we have still not officially received confirmation." Sri Lanka's board had expressed willingness to host some Asia Cup matches, despite an economic crisis that forced it to default on its \$46 billion foreign debt in April last year and seeks

a bailout from the International Monetary Fund. The official said it had the capacity to conduct an international tournament, even though the island was still emerging from the economic downturn. The unprecedented economic crisis led to months of protests and the ouster of president Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who was accused of corruption and mismanagement. He fled the country and resigned in July 2022. "Even at the height of the crisis when we didn't have fuel and electricity, we host-

ed the Australian team," the official said, referring to Australia's tour taking in three T20 matches, five ODIs, and three Tests. The Pakistan Cricket Board had threatened to boycott the World Cup in India, which is due to start in October, if the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) refused to play the Asia Cup in Pakistan a month earlier. The BCCI has since been looking to work out a plan to play the six-nation tournament at a neutral venue in September. The other nations in

the Asia Cup are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal. Indian cricket board's Secretary Jay Shah had ruled out the possibility of the Indian cricket team visiting Pakistan for the 50-over Asia Cup next year, saying that they had decided to hold the tournament at a neutral venue, local media reported. "Neutral venue for the Asia Cup is not unprecedented, and we have decided that we will not travel to Pakistan," Hindustan Times quoted Shah as saying following the 91st

annual general meeting of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). Shah, who is also the president of the Asian Cricket Council, added: "It's the government that decides over the permission of our team visiting Pakistan, so we won't comment on that but for the 2023 Asia Cup, it is decided that the tournament will be held at a neutral venue." Pakistan is scheduled to host the 50-over Asia Cup in the second half of 2023, following which the World Cup will take place in India.

Briefs

18,000 pilgrims receive medical care in Madinah

RIYADH: More than 18,000 pilgrims have received medical care in Madinah since the start of the current Islamic month, the Saudi Press Agency reported on Sunday, citing figures from the Ministry of Health. Of the total, 16,101 people, of different nationalities, were treated at seasonal health centers near the Prophet's Mosque, while 2,188 were cared for at local hospitals. The medical procedures provided included cardiac catheterizations, open heart surgeries, dialyses and endoscopies, the ministry said.—DNA

China has been spying from Cuba for years: US official

DNA

WASHINGTON: China has been operating an intelligence unit in Cuba for years and upgraded it in 2019 as part of a global effort by Beijing to boost its intelligence-gathering capabilities, according to a senior US White House official.

The statement on Saturday came days after The Wall Street Journal reported that China had reached a secret deal with Cuba to establish an electronic eavesdropping facility on the island roughly 160km (100 miles) from the state of Florida in southern United States.

The WSJ reported that China planned to pay a cash-strapped Cuba billions of dollars as part of the negotiations.

The US and Cuban governments have cast strong doubt on the report.

The White House official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the WSJ's characterisation "does not comport with our understanding", but did not specify how the report was wrong nor address in detail whether there were efforts by China to build a new eavesdropping facility in Cuba.

The official said the issue predated US President Joe Biden's administration as had Beijing's efforts to strengthen its intelligence collection infrastructure worldwide.

"This is an ongoing issue and not a new development," the official said. "The PRC [People's Republic of China] conducted an upgrade of its intelligence collection facilities in Cuba in 2019. This is well-documented in the intelligence record."

Asked for comment, an official at China's embassy in Washington, DC pointed to Friday's statement by a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson who accused the US of "spreading rumors and slander" with talk of a Cuba spy station and of being "the most powerful hacker empire in the world".

Ukraine floods recede but fears over disease remain

The North Crimean Canal draws its water supply from the Kakhovka reservoir, located behind the now-destroyed dam

NEWS DESK

KYIV: The size of the flooded area in the Kherson region as a result of the Kakhovka dam breach has almost halved, Ukraine says - but experts and officials fear infectious diseases may spread in polluted waters. Water levels have dropped by 27cm (10in), the regional administration's head, Alexander Prokudin, said. But thousands of Ukrainian homes remain flooded, the interior ministry said. Tens of thousands of people have lost access to drinking water. The major dam burst on Tuesday, releasing a huge torrent of water which quickly flooded vast areas of land on both sides of the Dnipro river. Ukraine has blamed Russia for "blowing up" the dam, located in a Russian-controlled area of Ukraine. Russia has denied this, and has accused

Ukraine of being responsible for its destruction. The BBC has not verified either claim, although it seems likely that Russian forces, who controlled the dam, decided to blow it up in order to complicate Ukraine's on-going counteroffensive.

Behind the dam, the huge Kakhovka reservoir - a vital source of water for the region - has drained of water. The World Health Organization (WHO)'s Ukraine representative, Dr Jarno Habicht, told the BBC the situation was "devastating" and providing safe, clean water was a priority. He said it was important to keep an eye on water-borne illnesses and that precautionary sample testing was ongoing. The UK's defence ministry said people were facing a "sanitation crisis" with limited access to safe water and an increased risk of water-borne diseases. While Ukrainian officials

said no cases of infectious illnesses have been reported so far, the city of Kherson - around 100km (62 miles) from the Kakhovka dam and badly affected by the floods - has introduced restrictions on the use of river water in order to prevent their spread.

The flooding of houses and sewage facilities means the water is now highly polluted, the city military administration said, meaning that bathing, fishing and drinking the water, or giving it to animals, is prohibited. Ukraine's interior ministry said 32 settlements had been flooded in Ukrainian-controlled Kherson, while another 14 were flooded in the Russian-controlled part. Another 31 settlements were flooded in the Mykolayiv region.

The destruction of the Kakhovka dam has also likely led to the disruption of water supplies to Crimea,

which was illegally annexed by Russia in 2014.

The North Crimean Canal draws its water supply from the Kakhovka reservoir, located behind the now-destroyed dam. Ukrainian hydro energy company Ukrhydroenergo said the water level in the reservoir had fallen by more than 7m (23ft) and on Sunday the UK defence ministry warned that "water will soon stop flowing" to the peninsula.

Drone footage filmed after the dam breach appears to show significantly reduced water levels near the entrance to the canal. Whoever was responsible for the destruction of the Kakhovka dam will have done so knowing that it would deprive Crimea of badly needed fresh water.

The canal was blocked by Ukraine following the annexation of Crimea in 2014, but Russia quickly un-

blocked it after it invaded southern Ukraine last year.

Russian commanders may have concluded that rendering the waterway useless again by blowing up the dam might have seemed like a necessary, if extreme, price to pay for complicating Ukraine's military plans. Earlier, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky confirmed that his country's long-awaited counter-offensive against Russia had started.

"Counter-offensive and defensive actions are taking place," he said on Saturday. Ukrainian troops are reported to have advanced in the east near Bakhmut and in the south near Zaporizhzhia, and have carried out long-range strikes on Russian targets.

Assessing the reality of the situation on the front lines is difficult. The respected US-based think tank, Institute for the Study of War,

says that while Ukrainian forces appear to have made some localised gains, they have struggled to break through dug-in Russian positions. On Sunday, Kyiv announced its ground forces had liberated the village of Blahodatne in the southern Donetsk region, east of Zaporizhzhia, and captured several Russian and pro-Russian troops. It is thought to be the first settlement Ukraine has taken since acknowledging its counter-offensive has begun - but not the first taken since Monday, when pockets of Ukrainian forces began to advance in the country's south.

Meanwhile in Russia's Belgorod region, bordering Ukraine, rail traffic was suspended after a freight train derailed on Saturday night. Belgorod's border areas have been hit by drones, shelling and cross-border raids in the past weeks.

Romania recalls Kenya envoy over racist comments

NEW YORK: Romania's ambassador to Kenya who allegedly compared a monkey with Africans during a meeting in the capital has been recalled, according to the Romanian foreign ministry. Dragoș Viorel Tigau was at a United Nations building in Nairobi on April 26 when a monkey appeared at the window of the conference room. "The African Group has joined us," Tigau said, according to a note from the South Sudanese embassy in Kenya seen by the AFP news agency.

"The African Group would like to condemn in strongest terms possible the insulting, racist and degrading utterances," wrote Chol Ajong'o, South Sudan's ambassador to Kenya who leads African diplomats in Nairobi. The Romanian foreign ministry said on Saturday it had only been informed of the incident this week, after which it "began a procedure to recall its ambassador".—APP

Nawaz Sharif, Rao Ajmal discuss politics in London

DNA

LONDON: MNA Haji Rao Muhammad Ajmal Khan, the central leader of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Chairman of the Standing Committee for Food Security, recently met PML-N Supremo Muhammad Nawaz Sharif in London. The meeting took place during a lunch organized in honour of MNA Rao by Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. The primary focus of the meeting revolved around the prevailing political situation in the country. Nawaz Sharif expressed his heartfelt connection with the people of Pakistan and emphasized his unwavering love for the people of Dehlpur. He reassured that he would soon recover from his health concerns and return to his beloved nation. During the meeting, Nawaz Sharif commended Rao Ajmal and his family for their steadfast support to the party. He highlighted that the PML-N firmly believes in serving the people and has made prudent decisions that have effectively managed the country's economy.

Egypt toughens visa rules for Sudanese fleeing war

CAIRO: Egypt has announced a new policy requiring all citizens of neighbouring Sudan to obtain visas before crossing the border as a United States and Saudi Arabia-brokered ceasefire took effect in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum. The Egyptian foreign ministry imposed the new regulations on Saturday, justifying the move as a crackdown on "illegal activities" including fraud. The decision was a reversal of a longstanding exemption for children, women and elderly men. More than 200,000 Sudanese nationals have entered Egypt, most of them through land crossings, since fighting broke out two months ago between the army, led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), commanded by Burhan's former deputy Mohamed Hamdan Daglo.—APP



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah holding a post-budget press conference at the Sindh Assembly's auditorium. —APP

Nuclear fears are a false 'excuse'

TEHRAN: Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has said claims that Tehran may pursue a nuclear weapon are a false "excuse" that untrustworthy international stakeholders use. He told a group of nuclear officials and scientists in Tehran on Sunday that Islamic values prevent Iran from pursuing a weapon of mass destruction.

"If it wasn't for that and we wanted to do it, they wouldn't have been able to stop it, just as they haven't been able to stop our nuclear advances and won't be able to," Khamenei said. "The excuse of a nuclear weapon is a lie, this is not the issue, something else is at play. They know that nuclear advancement will be a key for progress in other issues of the country." Iran currently enriches uranium to 60 percent, which

is a short technical step from the over 90 percent purity required for a bomb, and is said to have amassed enough fissile material for more than one bomb. But Western intelligence sources and monitors say there have been no signs that Tehran is currently working on producing a bomb. The Iranian supreme leader said two decades of challenges with world powers emanating from the country's nuclear programme have shown that some of them, along with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), cannot be relied upon to fully implement their commitments.

"One of the achievements of this 20-year challenge was that we realised we can't trust their word," he said. Khamenei, however, emphasised that cooperation with the United Nations' nuclear

watchdog must continue within the framework of safeguards agreements and in compliance with a law passed by the Iranian parliament in late 2020 that paved the way for advancing Iran's nuclear programme.

"You might make agreements on some issues, there is no problem with that, but make sure the infrastructure of the nuclear industry remains untouched," he said, after visiting an exhibition that included a display of advanced Iranian IR-6 centrifuges. Iran and the IAEA reached an agreement to strengthen their cooperation in early March, in order to resolve cases that Tehran has maintained need to be finalised before the country's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers - which the United States unilaterally abandoned in 2018 - can be restored.—Agencies

Macron urges Iran to stop backing Russia

PARIS: French President



Emmanuel Macron urged his Iranian counterpart Ebrahim Raisi to "immediately end" Tehran's support for Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which involves supplying Moscow with attack drones, the Elysee said. Macron in a telephone call underlined the serious "security and humanitarian consequences" of Iran's drone deliveries "and urged Tehran to immediately end the support it thus gives to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine," said a statement. The call came a day after White House national security spokesman John Kirby said Russia was receiving materials from Iran to build a drone factory on its territory that "could be fully operational early next year." The White House released a satellite image of the location of the prospective plant in the Alabuga special economic zone.—DNA

Part of major US highway collapses after fire

PHILADELPHIA: A large vehicle fire under an elevated section of Interstate 95 in Philadelphia caused a huge portion to collapse, closing the highway in both directions. Video from the scene showed a massive slab covering an entire section of the northbound lanes collapsed onto the surface roadway in northeast Philadelphia. Officials said there were no immediate reports of injuries.

Captain Dereck Bowmer of the Philadelphia fire department said emergency crews responding shortly before 6:30am on Sunday to an accident report found heavy fire from a vehicle or vehicles. Early reports indicated the vehicle may have been a tanker truck, but officials said that had not yet been confirmed. The fire was reported to be under control. The I-95 is the main highway in the eastern United States linking major centres such as Washington DC, New York City, and Philadelphia and running all the way south to Florida state. Bowmer said the northbound lanes were gone and the southbound lanes were "compromised" because of the heat from the fire. He also said runoff from the fire or perhaps compromised gas lines were causing explosions underground. Officials said they were also concerned about the environmental impacts of runoff into the nearby Delaware River. "Today's going to be a long day. And obviously, with 95 northbound gone and southbound questionable, it's going to be even longer than that," said Dominick Mireles, director of Philadelphia's Office of Emergency Management.—DNA

Zelensky says counteroffensive actions under way

KYIV: Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky said that counteroffensive actions were under way against invading Russian forces in his country but declined to divulge additional details. The Ukrainian leader made the comment on Saturday at a news conference in Kyiv, while standing alongside visiting Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. He was responding to a question about Russian President Vladimir Putin's statement a day earlier that Ukraine's counteroffensive had started and that Ukrainian forces were taking "significant losses". Zelensky said that "counteroffensive, defensive actions are taking place in Ukraine. I will not speak about which stage or phase they are in." "I am in touch with our commanders of different directions every day," he added, citing the names of five of Ukraine's top military leaders. "Everyone is positive. Pass this on to Putin." Top Ukrainian authorities have stopped short of announcing a full-blown counteroffensive was under way, though some Western analysts have said fiercer fighting and reported use of reserve troops suggests it was. In his nightly video address, Zelensky provided few details while urging troops to keep fighting. "Thank you to all those who hold their positions and those who advance," he said, citing the eastern and southern fronts, where fighting is heaviest. Ukraine's general staff said its forces had repelled enemy attacks around Bakhmut and Marinka, sites of heavy clashes in the east. Russian forces, it said, "continue to suffer heavy losses which they are trying to conceal". Deputy Defence Minister Hanna Maliar made it plain on Telegram that the military would issue no statements until battlefield positions became clear. "Ask yourself this... am I prepared to receive information about the liberation of this or that town not when our troops enter it, but once they establish a stronghold?" she wrote. Ukraine has said for months it plans to conduct a significant counteroffensive to recapture land occupied by Russia in the south and east.—APP

Trump still headline act for Republicans, despite charges

WEB DESK

WASHINGTON: Former US President Donald Trump appeared defiant at two Republican Party conventions on Saturday, a day after he was charged with mishandling classified documents. Mr Trump - who is running to be the Republican candidate for president in 2024 - claimed that he was being pursued in federal court because of his re-election hopes. But at the North Carolina Republican Party convention, he didn't look like a man under severe legal stress. Hundreds of people stood up to welcome their former president as he walked onto the stage, happily soaking in the adulation. He was the main event, after a three-course meal. There was salad to start, steak for the main and ice-cream with strawberries for dessert - washed down with jugs of coke. It was just a day after an indictment was unsealed

revealing federal charges against Mr Trump, accusing him of mishandling classified documents including nuclear secrets. But Mr Trump - who denies wrongdoing - was characteristically combative. He suggested nothing will stop him on his quest for the presidency. Not even, reportedly, jail. And in the vast conference room, they didn't want him to stop. They laughed at his jokes, offered regular applause and welcomed bold declarations, for example that he is the only candidate who can prevent World War Three.

This was, after all, a Republican Party convention dinner with guests who had paid to see him speak. Earlier, former vice-President Mike Pence received a warm reception but it was nothing like the intense buzz that surrounded his ex-boss. What's more, the one-term vice-president got the lunch slot while Mr Trump got dinner. He was the big Saturday night

ticket. Earlier in the day, amongst the merchandise and campaign stands, I came across Cheryll Korfmann and Charli Thyne. Mr Trump proudly stripped off her jacket to reveal a Trump-branded T-shirt. "I'm Trump all the way," she said. I pointed out the photographs, printed as part of the justice department's case, that showed boxes of files piled up in a ballroom, even a bathroom, in Mr Trump's Mara-Lago resort in Florida. "Wait a minute," said Cheryll. "This is America. We're not guilty until we're proven guilty." The two believe the system is riddled with double standards and said they would support Mr Trump, even if he was convicted. If elected he could, suggested Cheryll, even pardon himself from prison. An unshakable support for Mr Trump echoed through the halls, with his name and image visibly dominant on printed banners and baseball caps. But there were

those who were open to possibilities beyond Mr Trump's narrative. The truth matters, said husband and wife Jeff and Laura Morgan. "If the truth is that there's impropriety, that needs to be brought out," said Jeff. "If it's politically motivated, that needs to be brought out." Laura is a previous Miss Senior America while Jeff is running for mayor of Pinehurst, North Carolina. She conceded there is a lot of drama surrounding the current front-runner. "I think people ought to just run on their merits and not do bashing and blaming." They saw Mr Trump's legal baggage as both a potential issue but also a rallying point for his base. Mr Trump did not spend his whole speech ridiculing the charges against him, far from it. A long, winding address touched on everything from the cost of living to transgender people's participation in sport to trade with China and France.

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Briefs

Magnitude 6.2 earthquake shakes Japan

DNA
TOKYO: A magnitude 6.2 earthquake shook Japan's northernmost main island of Hokkaido on Sunday, but there were no immediate reports of damage or injuries. No tsunami warning was issued. There were no reports of problems at the nuclear plants in the area or of disruptions to power supply or bullet trains running in northern Japan. The quake, which hit at 6:55pm (09:55 GMT), was 140km (87 miles) deep and struck the southwestern part of Hokkaido, according to the Japanese Meteorological Agency. It shook much of the island, including the cities of Chitose and Atsuma, the agency said. Parts of northern Honshu, the nation's biggest island where Tokyo is located, were also rattled, although the nation's capital was not affected. Japan is one of the world's most earthquake-prone nations and is located on the Pacific Ring of Fire, an arc of intense seismic activity across the Pacific basin.

Houston mass shooting leaves 6 injured

DNA
HOUSTON: In yet another mass shooting incident a day after the San Francisco rampage, an armed gunman opened fire outside a Houston nightclub Sunday leaving six people injured of which one is said to have sustained life-threatening injuries. The shooting took place in a parking area which was crowded with people, according to Houston Police Department Chief Troy Finner. The incident occurred just days after a shooting in San Francisco's Mission District neighbourhood which left at least nine injured Friday night. San Francisco police said none of the victims was critical and expected to survive as it was a "targeted and isolated" shooting. Finner also added that investigators didn't know how many people might have been responsible for the shooting and that no suspects were in custody. "We had 6 victims here in a shooting. Apparently, there was some kind of disturbance in the club that came out into the parking lot," Finner said. Finner stated that one of the victims, a male, was in critical condition and underwent surgery. Finner said: "We're just praying that he's going to make it." "Everybody else is in stable condition but we expect them to make it, so just prayers out to the family of the one victim who has just got out of surgery - I hope he's going to be all right," he told the journalists.

Elahi's health deteriorates in prison

DNA
LAHORE: Former Punjab chief minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Central President Chaudhry Parvez Elahi's health has been deteriorating in prison, media reported on Sunday. Elahi was taken to the Punjab Institute of Cardiology (PIC) for medical tests and doctors' examination after complaining of chest pains. The reports of his electrocardiogram (ECG) and echocardiogram are awaited. According to reports, he has been shifted back to prison. The former chief minister was sent to prison on June 4 for 14-day judicial remand by a judicial magistrate in Lahore after his arrest by the Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) in a case pertaining to bribery and illegal recruitments. The court had denied ACE's request for physical remand.

'Most fearless' fighting in Sudan post-ceasefire

The United States and Saudi Arabia-brokered ceasefire was set in order to facilitate the safe passage of desperately needed humanitarian aid across the country. It was also hoped that it would halt the fighting that has been raging since April 15

DNA
KHARTOUM: Fighting has resumed with renewed intensity following a brief period of respite, the quietest since Sudan broke out into conflict nearly eight weeks ago when a rivalry between the army and its rival paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) exploded into open warfare. Within 30 minutes of the ceasefire ending on Sunday morning, air raids, artillery shelling and machine guns could be heard pounding several parts of the country, according to Al Jazeera's Hiba Morgan, reporting from Sudan. 7 civilians were killed in the capital of Khartoum due to the fighting, as the army launched airstrikes against RSF bases. While Saturday marked the calmest day since the conflict began, Sunday's fighting has been the "most fearless", with residents sheltering in place for

safety, Morgan said. Witnesses said fighting resumed in the north of Omdurman, in el-Geneina near the border with Chad, and in el-Obeid, the capital of North Kordofan state, southwest of Khartoum. The United States and Saudi Arabia-brokered ceasefire was set in order to facilitate the safe passage of desperately needed humanitarian aid across the country. It was also hoped that it would halt the fighting that has been raging since April 15. Morgan said that during the 24-hour truce, some aid groups were able to reach those in need, with people in the southern part of the capital also able to leave their homes to replenish their stock of essential commodities. But in the northern part of the capital, she said people remained trapped with no assistance. Meanwhile, the situation in West Darfur is being described as "catastrophic", Morgan reported. In el-Geneina in particular - which has been experiencing a

communication outage for weeks - there have been new waves of attacks by Arab nomadic tribes with ties to the RSF. These militias, Morgan said, are targeting people based on ethnicity. The West Darfur Doctors' Syndicate has called the killings, in which more than 1,000 people have died, equivalent to genocide. The violence has led to people fleeing to neighbouring Chad over the past weeks, a harrowing and risky journey, according to journalist Zein Basravi in the Chad city of Adre on the border with Sudan. Abdulkareem Haroon, a man who fled el-Geneina to Adre, said he was beaten and whipped and lost his brother on the journey. "I don't know if they killed him or have taken him," Haroon told Al Jazeera. El-Obeid, on a major route to Darfur, is said to be under a state of siege, with residents saying supplies of food and medicine are cut off. "The situation is difficult. The RSF are

spread out on the roads between the villages and they are looting, and there are gangs looting everywhere. Moving from place to place became dangerous," North Kordofan resident Mohamed Salman told the Reuters news agency. "We don't know how we'll plant or how we'll live in this situation." The wider Kordofan region is an important agricultural area, a source of livestock, oilseeds and gum Arabic. More than 1.4 million people have been displaced within Sudan and a further 476,800 have fled to neighbouring countries, most of whom are already struggling with poverty and internal conflict, according to estimates from the International Organization for Migration. About half of those fleeing are heading north to Egypt. On Saturday, Egypt toughened its visa rules for Sudanese nationals fleeing the war, requiring visas before crossing the border, and reversing an exemption for women and children.

Saudi Arabia seeks cooperation with China

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia wants to collaborate, not compete, with China, the kingdom's energy minister declared on Sunday, saying he "ignored" Western suspicions over their growing ties. As the world's top oil exporter, Saudi Arabia's bilateral relationship with the world's biggest energy consumer is anchored by hydrocarbon ties. But cooperation between Riyadh and Beijing has also deepened in security and sensitive tech amid a warming of political ties - to the concern of the US. Asked about criticism of the bilateral relationship during an Arab-China business conference, Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman said: "I actually ignore it because... as a business person... now you will go where opportunity comes your way." "We don't have to be facing any choice which has to do with (saying) either with us or with the others." Chinese entrepreneurs and investors have flocked to Riyadh for the conference, which came days after a visit by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken. - Agencies

Death toll soars to 27 as torrential rains batter K-P

DNA
PESHAWAR: The death toll has risen to at least 27 with 169 injured in recent storms and heavy rainfall in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa's (K-P) districts of Bannu, Karak, DI Khan and LakkiMarwat, the local disaster management authority said on Sunday. Since yesterday, K-P's southern districts, including Bannu, LakkiMarwat and Karak, have borne the brunt of powerful storms that swept away homes, uprooted trees and electricity pylons and left hundreds of people stranded, the officials said. The combination of heavy rainfall and fierce winds has led to tragic incidents, including the collapse of walls, roofs and falling trees, resulting in the loss of two lives and several injuries. As per the hospital sources, strong winds and heavy rainfall have resulted in five people's deaths and left 39 individuals wounded in LakkiMarwat. In Karak, the official sources revealed, the windstorm claimed the lives of five people, leaving ten injured. The devastation has resulted in significant financial losses, primarily affecting the solar panel plants installed on the rooftops of mosques, schools, and houses.

Pakistan unlikely to devalue rupee: Fitch Ratings

DNA
NEW YORK: Amid negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to restart a \$6.7 billion bailout programme, Fitch Ratings said that it is unlikely the cash-strapped nation will devalue its currency again as pressure on the rupee has eased. Krisjanis Krustins, a Hong Kong-based director at Fitch, said: "We currently do not expect a large further devaluation of the Pakistan rupee." "Although the currency has been very stable over the past few months, pressure on the reserves [held by] the State Bank of Pakistan has also been contained, which suggests minimal interventions to support the currency," Krustins said in an emailed response to questions sent by Bloomberg. The multilateral lender has said it is working with authorities to fix its currency market and other issues before it resumes the bailout programme, which is set to expire this month.

Taiwan scrambles air force as Chinese jets cross median line

TAIPEI: Taiwan sent up fighters and deployed ships and land-based missile systems to keep watch on Chinese aircraft on Sunday after spotting 10 Chinese warplanes crossing the sensitive median line, which separates the two sides, of the Taiwan Strait. The island's defence ministry said four Chinese warships also carried out combat patrols. This is the second time in less than a week that Taiwan has reported renewed Chinese military activity after 37 Chinese military aircraft flew into the island's air defence zone, some of which then flew into the western Pacific on Thursday. China, which views democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory, has regularly flown its air force into the skies near the island over the past three years. However, they have not entered Taiwan's territorial air space. In a short statement, Taiwan's defence ministry said that as of 2pm (06:00 GMT) on Sunday, it had detected 24 Chinese air force planes, including J-10, J-11, J-16 and Su-30 fighters, as well as H-6 bombers. It did not specify where the aircraft flew but said 10 had crossed the median line of the Taiwan Strait, which separates the two sides and had previously served as an unofficial barrier, which China does not recognise. - Agencies



ISLAMABAD: Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy of the Philippines Ms. Maria Agnes Cerventes hosted a reception at the Embassy. A cultural troupe performs traditional dance on the occasion. - DNA

Russia moves to take direct control of Wagner

MOSCOW: Russia appears to have moved to take direct control of Wagner, after months of infighting between defence officials and the private military group. Deputy Defence Minister Nikolai Pankov said "volunteer formations" will be asked to sign contracts directly with the ministry of defence. The vaguely worded statement is widely believed to target the group. But in a furious statement on Sunday, Wagner boss Yevgeny Prigozhin said his forces would boycott the contracts. The private military group has played a major role in the war in Ukraine, fighting on the side of Russian forces. But Prigozhin, who is said to hold political ambitions of his own, has been embroiled in a public dispute with Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu and military chief Valery Gerasimov for months. He has repeatedly accused the pair of incompetence and of deliberately undersupplying Wagner units fighting in Ukraine. "Wagner will not sign any contracts with Shoigu," Prigozhin said in response to a request for comment on the defence ministry's announcement. "Shoigu cannot properly manage military formation." He insisted that his group was well integrated with the Russian military, but said that its effectiveness would be damaged by having to report to the defence minister. While Saturday's announcement did not directly reference Wagner or any other paramilitary groups, Russian media suggested that the new contracts were a move to bring Prigozhin and his forces under control. But the defence ministry said the move was designed to "increase the effectiveness" of Russian units fighting in Ukraine. "This will give volunteer formations the necessary legal status, create common approaches to the organization of comprehensive support and the fulfilment of their tasks," the ministry said in a statement, adding that the contracts must be signed by 1 July. The long-running tensions between the Wagner Group and the army have threatened to boil over in recent weeks. Last week the group kidnapped a senior frontline army commander, Lt Col Roman Venevitsin, after accusing him of opening fire on a Wagner vehicle near Bakhmut. Lt Col Venevitsin was later released, and in a video shared by Russian military bloggers he accused the group of stoking "anarchy" on Russia's frontlines by stealing arms, forcing mobilised soldiers to sign contracts with the group and attempting to extort weapons from the defence ministry. Prigozhin called the comments - which appeared to be read from a script - "absolutely total nonsense". - DNA

Taliban slam UN report calling them 'exclusionary'

DNA
KABUL: The Taliban has condemned as "baseless and biased" a United Nations Security Council report that called the Afghan administration "highly exclusionary" and "repressive". The report, released earlier in June by the UNSC's Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, said the Taliban governance structures remain "highly exclusionary, Pashtun-centred and repressive" towards all forms of opposition. It also said Kandahar's return as the seat of power - like it was during the Taliban's rule of Afghanistan in the 1990s - circumvents senior Taliban ministers in Kabul, the centre of the current government, because of the way decisions are made. The report also said the group was battling internal conflict over key policies, the centralisation of power and the control of financial and natural resources in Afghanistan. Ongoing power struggles are further destabilising the situation, to the point where an outbreak of armed conflict between rival factions is a manifest risk, the report added. In recent months at least two spokespersons based in Kabul were asked to shift to the southern city of Kandahar, raising speculations about the shift of power from the capi-

Jakarta's Taman Mini Park; a must visit place

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Taman Mini Jakarta remains committed to promoting sustainable tourism practices and preserving Indonesia's cultural heritage for future generations. Efforts are made to ensure the park's operations align with eco-friendly practices, and initiatives are in place to educate visitors about the importance of environmental conservation. It may be mentioned here that the Park covers approximately 150 hectares of land and features miniature replicas from all the provinces of Indonesia. Taman Mini is not just a tourist attraction but also serves as an educational center for visitors to learn about Indonesia's history, culture, and traditions. Because of its attractions and cultural heritage it has become a must-visit place. The Indonesia Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy deserves credit for giving a complete new-look to the Park. As compared with 2018 when I first visited the Park, the place has a lot more to offer to the visitors. In order to encourage local as well international tourists an affordable entry fee is charged. Millions of tourists visit this place annually and enrich their know-how about the Indonesian culture and lifestyle of various regions.

The Pakistan media delegation was given a warm welcome upon its arrival. Special cultural performances ostensibly pro-

vided a real feast to the delegation. The thrilling and mesmerizing performance by the Papua region people was touch-

ing and impressive. It is accurate to say that those who have not visited Taman Mini have visited nothing!!



JAKARTA: Members of the Pakistani media delegation posing for a picture with the natives of the Papua region after the cultural performance, at Taman Mini. - DNA