



Islamabad POST

Monday, June 19, 2023

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

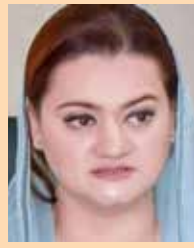
Price Rs. 25

Distinct ancient heritage is a treasure for both nations

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Moeen guilty of breaching ICC code

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Briefs

Dar hopes to maintain reserves

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Ishaq Dar maintained that there would not be any major reduction in Pakistan's nearly \$4 billion foreign exchange reserves at present after China promptly refinanced the \$1.3 billion loans repaid this week. In a televised message, Dar announced that the country had also made another \$300 million debt repayment to China, hoping that Beijing would refinance the amount within four or five days. During the past five days, Pakistan has made \$1.3 billion Chinese loans repayments despite having only \$4 billion reserves in hand.

No issues with US-India partnership

APP

NEW YORK: Pakistan has no problem with the United States developing a partnership with India if it is not at the cost of Pakistan, he said, ahead of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Washington where he is set have talks with President Joe Biden on June 22.

Murtaza to take oath as mayor today

DNA

KARACHI: Newly-elected Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab and Deputy Mayor Salman Murad will take oath today (Monday) at Gulshan Jinnah Polo Ground in Karachi. Sindh Election Commissioner Ijaz Anwar Chauhan will administer oath to the mayor and deputy mayor of Karachi. PPP leaders Murtaza Wahab and Salman Murad were elected mayor and deputy mayor on June 15 in a tight contest after beating the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) candidate Hafiz Naemur Rehman.

Key meeting today

PPP, PML-N to bring down temperature

The meeting takes place amidst severe budget criticism from PPP leaders



SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: To iron out any further contention, the key leaders and ministers from the ruling alliance parties, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), will meet for another round of negotiations on Monday with the aim to resolve their disagreements concerning the country's financial matters, media reported. The meeting, to be led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and attended by Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, carries significant weight as it takes place amidst severe criticism from PPP leaders regarding the budget proposals for the next fiscal year. Earlier, Bilawal — who is also PPP chairman — had said his party will abstain from endorsing the recently-announced budget in the National Assembly unless the commitments made to the party regarding areas affected by flooding are honoured. The first high-level meeting, also chaired by the premier, between the two political entities

Budget approved with Sindh CM's consent: Iqbal

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal has said that 2023-24 federal budget was tabled in the National Assembly last week with the consent of Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah. His statement came a day after Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari publicly criticised the government's economic team saying promised funds for flood victims were not allocated in the budget. Responding to Bilawal's warning, the planning minister said the PPP-backed Sindh CM's objections over the budget were removed by the economic team. He questioned why objections are being raised now when the budget was approved with consensus in the National Economic Council (NEC) meeting. Similarly, he said the federal cabinet also approved the budget. Iqbal said some funds were also increased in

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TTP commander among 3 killed

Zafri was involved in 26 grenade attacks in Pakistan

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Security forces gunned down a most wanted Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) commander among three terrorists during an intelligence-based operation in Dara Adam Khel area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, it emerged on Sunday. According to security sources, TTP commander Zafar Khan alias Zafri accompanied by two of his group members were killed in the IBO. On the night between June 16 and 17, security forces in a highly planned IBO killed TTP commander Zafar Khan alias Zafri son of Ghulam Siddique in Dara Adam Khel and two of his members identified as Hasan Khan son of Mohammad Imran resident of Bazi Khel and Anas alias Ali resident of Nangarhar Afghanistan. The slain commander was a resident of vil-

lage Malan in Dara Adam Khel and reached Peshawar from Nangarhar province of Afghanistan on May 22, 2023, said the well-placed sources. Zafri was also a former member of Tehreek-e-Taliban Afghanistan (TTA) and was involved in 26 grenade attacks in Pakistan, it added. He was also involved in dozens of terrorist attacks against security forces, coal contractors, businessmen and influential people and had received more than Rs100 million in extortion and kidnapping for ransom. The other slain terrorist, Hasan Khan, was an expert in sniping and grenade attacks and remained a part of TTA from 2019 to 2021. He had joined Tariq Gidar group in 2022. Anas was a sniping expert and involved in terrorist attacks against security forces in North Waziristan and South Waziristan districts.

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Bus accident

FIR registered against the driver, owner

PM directs Motorway police to be vigilant

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: In the aftermath of the deadly bus accident near Kallar Kahar, which claimed 13 lives and left more than 30 people injured, a criminal complaint has been filed against the bus driver and its owner, among others, it emerged on Sunday. Yesterday, a bus veered off the Islamabad-Lahore Motorway into the opposite lane and overturned near Kallar Kahar. The first information report (FIR), a copy of which is available with Dawn.com, was filed on Saturday evening by Motorway Police Officer Muhammad Bilal at the Kallar Kahar police station. It names the bus driver, bus owner, manager of the Rawalpindi station (from where the bus departed), manager of the bus company's station and the motor vehicle examiner as those who are responsible for the accident. It invokes sections 322 (punishment for qatl-bisabab), 337G (punishment for hurt by rash or negligent driving), 279 (rash driving or riding on a public way), 427 (mischievous causing damage to the amount of fifty rupees) and 109 (punishment of abetment if the act abetted committed in consequence and where no express provision is made for its punishment) of the Pakistan Penal Code.

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Greece Shipwreck incident

Pakistan to observe day of mourning

PM Shehbaz orders inquiry, crackdown on human traffickers

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Expressing his grief over the tragic incident of the boat carrying migrants capsized off the coast of Greece resulting in deaths of several people, including Pakistanis, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has announced a countrywide day of mourning on Monday (today). At least 78 people were drowned when the ill-fated boat with reportedly 400 to 750 people onboard sank in the Mediterranean Sea near the Greek coast. Meanwhile, some 104 people were rescued and sent to Kalamata, Greece, as per to the latest media reports. According to a notification issued by the Prime Minister Office, the day of mourning will be observed throughout the country. It said that the national flag will fly at half mast at all the important buildings. Meanwhile, the prime minister has constituted a four-member high-level committee to investigate the tragic incident of boat capsizing off Greece's coast. According to a notification issued by the PM's Office, the committee will comprise National Police Bureau Director General Ehsan Sadiq — who will head the body — Minister of Foreign Affairs Adnan Uzair (Africa) Javed Ahmed Umrani, AJK's Police Region Poonch Deputy Inspector General Sardar Zaheer Ahmed and FIA's Joint Secretary Faisal Nisar Chaudhry. The committee shall submit its report within one week. As per terms of reference of the committee, it will ascertain facts of the Greece boat tragedy, to identify loopholes and lapses in the legal and enforcement mechanism in Pakistan that exposed precious human lives to the vagaries of human trafficking in this particular case and similar incidents in the past.

AJK police arrest 10 'sub-agents'

DNA

MUZAFFARABAD: The Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) police arrested on Sunday 10 "sub-agents" allegedly involved in the smuggling of people to Europe via the Middle East and Africa, including those who died in the recent Greece boat tragedy. The Foreign Office said on Saturday that 12 Pakistanis had been found alive as National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf urged the government to "immediately investigate" the incident. Talking to media, Kotli Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Muhammad Riaz Mughal confirmed that 21 people from AJK had been aboard the ship and were missing. He said 19 of these people belonged to Khairatta and the remaining hailed from neighboring Charhoi. SSP Mughal revealed that as many as 10 "sub-agents" were arrested in AJK during the last 24 hours. "The arrests were made after the police chalked out an effective strategy in the light of the information shared by the families of the victims about the persons who had trapped the victims into landing them in Europe against millions of rupees," he told media. Mughal said the suspects were booked

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Pakistan to seek \$3-4bn from friendly countries

With the provision of bridging financing gap of \$3-\$4 billion from bilateral friends, Pakistan can manage its financing needs

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Keeping in view the possibility of a continued deadlock with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) till the end of June 2023, Pakistan — under the much-hyped Plan B — is left

with no option but to make a request to its bilateral partners for additions deposits of \$3 billion, media reported Sunday. The Q Block (Ministry of Finance) is contemplating all available options to bridge financing from bilateral friends to avert the looming crisis on its external accounts in case the ninth review is not completed. It should be noted that the IMF programme is scheduled to expire on June 30, 2023. Both sides, the IMF and Pakistan, had gone public with their apprehensions despite showing their commitment to remain engaged for the completion of the ninth review under the \$6.5 billion Extended Fund

Facility (EFF) programme. "With the provision of bridging financing gap of \$3-\$4 billion from bilateral friends, Pakistan can manage its financing needs. This arrangement is under active consideration and will be implemented to avoid the danger of default in the next few months till the end of October or November 2023," top official sources said. It may only be wishful thinking as friendly countries like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have linked their additional deposits of \$2 billion and \$1 billion respectively with the signing of the staff-level agreement and revival of the IMF programme.

Indonesia: a nation of diversity and cultural riches

Both Indonesian and Pakistani cultures emphasize respect for elders and the importance of family values. Therefore Pakistani visitors feel at home while being in Indonesia and vice versa

EDITORIAL

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

INDONESIA, a country located in Southeast Asia, which happens to be the world's largest archipelago, stands out for its vibrant society, rich culture and extremely hospitable people. It is the warmth of the Indonesians and the breathtaking natural wonders that make it the most sought-after tourist attraction. Much has changed in the largest Muslim country since 2019 when I last visited the country. Since Indonesia was frequented by millions of tourists therefore it was also hit hard by the Covid pandemic like other countries that used to welcome huge influx of visitors. But hats off to the Indonesian government that because of its tireless efforts tourists flow has resumed almost to full scale. Courtesy the Indonesian embassy in Islamabad the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, I had a chance to again visit the wonderful Indonesia to-



gether with few other colleagues as part of the FAMTRIP 2023. After staying in Jakarta for a few days our delegation then left for Lombok — a place that appears to be top on the agenda of the Tourism Ministry, which is being developed and offered to the international as well domestic tourists as an exotic destination packed with spell-binding attractions. Ni Made Ayu Marthini Deputy Minister for Marketing, Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy while talking to our delegation said that their primary focus was on developing 10 Tourism Priority Destinations in the period of 2023-24. She said, 'currently, we are highly promoting our 10 Tourism Priority Destinations, namely Lake Toba in North Sumatera, Borobudur Temple in Central Java, Mandalika in West Nusa Tenggara, Labuan Bajo in East Nusa Tenggara, Likupang in North Sulawesi, Tanjung Kelayang in Bangka Belitung, Bromo-Tengger-Semeru in East Java, Wakatobi in Southeast Sulawesi, Morotai Island in North Maluku and Raja Ampat in West Papua. The first five aforementioned destinations are designated as Tourism Super Priority Destinations, she informed. In 2019 among other places I also visited Labuan Bajo, which is yet another attraction that offers stunning white-

sand beaches and enchanting blue water snorkeling and surfing opportunities. Komodo Island is also located nearby, which is part of the Komodo National Park. It is famous for its population of Komodo dragons, which are the largest living lizards on Earth. Indonesia takes great pride in preserving its cultural heritage. The country is home to numerous UNESCO World Heritage sites. Indonesian and Pakistani cuisines have similarities, such as the use of aromatic spices and flavors. Both countries have their versions of rice dishes, curries, and grilled meats, although the specific ingredients and cooking techniques may vary. Both Indonesian and Pakistani cultures emphasize respect for elders and the importance of family values. Therefore Pakistani visitors feel at home while being in Indonesia and vice versa. The Indonesian embassy in Islamabad spearheaded by Ambassador Adam Tugjo has published a few books on Indonesian cuisines and similarities between the two cultures. These books provide a deep insight into culinary and cultural aspects of bilateral relations. All said and done, there are certain areas that pose a challenge to the Indonesia government. Rapid urbanization, environmental issues, and socio-economic

disparities are among the issues the country is working to address. However, Indonesia's government and civil society organizations are actively promoting sustainable tourism, environmental conservation, and community empowerment initiatives to ensure a brighter future for the nation. The Deputy Minister for Marketing during her interview hoped to see more and more investors and tourists come to Indonesia. After visiting the newly-introduced tourist attractions I can say on authority that these places offer potential business avenues, especially the Labuan Bajo and Lombok islands. The government extends certain business incentives to investors that make the prospects even brighter. There are some hiccups though, which if addressed, can ensure enhanced flow of tourists and businessmen to Indonesia. As informed by the Pakistani embassy in Jakarta, many Pakistani visitors had to face problems at the airports at the immigration desks. In some cases visitors were even denied entry. The Indonesian authorities are aware of such incidents and assured to overcome this issue sooner rather than later. They said that it was not a Pakistan-specific problem and some drastic steps had already been taken to improve

working of the immigration countries. To Sum up, the Presidential election in Indonesia is going to take place in February 2024. Three contenders are in the run. The incumbent President Joko Widodo is not in the game as law does not allow him to stand for the third time. Interestingly, some of his cohorts suggested him to amend the Constitution to be eligible for a third term nevertheless he outright declined this proposal, which unequivocally shows his character and commitment to the rule of law and upholding of the Constitution. Obviously, countries that do not respect their Constitution have to face stupendous challenges i.e. political instability; economic consequences; corruption and crime; weak adherence to the rule of law; human rights violations and international reputation. If Indonesia is making progress by leaps and bounds, among other things, political harmony appears to be a key reason. President Jokowi brought his arch rival Prabowo Subianto into his cabinet as defence minister who had finished No 2 in the 2019 Presidential election, a move analysts say had helped heal divisions. It is because of the all-inclusive approach of the sitting President that contributed greatly towards achieving political harmony and stability.

Inside...

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Ashrafi urges political dialogue for stability in country

LAHORE: Special Representative on Interfaith Harmony and Middle East and Central Chairman of Pakistan Ulama Council Hafiz Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi called upon political parties on Sunday to hold dialogue for restoring stability and peace in the country.

Addressing a press conference at Baitul Aman here, he said investors were ready to come to Pakistan, but they wanted peace in the country. He said it was good that Pakistan's relations with Russia and other countries were improving.

He said the supremacy of the law required everyone to avoid playing with the Constitution. The ulama of the country did not approve of political fights, he added. Expressing his grief over the loss of human lives in a boat, which capsized near Greece, he said peace would have to be restored in Pakistan if the youth were to be stopped from leaving the country for some job opportunities in other countries. He demanded the prime minister and the interior minister should take action against those involved in sending Pakistani citizens abroad illegally. He also appealed the chief justice of Pakistan to take suo moto notice of such events. He also expressed condolences to those who lost their lives in a bus accident near Kallar Kahar. —APP

Forests preservation, growth mandatory

PESHAWAR: Where climate change issue is affecting the whole world, its impacts in Pakistan are also increasing by each passing year as according to a study Pakistan is among the list of countries vulnerable to climate change if timely measures are not taken. As many other measures are necessary to mitigate the effects of climate change, the most important one is to grow more trees besides controlling deforestation. No doubt, there are many other challenges being faced by the country but this issue requires special attention of the current governments, both central and provincial. Keeping in view the gravity of the issue, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has taken numerous measures for sustainable growth and preservation of forest resources of the province by ensuring careful utilization and protection of forest lands. "Considering forests a rich treasure of the province, the government is giving due consideration to its protection and sustainable growth through different measures including setting up of enclosures, protection from fire. —APP



ISLAMABAD: A family is buying traditionally designed trays from stall during "Sakafti Mela" at Lok Versa in Federal Capital.— ONLINE

Bilawal striving to develop good ties with all countries

The state minister said Pakistan People's Party had always pursued the policy of friendly relations with all world nations on the basis of equality

SARGODHA: Minister of State for Production and Industries Tasneem Ahmed Qureshi has said that the country is reaping the benefits of solid efforts of Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari for good relations with all world countries. The recent agreements with Russia were a result of a wise policy of Bilawal Bhutto, he said while talking to APP here on Sunday. The state minister said Pakistan People's Party had always pursued the policy of friendly relations with all world nations on the basis of equality. He said the deal struck by Pakistan with Russia for crude oil import would help the government pass on financial relief to masses, who had been bearing the brunt of inflation, stemming from the previous gov-



ernment's flawed economic policies. Tasneem Qureshi said: "It is for the first time in the country's history that crude oil from Russia has arrived in Pakistan. I want to say to my political opponents that Russian oil has reached Pakistan, which will benefit the people; so at least congratulate the nation today," he regretted that the previous government always misled people on almost all issues. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government, in fact, did not manage to get any oil deal with Russia, which was also confirmed by the Russian government officials. He said Pakistan had imported 100,000 tons of oil from Russia initially with plans to gradually increase the quantity over time as the country would meet its quarterly oil requirements through utilisation of Russian oil. The state minister said the previous government made baseless claims, suggesting that the PTI government's attempt to import oil from Russia led to its alleged removal. He said the government intended to ink a \$10 billion contract before the end of its tenure, so a new oil refinery could be established in Pakistan. — APP

BISP to release 4th quarterly tranche of Rs 9k

ISLAMABAD: Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) will release the 4th quarterly tranche of Benazir Kafaalat cash assistance from June 19 (today). The fourth quarterly tranche will be Rs 9000/- after a 25 percent increase, which was announced by the federal government early this year. In addition to Benazir Kafaalat cash assistance, Benazir Taleemi Wazaif stipend's installment of January to March is also being disbursed to 6.7 million school-going students having at least 70% attendance in school who are registered under Benazir Taleemi Wazaif. This time, the disbursement will be made through 1559, especially arranged Camp sites established throughout the country. The arrangement of disbursement of Stipends through Campsites is to facilitate the beneficiaries and ensure transparency. Provision of payment through ATMs of HBL and Bank Alfalah would not be available, nor will any payment be made at the POS outside the campsites established by the BISP. About Rs. 81 billion will be disbursed among 9 million beneficiaries' families of Benazir Kafaalat cash assistance, while another Rs 16 billion will be doled out to the 6.7 million beneficiaries of Taleemi Wazaif. It is important to note that at the primary level Rs 2000/- is paid to a girl student while Rs1500 is given to a boy student. At the secondary level, a girl student and a boy student are paid Rs 3000/- and Rs 2500/- respectively, while at the higher secondary level the stipend is Rs 4000/- and Rs 3500/- for the female and male students, respectively.—APP

Elections should be held as per constitution: Kaira

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) Qamar Zaman Kaira Sunday said that the general elections in the country should be held according to the Constitution and not on the will and whims of a single party as PPP believes in democratic norms. "Any political party achieved people's mandate in free and transparent election would have all the right to form government and address the country's problems", he said while talking to a Private news channel. PPP has strong roots in masses that would win the general elections and complete the mission of former prime ministers Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto Shaheed, he added. He said the PPP believes in services to people, not abusive politics, adding, PPP is not fighting against any political party.—APP

Federal budget 2023-24, a deficient and defensive document

CHAUDHRY M LATIF



There is no denying the fact that the federal budget launched for the fiscal year 2023-24 has been formulated during multi dimensional difficulties. First and foremost problem is the subjugation of IMF which is a political motivated agency sponsored by the power who are opposed to Pakistan for their political objectives. The second difficulty is obvious in shape of political instability due to elements who are believed to be following objectives detrimental to our security and survival. It is well known fact that the budget proposals are initiated and completed mathematically by celebrated principles of budget procedures. At the same time the government in power has to come out with inspiration, vision, priorities and political will. The present budget presented by the coalition government is devoid of any input by member political parties.

Total responsibility has been placed on the Finance Minister who is already in defensive position due to price hike and deterioration of our currency. The Minister was handed over charge of Finance Ministry with over confidence and treating him as an expert of financial matters. No doubt, he had bright record in the past but this time he seems baffled and his faulty decisions are self speaking. One conspicuous aspect of the budget is the unprecedented and fallacious decision is the unreasonable increase in salary of government employees which is also to be followed by provinces as well. It has two pronged drawbacks. On the one hand when we are already short of funds and are in grip of heavy loans and over drafts, there was no sense in announcing so high increase as 35 %, 30% and pension 17.5%. This decision has foolishly created disparities and discrimination when the calamity is the same and equal for all employees. The decision is also antagonistic to the provisions of fundamental rights ensured under the constitution. Equality before law and equal protection of law are the guarantees under the constitution. In nutshell the Finance Minister and his aides have proved an utter failure at this juncture of political

turmoil. The budget proposals are bound to result in political problems for future government that would come in power after general elections. For the bureaucracy civil, military or otherwise only 10 % increase in their salaries could be plausible for all grade of service and for pensioners. The Administrative services group in civil service has already created disparities in salary structure and some employees are agitating their cases before the judiciary. The Finance Minister has no legal or constitutional authority to create this discrimination in services, and create thereby distrust among the bureaucracy which is the backbone of state. The government is giving too much and in return earning rift among the classes of employees and uncalled for financial burden. The present government has at its discredit the waste of 89 billion of rupees in shape of free atta scheme. The Atta scheme was also launched without proper planning. The present budget is another attempt to usher in gloomy panorama in the succeeding years. The reason being that pay once increased cannot be reduced in future under law. So the liability has been created for no justifiable cause. The budget has failed to devise means of frugal-

ty which could serve as earning by saving. The nonsense order of closing of business concerns by or before 8pm should be changed by order of opening business centers by or before 9 am. It would save energy and inculcate habit of early rising. The shops not open by 9 am should be penalized. Similarly there should be one holiday in a week and six working days by starting at 8 am and closing by 2 pm. That would again save energy and encourage getting up early by our princely elite of bureaucracy who have the authority even to supersede the order of the government. In fact they are the real decision makers at the federal secretariat. The budget has also been rejected by the Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries. As a positive measure, the government could curtail protocol privileges which exploit our police force and the public is left at the mercy of dacoits. There should be inspiration and hope in the budget speech. The government could change the pattern of annual tree plantation tradition and could under take construction of artificial lakes in all forest enclosures so that trees could survive and also could be saved from fatal forest fires. There is a big fire in Canada these days

and earlier a similar mishap was witnessed in Australia. If there are several lakes in forest enclosures the forest fires could be easily controlled without colossal loss of wild life and property. The government could also undertake schemes of saving every drop of rain water. In France, as reported by Ch. Zulfikar Langrial from Paris, each house is bound to conserve roof rain water for their vegetation and vegetables. In India solar panels are placed on water canals thereby saving space and also saving 30 % water of canals due to control of evaporation. In our brother country Turkey the government has decided to cultivate fruit gardens in territories lying as fallow land. Unfortunately, the current budget is devoid of any visionary idea or scheme. Another important point missed by the learned Finance Minister is that coalition government has made some achievements and also which should have been highlighted budget could be defended effectively. The government is struggling hard to purchase petroleum, energy, and food items at cheaper rates from neighboring countries which is a positive initiative. —The writer is Retired Additional Chief Secretary and Advocate Supreme Court of AJK.

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

JUNE

June 02/Italy	National/ Independence Day
June 04/Finland	Armed Forces Day
June 06/UAE	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
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Railway Exchange 9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi. 5555489
CAA.....9281092



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MH.....5611116
Cantt Hospital...9270907-11
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RGH.....9290301-7
Holy Family.....9290322-7
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Shifa International 4603666



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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Revival, expansion of Pakistan's film industry vital: Marriyum

Pakistan's film industry faced a significant setback between 1970 and 2000, causing its growth to stagnate. However, since 2000, the industry has experienced a boost, although its progress has been hindered by the absence of cinemas and affordability issues, which limited access for the general public, she maintained

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Sunday said that the revival and expansion of Pakistan's film industry were vital to project the national narrative through screen tourism. "Screen tourism presents an opportunity to spread the narrative of Pakistan, as seen in the successful examples of Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Iran, where budding film industries have thrived", she said while addressing 25 high achievers of the National Amateur Film Festival Award bound to leave for Australia on Monday. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has sponsored these 25 students one-year training in New York Academy, Australia. The government was to promote Pakistan's narrative, focusing on heritage, youth engagement, and tourism through screen tourism, she maintained. The minister said it was high time

to invest in Pakistan's entertainment industry, which currently enjoyed tax exemptions.

"Over the next decade, I foresee a revival of the industry that will allow it to compete with neighbouring countries and even international markets," she said adding that the high achievers had the potential to make a significant impact in this field. The minister recalled that Pakistan's film industry faced a significant setback between 1970 and 2000, causing its growth to stagnate. However, since 2000, the industry has experienced a boost, although its progress has been hindered by the absence of cinemas and affordability issues, which limited access for the general public, she maintained. The minister said the government introduced a film policy in 2017 to address these challenges. She said that extensive research and consultations with relevant stakeholders and experts were conducted to develop this comprehensive policy. Lessons, she added, were learned from



countries with flourishing film industries or successful revivals, providing valuable insights. Marriyum Aurangzeb said that incentives for the film industry were included in the 2018 budget, and after coming into power again last year, the coalition government established a dedicated film division in the ministry. The film sector currently enjoyed zero taxation, with income tax exemptions for individuals and production houses. Import of equipment for film and drama production had also been tax

exempted, she said. The minister disclosed that the corporate entities providing funds for film production can claim CSR tax credits from the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), making it a significant incentive. Furthermore, she said, the government has approved a film finance fund with an initial allocation of Rs 2 billion. This fund, operated through the Film Council, will support budding producers in the production of films, television dramas, and documentaries. The minister said for making entertainment accessible to the general public, cinema income has been exempted from taxation for the first ten years, especially for those cinemas offering affordable ticket prices. She maintained that an excellent example of the cinema industry's revival was the monumental success of the new version of Mulla Jatt movie. This version, not seen by those who made the original movie a hit, generated substantial business overseas in multiplex cinemas. She said by taking

advantage of this framework, young students and professionals, equipped with valuable skill sets, can tap into the immense potential of the film industry.

Marriyum said that universities like NUST, Iqra and LUMS as well as schools and colleges, offer film production and drama as degree courses, fostering a talent pool for the industry. The revitalized PTV academy, equipped with modern studios, will be open to schools and colleges, allowing the youth to gain knowledge and experience in film production, she remarked. About the Australia-bound high achievers of the National Amateur Film Festival Award, she said as individuals embarking on this course, they were fortunate to be part of this endeavor. Upon their return, they might even become instructors and produce films at the PTV academy, further contributing to the industry's growth. She congratulated them on their achievement, and wished them best of luck for their future endeavors.

MbS unveils plans for The Line city in Neom

ISLAMABAD: The Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia Press Attaché Dr. Naif Al-Otaibi on Sunday said in a bold and visionary move, Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman had announced plans for The Line city in Neom, an ambitious project set to transform the concept of urban living. Designed to accommodate a staggering 10 million people, The Line city aimed to become a beacon of progress, innovation, and sustainability under the dynamic leadership of Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman, he informed the media persons in a virtual meeting from Riyadh. Dr. Naif explained that the city, located on the pristine Red Sea coast in northwest Saudi Arabia, spanned over 26,500 square kilometers, making it one of the largest independent urban projects in the world. With a strategic location at the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and Africa, it was poised to become a global hub for trade and investment, he maintained. He said at the heart of Neom, the city's philosophy lied a commitment to sustainable development as Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman envisions a future where cutting-edge technology and environmental stewardship go hand in hand. He said the city would be powered by 100% renewable energy, making it one of the largest carbon-neutral urban centers on the planet. Dr. Naif said it would boast state-of-the-art infrastructure and cutting-edge technologies, including advanced artificial intelligence systems, autonomous transportation networks, and smart city solutions. The Crown Prince's vision incorporated the latest advancements in robotics, biotechnology, and nanotechnology, aiming to create an ecosystem conducive to innovation and scientific breakthroughs, he added. He further said the city would prioritize quality of life for its residents as a comprehensive healthcare system, world-class education institutions, and an abundance of recreational and cultural facilities would cater to the diverse needs of its inhabitants. With a focus on nurturing talent, it planned to attract leading researchers, entrepreneurs.—DNA

RDA accelerates operation against illegal construction

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) on the directives of the Director General (DG) Muhammad Saif Anwar Jappa has accelerated its ongoing operation against illegal construction. According to an RDA spokesman, the RDA enforcement team in an operation had sealed four schools namely Beaconhouse, Two Silver Oaks School Buildings, Kamal Laboratory in Civil Line Housing Scheme and Jinnah Foundation High School in Asghar Mall Scheme. The spokesman informed that the Enforcement Squad of RDA while carrying out an operation against unauthorized and illegal residential cum commercial buildings in Civil Line Housing and Asghar Mall Schemes took action in accordance with the law against the violators.

He said that the Enforcement Squad including the Assistant Director of Building Control, Assistant Director of Land, Building Inspectors and others carried out the operation and sealed the five commercial buildings which were illegally constructed. The spokesman informed that earlier notices were also issued to the owners of the properties namely Dr Mansoor Jan, Muhammad Yousaf, Salman Yousaf, Sadat Rashid, Asad Pervaiz Qureshi, Amir and Amer Malik who had violated approved building plans, maps and violated the Punjab Development of Cities Act 1976 and RDA Building and Zoning Regulations 2020. They constructed illegal commercial buildings without approval and No Objection Certificates (NOCs). He said that the DG had directed the LU&BC Wing

to take strict action against encroachments, illegal and unauthorized constructions and commercial activities without any discrimination. The DG had also ordered the Building Control Wing to conduct a survey to identify illegal residential and commercial buildings and regularize all illegal residential cum commercial buildings in RDA-controlled areas, he said adding, the citizens had also been advised to remove encroachments on their own to avoid any legal action. RDA spokesperson Hafiz Irfan informed that the authority was working to control illegal societies and in that regard, it had up-loaded a list of "legal and illegal housing societies on its website" so that people could be saved from investing in illegal schemes. "Stern action under the law is being taken against such

societies including demolishing of illegal buildings and issuing of notices to their administrations." As many as 42 legal notices were issued besides lodging nine FIRs against the rules' violators during the last five months. Their 17 offices were sealed while 35 complaints in Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Cyber Crime Wing for registration of FIRs were launched this year," he said. "The RDA had also requested Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) to refrain private TV channels from airing advertisements of illegal housing societies." Moreover, the Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and the DG of the FIA had also been approached to block bank, and social media accounts of such schemes, the spokesman said.—APP

PIAF for serious steps as exports down

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Expressing serious concern over the continued falling trend of exports the Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) has said that the country's exports during the first eleven months (July-May) of the current fiscal year 2022-23 (11MFY23) totaled \$25.38 billion against \$28.87 billion during the corresponding period of last year, showing a drop of 12 percent, as the government has failed to win the confidence of the business community due to continued rupee depreciation and uncertainty PIAF Chairman Faheem-ur-Rehman Saigol, quoting the latest figures, stated that the country's textile exports were down by around 15 percent during the first eleven months to \$15 billion as compared to \$17 billion during the same period of last year. Faheem Saigol said that Pakistan has remained a potential market for foreign investors, who still have plans to make fresh investment in the country, but they have continued to wait for the return of economic stability. He highlighted uncertainty in the rupee-dollar parity as one of the major concerns of foreign investors. He said a slowdown in the economy had badly impacted business confidence. It is must for the authorities concerned to first create an enabling environment for the local businessmen desiring to make new investment. Data shows that the exports in May 2023 were \$2.2 billion (provisional) as compared to \$2.137 billion in April 2023 showing an increase of 2.95 percent but decreased by 16.16 percent as compared to \$2.624 billion in May 2022.

Govt can effectively maximize budget's impact: PIDE report

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Federal annual budget proposal for the fiscal year 2023-24 marks a significant milestone in crucial economic decision-making. To maximize the budget's impact and align it with national goals, the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) MacroPolicy Lab has conducted a thorough evaluation, providing invaluable insights and recommendations. The Lab's analysis focuses on optimizing resource allocation, addressing socio-economic challenges, and fostering sustainable development. The policy recommendations put forward by the PIDE MacroPolicy Lab aim to enhance the budget's effectiveness and drive economic growth. These recommendations have been formulated after a comprehensive evaluation of the budget proposal. According to a Press Release issued from the Pakistan Institute of Development

Economics (PIDE), MacroPolicy Lab insights highlighted key areas of focus that will contribute to the long-term development of Pakistan. Focus on Export Promotion: The Lab recommends that the government prioritizes export promotion as a crucial element for economic growth. It suggests boosting investors' confidence and encouraging a favorable business environment. The budget proposals should include measures to stabilize and enhance the exports sector, such as providing incentives for the IT industry and freelancing. Additionally, the government should facilitate the remittance of earnings by allowing registered freelancers to open and maintain dollar accounts in local commercial banks. Evaluation of Taxes and Withholding: To strengthen the tax system and revenue generation, the government needs to evaluate taxes and withholding practices. The Lab highlights the detrimental effects of withholding taxes

on financial inclusion and suggests promoting the use of digital payments in certain cases. The budget should also focus on expanding the tax net by considering sectors like agriculture and retail. Prioritize Productive Growth: To drive productive growth, the government should prioritize sectors that can generate higher value-added outputs, employment opportunities, and contribute to overall economic development. The Lab emphasizes the need to incentivize the manufacturing and export sectors for sustainable productivity gains. It also recommends allocating a portion of the budget for research and development grants, fostering innovation and addressing national challenges. Address Debt and Debt Servicing: The budget proposal should address the growing concern of public debt and debt servicing. The Lab highlights the need for managing both external and domestic debts effectively.

Pakistan has become a hunting ground for elites

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt said on Sunday Pakistan has been made a hunting ground for the elites. Influential

people consider Pakistan a gold mine that is being robbed mercilessly to fill their coffers, he said. Shahid Rasheed Butt said in a statement issued here today that no serious attempt has ever been made to expand the scope of taxes in any budget. Tax evaders have always enjoyed a free

ride while taxpayers have been broken by continuously increasing the burden on them, and this process is still going on with full force, he added. The business leader said that the elite have been devouring the country's resources for decades, but there is no end to their rent seeking

and greed. Shahid Rasheed Butt said that we have been made into a nation where basic needs are impossible to meet, justice, equality, and prosperity are nowhere to be found, and the country's survival is linked to begging. The policymakers have only one goal in mind, to serve the elite.

'Elections should be held as per constitution'

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) Qamar Zaman Kaira Sunday said that the general elections in the country should be held according to the Constitution and not on the will and whims of a single party as PPP believes in democratic norms. "Any political party achieved people's mandate in free and transparent election would have all the right to form government and address the country's problems", he said while talking to a Private news channel. PPP has strong roots in masses that would win the general elections and complete the mission of former prime ministers Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto Shaheed, he added. He said the PPP believes in services to people, not abusive politics, adding, PPP is not fighting against any political party but against poverty and inflation. PPP government had always worked for poor people and downtrodden segments of the society, he added. —APP

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PID K 3628

Briefs

Eidul Azha likely on June 29

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Central Ruet-i-Hilal Committee will meet on June 19 for moon-sighting of Zilhaj. The meeting of Ruet-i-Hilal committee will be chaired by Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad at the meteorological department office in Karachi. The announcement of moon will be made after the meeting. Other zonal committees will also meet in Lahore, Peshawar, Quetta and Islamabad simultaneously. According to the Climate Data Processing Center (CDPC), Zilhaj moon is likely to be seen in Pakistan on June 19 and Eidul Azha may fall on June 29 (Thursday). The CDPC report says the Zilhaj moon will be born on June 18 at 9.37pm. It is highly likely that Zilhaj will begin on June 20. However, the final announcement will be made by the committee.

Shandur Polo festival to be started on July 7

ISLAMABAD: A three-day Shandur Polo Festival 2023 would be held from July 7 to 9 to entertain the participants coming from various parts of the country at large. Shandur Polo Festival is an amazing festival celebrated by the tribes of Gilgit and Chitral in the northern parts of the country, said a news release received here on Sunday. The tribes from the regions of Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral meet at the Shandur pass every summer. Summer and Autumn are considered ideal for exploring the regions of Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral. The pass has a beautiful polo ground where unique wild free-style polo is used to play among different teams of the region. Shandur Polo Ground is considered to be the highest polo ground in the world at 3,700 meters. The polo ground is adjacent to Shandur Lake. The festival provides an amazing cultural experience in the Hindukush mountain ranges.—APP

Revenue officers ordered to complete all 'Jamabandis'

RAWALPINDI: Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Liaquat Ali Chatha has directed the authorities concerned to complete all the 'Jamabandis' within 15 days. According to a Commissioner Office spokesperson, the Commissioner had also instructed the authorities to formulate a special cleanliness plan for Eid ul Azha. All revenue matters including the issues of 'Khasra, Gardavari, Jamabandi, and blocked khawat' should be resolved on a priority basis, he directed the authorities concerned. The allotment of land should be done in the presence of all the parties concerned and a unilateral decision would not be accepted, he added. No revenue case should remain pending for more than six months, he said. High-performing officers would be encouraged and action would be taken against those who are not performing well, the Commissioner said.—APP

Exploring KP's hydel potential inevitable

PESHAWAR: Citing the importance of cheap power generation for a country's economic and social growth, developed and developing countries around the world give special impetus to hydel power generation. With soaring prices of petroleum products, reliance on oil for power generation is being lessened around the globe, pushing countries to build more water reservoirs not only to fulfil growing energy needs but to enhance agricultural yields. Like other SAARC countries, Pakistan is also confronted with the grave challenge of an energy crisis due to high population growth, power pilferage and non-construction of dams.—APP

Agriculture is the lifeline of Pakistan's economy

The government should ensure the exhibitions of the agricultural sector at the local and international level. He said that this sector is facing a severe shortage of cold storage, cold storage warehouses should be built at all airports for the storage of Pakistani agricultural commodities

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that the agricultural sector can play a very key role in increasing exports and reducing imports. In the last one year, the trade deficit has reduced from 17 billion dollars to 3 billion dollars because of measures taken by the government. In order to completely eliminate the deficit, attention should be paid to increasing the export of fruits, vegetables and other agricultural commodities. Promotion of research is necessary to increase the efficiency of the agricultural sector. Government should mobilize embassies to promote Pakistani products to new markets of the world. He expressed these views yesterday while talking to the members of the Agro Committee of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce who met him under the chairmanship of the Convener Committee Chaudhry Sohail. President Islamabad Chamber said that being an agricultural country, agriculture is the lifeline for the Pakistani economy. Pakistan achieved a record production of 27.5 million tons of wheat this year despite the devastating floods. Similarly,



Pakistan ranks fifth with 88.7 million tons of sugarcane, 10th with 9.3 million tons of rice, 20th with 10 million tons of maize, 5th with 2.3 million tons of mango and sixth with 2.1 million tons of onion production. Pakistan should take steps to take its agricultural products to traditional as well as non-traditional markets, focusing on Central Asian countries. For the agriculture sector, the results of the Prime Minister Kisan package given by the government have been seen this year in the form of record production of wheat, the government should not only extend this package but

also increase the incentives. He said that like other industries of the country, the fruit and vegetable industry is facing problems due to high production costs. Fruit orchards in Pakistan have become very old, which has affected the production on the one hand, and on the other hand, due to the decline in quality, there are problems in exports. Mangoes and Kinu have a major share in Pakistan's agricultural exports, but this year, mango exports have decreased by 20%, while Kinu exports have decreased from 220 million dollars to 110 million dollars,

which is a big blow to the government's export promotion policy. The government should promote research and development in the agricultural sector. In this regard, money should be allocated in the budget. Cold storage is a big problem for the fruits and vegetables sector of Pakistan. Electricity prices for the cold storage industry should be fixed on a prospective basis. He said that although the federal budget has been presented in the parliament, but before approval, the government should announce all possible incentives to increase the production and export of the agricultural sector. Speaking on this occasion, Convener Agro Committee Chaudhry Sohail said that we want to take steps to increase the export of fruits and vegetables from this region through the platform of Islamabad Chamber. The government should ensure the exhibitions of the agricultural sector at the local and international level. He said that this sector is facing a severe shortage of cold storage, cold storage warehouses should be built at all airports for the storage of Pakistani agricultural commodities. Chaudhry Bashir, Naseebullah Khan, Babar Chaudhry, Khalid Chaudhry and others were also present in the meeting.

Northern tourist resorts witnessing huge rush

ISLAMABAD: With the start of kid's summer holidays, mostly tourist destinations of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, mainly those in Abbottabad, Swat, Naran, Kaghan and Shangha have been witnessing a huge rush of visitors who are enjoying the picturesque beauty of hill stations with their family members. Vacation spots in Pakistan are no less than any other international vacation spots as scenic views and beautiful landscapes will leave any person refreshed and happy, said a report aired by PTV news channel. "I always try to choose a hill

station as my vacation spot. They are a perfect choice to unwind and relax after your dull and monotonous routine", said a student. Gilgit-Baltistan and its hill stations are perfect for adventurous people, said a foreign tourist. Shogran is a gorgeous hill station located in Kaghan valley, said a tourist from Punjab city, adding, every year, hundreds of tourists visit Shogran because of its breathtaking beauty. Kalam has also the most visited hilly areas of Pakistan as it is an astonishing valley located 99km from Mingora. Kalam has so

much to offer to its visitors. From beautiful hills to freshwater streams to wildflowers to cool breeze, Kalam is filled with all the blessings of nature, said a local. Malam Jabba is a hill station located in the Hindu Kush mountain range which is immensely popular among the masses because of its amazing ski resort, said a foreign visitor, adding, people from different countries come to visit this spectacular ski resort every year specially in summers. Hill stations in Pakistan are a perfect option to spend an adventurous and

fun-filled vacation with your friends and family, said a group of youngsters. AJK is the world's renowned paradise for tourists. The mesmerizing green valleys, pastures and meadows are a major source of attraction for people", said a local. "I had imagined the beauty of Swat from my childhood but this place is certainly more beautiful than I imagined," said a youngster girl. "I have captured the beauty and beautiful moments of Naran Kaghan these will stay with me forever," said a visitor who came from UAE.—APP

IRSA releases 230,800 cusecs water

Water inflow and outflow in dam was recorded as 143,300 cusecs and 100,000 cusecs respectively

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Sunday released 230,800 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 300,500 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1455.00 feet and was 57.00 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 143,300 cusecs and 100,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1147.60 feet, which was 97.60 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 54,400 cusecs and 28,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 118,000, 127,500, 70,400 and 23,300 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 60,000 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 20,800 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

'Digital printed meat distribution' bags attracting customers

ISLAMABAD: As Eid-ul-Azha is approaching fast, a number of social media platforms have introduced a new unique trend of transparent and flexible digital printed meat distribution bags which is gripping the user's (netizens) attention. According to a social media report, these modern meat packaging bags are Eid special digital printed ones to help citizens to divide the meat into portions for distribution amongst family, friends and the deserving class. "Get ready for a hassle-free Bakra Eid meat distribution with our premium quality plastic bags! Designed to keep your meat fresh and hygienic, our bags come in various sizes and are easy to carry. Made from eco-friendly and recyclable material, our bags are a responsible choice for the environment. Order now and enjoy a stress-free meat distribution experience", a company assures on social media. Eid ul Azha shoppers are made of high-density material and these biodegradable Eid bags are safer for the environment than traditional plastic bags, claimed an online seller talking to this scribe of APP. "I am really impressed as it is high-quality food grade shoppers which would keep the meat fresh for long hours", an online customer commented. Eid Mubarak Printed meat bags are also amazing and attractive to my family members, said a woman customer. These logo prints are really vibrant and attractive, and the quality of the shoppers is also premium and fine, said another customer. Meat distribution shoppers are beautiful and eye-catching, said a youngster. We are offering various sizes of bags which are easy to carry and made from eco-friendly material, said an online retailer, adding, its price is between 200 to 500. "Online unique style bags are now easy and comfortable," says a website user. In the online gallery, the printed bag styles, details and prices are given separately to help a customer select the bags of his choice, said another user.—APP

Cantt Boards set June 28 deadline for availing discount

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi and Chaklala Cantonment Boards have advised the taxpayers to pay their property taxes, conservancy taxes, and water charges for the current year by June 28 and receive a 10 per cent discount. The property owners failing to pay the taxes and other charges by the deadline would be facing monetary penalties. According to RCB spokesman, the board had sent all the outstanding bills to its taxpayers. However, the individuals who did not receive these bills could contact the RCB main office or RCB Care Centre to avail of the 10 per cent discount on taxes, he added. For more information and queries about the discount on property tax and other RCB-related matters, the residents could contact the board office, he added.

He informed that special arrangements had been made and National Bank Booth Cantonment Board Branch would be open on June 24 to facilitate the taxpayers. He further informed that RCB on the directives of the Cantonment Executive Officer had started a survey to identify dangerous buildings. The Board had directed the owners of the old buildings to take all possible precautionary measures and get the dangerous buildings repaired before start of monsoon rains. He informed that after completing the survey, notices would be issued to the owners under Section-126 of the Cantonment Act, 1924 and they would be directed to vacate or demolish their dilapidated commercial and residential properties. The owners of the dangerous buildings particularly.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Executive Director, Tang International Education Group Max Ma posing for group photo graph along with others during "Dragon Boat Festival" in a sense of Pak China Cultural Exchange Event, in Federal Capital— ONLINE

ICCPO visits Security Division

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Capital City Police Officer, Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan conducted a visit to the Security Division Islamabad and reviewed security arrangements and oversaw the maintenance and inspection of police vehicles, a police public relations officer said. He said that, the ICCPO was accompanied by CPO Security Muhammad Hassan Raza Khan, SSP Security Division Masood Ahmed and the MTO Security Division. ICCPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan inspected various police vehicles, including the Hino Truck, Mazda Truck, Foton Pickup and Toyota Hiace Ambulance. Emphasizing the significance of maintaining a reliable fleet for VIP movements and foreign delegations, the ICCPO issued strict instructions to the MTO regarding regular inspections and prompt repairs of any defects discovered. During the inspection, the ICCPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan commended the drivers of the vehicles and the MTO Security Division for their dedication and exemplary service. He highlighted the importance of maintaining vehicles in optimal condition and emphasized the need for cleanliness and upkeep. "The Islamabad Capital Police is steadfast in its commitment to upholding security standards and ensuring the safety of our citizens, guests, and dignitaries," stated Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan. "Our police vehicles play a crucial role in this endeavor, and it is imperative that they are maintained to the highest standards to fulfill their responsibilities effectively."

IHC issues contempt notice to federal minister

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Saturday issued a contempt of court notice to Federal Minister for Science and Technology Agha Hassan Baloch and secretary science and technology. In its written order, the IHC said that prima facie both the minister as well as the secretary had deliberately violated the court order. "Both are issued a show-cause notice. Please explain within five days as to why contempt proceedings are not initiated against you," the court said. The court issued the notice in the case of the appointment of acting DG Pakistan Standard and Quality Control Ghulam Farooq. The IHC, in its order, said that the court had, on March 22, 2023, suspended the notification of Farooq's appointment. But, through office order, dated March 28, another joint secretary Ziauddin was appointed on the post. And on April 10, Farooq was reinstated through another office order. The high court further said that a civil servant could not be appointed on the post of MP scale, and that it was the federal government, and not the Ministry of Science and Technology.

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Trump and political violence

Like Joe Biden's ascent to the White House, Donald Trump's indictment for unlawfully holding classified documents and obstructing justice offers a partial answer to one great question of American politics: can the country's institutions contain his excesses? The backlash that the indictment has prompted highlights another: what happens when they do? When the Democrat defeated him, Mr Trump's armed supporters stormed the Capitol to prevent the transfer of power, assaulting police officers and chanting "Hang Mike Pence". The violent rhetoric doesn't just come from the grassroots. The Arizona Republican Kari Lake announced that "to get to President Trump, you're going to have to go through me, and you're going to have to go through 75 million Americans just like me ... Most of us are card-carrying members of the NRA [National Rifle Association]." Mr Trump himself previously warned of "death and destruction" if he were indicted in a separate case, over hush money payments. Nonetheless, last year, research found that more than two in five Americans think a civil war is at least somewhat likely within the next decade. The number who think violence would be justified to restore Mr Trump to the White House has fallen since last year, but still stands at 12 million. An increasingly divided country is also increasingly well armed, with almost 400m privately held guns; their owners are disproportionately white, male and Republican. According to one study, almost 3% of adults, or 7.5 million people, bought a firearm for the first time between January 2019 and April 2021. A slew of analysts have warned that the US could be heading towards widespread political violence. Prof Barbara Walter notes in her book *How Civil Wars Start* that two conditions are key: ethnic factionalism and anocracy – when a country is neither fully democratic nor fully autocratic. She believes that the US has the first, and remains close to the second, even if the short-term threat has ebbed somewhat since 2021. Others have pulled back from warnings of civil war, but think major civil disruption is entirely plausible. No one foresees a straight confrontation between forces as in the 1860s, let alone a geographic split. What some experts fear is a guerrilla-style asymmetric conflict waged by a decentralised movement, with small groups or lone attackers targeting minority targets such as synagogues or gay clubs, civilians more broadly, infrastructure, or figures such as Democratic politicians, judges and election officials. No violence broke out at the indictment hearing in Miami, as some had feared. Key figures on the extreme right are now locked up: more than 1,000 people have been charged with offences relating to January 6, and hundreds of those imprisoned. Others reportedly feel that Mr Trump has abandoned them. Nonetheless, the growth of threats and political violence in recent years is undeniable. That the language of Mr Trump and his enablers makes these more likely is surely, by now, beyond doubt.



The west must admit responsibility

The nationalities of the several hundred people assumed to have drowned in the latest, terrible migrant boat tragedy in the Mediterranean help explain why they attempted so perilous a journey. Pakistanis, Egyptians, Syrians, Afghans and Palestinians reportedly comprised most of the approximately 750 passengers crammed on to the unseaworthy vessel that set off from Tobruk in Libya and sank 50 miles off the coast of Greece last Wednesday. The list of countries of origin is an index of pain, for which the EU, Britain and their allies bear much responsibility. The west's failure to stop the Syrian regime's war on its people led to the 2015-16 migrant crisis, when hundreds of thousands of Syrians sought safety in Europe. Although fighting has subsided, many, including Palestinians living in desperate conditions in camps in the war-torn country, still flee persecution by a vengeful regime, or are quitting an increasingly unaccommodating Turkey. It can be no surprise that Afghans were aboard the boat. The decision by the UK and European Nato members to join the US in abandoning Afghanistan in 2021 triggered a predictable crisis. The UN says 28.3 million people, two-thirds of the population, will need urgent humanitarian assistance this year. Despotism and Taliban rule makes matters worse. Little wonder people resort to desperate measures. This argument may be extended further, to include people from other neglected, post-colonial countries in the Horn of Africa, the Sahel and South Asia, whose sense of hopelessness, impoverishment and chronic insecurity fuels migration. Last week's tragedy has produced a torrent of recriminations. The Greek coastguard is criticised for not doing more or acting fast enough to help the stricken trawler. The official story of what happened at sea appears to change daily. Greece's government is again under fire, given its recently toughened anti-migrant stance and previous, shocking cases of boat "pushback". European countries, including Britain, have persistently failed to develop a humane, coherent and effective approach to the challenges posed by irregular migration. After the 2015-16 influx, Germany's Angela Merkel cut a one-off deal with Turkey to curb refugee flows. A subsequent agreement with Libya did not halt abuses in detention camps or new sailings. Brussels is now discussing payments to Tunisia. For its part, Britain cut a random deal with Rwanda, in breach of international law. Yet overall, efforts to deter these dangerous voyages, in the Mediterranean and the Channel, are floundering, with the numbers of crossings and deaths rising this year. Far too few safe, legal routes exist. And international coordination is lacking. Whether the new EU-wide migration and asylum pact will make any difference is questionable. Short-term fixes and Rwanda-type wheezes will not prevent more tragedies. The need to recognise fundamental causes and tackle migration challenges at source is urgent. That must mean expanded, systemic cooperation wherever politically possible with countries of origin and transit. It means offering more (not less) development aid and assistance. It means acknowledging food insecurity, inequality, conflict and climate crisis – key drivers of irregular migration – are problems the west helped create.

Emergence of Golden Ring Economic Bloc

Gul.i.Ayesha Bhatti



In our rapidly evolving world, there is a political and economic shift in favor of Asia, which is expanding quickly and has enormous potential for natural resources and human capital that is still mostly untapped. An obvious example in this context is Russia's announced initiative to create a "Greater Eurasian Partnership" on the largest continent in the world, which would include states like Pakistan, China, India, Iran, and other regional nations based on their pre-existing cooperation structures (the Eurasian

According to Kenneth Kriz, a transportation route is a geographical region between two points that connects various hubs and facilitates the movement of people and goods. One or more routes connecting economic activity centers make create a corridor. These routes share transfer stops but connect to the same terminals with different alignments. Therefore, a transit corridor that carries oil, natural gas, coal, electricity, and other commodities between regions of energy and good supply and consumption might be described as an "economic corridor."

In our rapidly evolving world, there is a political and economic shift in favor of Asia, which is expanding quickly and has enormous potential for natural resources and human capital that is still mostly untapped. An obvious example in this context is Russia's announced initiative to create a "Greater Eurasian Partnership" on the largest continent in the world, which would include states like Pakistan, China, India, Iran, and other regional nations based on their pre-existing cooperation structures (the Eurasian Economic Union, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN). The notion of the large Central Eurasian regions being geopolitically and economically united allows for the designation of China and Iran as the respective eastern and western poles, Russia as the northern pole, and Pakistan as the southern pole. About 17% of the global GDP comprises these four nations. Their multifaceted cooperation may not only aid in the expansion of their connection (transport, energy, military-technical, and humanitarian), but also in the inclusive, sustainable socio-economic development aimed at easing tension and bringing about peace in the region.

This quadrangular state formation in their relationship seems natural and may be quite encouraging, particularly in all these countries' relations with Washington deteriorating. The US's increased economic, political, and diplomatic pressure on these regimes is responsible to foster tighter ties between Moscow, Islamabad, Beijing, and Teheran. Extending their interstate cooperation on bilateral, quadrilateral, and multilateral levels within various international and regional platforms, such as the United Nations, its specialized agencies, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, may be beneficial. First and foremost, Russia and Pakistan, with their ongoing efforts to make up for missed opportunities to advance their mutually beneficial collaboration, may be among the

entities with the greatest interest in developing this regional interstate cooperation. There have been many ups and downs in the interaction between these two countries over the course of their more than 70-year interstate history, according to a thorough examination of the evolution of their relations. As a result of both governments' participation in developing the shared economic and security structure of Greater Eurasia, their bilateral relations have recently progressively reached a new level of mutually beneficial partnership. The implementation of the Russian integration project of the EEU, which opens the possibility of creating the Greater Eurasian Partnership, in tandem with the Chinese mega-initiative of the Belt and Road Initiative and its flagship project CPEC. In this context, Russia supports Pakistan's idea to create a new strategic economic bloc known as the "Golden Ring Economic Bloc (GREB)," which would also include China, Iran, and Turkey in addition to Russia and Pakistan. These five nations, which geographically form a sort of ring around Central Asia and Afghanistan, account for over 30% of all human and natural resources, giving GREB its name. GREB concept appears to be a more focused attempt to promote the country's geostrategic importance for regional connectivity and Eurasian integration in the rapidly changing global and regional environment. It is strategically promising and advantageous for all stakeholders. The emergence of the GREB initiative as a national geostrategic and geoeconomic concept of self-identification demonstrates Islamabad's intention to shift its foreign policy towards regional integration by constructing a new variant of a regional economic bloc that does not conflict with, but rather supplements, the existing Russia and China inclusive economic projects of Eurasian integration (GEP-EEU and BRI-CPEC), in order to harmonize all of them. Through the connectivity of transportation and energy between the nations along the currently resurrected historic Great Silk Road, the world-including Russia—is becoming more interested in the Central Eurasian region, which is developing rapidly but is the least interconnected. Due to its convergence with the Russian concept of GEP-EEU, Moscow also supports the Chinese mega plan of BRI-CPEC. It offers a chance to expand partnerships across Eurasia and achieve a more thorough regionalization of the continent. Due to Iran's significance in helping to stabilize the situation in Central and South Asia, Russia supports the option of CPEC's

continued growth through its inclusion in addition to Afghanistan (which borders China and Pakistan). The establishment of a strategic alliance between these nations inside the CPEC framework can support both regional stability and the socioeconomic development of those nations. Moscow is interested in the development and implementation of CPEC principally as a means of enhancing regional connectivity in Greater Eurasia. Russian specialists claim their country values Pakistan's geographic location and wants to help it peacefully join the multipolar Eurasian system built through Sino-Russian strategic cooperation. Additionally, it provides Moscow with a chance to penetrate the brand-new Asian gas supply markets, which the Russian energy behemoth views as a substitute for the flow of European gas. A further significant milestone towards regional connection was the arrival of the first shipment of oil from Russia in Pakistan. Pakistan has paid for this cheap crude oil in Chinese currency, a significant change from the country's US dollar-dominated export payment policy. The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs says that in principle, our way is open for the trade of crude oil in Chinese currency.

Russia has also suggested a land route to deliver oil through Iranian territory. By utilizing this corridor, the participating nations can utilize barter commerce and similar methods to fully utilize each other's resources and meet their requirements without relying on those states who might otherwise urge them to forgo their national interests. Additionally, these nations stand to gain from their unfinished initiatives like the TAPI and IP pipelines. Business to Business (B2B) Barter Trade Mechanism 2023 has been introduced by the government of Pakistan recently. Pakistan would be permitted to export a wide variety of items to Russia, Iran, and Afghanistan under the new regulations. Pakistan would buy necessary goods from Iran, Russia, and Afghanistan in exchange, including crude oil, LNG, and LPG, to meet its energy needs. In addition to ensuring a consistent supply of energy resources, this strategic barter system will help these states become less reliant on conventional trading practices.

This economic golden ring can be further strengthened by formalizing a strategic policy, fostering greater cooperation, establishing and upholding principles, engaging in fruitful debate, and recognizing and defending the shared interests of all member states.

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Why CPEC is Bleeding?

Dr. Abdus Sattar Abbasi

Usually there is gap between narratives and ground realities but in this case I found lack of coordination among relevant stakeholders and a bit of mismanagement that is causing real discomfort, which needs elucidation. I was surprised to listen that for any medical complication people of Gwadar travel to Karachi while only ambulance charges rupees fourteen thousand for the round trip besides other expenses of treatment, hospitalization and staying of attendants in the city coupled with the loss of income due

I have just arrived at my desk after a breakfast meeting with Mr. Hidayat ur Rehman the founder of "Gwadar ko haq do" means "Give rights to Gwadar" movement and couldn't resist to start writing these lines. We were more than 20 professionals on the table and probably I was the one with maximum questions looking at his dissatisfaction about the development of Gwadar contrary to repeated claims on media by both Pakistani and Chinese officials about the advancement of fundamental facilities for indigenous people. Usually there is gap between narratives and ground realities but in this case I found lack of coordination among relevant stakeholders and a bit of mismanagement that is causing real discomfort, which needs elucidation. I was surprised to listen that for any medical complication people of Gwadar travel to Karachi while only ambulance charges rupees fourteen thousand for the round trip besides other expenses of treatment, hospitalization and staying of attendants in the city coupled with the loss of income due to the absence from their fundamental source of earning i.e. fishery. If we envisioned making Gwadar an international city as a hub of global trade then we need to start from the building of modern infrastructure for basic facilities including health, education, sanitation and water supply. We heard so many times in media about the establishment of schools and hospitals in the city of Gwadar but the fact remains that people of Gwadar travel to Karachi as on June 17, 2023 for the treatments of fundamental nature. Desalination of water in port cities is a common phenomenon around the world, even countries like Barbados and Algeria, let alone Australia, Germany and Israel, are operating water desalination plants quite efficiently. Conversely, in Gwadar the water desalination plant is laying abandoned which was installed with the cost of billions of rupees. Initially there wasn't any supply line to the city of Gwadar from the desalination plant and now probably there is a problem of silting at the origin; in both cases it is sheer mismanagement and incompetence to be unable to operate the water desalination plant considering the value of providing clean drinking water to the people

of Gwadar; I think those who are at the helm of affairs need to give it a top priority to ensure that water desalination plant starts working immediately and remains operational without any disruption. To the question that why don't people of Gwadar take benefit from the commercial aspect of CPEC by exporting agriculture goods especially nuts to China to inculcate economic prosperity, he instantly replied, "Our mainstay is fishery we export fish to eight countries but we are not allowed and importantly we are not being facilitated to export fish and its by-products to China. We don't have any fish processing facility at Gwadar therefore we can't contribute to the expected economic gains through CPEC". It should be a matter of serious concern especially for those who envisioned CPEC and equally for those who are now implementing the project. It is just a simple commonsense that promoting and facilitating fishery can contribute significantly to engage people of Gwadar; policy makers and frontline managers of CPEC need to give immediate attention to develop modern fish processing infrastructure in the city. Probably, one of the strategic comments of the guest was, "We are dwellers of sea waters but we are not being represented in Pakistan Navy. I think those who can endure rigors of water are much suitable for jobs in the navy, but none of us is employed in Pakistan Navy". I remember a door to door campaign of Pakistan Army in entire province of Baluchistan to recruit soldiers from every tribe and corner of the province. In the same manner if Pakistan Navy can employ young children of the local fishermen that can boost ownership and confidence of inhabitants of shores throughout the sea belt of Baluchistan. Responding to one of the questions Mr. Hidayat ur Rehman said that the urgent need of the people of Gwadar is the rehabilitation center for the narcotic addicts. He said that every family in the city is victim of narcotics, parents especially mothers are terribly frightened for the future of their children due to the widespread prevalence of narcotics in the city and interesting thing is that those among local residents who are closely allied with the administrative setup

are actually linked with the business of narcotics thus betraying the confidence of authorities while selling them their false patriotism. Instantly, number participants extended their interest to facilitate establishment of rehabilitation center for the narcotic addicts in the city of Gwadar. Establishment of "Gwadar Desk" was announced by the hosts, Think Pakistan and Lahore Leads University, to facilitate people of Gwadar in particular and Baluchistan in general in meeting their existing economic and strategic challenges besides promoting their voice in rest of Pakistan and all possible international forums, integrating them in the national and global mainstream for the prosperity and success of relevant stakeholders. When there was an emphasis on learning Chinese language, the guest suggested educating Chinese counterparts to learn Baluchi language to better understand people of Gwadar to eliminate the existing communication gap, because it is more than important for Chinese companies to be aware of the sentiments of local population while operating in this part of the world. One of the participants added a hadith narrating the importance of learning languages to understand the deep-rooted dynamics of any society. It was indeed a memorable meeting with sumptuous breakfast, insightful discussions and a selfie session at the end of the program. However, it left an impression that there is a strong need for coordination among all relevant stakeholders to appropriately implement the envisioned plan and immediately take corrective measure to stop bleeding out of such an important initiative of CPEC which promised growth and development of not only China and Pakistan but all nations across One Belt One Road initiative.

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Briefs

PPP, PML-N to bring down temperature

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took place earlier this week; however, the PPP chairman was unable to attend the meeting, as he was out of Islamabad. Meanwhile, Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Minister Ahsan Iqbal and PPP leader and Water Resources Minister Syed Khurshid Ahmad Shah were present at the meeting. CM Shah, in his speech in the Sindh assembly regarding the provincial budget on Saturday, once again criticised the federal government for its unfulfilled promises. Nevertheless, the meeting on Monday will be another attempt to resolve the differences between the federal and Sindh's provincial governments.

Budget approved with...

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the budget on the demand of CM Murad and added that most of the Rs80 billion funds for flood victims was given to Sindh. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the planning minister said there were trying to make all decisions with the consensus of all allies. He said the input of all allies were included in the preparation of the budget. Finance Minister Dar unveiled an Rs14.5 trillion (around \$50.5 billion) budget on June 9, with over half set aside to service Rs7.3 trillion of debt, raising concerns from various stakeholders about the economy's future.

AJK police arrest 10 'sub-agents'

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under sections 418 (cheating with the knowledge that wrongful loss may ensue to a person whose interest of fender is bound to protect), 419 (punishment for cheating by personation), 420 (cheating and dishonestly inducing delivery of property), and 322 (punishment for murder) of the Pakistan Penal Code. "They were sub-agents or agents of main human traffickers Chaudhry Zulqarnain, Talat Kiani, and Khalid Mirza, who belong to Kotli and Mirpur and are based in Libya. "During the preliminary interrogation, the suspects made harrowing disclosures about how and for whom they operated and who else was involved in the ghastly business," SSP Mughal said.

FIR registered against...

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In his complaint, the official stated he was performing his routine duty at N-225 when at around 3:14pm, he received an alert that a bus - with registered number BSG-055 and belonging to the Shalimar Transport Service - was met with an accident. Upon reaching the location, he saw that the bus driver, Farhat Abbas Shah, had "lost control of the bus", due to which it "broke the crash barrier" and overturned, the complainant added. Bilal further said that a total of 13 people were killed in the accident, out of which five had died on the spot and were yet to be identified. The FIR stated that 32 others were injured, who were then taken to the Kallar Kahar Trauma Centre via ambulances belonging to Rescue 1122, Hascol Petroleum and the Frontier Works Organisation. The complainant went on to say that upon inquiring, the survivors alleged the bus was "not fully fit" when it was departing the Rawalpindi bus station. The FIR quoted them as saying that they informed the driver; the bus owner; and the Rawalpindi station manager, about the vehicle's "fault". However, the men told the driver that the bus was fit to be driven, the FIR added.

Nottingham Open 2023

Andy Murray beats Arthur Cazaux in final

Andy Murray is enjoying good form at just the right time, with Wimbledon - where he is a two-time champion - beginning on 3 July

NOTTINGHAM: Andy Murray won the Nottingham Open for back-to-back grass-court titles to maintain a perfect Wimbledon build-up. A week after victory in the Surbiton Trophy, the 36-year-old hoisted more silverware with a 6-4 6-4 victory over France's Arthur Cazaux.

He was then left stunned when his four children and wife delivered an even more perfect Father's Day present - surprising him by being in the crowd.

Katie Boulter faces fellow Briton Jodie Burrage in the women's final on Sunday. Hopes of more British success at the event in the women's doubles were extinguished though, with Heather Watson and Harriet Dart losing 7-6 (8-6) 5-7 10-8 to Norway's Ulrikke Eikeri and Estonia's Ingrid Neel in the final. Before last week, it had been seven years since Murray had won a singles title on grass, but the Scot now has claimed two in seven days.

And he has achieved this one without dropping a set. The former world number one got off to a fast start against Cazaux in a final that had been brought forward because of bad weather forecast for later in the day, going a double break ahead against the 20-year-old world number 181.

The top seed was broken to love by the qualifier while serving for the first set, although then served it out to love at the second time of asking, sealing it with an ace after a series of winners that wrongfooted his opponent.

The Frenchman made it more of a contest in the second set but Murray made the key breakthrough at 4-4 when Cazaux netted twice in succession to hand the Briton a break that left him serving for the match.

A stunning backhand down the line put him two points from victory before Cazaux netted a service return and



Murray wrapped up victory on his first match point when the Frenchman hit long.

Murray is enjoying good form at just the right time, with Wimbledon - where he is a two-time champion - beginning on 3 July. But these Nottingham and Surbiton titles have come at Challenger events - the second tier of men's tennis - and he will face a notable step up in the quality of the field at his next event at Queen's, which starts on Monday. There, he will be unseeded and has been handed a tricky first-round draw against Australian seventh seed and world number 18 Alex de Minaur.

But he can take a lot of confidence into the London event with a winning streak of 10 matches on grass, with just one set dropped, and looking physically fit on the court - the importance of which, four years after hip surgery nearly ended his career, cannot be overstated.

He will return to the world's top 40 on Monday and will seek more wins at Queen's to amass enough ranking points to be one of 32 seeds at Wimbledon.

Father's Day surprise for Murray After his triumph, Murray had been telling the on-court interviewer about how he was planning to get home quickly so that he could see his children before bedtime on Father's Day.

It turned out he did not have to! The Scot was left somewhat surprised when he saw his family in the stands.

"I didn't know they were here," he said, looking a little emotional. "I had no idea they were coming."

"They came last week for the final at Surbiton, they turned up and it started raining then they had to go home for the kids' bedtime and they missed the end of the match so it's great they could come today." - Agencies

Zenab determined to complete Seven Summits mission

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's US-based women climber Zenab Mansoor, who successfully attempted Mount Everest last month, said on Sunday that she was committed to ascending Seven Summits, the seven highest peaks in seven continents.

"I've the incredible fortune to climb the highest peaks in five continents. These include Kilimanjaro in Africa, Elbrus in Europe, Denali in North America, Vinson in Antarctica and Everest in Asia. I am hoping to complete the list with Aconcagua in South America and Carstenz Pyramid in Oceania/Australia by the end of this year or early 2024", Zenab told APP on Sunday. A pediatric ICU physician, Zenab moved to USA in 2008 to pursue her career in medicine. Currently, she resides in Seattle, Washington. On May 17, she reached atop Everest (8,849-metre), the world's highest peak, located in Nepal.

"That was an incredible moment for me as I got to raise my country's flag on the highest point on the planet. "My journey to the top of the world was achieved that day but my love for climbing began in my childhood, as I had always felt a sense of awe and wonder when visiting the northern areas of Pakistan and dreamt of scaling high peaks of the world. "That childhood dream was shelved for many years as I pursued a very demanding career in medicine. "Then in 2013, I heard about Pakistani woman mountaineer, Samina Baig, who had summited Everest and thus, become the first ever Pakistani female to do so. Her trailblazing achievement reignited the fire in me and she has been a source of inspiration ever since," she added.

However, it took several more years to Zenab to start realizing her dream. "In December 2016, a devastating family tragedy left me feeling heartbroken and

despondent," Zenab said while referring to a PIA plane crash, near Havelian area of Abbottabad wherein she lost her younger brother, the 26-year-old co-pilot Ahmed Mansoor Janjua. All 47 people on board had died in the incident.

"To help me cope with the grief, I decided to take a trip to Tanzania and Mount Kilimanjaro became my first climb. At 5,895 meters, it is the highest point in Africa. It was a grueling climb, but watching the sunrise over the clouds from the top of the mountain was a site I will not forget. The feeling of reaching the summit was indescribable, and it fueled my desire to climb higher and more challenging peaks," she said.

According to Zenab, on her return from Kilimanjaro, she signed up for a mountaineering class and successfully summited two popular climbing spots for budding mountaineers in the US, Mount Baker and

Prograis proud of 'tough win' over Zorrilla

WASHINGTON: Hometown hero Regis Prograis retained his World Boxing Council light-welterweight crown on Saturday with a split-decision victory over Puerto Rico's Danielito Zorrilla at New Orleans. Prograis won by judges' scores of 118-109 and 117-110 while the third judge saw Zorrilla winning 114-113. "I was confident I would get the decision," Prograis said. "It was a tough win but I felt like I deserved the win." Prograis, who managed the only official knockdown in the third round of a fight filled with pushdowns and slips, improved to 29-1 while elusive Zorrilla fell to 17-2. "I got the drop early and I kept pressing the action but he ran around the whole time," Prograis said. "I definitely have to go back to the gym and work on some things but he ran, he definitely tried to survive." Prograis, 34, suffered his only loss in a 2019 title unification showdown with Scotsman Josh Taylor, but the southpaw has won his five fights since then, including an 11th-round knockout of American Jose Zepeda last November.

For the vacant WBC title at 140 pounds. Despite his division's longest-reigning belt holders. Late sent Prograis but the champion Zorrilla and him to ground, referee Ray downs, in push-ups. Prograis said. - Agencies



Moeen found guilty of breaching ICC code

LONDON: English all-rounder Moeen Ali has been found guilty of breaching the ICC Code of Conduct during the ongoing first Test against Australia in Edgbaston and will be fined 25 percent of his match fees as a punishment. Moeen, 36, breached Article 2.20 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel which is associated with displaying actions that go against the spirit of the game. The incident took place in the 89th over during Australia's first innings when the all-rounder was seen applying a "drying agent" to his bowling hand while fielding. The 36-year-old admitted his offence and accepted the penalty presented by Andy Pycroft of the Emirates ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees. Level 1 breaches carry a minimum penalty of an official reprimand, a maximum penalty of 50 per cent of a player's match fee, and one or two demerit points. Earlier, Moeen revealed his conversation with the English skipper Ben Stokes and how a one-word message convinced him to take back retirement and play the Ashes. "Stokes sent me a message saying 'Ashes?' I responded with 'LOL,'" Moeen revealed in a press conference on Tuesday. The 36-year-old stated that only Stokes could have persuaded him to come out of Test retirement. Moeen further said he was not aware of the news about Jack Leach's injury and thought Stokes was joking. - Agencies



Shandur Polo Festival 2023 to be held in July

GILGIT: The three-day Shandur Polo Festival 2023 will take place from July 7 to 9 with participants from various parts of the country. Shandur Polo Festival is celebrated by the tribes of Gilgit and Chitral in

the northern parts of the country. The tribes from the regions of Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral meet at the Shandur pass every summer.

The pass has a beautiful polo ground where unique wild free-style polo is played among different teams of the region. Shandur Polo Ground is considered to be the highest polo ground in the world at 3,700 meters. The polo ground is adjacent to Shandur Lake. The festival provides an amazing cultural experience in the Hindukush mountain ranges. Last year, Chitral defeated Gilgit-Baltistan on the last day of the annual Shandur Polo Festival to clinch the trophy.

According to hindukushheights.com, Chitral and Gilgit have always played the game of polo closest to its original form. Each team has six players with two halves of 25 minutes each along with a 10-minute interval. Only one polo pony is permitted per player, and if a player or pony leaves the field injured, the opposing team also reduces its strength by one player. A fresh polo pony may not be introduced into the game, as that will prove to be a distinct advantage. The field measures about 200 meters by 56 meters, as compared to a normal polo field of 270m by 150m, with 60 cm high stone walls running the length of the field on both sides instead of boards. In order to decide the final teams to play at the Shandur Polo Festival, preliminary matches are played both in Chitral and Gilgit. The best horses and players are chosen for the final games by the local juries after the preliminary matches. - DNA

Goalkeeper Munir howler sinks Morocco

JOHANNESBURG: A blunder by Morocco goalkeeper Munir el Kajoui led to a 2-1 Africa Cup of Nations qualifying defeat in South Africa on Saturday - their first loss since reaching the 2022 World Cup semi-finals. Zambia completed a joyful day for southern Africa by hammering the Ivory Coast 3-0 in Ndola to secure a place in the finals for the first time since 2015. South Africa and World Cup history-makers Morocco had qualified ahead of a lively Group K clash in Johannesburg that drew a 50,000 crowd despite near-freezing conditions.

El Kajoui, standing in for rested Yassine Bounou, allowed a Percy Tau cross slip from his grasp into the net after only five minutes and Zakhele Lepasa added a second on 48 minutes. Hakim Ziyech halved the deficit on the hour, but an equaliser eluded Morocco, who last December became the first African and Arab team to reach the World Cup semi-finals.

After finishing fourth in Qatar, the Atlas Lions beat Brazil and drew with Peru and Cape Verde in friendly matches. The visit to Johannesburg marked a return to competitive action. "We could have scored four or five goals against Morocco, who are currently the best team in Africa, and it is a great confidence booster to beat them," said South Africa coach Hugo Broos. "Having played in front of small crowds lately,

it was wonderful to have so many people backing us, and I believe they left the stadium feeling very proud to be South Africans." Morocco coach Walid Regragui, mas-



termined behind successes over Belgium, Spain and Portugal before a semi-final loss to France in Qatar, said he was "not unhappy with the result". "Call me crazy if you

wish for saying that, but you sometimes learn more from a loss than a win. My players were tired after a gruelling season of domestic and World Cup matches." Zambia, needing one point to end a run of three failed qualifying campaigns, took all three as they outplayed the Ivory Coast, who will host the January 13-February 11 finals. After stunning the Ivorians by winning the 2012 final, Zambia declined dramatically, failing to get past the group stage in the following two tournaments.

Worse followed for the Chipolopolo (Copper Bullets) as they did not even qualify for the next three editions. But those sad memories were forgotten before a capacity 50,000 crowd as Zambia claimed a fourth straight Group H victory. Serge Arurier conceded an own goal on 32 minutes, Patson Daka doubled the lead three minutes into the second half and Kings Kangwa completed the rout after 55 minutes. Two-time champions Ivory Coast qualify automatically as hosts, but are competing in the qualifiers to gain competitive match practice. Central African Republic's hopes of a maiden appearance at the African showpiece are all but over after losing 2-1 to Angola in Douala. An 86th-minute goal from Felicio Milson sank the minnows after Geoffrey Kondogbia had struck just after half-time to cancel the early lead Kialonda Gaspar gave Angola in the Group E clash. - Agencies

TTP commander among 3 killed

FROM PAGE 01
The coal miners, business community and common people of the area breathed a sigh of relief with the elimination of the wanted terrorists. The security forces would continue their efforts to make the country safe and free from terrorism with the cooperation of the people.

Lok Mela to end today

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Lok Virsa organizing Saqafi Mela from Thursday 15th June to 19th June, 2023. On Sunday 18 June 2023 a musical fusion night was held at Lok Virsa open-air theatre. This event was organized with the collaboration of Foreign Office. The event was reserved for foreign mission in Islamabad. Ambassadors, diplomats, high level officials attended the concert. Chief Guest was Fareena Mazhar, Federal Secretary of National Heritage and Culture, Fareena Mazhar in her welcome remarks thanked all the honourable guests for joining Lok Virsa at this prestigious occasion which was presented to showcase rich musical heritage of Pakistan. She said that. "I believe that the folk music represents the true cultural identity of the people, their love, their joys and sorrows, their colorful ceremonies and festivities, and above all their spiritual entity".

Music and dance occupy a central place in Pakistani culture, serving as powerful expressions of emotions and storytelling. Pakistani cuisine is a delightful fusion of flavors and spices, influenced by the Mughal, Persian, Central Asian, and South Asian culinary traditions. Rice dishes, such as biryani and pulao, accompanied by succulent kebabs, curries, and aromatic bread like naan and roti, make up the heart of Pakistani cuisine. Sweets like gulab jamun, jalebi, and barfi provide a perfect ending to a traditional meal. Pakistan is a land of religious diversity, and it is home to several famous religious sites for non-Muslim communities. These sites hold great historical, cultural, and spiritual significance and attract visitors from around the world. Folk musician hailing from different parts of Pakistan gave an enthralling performance.

CM Naqvi gives charge of Tourism, Archeology, Museum to Amir Mir

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Sunday gave the charge of the Ministry of Tourism, Archeology and Museum to his caretaker cabinet member Amir Mir. According to a private TV channel, Punjab Services Department has issued the formal notification of Amir Mir's more responsibilities in the cabinet. It is worth mentioning that Amir Mir is already paying responsibilities in the caretaker government as the information minister.

Kundi says Siraj has no basis to demand Karachi mayorship

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party spokesperson Faisal Karim Kundi said on Sunday that Sirajul Haq had no moral justification to claim the mayorship of Karachi. Responding to the press conference of JI's chief, he said the people of Karachi had rejected the false dreams of JI adding the PTI members had also not supported the JI's policies. He added the people of Karachi had achieved the real freedom and the recent elections which gave Murtaza Wahab mayorship was the evidence that common people were with the PPP.

Briefs

Innovation
Award-
Pakistan's
Largest Pitching
Competition

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Prime Minister's National Innovation Award, Pakistan's most significant pitching competition, took place at the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) from June 17-18, 2023. This highly anticipated event has attracted 256 shortlisted candidates from across the country, who are vying for the prestigious title.

The culmination of this inspiring event will be the National Award Ceremony, scheduled to take place today (June 19th) at the Prime Minister's Office Auditorium. Where the top 50 winners will be awarded a cash prize of rupees up to 2 million. Organized by the Prime Minister's Youth Programme and executed by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC), the National Innovation Award serves as a groundbreaking initiative that aims to foster creativity, encourage entrepreneurship, and provide unprecedented opportunities to the youth of Pakistan. This government-funded program offers equity-free grants, enabling young innovators to transform their ideas into tangible realities.

The competition features a diverse range of participants, including students, professionals, and budding entrepreneurs, who have come together to present their groundbreaking ideas and projects. With the expert jury comprising renowned field experts from various thematic areas and industries, the candidates are putting their best foot forward in hopes of securing victory and gaining recognition for their innovative contributions.

One of the distinguishing aspects of this pitching competition is its accessibility, as it accommodates both physical and online pitching. This approach ensures that talented individuals from all corners of Pakistan can participate, regardless of their geographical location. The inclusion of online pitching enables a broader range of ideas to be heard and encourages a more diverse pool of talent to come forward.

School-
enterprise
cooperation
to boost
green energy
in Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD School-enterprise cooperation with help of China could help to boost green energy in Pakistan.

"We should raise technicians. We should make a 2-year technical training program in collaboration with China in which we can train technicians for further development of hydropower, solar power, and wind energy in Pakistan," said Sajid Rashid Ahmad, principal of Earth and Environmental Sciences College in University of Punjab, according to Gwadar Pro, Pakistan is grappling with the effects of climate change. Therefore, developing green energy is an inevitable choice for the country to achieve sustainable development. On the International Conference on Pakistan Energy Sector Landscape held earlier this month, Minister for Energy, Engr. Khurram Dastgir Khan addressed that the future of Pakistan's energy mix aimed to depend on indigenous and clean energy sources including solar, wind, hydroelectric and tar coal energy sources. However, the development of mentioned clean energies in Pakistan faces a lot of challenges. "Taking solar energy as an example, although Pakistan has promoted solar panels and made Quaid-e-Azam solar park, we didn't make long-term planning and have not started producing our own solar plates. Solar energy is becoming expensive as the solar plates are becoming expensive." Sajid Rashid Ahmad suggested collaborating with China in this field. "Technology transfer is our best option.

Blinken kicks off meetings in Beijing on high-stakes mission

Blinken opened his program by meeting Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang for an extended discussion to be followed by a working dinner. He'll have additional talks with Qin, as well as China's top diplomat Wang Yi and possibly President Xi Jinping, on Monday

DNA

BEIJING: U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Sunday kicked off two days of high-stakes diplomatic talks in Beijing aimed at trying to cool exploding U.S.-China tensions that have set many around the world on edge. Blinken opened his program by meeting Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang for an extended discussion to be followed by a working dinner. He'll have additional talks with Qin, as well as China's top diplomat Wang Yi and possibly President Xi Jinping, on Monday. Neither Blinken nor Qin made any substantive comments to reporters as they began the meeting at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse. Despite Blinken's presence in the Chinese capital, prospects for any significant breakthroughs are slim, as already strained ties have grown increasingly fraught in recent years. Animosity and re-primations have steadily

escalated over a series of disagreements that have implications for global security and stability. Blinken is the highest-level American official to visit China since President Joe Biden took office and the first secretary of state to make the trip in five years. Biden and Xi agreed to Blinken's trip early at a meeting last year in Bali. It came within a day of happening in February but was delayed by the diplomatic and political tumult brought on by the discovery of what the U.S. says was a Chinese spy balloon flying across the United States that was shot down. The list of disagreements and potential conflict points is long, ranging from trade with Taiwan, human rights conditions in China and Hong Kong to Chinese military assertiveness in the South China Sea and Russia's war in Ukraine. Blinken will also be pressing the Chinese to release detained American citizens and to take steps to curb the production and export of fentanyl precursors



that are fueling the opioid crisis in the United States. U.S. officials have said Blinken will raise each of these points, though neither side has shown any inclination to back down on their entrenched positions. Shortly before leaving, Blinken emphasized the importance of the U.S. and China establishing and maintaining better lines of communication. The U.S. wants to make sure "that the competition we have

with China doesn't veer into conflict" due to avoidable misunderstandings, he told reporters. Biden and Xi had made commitments to improve communications "precisely so that we can make sure we are communicating as clearly as possible to avoid possible misunderstandings and miscommunications," Blinken said Friday. Xi offered a hint of a possible willingness to reduce tensions, saying in a meeting with Microsoft

Corp. co-founder Bill Gates on Friday that the United States and China can cooperate to "benefit our two countries." "I believe that the foundation of Sino-U.S. relations lies in the people," Xi said to Gates. "Under the current world situation, we can carry out various activities that benefit our two countries, the people of our countries, and the entire human race." Biden told White House reporters Saturday he was "hoping that over the next several months, I'll be meeting with Xi again and talking about legitimate differences we have, but also how ... to get along." Chances for such a meeting could come at a Group of 20 leaders' gathering in September in New Delhi and at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in November in San Francisco that the United States is hosting. Since the cancellation of Blinken's trip in February, there have been some high-level engagements. CIA chief William Burns traveled to China in May, while China's com-

merce minister traveled to the U.S. And Biden's national security adviser Jake Sullivan met with Wang in Vienna in May. But those have been punctuated by bursts of angry rhetoric from both sides over the Taiwan Strait, their broader intentions in the Indo-Pacific, China's refusal to condemn Russia for its war against Ukraine, and U.S. allegations from Washington that Beijing is attempting to boost its worldwide surveillance capabilities, including in Cuba. And, earlier this month, China's defense minister rebuffed a request from U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin for a meeting on the sidelines of a security symposium in Singapore, a sign of continuing discontent. Austin said Friday he was confident that he and his Chinese counterpart would meet "at some point in time, but we're not there yet." Underscoring the difficulties, China rejected a report by a U.S. security firm, that blamed Chinese-linked hackers for attacks on hundreds of public agencies, schools and other targets around the world.

Biden's top aide in KSA to push for normalization with Israel

RIYADH: A top advisor to US President Joe Biden has reportedly traveled to Saudi Arabia as part of Washington's relentless push to broker a normalization deal between Riyadh and Tel Aviv. The US-based news website Axios reported on Saturday that Brett McGurk, Biden's senior Middle East adviser, had arrived in Saudi Arabia to hold "talks with Saudi officials that will focus on the administration's efforts to reach a normalization agreement between the Israel and the kingdom as well as other issues." According to the report, McGurk was also expect-

ed to meet with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to discuss the kingdom's normalization of relations with Israel. McGurk's visit is part of attempts by the White House to push for a Saudi-Israeli deal in the next six to seven months before Biden's presidential election campaigns. The top advisor's trip to Saudi Arabia comes less than two weeks after US Secretary of State Tony Blinken visited the kingdom and met bin Salman, with Saudi officials having snubbed the US diplomat's latest push for the normalization deal. Saudi Foreign

Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud said at a joint press conference with Blinken that "without finding a pathway to peace for the Palestinian people...any normalization will have limited benefits." Saudi Arabia cautiously welcomed the US-brokered normalization deals between the Israeli regime and the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco in 2020. The oil-rich kingdom itself, however, has been expected to jump on the bandwagon since then, as the two sides have seen growing contacts and de-facto rapprochement in recent years, de-

spite claims that it is committed to the 2002 so-called Arab Peace Initiative, which conditions normalizing ties with Israel on the establishment of an independent, sovereign Palestinian state within the 1967 borders. The Riyadh regime in November 2020 granted permission for Israeli airlines to use its airspace, hours before the first Israeli flight to the UAE was set to take off. Palestinian leaders, activists and ordinary people have repeatedly rejected Arab-Israeli normalization deals as "a stab in the back of the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian people."—APP

Fear after 'brutal' Uganda school attack

MPONDWE: Grieving families prepared to bury their dead in western Uganda on Sunday while others desperately searched for loved ones still missing after militants killed dozens of students in a school attack. Officials say at least 41 people, mostly students, were massacred on Friday in the worst attack of its kind in Uganda since 2010. Victims were hacked, shot and burned in the late-night raid on Lhubirha Secondary School in Mpondwe, which lies less than two kilometers (1.2 miles) from the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo. Pope Francis offered a prayer on Sunday for "the young student victims of the brutal attack" that has shocked Uganda and drawn condemnation from around the globe. Ugandan authorities have blamed the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), a militia based in DR Congo, and are pursuing the attackers who fled back toward the border with six abductees in captivity.—Agencies

Swiss look set to back climate law

DNA

GENEVA: The Swiss, feeling the impact of global warming on their rapidly melting glaciers, on Sunday backed a new climate bill aimed at steering the country towards carbon neutrality by 2050, according to early estimates. The initial projections from the gfs.bern institute showed that 58 percent of Swiss voters had said "yes" in the referendum on the new law, which would require Switzerland to slash its dependence on imported oil and gas, scaling up the development and use of greener and more homegrown alternatives. Voters also appeared to have overwhelmingly backed adopting a global minimum tax rate of 15 percent for multinational corporations, with 79 percent voting in favour, according to the projections published shortly after polls closed at noon (1000 GMT). Recent opinion polls had indicated strong but slipping support for the climate bill, amid an anxiety-infused campaign around electricity shortages and economic ruin driven by the populist right-wing Swiss People's Party (SVP). Supporters had argued the "Federal Act on Climate Protection Targets, Innovation and Strengthening Energy Security" is needed to ensure energy security. They say it will also help address the ravages of climate change, highlighted by the dramatic melting of glaciers in the Swiss Alps, which lost a third of their ice volume between 2001 and 2022. Switzerland imports around three quarters of its energy, with all the oil and natural gas consumed coming from abroad. Climate activists had initially wanted to push for a total ban on all oil and gas consumption in Switzerland by 2050. But the government balked at the so-called Glacier Initiative, drawing up a counter-proposal that scrapped the idea of a ban but included other elements. The text promises financial support of two billion Swiss francs (\$2.2 billion) over a decade to promote the replacement of gas or oil heating systems with climate-friendly alternatives.

Sudan begins a cease-fire ahead of a pledging conference

CAIRO: Sudan's warring parties began a cease-fire Sunday morning after two months of fighting pushed the African nation into chaos. Residents in the capital, Khartoum, and its neighboring city of Omdurman reported "relative calm" in the first hours of the cease-fire Sunday morning, after fierce clashes were reported the previous day. The three-day truce came ahead of a pledging conference the U.N. and other nations will organize Monday to raise funds to cover Sudan's humanitarian needs. The U.N. says it received less than 16% of the \$2.57 billion required to help

those in need in Sudan in 2023. Another \$470 million is needed to support refugees in the Horn of Africa region, it said. The United States and Saudi Arabia, announced the cease-fire agreement Saturday. Both led concerted diplomatic efforts to stop the war over the past two

months. The U.S. and Saudi Arabia said in a joint statement that the military and its rival paramilitary group, the Rapid Support Forces, agreed to halt fighting and "refrain from seeking military advantage during the cease-fire." Sudan plunged into chaos after months of worsening tensions.—APP

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TEHRAN: Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, Asad Majeed Khan meets Foreign Minister of Iran, Amirabdollahian. Both sides discussed matters of mutual interest.—DNA

Putin meets African peace delegation

The neo-colonial European administration, or more precisely the American administration, deceived the international community and African countries in need," he said

ST. PETERSBURG: Russian President Vladimir Putin met an African peace delegation Saturday that is looking to end the Russia-Ukraine war.

The delegation, which met Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Friday in the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv, met Putin at the Constantinian Palace in St. Petersburg. The delegation included the head of the African Union and President of Comoros Azali Assoumani, as well as the presidents of South Africa Cyril Ramaphosa, Macky Sall of Senegal; Hakainde Hichilema from Zambia; Egyptian Prime Minister Mustafa Madbuli and heads of state of Congo and Uganda. Russian Foreign

Minister Sergey Lavrov and Policy Advisor Yuriy Ushakov were also present at the meeting. The meeting lasted more than three hours.

"We are open to a constructive dialogue" "We are open to a constructive dialogue with anyone who wants to establish peace, based on the principles of justice and taking into account the legitimate interests of the parties," Putin said at the beginning of the meeting. After listening to Ramaphosa's 10-point peace offer, Putin said the problem started in Ukraine after the "un-constitutional, bloody state coup" supported by the West in 2014, and he claimed that the coup is the "power source" of the current



administration. Noting that Russia supports some Ukrainians, who declared they would not support the administration that came to power in the coup, due to historical and cultural ties, Putin said the Minsk Agreement was signed between the parties to resolve the problem

with peace. Stating that the Kyiv administration withdrew from the peace process by not adhering to the peace agreements, Putin said: "After that, Russia had to recognize the Donetsk People's Republic and the Lugansk People's Republic, after eight years of declining to do so, which were established on the territory of Ukraine." Stating that their recognition of those administrations is following international law and the UN Charter, Putin said that "according to the UN Charter, these administrations can declare their independence." Announcing the figures on food exports from Ukraine dated June 15, Putin noted Turkish President Recep Tayyip

Erdogan's efforts on the grain deal. A total of "31.7 million tons of agricultural products were exported from Ukrainian ports with the help of Russia and Türkiye - 976,000 tons of agricultural products were sent to African countries in need - Djibouti, Somalia, Sudan, Libya and Ethiopia," he said. "The neo-colonial European administration, or more precisely the American administration, deceived the international community and African countries in need," he said. Emphasizing that Russia has "never refused negotiations," Putin said last March, with the help of Erdogan, delegations from Russia and Ukraine held talks in Türkiye.—Agencies

Governor
lauds
launching of
cash awards

ISLAMABAD: Governor Punjab Engineer Muhammad Baligh Ur Rehman Sunday hailed the launching of the first-ever Rs30 million cash awards for breeders evolving the best quality high-yield seeds of rice, cotton and wheat. Congratulating Shahzad Ali Malik Chairman Rice Research and Development Board, the Government of Punjab, he said it first time in the history of the private sector that encouraging bold initiative has been taken to fully recognise the contribution of ignored plant breeders in Pakistan. He said the announcement of huge cash awards will definitely boost the morale of plant breeders across the country and help conduct results-oriented research leading to evolving the best quality seeds.

Governor stressed the need for immediate steps to increase yield per acre of field crops through the best varieties which is possible by rewarding breeders through a lucrative incentive package/scheme.

He highlighted that out of five major field crops rice, maize, cotton, wheat and sugar cane, only two crops, rice and maize performed well due to high-yield varieties with the main contribution of the private sector. He said rice and Maize helped Pakistan achieve local demand, export earnings and import substitution. Governor Baligh Ur Rehman said Pakistan is currently importing cotton, wheat, edible oil, pulses and other agro-commodities to the tune of approximately 14-15\$ annually.

The introduction of high-yielding varieties in these crops through incentivizing breeders will result in import substitution and help in substantially reducing trade.

Shahzad Ali Malik thanked Governor for his appreciation and assured him of full support to the government for attaining food autarky. He informed the Governor that on his special direction, Guard Agricultural Research and Services will also further extend the scope of research with the Department of Plant Breeding and Genetics Punjab University headed by leading scientist Prof Dr Muhammad Arshad Javed in collaboration with the Chinese company.—DNA

Mali's
military
junta holds
referendum

BAMAKO, Mali (AP) — Malian voters cast ballots on a new draft constitution Sunday in a referendum that the country's coup leader says will pave the way toward holding new elections in 2024, but that critics have called a delaying tactic for him to extend his time in power. In a message broadcast on state television on the eve of the vote, Col. Assimi Goita told Malians that the proposed draft constitution "provides for a better-organized executive power, while maintaining the necessary balance with the legislative power." However, Imam Mahmoud Dicko, an opponent of the military junta, invited his supporters to a large hall in Bamako on Friday to ask them to vote against it. "In our country today, can we speak of justice, democracy, human rights, the rule of law? What kind of democracy are we talking about? Where is it? What rule of law is there in a country where justice is used by the military to repress people? That's the reality of this country today," said Dicko, a one-time junta supporter who led the movement calling for the departure of democratically elected president Ibrahim Boubacar Keita before he was ousted in 2020.

Malians who voted Sunday said they hoped the constitution's approval would be a step in the right direction for a country mired by Islamic extremist violence for a decade. "I voted so that this new constitution would bring us peace and stability," said Moustapha Diakou, a retired driver in Kalsoribougou. "We are in a situation where only the new decisions can bring us peace." The proposed draft constitution creates a two-chamber parliament, the National Assembly and the Senate; until now the country has only had a National Assembly.—APP

Briefs

More than 718,000 arrive in Madinah for Hajj

DNA

RIYADH: A total of 718,030 pilgrims of different nationalities reached Madinah so far arriving through air and land ports to perform Hajj this year, reported SPA on Saturday. The Hajj and Visit committee said in a statistics report that the total of arrivals for Saturday reached 29,090 pilgrims, of whom 25,962 arrived at Prince Mohammad bin Abdulaziz International Airport in Madinah. The statistics report published on Saturday showed also that 556,953 pilgrims departed to Makkah on Saturday, while the number of pilgrims staying in Madinah until yesterday reached 161,021 pilgrims. Adding that the occupancy rate of housing in Madinah was 54 percent, and that 32,631 pilgrims benefited from the medical services provided to them. Authorities in Madinah were working around the clock to keep pace with pilgrims arriving through air and land ports to ensure the best experience for visitors performing the Hajj rituals this year. Meanwhile, the Supreme Court has called on Muslims throughout Saudi Arabia to be on the lookout for the crescent moon at sunset on the 29th day of Dul Qaada, which falls on June 18.

Israel set to approve thousands of permits in West Bank

WEB DESK

JERUSALEM: Israel's nationalist-religious government on Sunday tabled plans to approve thousands of building permits in the occupied West Bank, despite US pressure to halt settlement expansion that Washington sees as an obstacle to peace with Palestinians. The plans for approval of 4,560 housing units in various areas of the West Bank were included on the agenda of Israel's Supreme Planning Council that meets next week, although only 1,332 are up for final approval, with the remainder still going through the preliminary clearance process. "We will continue to develop the settlement of and strengthen the Israeli hold on the territory," said Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, who also holds a defense portfolio that gives him a leading role in West Bank administration. Most countries deem the settlements, built on land captured by Israel in the 1967 Middle East war, as illegal. Their presence is one of the fundamental issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

FIR against driver, owner over bus accident

DNA

RAWALPINDI: In the aftermath of the deadly bus accident near Kallar Kahar, which claimed 13 lives and left more than 30 people injured, a criminal complaint has been filed against the bus driver and its owner, among others, it emerged on Sunday. A day earlier, a bus veered off the Islamabad-Lahore Motorway into the opposite lane and overturned near Kallar Kahar. The first information report (FIR), a copy of which is available with Dawn.com, was filed on Saturday evening by Motorway Police Officer Muhammad Bilal at the Kallar Kahar police station. It names the bus driver, bus owner, manager of the Rawalpindi station (from where the bus departed), manager of the bus company's station and the motor vehicle examiner as those who are responsible for the accident. It invokes sections 322 (punishment for qat-bis-sabab), 337G, 279, 427 and 109 of the Pakistan Penal Code.

Tracing the Confluence of Civilizations

Distinct ancient heritage is a treasure for both nations

Ambassador Adam Tugio says Indonesia and Pakistan are heirs of one of the oldest civilizations in the world with a marked history of religious-cultural communication



BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: The colorful opening ceremony of photo exhibition titled "A Night at Lahore Museum: Tracing the Confluence of Civilizations Between Indonesia and Pakistan" jointly organized by the Indonesian Embassy and Lahore Museum enthralled the audience with its spectacular display of ancient cultural connectivity through meticulously selected photographs. The week-long exhibition provides a fresh perspective on the cross-regional

interaction between the two biggest Muslim populated countries from past to present. Addressing a large gathering of prominent guests from different walks of life, the Ambassador of Indonesia Mr. Adam Tugio said that distinct cultural-historic heritage is a revered treasure for the two brotherly nations that has continuously been preserved during the course of history. He especially pointed out that Indonesia and Pakistan are heirs of one of the oldest civilizations in the world with a marked history of religious-cultural communication and this exhibition aims to highlight the cross-regional cultural

influences through selected photographs and videos of artifacts, sculptures and inscriptions from both sides. "From cuisine to old healing practices, from religious traditions to cultural norms and from ancient history to modern civilization, there is a long list of striking similarities between the two brotherly nations", he remarked. Elaborating the existence of early historic inter-regional connectivity, the envoy pointed out that ancient Gandhara region mainly comprising North West region of present day Pakistan, was a melting pot of different civilizations. "The spread of Buddhist and Islamic civilization to the Indonesian archipelago is also attributed to influence of Gandhara civilization", added the envoy. Ambassador Tugio especially thanked the Lahore Museum for providing generous support and to all the guests for their participation and warmly invited Pakistani friends to the Exhibition to celebrate the rich cultural heritage of the two Muslim brotherly countries. Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Guest Prof. Dr. Javed Akram, Minister of Health Punjab appreciated the Embassy's initiative of organizing the Exhibition to promote the shared cultural heritage. He emphasized the need to strengthen academic linkages and people to people contacts to materialize the benefits from existing strong bonds of friendship between the two countries. The Director Lahore Museum Mr. Mohammad Usman commended the idea of the Indonesian envoy to organize this exhibition and said that both the nations have strong historical connections with striking similarities in culture and traditions. He highlighted the historical significance and pivotal role of Lahore Museum in promoting cultural activities and expressed commitment to support such kind of purposeful events. The Exhibition is open for public until 24th June 2023 at the Lahore Museum. Through interactive display, the Exhibition will allow visitors to trace the confluence of civilization between Indonesia and Pakistan in a variety ways. The exhibition also features spices and some popular products from Indonesia with the kind support of Indomie, the largest food producers of Indonesia which has been operating in Faisalabad.

Nearly 100 dead as Indian states swelter in heat

WEB DESK

NEW DELHI: At least 98 people have died in the Indian states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in the last three days due to extreme heat, according to officials. As parts of India have been witnessing severe heatwaves in the last few days with temperatures exceeding 40 degrees Celsius at many places, 54 people died in northern Uttar Pradesh and 44 people in eastern Bihar. All 54 deaths in Uttar Pradesh were reported from one Ballia district, where at least 400 other people have been admitted to the district hospital for treatment. Medical Superintendent Dr SK Yadav, confirming deaths, said a team from the state capital Lucknow will be arriving to investigate the matter. "They will see whether any other disease is responsible for these deaths. Most of these patients had other accompanying diseases like hypertension and diabetes," Yadav told Anadolu. Ballia district recorded a maximum temperature of 43°C on Saturday. Another 44 people died in the eastern state of Bihar due to hot weather conditions. Out of 44 deaths, 35 people died in Patna city alone, according to broadcaster India Today.

India eases curfew in violence-hit Manipur

DNA

NEW DELHI: Indian authorities said on Sunday they had started to relax a curfew imposed in violence-hit Manipur after 45 days of civil unrest in the north-east state, seeking to reduce anger spilling onto the streets and restore normalcy. "We have decided to remove curfew from 5 am until 5 pm to enable residents to buy food, medicines, and other essentials," said Diana Devi, a local government official based in capital city of Imphal, not far from the border with Myanmar. Manipur has experienced widespread violence since May 3, following protests by indigenous communities sparked by resentment over economic benefits and quotas for government jobs and education reserved for Kukis, an ethnic group, who mostly live in the hills.

Heavy casualties as Ukraine strikes back: UK

KYIV: Russia and Ukraine are suffering high numbers of military casualties as Ukraine fights to dislodge the Kremlin's forces from occupied areas in the early stages of its counteroffensive, British officials said Sunday. Russian losses are probably at their highest level since the peak of the battle for Bakhmut in March, U.K. military officials said in their regular assessment. According to British intelligence, the most intense fighting has centered on the southeastern Zaporizhzhia province, around Bakhmut and further west in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk province. While the update reported that Ukraine was on the offensive in these areas and had "made small advances," it said that Russian forces were conducting "relatively effective defensive operations" in Ukraine's south. The Ukrainian military said in a regular update Sunday morning that over the previous 24 hours Russia had carried out 43 airstrikes, four missile strikes and 51 attacks from multiple rocket launchers. According to the statement by the General Staff, Rus-

sia continues to concentrate its efforts on offensive operations in Ukraine's industrial east, focusing attacks around Bakhmut, Avdiivka, Marinka and Lyman in the country's Donetsk province, with 26 combat clashes taking place. Donetsk regional Gov. Pavlo Kyrylenko said that two civilians were killed, with a further three wounded in the past day. Ukrainian officials said Russian forces also launched airstrikes on other regions of the east and south of the country. One civilian was killed and four more wounded in Kherson province as a result of Russia's attacks, said regional Gov. Oleksandr Prokudin, while Zaporizhzhia regional Gov. Yuri Malashko said one person was wounded in Russian attacks that hit 20 settlements in the province. Vladimir Rogov, an official with the Moscow-appointed administration in the partially occupied Zaporizhzhia region, said Sunday that Ukrainian forces had taken control of the village of Piatykhvatky on the Zaporizhzhia battlefield. - Agencies

No limits to expand ties with Pakistan: Iranian FM

- Both countries agree to deepen cooperation in various sectors

DNA

TEHRAN: Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian has said that his country has no limits to expand relations with the neighboring Pakistan, as it has a special place in Iran's foreign policy. Amirabdollahian held talks with Foreign Secretary of Pakistan Asad Majeed Khan in Iranian capital Tehran, Iranian media reported Sunday. The top Iranian diplomat described the current level of Tehran-Islamabad relations as good and developing, saying that both sides should use all the existing capacities to further expand their relations. The Pakistan official on his part emphasized the importance of expanding relations with Iran. He also briefed Amirabdollahian on issues discussed during the latest round of consultative political talks

held by senior Iranian and Pakistani officials. Meanwhile, Pakistan and Iran have agreed to deepen cooperation in trade, energy, transport, connectivity, cultural exchanges and educational linkages. The understanding was reached during wide-ranging discussions between Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Dr. Asad Majeed Khan and Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri Kani on the occasion of 12th bilateral consultations in Tehran. During the first round of two-day talks, both sides held fruitful discussions on entire spectrum of relations. The Foreign Office said while reviewing the progress on implementation of decisions of last session, the meeting discussed all aspects of Pakistan-Iran bilateral relations covering political, economic, trade, investment, border security, education, climate change and culture domains.