



Islamabad POST

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Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

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UN Chief says IMF favors the rich countries

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Johnson faces judgement of British MPs

Detailed News On Page-07



Trump's trial sends terrible message

Detailed News On Page-07



Briefs

Imran Khan visits Latif Khosa's residence

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: PTI Chairman Imran Khan arrived at the residence of senior jurist Latif Khosa and strongly condemned the gun attack on his house, demanding strict action against those responsible for cowardice attack. During the meeting on Monday, PTI Chairman stressed the need for initiating a comprehensive investigation into the attack in order to bring the responsible to book. On the occasion, Imran Khan expressed deep concern and regret over the curb on freedom of expression.

Shujaat meets Pervaiz in prison

DNA

LAHORE: Ice seems to be melting between the Chaudhrys of Gujrat as Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) chief Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain met with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) President Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi in Camp Jail, Lahore on Monday. Shujaat's son was also present during the meeting which lasted for about an hour, media reported. According to sources, Shujaat inquired about his brother's well-being. The meeting also involved discussions about the political situation in the country.

PML N sidelines Miftah Ismail

ALI HAMZA

LAHORE: In a major development, the ruling PML-N has decided to remove Miftah Ismail from the party's office, just days after PM Shehbaz Sharif told a gathering in Lahore that there was no room for those criticising and backstabbing Finance Minister Ishaq Dar. However, Miftah isn't alone in his removal from the slot of PML-N Sindh chapter's general secretary as the provincial president, Shah, too lost his spot.

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US and China pledge to stabilize tense relationship - Page 08

Support during tough times

PM grateful to friendly countries

Lauds China, Saudi Arabia for financial assistance, appreciates Azerbaijan for LNG agreement

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif has lauded the friendly countries, including China and Saudi Arabia, for supporting Pakistan in 'difficult times', media reported on Monday. The prime minister made these remarks while addressing the National Innovation Awards ceremony held under the aegis of Prime Minister's Youth Programme in Islamabad. PM Shehbaz expressed his gratitude to China for supporting Pakistan during the economic constraints by extending \$1 billion loan facility. He also regretted that words of certain personalities in the previous government had 'annoyed' China. "Despite all this, China stood by Pakistan in difficult time", he said and lauded the role of other brotherly and friendly countries of Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Qatar. The prime minister said that Pakistan was facing financial challenges, but expressed confidence that they would steer the country out of these issues. Such situations arose in the lives of nations, he said, stressing that the Pakistani nation has to make the determination and chart its way forward and once they had decided, then nothing could hamper it. During the last 75 years, he opined that foreign debts proved a

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Ishaq Dar calls for Charter of Economy

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Speaking in the National Assembly, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar has stressed the need for political parties to sign a Charter of Economy to steer the country out of economic challenges. He pointed out that the quagmire this time is bigger than the one witnessed back in 1998-99. The Finance Minister said the decline in the economy has been stopped, but now we have to take the economy towards a positive trajectory. As regards the reconstruction and rehabilitation of flood affected areas, the Finance Minister said the floods in 2022 inflicted a massive loss of thirty billion dollars on the national economy. He said about 16.3 billion dollars are required for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of physical infrastructure in the flood-affected areas.

Continued on Page 06

Israeli attack kills five Palestinians

At least 91 others were wounded in the violence

CENTRELINE REPORT

JENIN: Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank killed five Palestinians on Monday, in a raid that saw seven Israeli security personnel wounded and rare helicopter fire. The sound of gunfire was heard across Jenin as wounded Palestinians continued to arrive by ambulance at the northern West Bank city's Ibn Sina hospital into the early afternoon, a news agency said. Crowds gathered outside Jenin government hospital, as the funerals of those killed in 11 hours of fighting began. The Palestinian health ministry said five people had been killed and at least 91 others were wounded in the violence. It named four of those killed: 15-year-old Ahmed Saqer, Khaled Assassa, 21, Qais Jabareen, 21, Ahmad Daraghme, 19, and Qassam Abu Saria, 29. Meanwhile, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad claimed Abu Saria as a fighter for the group. Among the injured was Palestinian journalist Hazem Nasser, who was hospitalised with a gunshot wound.

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Palestine urges int'l intervention

DNA

RAMALLAH: Israel's ongoing aggression against Jenin is a dangerous escalation that will drag the region into more bloodshed, says the State of Palestine. The State of Palestine called on the international community to immediately and urgently intervene to stop Israel's massive military campaigns against the undefended Palestinian people under its illegal occupation; Israel, the occupying Power, and its officials must be held accountable and the culture of impunity it has thus far enjoyed must be combatted. Israel's deliberate killing of 5 Palestinians,

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan survivors say boat deliberately sunk

Authorities in Europe still have no clear idea how many people were aboard the boat when it sank - estimates range from 400 to over 700

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani survivors on the ill-fated boat that capsized off the Greece coast have blamed Greek coastguards for the incident, saying the ship - carrying hundreds of people - was deliberately sunk and no rescue was provided. The video account of the victims exposed the inhuman attitude of Greece authorities in the last hours leading to the tragedy. Authorities in Europe still have no clear idea how many people were aboard the boat when it sank - estimates range from 400 to over 700 - but likely hundreds came from Pakistan, and many from Azad Jammu Kashmir. The accounts of two Pakistani survivors emerged days after the tragic incident. "They have done this [on purpose]. They have sunk it themselves," one of the survivors said, while the other added that they had been still for five days and six nights before the ship sunk "in a minute".

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Qureshi wants end to human trafficking

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Vice Chairman Shah Mehmood Qureshi expressed his deepest condolence with the bereaved families of over 300 Pakistanis who lost their lives in the Greece boat disaster, saying that economic meltdown, state sponsored censorship and culture of fear and insecurity leading them to find any means necessary to leave. In his statement on Monday, Qureshi said:

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ISLAMABAD: As a token of appreciation and to thank the people and Government of Azerbaijan for hosting Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and his delegation last week, the Prime Minister is holding hand of the Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov during a ceremony. - DNA

Zil Hajj moon sighted

Eid ul Adha to fall on June 29 in Pakistan

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee has announced the sighting of Zil Hajj moon in Pakistan meaning that Eid ul Adha will be celebrated across the country on June 29 (Thursday). The decision was announced after the moon sighting committee met under the chairmanship of Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad. The testimonies of moon sighting were received from various cities including Karachi, Lahore and others, the Ruet-e-Hilal committee chairman said.

Continued on Page 06

AGP asks SC to reject pleas

Verdict reserved on petitions against SC review law

CJP Bandial says verdict to be announced after discussion

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan on Monday reserved the verdict on petitions challenging the Supreme Court (Review of Judgments and Orders) Act 2023 after arguments were completed from both sides. A three-member bench of the apex court headed by Chief Justice Bandial and comprising Justice Ijazul Ahsan and Justice Munib Akhtar heard the petitions challenging the vires of the Supreme Court (Review of Judgments and Orders) Act 2023. Ghulam Mohiuddin, Zaman Khan Vardak and the Jurists Foundation, through its

Continued on Page 06

Audio leaks commission: SC upholds order

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan (SC) on Monday upheld its May 26 order staying the proceedings of an inquiry commission led by Justice Qazi Faez Isa, probing the veracity of recent audio leaks and their

Continued on Page 06

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Ministers welcome four month budget

LAHORE: The caretaker provincial ministers have welcomed the budget presented for the first four months of the new financial year and congratulated the Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi.

In the caretaker cabinet meeting, the provincial ministers appreciated the policies of Punjab for not putting any kind of burden on the public and the government's steps taken to increase IT exports.

Provincial Minister for Information, Culture and Archeology Amir Mir said that the caretaker government's budget for the financial year 2023-24 was balanced in all respects, in which the budget for health and education had been allocated on a priority basis. Allocation of around 65 billion rupees in just four months for agriculture, livestock, fisheries and irrigation was a record.

Provincial Minister for Housing and Auqaf Azfar Ali Nasir said that the new budget was a practical budget and for the first time a government had focused on reducing the growing debt of billions of rupees for the purchase of wheat. Provincial Minister for Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education Dr. Javed Akram said that actions of the caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi for including the health sector in the priorities for the welfare of the people were commendable. "Mohsin Naqvi proved that if your determination is unshakable then no one could stop you from serving the people," he added.

Provincial Minister for Construction and Communications Bilal Afzal said that to complete 2500 projects out of 4842 development projects of Punjab was commendable. He said that the timely completion of development projects not only created convenience for the people but also made it possible to complete the projects within the fixed cost.—APP

Nation mourns loss of precious lives in Greece ferry disaster

LAHORE: The nation observed a mourning day on Monday over the Greece boat disaster, in which dozens of precious lives were lost. An overloaded ferry had capsized in the Mediterranean Sea off the coast of Greece on Wednesday. Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif had announced Sunday observance of a mourning day to share the grief of the grieving families. The national flag flew at half-mast across the country. Various bar councils and civil society members held special prayers, 'Ghaebana Namaz-e-Janaza' (funeral prayers) and 'Fateha khawani' in the native villages, towns and cities of victims of the ferry disaster.

The United Nations Human Rights office said in a statement on Sunday that at least 500 people were still missing and that dozens of people were known to have perished. A good number of women and children were among the missing persons in the 'horrific tragedy' that left at least 78 people dead. The ferry boat was carrying up to 750 people that went down 50 nautical miles off Pylos in southern Greece, it further said.—APP

To maximize trade benefits Indonesian envoy stresses products diversification

DNA

LAHORE: The diversification of products and robust market research to identify new business sectors would be the key for the Pakistani business community to gain maximum benefits from bilateral trade relationship between Indonesia and Pakistan. This was stated by Ambassador of Indonesia Mr. Adam M. Tugio while interacting with top CEOs at a "Dialogue on Indonesia-Pakistan Trade Relationship" organised by CEO Club Pakistan in Lahore.

Answering to various queries of leading business companies chairpersons during an engaging session, Ambassador Tugio highlighted many opportunities to further enhance bilateral trade beyond raw materials and agricultural products. "Textiles, leathers and pharmaceutical industries are the areas where business community of the two countries have the potential to team up in JV and produce items for third country markets", the envoy said.



Responding to the prospects of FTA, the Indonesian envoy suggested the business community to identify more items where Pakistan has comparative advantage and consult with relevant authorities to include them in Trade in Goods Agreement (TIGA) as part of the review process to expand the PTA. He reminded the audience on the important location of Indonesia as hub for expanding trade to the wider area in Southeast Asia and suggested leapfrogging strategy to explore possibility of joining Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement which

represents 15 countries and 30% population of the world. "By joining RCEP, Pakistan would get easy access into huge market of ASEAN and additional 5 partner countries with vast trade potential", added the envoy. Discussing about mutual collaboration in IT sector, Ambassador

Tugio said animation, health sector, business outsourcing new apps and other innovative ideas present lucrative prospects and are attractive areas of cooperation. He informed that Indonesian Embassy is working hard to promote educational linkages with universities in Pakistan and to strengthen scientific and technical cooperation with COMSTEC which would also be beneficial for pharmaceutical, herbal and halal industries. Earlier, the Ambassador of Indonesia was warmly received by Ms. Nazeya Qan Head Corporate Communications and esteemed members of the CEO Club Pakistan. The Ambassador expressed his admiration for Pakistan's thriving business community and its significant contributions to the country's economic growth. The CEO Club Pakistan members reciprocated the Ambassador's sentiments and expressed their eagerness to forge stronger economic ties with Indonesian counterparts.

JI wants formation of JIT to probe into Karachi mayor election

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Hafiz Naeemur Rehman – the chief of Jamaat-i-Islami's Karachi chapter – on Monday said they would move the court and demand formation of a JIT (joint investigation team) to ascertain why the union council chairmen belonging to the PTI remained absent on the day election was for the port city's mayor. Representatives from all the spy agencies should be made part of the JIT to determine how these elected members went missing during the process, said Rehman told media and accused the PPP and the ECP (Election Commission of Pakistan) of having a nexus. Describing the election of PPP's Murtaza Wahab as

racism flourish in Pakistan?" Last week, Wahab was elected Karachi mayor by defeating Rehman while Salman Abdullah, also of PPP, grabbed the deputy mayor's slot. Wahab bagged 173 votes while Rehman could secure 161 votes only. Out of 366 members, 333 members were present at the polling venue while 33 members could not reach the polling venue to cast their vote. The results triggered a clash between the PPP and JI supporters, as rival political workers, armed with clubs and sticks, pelted each other with stones and created chaos. Police and Rangers sprang into action and dispersed the mob by mounting baton-charge while also arresting some of the troublemakers.

CG of Thailand calls on Sindh Governor

Holding elections in time crucial for stability

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) spokesperson and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi Monday termed holding elections in time as crucial for political stability in Pakistan. In a press conference along with PPP leader, Nadeem Afzal Chan here, Faisal Kundi said that the people of Karachi gave a full mandate to the Pakistan People's Party in the local body elections. He said that his party was trying its best to achieve success in the upcoming elections. "We are ready to contest general elections and have started our campaign", he added. Faisal Kundi emphasized that all allies should go to the elections which are expected to be held by October. He said that the delegation of the PPP in a meeting with the Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif presented reservations on the budget. "The PPP delegation will meet the Prime Minister again today". The SAPM said that in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, funds were given to all MPs except those belonging to the Pakistan People's Party. About the return of former Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, Faisal Kundi said that PML-N has to decide when Nawaz Sharif will come. He said that the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) is benefiting nine million poor families through providing them financial assistance. The PPP spokesperson said that complaints regarding BISP funds have been received from all over Pakistan. He said that investigations were being carried out to address the complaints of those having difficulties in getting funds. Kundi stated that the quarterly payments under Benazir Kafaalat program were being issued with a 25 percent increase. The SAPM also expressed his grief over the death of more than 100 Pakistanis in a boat accident in Greece.

Ahsan Bakhtawari for improving county's storage system

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that Pakistan needs to improve its storage system to make it self-sufficient in food, especially wheat. Government should provide interest-free loans to flour mill owners to improve storage system. Every year millions of tons of wheat are wasted due to lack of storage system while wheat has to be imported to meet the country's needs. Access to cheap and quality flour to citizens is a joint responsibility of the Food Department and flour mills. Pakistan has produced more than 27 million tonnes of wheat this year, which is a record, due to the Prime Minister Kisan Package. The government and related institutions should ensure timely measures to deliver the fruits of the best harvest to the industry and the people.

former Senior Vice President Chaudhry Mukhtar, District Food Controller Muhammad Zaman and members of the Executive Committee were also present. President Islamabad Chamber said that Pakistan is primarily an agricultural country, it is very worrying that we have to import food every year to meet our requirement, which consumes huge national capital. Pakistan's farmers and industry have all the capabilities to make us self-sufficient in food. He said that the Food Department in collaboration with the flour mills industry should take such steps to ensure that we

do not have to install cheap flour points. He said that Deputy Director Food Department Maher Ghulam Abbas has rendered valuable services for the improvement of the system of the department. He has very diligently and dutifully implemented the policy of equality and treated all flour mill owners equally which is commendable. The presence of 95% flour mill owners of Islamabad present in this hall today proves that they have full faith in their policy of equality and inclusiveness of all stakeholders. Islamabad Chamber stands with him in this regard.



Rice varieties will help uplift farmers and enhance rice productivity

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Rice Variety Evaluation Committee (VEC) meeting at the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) Headquarters in Islamabad was led by Dr. Imtiaz Hussain, Member of PARC's Plant Sciences Division. During the meeting, Dr. Hussain underscored PARC's dedication to assisting both public and private sector institutes as well as seed companies in the evaluation and introduction of rice hybrids and varieties.

Attendees included representatives from the Federal Seed Certification, national and multinational seed companies, provincial seed councils, as well as rice scientists from research institutes at the provincial and federal levels. The committee members were provided with a comprehensive overview of fifty-one proposals for rice hybrids/varieties by Dr. Muhammad Yousof, National Coordinator Rice of PARC. Following thorough discussions and careful considerations, the VEC recommended 14

high-yielding rice hybrids from private seed companies for the cultivation in Pakistan. Furthermore, the National Institute of Genomics and Biotechnology (NIGAB) of PARC introduced four fine rice varieties that demonstrated significantly higher grain yield compared to the currently grown varieties. These fine rice varieties were also endorsed by the VEC for cultivation in Pakistan, with the aim of enhancing farmers' productivity and profitability. In addition to the above recommendations, the

VEC also suggested the cultivation of Sona Super Basmati, a long-grain variety measuring 9.5 mm, and Vital Super Basmati developed by RRI, Kala Shah Kaku. Vital Super Basmati is notable for its high levels of zinc and iron enrichment. During a meeting with rice scientists, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman PARC, expressed his confidence in the positive impact that the introduction of these high-yielding rice varieties would have on rice productivity and the profitability of farmers across the country.

Dr. Waseem ul Hassan, representing the Ministry of Food Security and Research applauded the efforts of rice scientists in Pakistan for their achievement in releasing the biofortified Basmati rice variety, along with the four high-yielding fine rice varieties. Furthermore, representatives from seed companies lauded PARC for establishing a transparent testing procedure for evaluating rice hybrids and varieties, recognizing the subsequent benefits it brings to farmers and the rice sector in Pakistan.

Commander Iranian Navy calls on Air Chief, lauds PAF professionalism

ISLAMABAD: Rear Admiral Shahram Irani, Commander of Islamic Republic of Iran Navy called on Air Chief Marshal Zaeher Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force (PAF) here on Monday and lauded the professionalism of PAF personnel. The meeting was focused on areas of mutual interest and regional developments, a PAF news release said. During the meeting, the Chief of the Air Staff highlighted that the advancement in space, electronic warfare, cyber and niche technologies coupled with artificial intelligence had profoundly affected the traditional environment of national security. He briefed the visiting dignitary about various ongoing projects being carried out by Pakistan Air Force with special focus on modernization and development of indigenous capabilities. The Air Chief also emphasized that Pakistan and Iran enjoyed longstanding religious, cultural and historical bonds which were manifested through strong ties between both the countries. Rear Admiral Shahram Irani, Commander of Islamic Republic of Iran Navy commended the exceptional progress made by Pakistan Air Force on its path to modernization.—APP

Minister emphasizes for promotion of tourism in KP

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Industries, Commerce and Technical Education Adnan Jalil on Sunday emphasized the need for concerted efforts to explore and promote the countless tourist attractions in our province to invite foreign visitors. He expressed these views during a briefing held at the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority (KPCTA), which focused on tourism opportunities in the province and the efforts of KPCTA to explore them. He said that cultural and tourism activities should be effectively promoted at the local, national, and international levels to inform both local and foreign tourists about our rich traditions and to highlight the tourism potential and beautiful spots in the province.—DNA

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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/Sweden
National Day
- June 10/Portugal
Portugal Day (National Day)
- June 10/Jordan
Arab Revolution & Army Day
- June 11/United Kingdom
Birthday 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

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Monal.....0334-5421812



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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



Enquiry

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



Hospitals

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



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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Alvi directs Info Ministry to pay retirement benefits

The president noted with grave concern that a revenue-generating institution, such as Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (PBC), was facing an acute shortage of financial resources

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday directed the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MoIB) to pay pensionary benefits to 38 employees of Radio Pakistan within three months as their families were facing hardships due to delayed payments. The president noted with grave concern that a revenue-generating institution, such as Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (PBC), was facing an acute shortage of financial resources.

He emphasized taking up the matter of providing funds to PBC at the highest level and directed the Secretary MoIB to seek approval of the competent authority to obtain funds for payment in lieu of pension, gratuity, and commutation within three months and report compliance to Wafaqi Mohtasib. The president gave these remarks while disposing of a representation filed by PBC against a decision of the Wafaqi Mohtasib directing it to make the payment to the aggrieved employees. The act of non-payment of benefits to employees under the garb of financial constraints amounted to maladministration, he added. The Mohtasib had regretted that the superannuated employees were roaming to get their genuine and legal rights, in such old ages, where every penny was a basic necessity of that retired employee. As per details, Syed Pervaiz Hussain Shah and 37 others (the complainants) had filed a complaint with the Wafaqi Mohtasib stating that they had retired from service of PBC on different dates and necessary Pension Payment Orders

(PPOs) were issued but no payment was made so far. Feeling aggrieved, they approached the Wafaqi Mohtasib, who passed the order in their favour. PBC, then, chose to file a representation before the President against Mohtasib's order. The President disposed of the representation by observing that it was an established law that a government servant, who retired from Government service, qualifying for retirement benefits, pension being a material part of it, did not get it as a bounty of the State but as a right acquired after

putting in satisfactory service. He said that it was a matter of grave concern that PBC's retired employees and their families were striving hard without having pensionary benefits, to which they were entitled. He noted that PBC had also admitted the entitlement and liability of pension/commutation/gratuity etc. payable to its employees. The President, therefore, disposed of the representation with the direction to Secretary MoIB to seek approval of competent authority to obtain funds for payment of benefits to employees within three months.



ISLAMABAD: Dr Luay Shabaneh country representative UNFPA Islamabad called on Federal secretary health iftikhar shallwani today in his office.—DNA

World Refugee day to be marked today

ISLAMABAD: The World Refugee Day will be marked on Tuesday across the globe, the day honors the courage, strength and determination of women, men and children who are forced to flee their homeland under threat of persecution, conflict and violence. World Refugee Day honors the spirit and courage of millions of refugees worldwide. The people honor the spirit and courage of millions of refugees worldwide on World Refugee Day. It is a day to recognize the contributions of refugees in their communities. Organizations such as Amnesty International and the International Rescue Committee (IRC) often get involved in various activities for the day. They may include: Activist protests against using former prisons to detain migrants and asylum seekers. Screenings of films—APP

Over 1.5 mln children being immunized against measles

RAWALPINDI: Over 1.5 million children, between six months to 59 months of age would be vaccinated against measles during a weeklong drive launched in ten districts of the province including 42 Union Councils (UCs) of Rawalpindi district here on Monday. Caretaker Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare Dr Jamal Nasir said this while inaugurating the "Health Fair" and measles immunization campaign by vaccinating children here at Eden Marquee IJP road. During the special campaign, Dr Jamal said that besides measles immunization, Polio and Vitamin A drops were also being administered to children in 147 union councils of ten districts of Punjab which had been declared high-risk areas for measles virus spread. He informed that children were being vaccinated against measles and rubella in 80 Union Councils of Lahore city, 12 in Jhang, three in Hafizabad, two each in Narowal, Sialkot, Kasur and Toba Tek Singh, while one each in Gujranwala and Sheikhupura. The minister added that 52 UC supervisors, 354 skilled workers, 354 Assistants and 354 social mobilizers were also visiting 42 UCs of the Rawalpindi district including 19 union councils of the city, 8 UCs of Rawalpindi Cantonment, five UCs of tehsil Taxila and 10 UCs of Rawalpindi rural. He said that at the request of the Government of Punjab, the World Health Organization was providing technical and operational support for the special campaign. Dr Jamal said that the government was providing free vaccines against 12 deadly diseases to children under two years of age while parents who do not administer timely immunizations to their children's putting their lives at risk. He urged the parents to must complete the immunization of their children in time. APP

Impossible to increase jobs without reducing burden on taxpayers

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Monday that it is impossible to increase investment, employment, and revenue without reducing the burden on the tax-paying sectors of the economy. Constantly increasing the tax burden on tax-paying sectors is tantamount to driving them out of the country, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that in the country's GDP, agriculture accounts for 23%, while wholesale, retail accounts for 18%, construction and transport account for 19%. The burden of direct taxes in these sectors is negligible, which does not happen anywhere in the world. Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that due to non-collection of tax from important sectors, the

entire burden of tax falls on manufacturing, other tax-paying sectors and the public, which will result in serious economic problems. The business leader said that the situation of the country's economy is troubling and the non-cooperation of international organizations in these circumstances can prove to be very harmful. Due to the non-cooperation of the IMF, it has become impossible to obtain cheap loans from international institutions and other sources as well and as a result our foreign exchange reserves continue to decrease, he added. He said that it is very critical for Pakistan to finalise a deal with the IMF as soon as possible.

The international financial community is getting a very negative message about Pakistan due to continued accusing the IMF, therefore it has become necessary to end this practise. Mian Zahid Hussain further said that the advice of the countries and institutions that want to

lend to Pakistan should be given importance. If the country goes bankrupt, a long and painful period will begin, the situation will become more difficult and the people will become uncontrollable. Our country can better deal with the current economic situation provided that the cost of doing business is brought down to par with other countries in the region so that exports can increase. The government should establish a cost accounting authority which can determine the cost of doing business for Pakistani producers and bring the prices of gas and electricity to the level of competing nations, he suggested. We are not required to repeat the mistakes of the past, stop making empty claims and political parties have to decide to prioritize the interests of the country above everything else and stick to it; otherwise the worst economic crisis in the country's history will destroy everything, he warned.

Sherry condoles demise of Pakistanis in Greece

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Senator Sherry Rehman on Monday expressed her heartfelt condolences on the sad demise of Pakistanis in Greece and called for a thorough probe to investigate of the matter. The federal minister took to Twitter to share her sentiments on the tragic incident. Senator Rehman wrote, "Devastated to hear of the terrible boat tragedy. This loss of lives of men, women and children is a moment of bereavement for all of us. Prayers for all the families who lost their loved ones." She added that there was also need to investigate how this happened as well as introspect on why it happened.

Cattle markets become center of attraction

ISLAMABAD: As sale of sacrificial animals all over the country's makeshift cattle markets are gearing up where enthusiastic buyers specially youngsters are taking keen interest for buying some unique name and heavy weight animals. Despite prices, mostly people have been visiting animal markets to get the animals of their choice well before the Eid day, to provide their family members, especially children, to spend maximum time with these animals before they are slaughtered to fulfill the command of Allah Almighty, said a report aired by a Private news channel. All kind of heavy weight and various unusual name animals including cows, bulls, camels, goats, lambs are becoming the part of cattle markets across the country. A goat with heavy weight more than 300 kilograms has become an attraction for youngsters in Faisalabad cattle market, said a seller. Children are enjoying the best time while enjoying at cattle market, said a citizen. For the attraction of buyers, sacrificial animals are being decorated with colorful garlands, sterling bands, embellished belts and crowns, said another customer, said a student of 10 class. A trader in Lahore cattle market appeared with heavy weight bull unique name abu Bail' to attract the citizens, said a citizen, adding, he fed his bull a healthy food, which consists of butter and milk. "We are demanding high prices because we spent much time in bringing up a healthy and gorgeous pair of sacrificial animal," said a vendor in cattle market. Youngsters of Punjab cities have also been clicking selfies with special named animals and sharing it on social media, said a citizen. "An average-size cow, which was available against Rs90,000 is being sold at Rs140,000 this year," said a customer. The sellers are cashing the festive occasion and charging higher prices for such unique name animals, said another citizen. Karachi cow mandi is also biggest cattle market in the country and like every year, it showcases some of the most unique animals brought for sale, said a customer, adding, A cow, named "Rani" is up for sale at Rs9 million.—DNA

Beverages Industry pleads for reduction of 7% FED

ISLAMABAD: The aerated beverages industry's representatives appeared before the Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue and Chairman of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to seek a reduction in Federal Excise Duty (FED). The industry presented their negative growth figures to the committee, highlighting how the imposition of 7% FED has impacted their business and led to an approximately 40% decrease in volume. The industry's representatives underlined that the aerated beverages industry has been a reliable contributor to the national economy, bolstering the country's beleaguered forex reserves by an estimated US\$200 million during a challenging economic period. However, recent tax measures have hindered the industry's potential for growth, leading to a decrease in investment and revenue. The Chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue, Senator Saleem Mandviwalla, told the industry that he would consider the industry's advocacy on tax relief, commenting that the sharp volume drop also adversely impacts government revenue.—DNA

Senate submit 55 proposals

ISLAMABAD: The Senate on Monday proposed 55 recommendations related to Finance Bill 2023 and gave 31 recommendations regarding the public sector development program. The recommendations on the Finance Bill, 2023 would be forwarded to National Assembly which would decide whether or not these recommendations are to be incorporated into the Money Bill. In the session of the upper house of the parliament on Monday, Senator Saleem Mandviwalla, Chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Finance, presented the Senate's budget recommendations. The Senate recommended to National Assembly that tax of 12 percent of the sale on retailers and brands who are registered with FBR should be maintained, instead of increasing it to 15 percent. For filers, it was proposed that a tax on credit card transactions should be increased from 1% to 5%, and for non-filers and 2% to 10% for non-filers to be maintained at previous rates. Under the laptop scheme, mandatory technical training should be provided to those who purchase laptops so that they can earn income through online businesses. It has been proposed to gradually impose taxes on the real estate and agricultural sectors. Government institutions working in loss should be audited, and reform action should be taken against institutions like Pakistan Steel Mills, which have been incurring heavy losses for years. Income-generating industries should be given tax exemptions and provided with gas supply. It has been proposed to establish tax-free zones for foreign direct investment and rationalize the subsidy mechanism for seeds.—APP

Mushaal seeking UN chief's intervention to save Yasin's life

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson of Peace and Culture Organisation, Mushaal Hussein Mullick penned a letter to António Guterres, Secretary General, United Nations requesting his immediate intervention to save Mohammed Yasin Malik Chairman KJLF's life from Indian judicial murder. Mushaal, the wife of Yasin Malik, on Monday, wrote a letter to the UN chief and appealed to him to play his role to avert a judicial murder of her husband, a news release said. "I am Mushaal Hussein Mullick, the distraught wife of an unlawfully incarcerated husband and mother of an 11-year-old girl who has been denied a father's hug for almost 9 years. I am writing to you at a time when words fall me, yet with great hope in the office you hold and the principles you represent," she added. She said that help me articulate the right sentences to explain to an 11-year-old that her father is on death row for demanding what the UN has mandated as our right, or should I just tell her justice is dead? "My husband Yasin Malik 57, is the face of Kashmir's non-violent political struggle, which stems from a resolution of the very organisation you head today," she maintained. Mushaal stated that he has given away his youth, his family, and his health in the belief that the people of Kashmir deserve, as the most basic of human rights, the right to self-determination: all so with the most non-belligerent, orthodox political ethos for that he currently rots in a death cell of the notorious Tihar Jail in India since 7 May 2019 with no rights of a fair trial. She said that Yasin has spent 25 such years in multiple Indian jails. Are we waiting for him to die and crown him Kashmir's Mandela? "I am practically a widow, but does the English language have a word to describe a child whose father she has not met in almost a decade? I am no legal expert and nor do I have the luxury of time to engage one.—DNA

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Briefs

Nafisa hopeful coalition partners to mend fences

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party MNA Nafisa Shah Monday that she was hopeful that the coalition partners would address the PPP's reservations over budget allocation for flood victims' rehabilitation and urged for gearing up for timely transparent elections. Talking to a Private news channel, she said her party was neither in favour of early nor delayed general elections, adding, the general elections in the country should be held according to the constitution and democratic norms. She termed timely elections need of the hour to overcome the chaos and instability in the country. "No-one is dare to deprive the people of their due rights to elect their representatives and choose their government," she added, PPP considers its workers a precious asset as they made sacrifices and always help party in difficult times. Replying to a question, she said the PPP did not want any confrontation or deadlock and always preferred table talks to resolve issues. To another question, she said the PPP always ready for elections but we will support the partners till the completing time of assemblies, adding, we will not leave the coalition parties in any difficult circumstances and the PPP will continue to stand by its allies.—APP

Seafood exports increase by 17.13% to \$456 mln

ISLAMABAD: The exports of fish and fish preparations increased by 17.13 percent during the first eleven months of the current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding period of last year, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. The country earned \$456.668 million from seafood exports during July-May (2022-23) against the exports of US \$389.873 million in July-May (2021-22), showing growth of 17.13 percent, PBS reported. In terms of quantity, the exports of fish and fish preparations increased by 32.65 percent going up from 148,354 metric tons last year to 196,785 metric tons in the first eleven months of last year. On a year-on-year basis, seafood exports increased by 25.06 percent to \$50,578 million in May 2023 as compared to exports of \$40,444 million during April 2022. In terms of quantity, the exports witnessed a 32.20 percent increase going up from 16,578 metric tons last year to 22,081 metric tons this year. On a month-on-month basis, the seafood exports declined by 0.93 percent when compared to the exports of \$51,052 million in April 2023, according to PBS data. In terms of quantity, fish exports went down by 6.76 percent in May 2023 compared to the exports of 23,681 metric tons in April 2023. The overall food exports from the country were recorded at \$ 4,661.906 million during July-May (2022-23) against the exports of \$ 4,917.691 million recorded during July-May (2021-22), showing negative growth of 5.20 percent. It is pertinent to mention here that the overall trade deficit witnessed a decline of 40.59 percent during the first eleven months of the current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding period of last year.—APP

Senate offers Fateha

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Senate on Monday offered Fateha for Pakistani nationals who lost their lives after a ship carrying migrants sank off the coast of Greece on June 14. Senator Mushtaq Ahmad led Fateha on the request of Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani. He prayed God to grant patience to the bereaved family members to bear this loss. He also prayed for the progress and prosperity of the country.

CPEC success story reflected in Karot Power Project: Senators

Parliamentary Delegation lauds Green Development, Mushahid says time for course correction & regional connectivity to bid goodbye to IMF

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A Parliamentary Delegation visited the Karot Hydropower Project to commemorate its 1st Anniversary and celebrate the 10 years of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the 10 Years of BRI. The Delegation was led by Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Chairman Pakistan-China Institute. Mustafa Hyder Sayed, Executive Director Pakistan-China Institute, also accompanied the delegation. This was the first of its kind Cross Party Parliamentary delegation to have visited the Karot Hydropower Project which included Senator Waleed Iqbal, Senator Taj Haider, Senator Sadia Abbasi, Senator Palwasha Mohammad Zai Khan, Senator Rukhsana Zuberi, Mohammed Kani Dahi, MNA, Senator Pir Sabir Shah, and Senator Muhammad Asad Ali Khan Junejo. Moreover, journalists, bloggers, and students were also a part of this delegation.

"The Parliamentary delegation expressed admiration for the commitment of the Karot Hydropower Project to clean energy generation and its contribution to Pakistan's development agenda. They also acknowledged the project's pivotal role in meeting the country's energy-increasing demands while addressing environmental concerns. The delegation was warmly welcomed by Mr. Wang Minsheng, CEO of CSAIL, who delivered an introductory speech emphasizing



the significance of the Karot Project and the operations underway to boost Pakistan's energy sector. He said that the Karot Hydropower Project is the flagship project of CPEC, featuring sincere cooperation and mutual benefit between China and Pakistan. Expanding on the project benefits he said, "With an annual generating capacity of about 3.2 billion kWh, the project is expected to save about 1.4 million tons of standard coal and reduce carbon dioxide emissions by

3.5 million tons each year, meeting the electricity needs of 5 million people in Pakistan." In an interview given to CCTV, Xinhua and Phoenix TV, the Head of the Parliamentary Delegation, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed appreciated the project team for the effective operation and maintenance of the Karot Hydropower Project. Additionally, he emphasized the importance of CPEC as the backbone of Pakistan's economic growth – voicing optimism

regarding the CPEC and regional connectivity to ensure course correction to lessen Pakistan's dependency on IMF. Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed also appreciated the CSR initiatives taken by the 3 Gorges company, in which the company supported a 60-bed THQ Hospital Kahuta, which serves 30,000 patients per month. In addition to the various schools, access roads, and other infrastructure supported by the Karot Project for its local

communities. Senator Mushahid said through CPEC and regional economic and energy connectivity with Iran, Russia, Central Asian Republics and Gulf states like Saudi Arabia, UAE and Qatar, Pakistan can bid goodbye to the IMF. Mustafa Hyder Sayed, while welcoming the visit of the parliamentary delegation, termed it a consensus-building exercise and called for more such visits to other CPEC sites as well. In his view, these visits serve as providing

first-hand information about facts and achievements on the ground, helping to refute the propaganda against CPEC in Pakistan. He said Karot is a CPEC success story as it was completed a year ahead of schedule at less than the stipulated time, then Karot is about Clean Energy & Green Development, and finally, Karot has helped local communities to change their lives for the better through schools, hospitals, roads and infrastructure like bridges. Senator Waleed Iqbal, another delegation member, stated that the Karot Hydropower Project is the first large-scale hydropower project under the Belt and Road Initiative, emphasizing that its significance is not only for Pakistan but also for the regional development of Green Energy. Counsellor Bao Zhong from the Chinese embassy said that with the joint efforts of people from all walks of life in the two countries, the Karot Hydropower Project has made remarkable achievements, which strongly resonate with the spirit of the "Belt and Road" initiative joint consultation, joint construction and shared benefits. She said, "China is willing to work with Pakistan to earnestly implement the consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries and jointly promote the high-quality development of the Belt and Road". The delegation had the opportunity to examine key project components such as the spillway, dam structure.

Religious minister asks pilgrims to maintain discipline

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Religious Affairs and Inheritance, Senator Muhammad Talha Mahmood said that the government tried its best to provide all best facilities to hujjaj this year and asked all intending pilgrims to maintain discipline while performing hajj as there would be Muslims from every nook and cranny of the world. Talking to PTV news channel, he said

all intending pilgrims, being representatives of Pakistan should express maximum restraint and good behaviour, adding, hajj pilgrims to pray for divine blessings for the overall welfare of the country so that the journey of economic development of country. The Minister further said that Hujjaj were given special trainings suggested by the Ministry and follow the guidelines which are also

available on Ministry's social media platforms. While mentioning that his government has developed the hajj management using modern technology, he said, "It is our duty to arrange all the facilities so that those who are going to Saudi Arabia can perform hajj." Replying a question, he said that this year 2023 hajj is financially more economical as compared to last year,

adding, the fall in the value of the Pakistani rupee had also a significant impact on the Hajj package. To another question, he said that he is performing hajj with his own expenses, adding, the Hajj pilgrimage is one of the largest religious gatherings in the world and is considered a religious obligation for every Muslim who is healthy and able to afford it within their lifetime.—APP

About 5,492 tractors assembled in 10 months

ISLAMABAD: Domestic tractors assembling during the period from July-April, 2022-23 was recorded at 5,492 units as compared to the assembling of the corresponding period of last year. During the period under review tractors assembling in local markets decreased by 46.19 percent as against the assembling of the same period of last year, according to the data of the Large Scale Manufacturing Industries of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. About 25,645 tractors were assembled in the first 10 months of the last financial year (2021-22), whereas on a year-to-year basis, local assembling was recorded at 2,955 tractors in April 2023 as against the production of 5,495 tractors of the same month of last year. However, the output of power looms grew by 29.27 percent during last 10 months of current financial year as about 488 power looms were locally assembled as compared to the assembling of 390 looms of the same period last year. Meanwhile, local production of edible oil and vegetable also ghee grew by 4.97 percent and 16.72 percent respectively in 10 months of the current financial year as compared to the production of the same period last year. During the period under review, about 458,231 metric tons of cooking oil were manufactured as compared to the manufacturing of 411,710 metric tons of the same period last year. Over 1.268 million metric tons of vegetable ghee was also produced in order to tackle with local requirements in last 10 months of current financial year as compared to the output of 1.178 million metric tons of the same period last year. The tea blending in the country also witnessed about 5 percent growth during the period under review as about 108,345 metric tons of tea blended locally as compared to 124,062 metric tons of the same period last year.—DNA

MoU signed to strengthen research collaboration

KASHGAR : A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Centre for BRI and China Studies (CBRICS), Institute of Peace and Diplomatic Studies (IPDS) and Centre for China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CCPEC), Kashi University (KSU) to strengthen research collaboration on CPEC. The MoU was inked during the third Muztagata Forum, an International Symposium dedicated to CPEC, held in Kashgar, China, on June 18. Through the MoU, according to Gwadar Pro on Monday, CBRICS and CCPEC are committed to organizing joint research projects, conferences, seminars, and workshops that bring together scholars, experts, and policymakers from China, Pakistan, and beyond. The collaboration will also facilitate faculty and student exchange programs, enabling the exchange of ideas, experiences, and cultural understanding between the two institutions.—APP

Over 1.5 mln children being immunized against measles

RAWALPINDI: Over 1.5 million children, between six months to 59 months of age would be vaccinated against measles during a week-long drive launched in ten districts of the province including 42 Union Councils (UCs) of Rawalpindi district here on Monday. Caretaker Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare Dr Jamal Nasir said this while inaugurating the "Health Fair" and measles immunization campaign by vaccinating children here at Eden Marquee IJP road. During the special campaign, Dr Jamal said that besides measles immunization, Polio and Vitamin A drops were also being administered to children in 147 union councils of ten districts of Punjab which had been declared high-risk areas for measles virus spread. He informed that children were being vaccinated against measles and rubella in 80 Union Councils of Lahore city, 12 in Jhang, three in Hafizabad, two each in Narowal, Sialkot, Kasur and Toba Tek Singh, while one each in Gujranwala and Sheikhupura. The minister added that 52 UC supervisors, 354 skilled workers, 354 Assistants and 354 social mobilizers were also visiting 42 UCs of the Rawalpindi district including 19 un-

ion councils of the city, 8 UCs of Rawalpindi Cantonment, five UCs of tehsil Taxila and 10 UCs of Rawalpindi rural. He said that at the request of the Government of Punjab, the World Health Organization was providing technical and operational support for the special campaign. Dr Jamal said that the government was providing free vaccines against 12 deadly diseases to children under two years of age while parents who do not administer timely immunizations to their children's putting their lives at risk. He urged the parents to must complete the immunization of their children in time. While inaugurating the Health Fair, Dr Jamal said that the aim of the health fair was to provide maternal, child health, and family planning services to the underprivileged sections of society. Apart from mother and child health and family planning counters, electronic medical records, nutrition screening, ultrasound and mental health clinics had also been set up at the fair. The health minister said that provision of health facilities was the priority of the caretaker government, and added that a healthy mother and child were essential for a healthy society.—APP

Secretary Defence visits Iran


ISLAMABAD: Secretary Defence, Lieutenant General (R) Hamood uz Zaman Khan alongwith Defence delegation visited Islamic Republic of Iran, where both sides agree to enhance bilateral cooperation in various sectors. Iranian Deputy Defence Minister welcomed the dignitary and expressed best wishes for Pakistan's political and military leadership, a news release said.—APP

Senate continues debate on budget 2023-24


ISLAMABAD: Senators from both government and opposition benches on Monday participated in the debate on the budget 2023-24 in the upper house of the parliament and recommended various proposals to make it more people-friendly. Participating in the discussion on the budget for the year 2023-24, Senator Engr Rukhsana Zuberi said that there should be a charter of the economy for the long-term basis to change the life of the common man. She said that there is a good increase in the salaries and pension of government employees in the budget, however, she stressed the need to ensure proper implementation of this decision. She said that many taxes should be reviewed and make friendly particularly related with the IT sector. She said that those citizens using solar energy should be exempted from the tax as they are contributing to the country. She also suggested announcing investors and peoples awards to create a culture of encouragement. Senator Fida Muhammad said that everyone should play a role in the progress of the country and work jointly for the strengthening of democratic institutions. He said that more incentives should be announced for the poor segment of society. Senator Muhammad Abdul Qadir said that the role of the Senate on the budgetary documents should be more strengthened. He urged to make strong economic decisions for economic viability to control inflation and improve quality of life. He said that power generation is major issue and stressed the need to improve the management system of power companies. He said that more focus should be on the efficiency of the independent power producers. He said that IT and medicine exports should be enhanced up to \$ 50 billion in the next five years which is very low presently and below \$3 billion. He urged the government to take measures to attract more foreign direct investment.—APP

'Pakistan's economy to touch \$1 trillion by year 2035'

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal on Monday said that the size of Pakistan's economy would be expected to touch \$1 trillion by the year 2035 as the country's economy would become one of the largest in the world. Addressing 'Master Card Funded Care Ignite Project' ceremony held here, the minister said that the country's economy had the potential to become a major economy in the world by 2035. Ahsan Iqbal hoped that domestic exports could reach \$100 billion in the next five years and current domestic exports stood at \$30 billion, which was much less than its potential. He said that the current government was following short-term, medium and long-term plans to improve the economy, for which the Economic Council had been formed. Ahsan Iqbal said that the economy of the country had deteriorated due to the wrong planning of the previous Tehreek-e-Insaf govt.—APP







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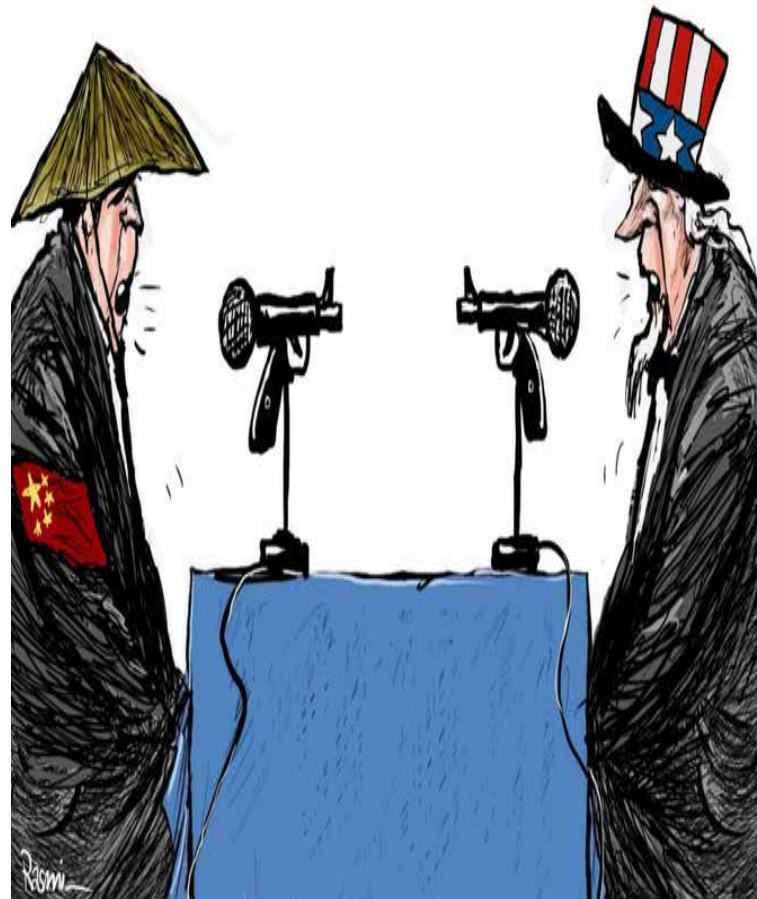
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Sino-EU relations

Practical China-Germany cooperation, which has enabled two-way trade to increase by almost 1,000 times over the past five decades, has served economic and social development in both countries. China remained Germany's most important trading partner for the seventh year in a row last year. Premier Li Qiang's ongoing visit to Germany, the first leg of his five-day trip that started on Sunday and which will also take him to France, signals Beijing's readiness to continue to work with Berlin to carry forward traditional Sino-German friendship and further deepen exchanges and cooperation between the two countries amid a fast-changing global landscape. That Li has chosen Germany as the first destination for his debut overseas trip as premier reflects the importance Beijing attaches to Sino-German relations. During the visit, Li is scheduled to chair the seventh inter-governmental consultation together with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz. The direct and in-depth interaction between the two governments is expected to enable them to explore the potential for further cooperation and push the comprehensive strategic partnership to a new stage by helping the two sides manage their differences. The visit comes as some in the European Union are trying to "de-risk" from China by seeking a reduction in the bloc's economic reliance on it. Germany's recently released national security strategy has described China as not only a partner, but also a "competitor and systemic rival" that is seeking to use its economic might to achieve political goals. This has been firmly rebutted by Beijing, with a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson cautioning that "viewing others as competitors, rivals or even adversaries and turning normal cooperation into security or political issues will only push our world towards a vortex of division and confrontation". That China remains committed to high-standard opening-up and will continue to promote an open world economy means unlimited opportunities for foreign businesses including those from Germany. German chemical giant BASF's investment in a mega complex in Zhanjiang, Guangdong province, last year, expected to amount to 10 billion euros (\$9.95 billion), was a clear vote of confidence in China's economic future. Cooperation between China and Germany has flourished thanks to the extraordinary vision and political courage of generations of Chinese and German leaders, as well as the two sides following the principles of respecting each other in pursuit of win-win results and mutually beneficial cooperation. Strengthening the bonds of friendship with Germany and France will provide a stable foundation on which to enhance mutual trust between China and the EU. This will help them work together to promote a peaceful resolution of the Ukraine crisis, counter the US' coercive trade practices, and stop the EU from becoming embroiled to its detriment in the US' schemes in the Asia-Pacific. Hopefully, Li's visit will drive home the message that China was, is, and will forever be, a partner that Germany and France can work with for their own development and prosperity as well as those of the EU as a whole.



Prolonging of bloodshed unconscionable

After China openly announced it would try and mediate between Russia and Ukraine and dispatched an envoy to solicit opinions on how to get the two sides back to the negotiation table in May, more members of the international society have stepped up the promotion of peace talks.

In April, Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva supported China's call for peace and proposed forming a group to mediate in the Ukraine crisis. On June 3, Indonesian Minister of Defense Prabowo Subianto also proposed a peace plan at the annual session of the Shangri-La Dialogue. The latest initiative is from Africa. A delegation of leaders from seven African nations and the representatives of three others met with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Saturday in Saint Petersburg, one day after talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in Kyiv.

Although neither Russia nor Ukraine fully agreed with their proposed "road to peace" that seeks agreement on a series of "confidence-building measures", their mediation effort is still noteworthy as it is "the first time that Africa is united behind the resolution of a conflict outside of our continent", as South African President Cyril Ramaphosa's office said ahead of the trip. The fact that the African delegation made the trip and held in-depth talks with leaders of the two nations is further evidence that an increasing number of members of the international community recognize that peace best serves everyone's interests.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, however, seems to have other ideas. Led by the Cold War warriors in Washington and the hawkishly antipathetic-to-Russia head of the organization Jens Stoltenberg, the transatlantic alliance continues to fuel the flames by supplying weapons and other military assistance to Ukraine, as their objective is to permanently weaken Russia. On Thursday, the day before the African delegation arrived in Ukraine, NATO held a defense ministers' meeting with the participation of senior executives from 25 major Western defense companies. The fault line in the international community demarcates those countries that cherish peace and those that seek geopolitical advantages at the cost of lives. China and the other responsible members of the international society have already demonstrated they are on the former side of that divide. Now it is time for certain Western politicians to prove they don't belong to the latter.

Refugees should be seen as an opportunity, not a burden

Dr. Majid rafizadeh

Countries often choose a different theme for Refugee Week every year. In the UK, the theme for this year is "Compassion," while "Finding Freedom" is the theme assigned to this year's Refugee Week in Australia. First of all, it is important to point out the courage and strength that it takes to flee one's home and attempt to find a safe and secure place for one's family, particularly children and the elderly. Being forced to abandon the place where one has lived, studied and grown up, being forced to leave friends and relatives behind and to start a new

This year's Refugee Week, which aims to celebrate and honor refugees across the world, runs from June 19-25. World Refugee Day also takes place every year on June 20. This is a good time to raise awareness about refugees and examine the important issues that impact refugee diasporas across the world.

Countries often choose a different theme for Refugee Week every year. In the UK, the theme for this year is "Compassion," while "Finding Freedom" is the theme assigned to this year's Refugee Week in Australia. First of all, it is important to point out the courage and strength that it takes to flee one's home and attempt to find a safe and secure place for one's family, particularly children and the elderly. Being forced to abandon the place where one has lived, studied and grown up, being forced to leave friends and relatives behind and to start a new life in a foreign place is traumatic; to survive and thrive in a new home needs extraordinary courage, faith and strength. If refugees are successfully resettled in a new country, they then face other significant challenges, including language barriers and difficulties accessing medicine and healthcare services, finding suitable housing, adjusting to a new culture, rules and norms, and finding work, as well as prejudice and racism. Unfortunately, only a fraction of the world's refugees are able to settle in a new country. As one refugee from Iraq, Ahmed Badr, who is now interim director of the Patricelli Center for Social Entrepreneurship and adjunct assistant professor of public policy at Wesleyan University, said: "My family and I became refugees in 2006, leaving Baghdad and moving to Syria, which was taking in refugees at the time. After over a year of interviews, we received a phone call: We had four one-way tickets to Sioux Falls, South Dakota. We were incredibly lucky. Only 2 percent of all refugees are resettled to a new country, and the average time an indi-

vidual spends in the refugee camp is over a decade." It is worth noting that half of the refugees around the world are children. In total, a staggering number – 108.4 million individuals – were displaced across the world at the end of 2022, according to a report released this month by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. This is the highest number since the Second World War.

There are several reasons why refugees decide to flee their homes. The most important factors are violence, conflict, war and fear of persecution, which can take different forms, such as religious, racial or political, as well as prejudice against certain social groups. For example, many refugees currently come from Syria. Since 2011, Syria has witnessed the second-deadliest conflict of the 21st century – after the Second Congo War – and the worst humanitarian crisis in a generation. The Syrian civil war has resulted in an estimated 600,000 deaths, while almost 14 million people, equivalent to more than half of the Syrian population, have been displaced by the conflict. Other countries from where many refugees originate include Ukraine, Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen and Sudan. The current conflict in Sudan has caused a massive displacement, with more than 1 million people having fled their homes to seek safety, mostly elsewhere within Sudan, but a significant number have also left the country as refugees. Some other reasons behind people leaving their homes and crossing borders include natural disasters, starvation and a lack of water and food.

One of the issues to address is that the overwhelming majority of refugees (about 85 percent) are hosted in developing countries. Refugees can have a significant impact on the social, economic, political and even environmental landscapes of host countries. The hosts tend to face political and economic strain if they are not prepared for the situation. Problems arise when

host countries do not have the resources or are not economically and socially prepared to deal with a huge influx of refugees.

As a result, it is important that developed nations offer assistance. With effective investments and integration, refugees can be a great asset that stimulate their host country's economy and promote productivity. As Amnesty International stated: "Wealthier countries aren't doing nearly enough to share the cost of protecting people who have left everything behind. Appeals for humanitarian assistance for refugees are consistently – and often severely – underfunded. In short, the world urgently needs a new, global plan based on genuine international cooperation and a meaningful and fair sharing of responsibilities." Finally, as we mark this important week, let us conclude with the words of Warsan Shire, a poet who was born in Kenya to Somali parents and now lives in London. She was named the inaugural Young Poet Laureate for London in 2013. In "Home," she wrote: "No one leaves home unless, home is the mouth of a shark; you only run for the border, when you see the whole city running as well ... You have to understand, that no one puts their children in a boat, unless the water is safer than the land; no one burns their palms, under trains, beneath carriages; no one spends days and nights in the stomach of a truck, feeding on newspaper unless the miles traveled, means something more than journey. No one crawls under fences, no one wants to be beaten, pitied. No one chooses refugee camps, or strip searches where, your body is left aching, or prison."

In a nutshell, refugees around the world face many challenges to find a new and safe home. It is essential for developed countries to do more to address the refugee crisis. Refugees should not be viewed as a burden, but an opportunity. Courtesy: Arab News

The real problem with Israel's 'collective punishment'

Belén Fernández

The Lebanese novelist Elias Khoury would describe the scene as follows: "It is devastation. It is a pure devastation that is like nothing you have ever seen—apart from devastation. Ruins stretching to the horizon, challenging the sky." My friend Amelia and I spent two months hitchhiking through the wreckage of Lebanon, staying in the homes of beneficent strangers and being continuously force-fed in accordance with rules of Lebanese hospitality. By the time we left, "pure

In September 2006, I paid my first visit to Lebanon, arriving 34 days after the 34-day summer assault by the Israeli military that had killed some 1,200 people in the country.

While Israel was subsequently revealed to have planned the war in advance, the alleged *casus belli* was the cross-border kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah, which had intended to use them as bargaining chips to secure the release of Arab prisoners in Israeli jails. I was 24 years old, and it was my first up-close view of Israeli military handiwork: decimated villages, bombed-out bridges, craters in the ground where apartment buildings had once stood.

The Lebanese novelist Elias Khoury would describe the scene as follows: "It is devastation. It is a pure devastation that is like nothing you have ever seen—apart from devastation. Ruins stretching to the horizon, challenging the sky." My friend Amelia and I spent two months hitchhiking through the wreckage of Lebanon, staying in the homes of beneficent strangers and being continuously force-fed in accordance with rules of Lebanese hospitality. By the time we left, "pure devastation" had become so normalised in our eyes that intact buildings had begun to seem disfigured.

The 2006 war is but one of numerous Israeli operations denounced by human rights organisations and other appointed upholders of global ethics as collective punishment, a war crime under international humanitarian law. According to Article 33 of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, "no protected person may be punished for an offence he or she has not personally committed." Indeed, on the surface, "collective punishment" appears to be a pretty apt description for flat-

tening entire villages, saturating a country with millions of cluster bombs, and sending an attack helicopter to slaughter children in the back of a pick-up truck. But the term fails to fully hit the mark – although I, too, have admittedly used it on various occasions. The implication remains that it is merely the "collective" part of the punishment that's the problem, and that Israel is still entitled in principle to mete out non-collective punishment in Lebanon. This is despite Israel's own criminal track record in the country and integral role in generating the conditions for violence. To be sure, kidnapping some soldiers is a rather anticlimactic "offence" when compared with the apocalyptic 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon that killed tens of thousands of people and spawned Hezbollah in the first place – or with the torture-happy 22-year occupation of south Lebanon that ended in 2000. Speaking of occupation, jump across Lebanon's southern border to occupied Palestine and you'll find no shortage of collective punishment charges levelled against Israel by United Nations experts, Human Rights Watch, and the like. Again, the terminology would appear to constitute an accurate assessment of a panorama defined by intermittent military massacres, the asphyxiating blockade of the Gaza Strip, and continuing home demolitions in the West Bank. In the summer of 2014, for example, the Israeli army killed 2,251 people in Gaza over a period of 50 days, including 551 children – a "pure devastation", if you will, that was allegedly in response to rocket fire from Hamas into Israel.

And over just three days in August of last year, in an operation dubbed Breaking Dawn, Israel presided over the slaughter of at least 44 Palestinians in

the besieged coastal enclave. Among the dead were 16 children. According to the Israeli government, the bloody affair was a "preemptive" act against the Palestinian Islamic Jihad group – which perhaps raises the morbid possibility of a new category of "preemptive collective punishment". But again, the "collective punishment" charge is inadequate from a perspective of justice – suggesting as it does that the Palestinian resistance to Israel's occupation is a fundamentally criminal and punishable offence, as long as the punishment is meted out non-collectively. After all, Palestinian violence does not occur in a vacuum. It occurs within a context of 75 years of Israeli subjugation, dispossession, ethnic cleansing and massacres. Rockets fired from within an occupied, blockaded, and bombarded territory are a response to Israeli violence. In the West Bank, meanwhile, Israel's rampant demolition of the homes of suspected Palestinian "terrorists" must obviously be denounced. And yet here, too, the "collective punishment" charge implies the validity of individual punishment of Palestinians whose own actions are a direct result of decades of barbaric Israeli policy.

Those who decry Israeli collective punishment no doubt mean well, but one can't help but wonder whether the use of the terminology ultimately works to invalidate the right to resistance. In The Practical Guide to Humanitarian Law, Françoise Bouchet-Saulnier – legal director of Doctors Without Borders (Médecins sans Frontières, or MSF) – references a fitting quote from French-Algerian philosopher and writer Albert Camus: "Calling things by the wrong name adds to the affliction of the world."

By terrorising Palestinians, Israel already adds considerably to the affliction of the world. And in the absence of any sign of improvement, perhaps it's time to rethink how we talk about it.

Belén Fernández

Briefs

PM grateful to friendly countries

FROM PAGE 01
hefty burden upon Pakistan whereas those nations had progressed that utilised the foreign loans and returned it on the basis of their talent, honesty and skills. "We have to get rid of these debts as they could not thrive on the foreign debts," the premier said, adding the country was gifted with precious resources. PM Shehbaz Sharif, without naming the previous government, said that he would not go into details about the man-made crises in the past. He said the challenges were faced by the nations and stressed that they should make a promise to change fate of Pakistan without seeking foreign debts. Referring to 1971, he said they lost one part of Quaid's Pakistan but never learnt lessons from the past. The prime minister said the leg-pulling and game of allegations must be ceased and they all have to agree upon unified national agenda as being practiced by different countries.

Ishaq Dar calls for Charter...

FROM PAGE 01
The Minister said a meeting was held with the senior leaders of PPP on Friday wherein a comprehensive roadmap has largely been prepared for the reconstruction phase. He said another meeting will be held today to give final touches to this roadmap. The Finance Minister recalled that during the rescue and relief phase, the federal government disbursed twenty five thousand rupees each amongst the flood affected families.

Pakistan survivors say boat...

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"We did not sink for five days [...] so why would we sink now?" They recounted that the ship's engine had broken down, leaving them still for almost a week. "We did not drown even though our engine had [completely] shut down. On the sixth night, around 2:30am [...] I checked the time; it was 2:15am. Around 10 minutes later, this incident occurred," one of them said, adding, "It [the boat] sunk because of the one-maund-rope they threw into the boat." They further alleged that they did not help despite the presence of two-speed boats, one cargo boat and one receiving ship at the location. This statement endorsed an independent investigation reported by BBC that poked holes in the Greece authorities' account of the incident. An analysis of the movement of other ships in the area suggests that the boat remained stationary for at least seven hours before drowning.

Israeli attack kills five...

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according to the Palestinian journalists syndicate, Jenin's deputy governor, Kamal Abu al-Rub, told news agency the Israeli forces had launched the raid at around 4:00am (0100 GMT). "The army stormed the (Jenin refugee) camp and the city after the dawn prayer in large numbers, and there was intense gunfire," he said.

Palestine urges int'l intervention

FROM PAGE 01
including 15 year-old child Ahmad Saqer, the trapping, targeting and injury of journalists, expose the occupier's consistent criminal conduct, including the international and willful targeting of civilians with full impunity. In this connection, we call on the United Nations Secretary-General to immediately add Israel to the list of parties that commit violations against and affecting children without any further delays or politicized excuses.



ISLAMABAD: A view of the goats in temporary sacrificial animal market along the Lehtarar Road as ahead of Eid-ul-Adha, under the super vision of Directorate of Municipal Administration in Federal Capital. Online

Pak to face Bangladesh in Five-Nation Basketball C'ship SF

Pak basketball team won the last three matches by showing excellent performance in the league round matches, Pakistan defeated Maldives by 65-63 points

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan will face Bangladesh on today (Tuesday) in the semi-final of the on-going five-nation international basketball championship at Male, Maldives. The line-up of the semi-finals of the five-nation international basketball championship has been completed after the completion of last league round match between Nepal and host Maldives as host country crashed out from the event after being defeated by Nepal in the last league match by 75-68 points. Pakistan basketball team won the last three matches by showing excellent performance in the league round matches, Pakistan defeated Maldives by 65-63 points, Bhutan by 76-53 points and Bangladesh by 84-66 points respectively,



while the green shirts had to face defeat in the first match against Nepal by 66-62 points.

In the semi-final round which will be held on June 20 (Tuesday), Nepal and Bhutan will compete in the first semi-final match, while Pakistan will fight against Bangladesh in the second semi-final match of the championship. Muhammad Shahbaz Ali is leading the national basketball team in the five-nation championship as Pakistan team is participating in any international event after seven years. Pakistan squad: Muhammad Shahbaz Ali (captain), Abdul Wahab, Muhammad Umair Jan, Zain ul Hassan Khan, Muhammad Shahid, Imad Ahmed, Zia Ur Rehman, Saqib Ullah Mahsood, Mahtab Akram and Sheraz Aslam. Officials: Malik Muhammad Riaz (head coach), Umer Mehmoed (coach), Ahmed Ali Tipu (manager).

United fan banned for mocking Hillsborough tragedy

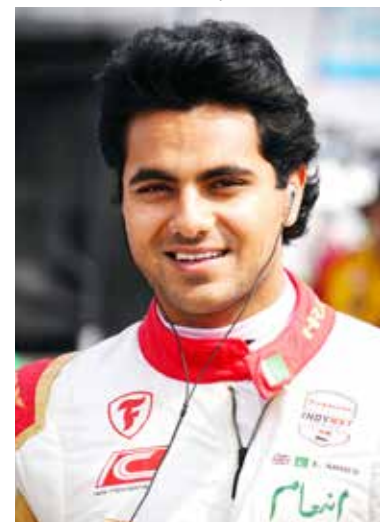
LONDON: A Manchester United fan was fined and banned from football in the UK for four years on Monday, for wearing a replica shirt mocking the Hillsborough disaster. Police received a number of complaints about James White's shirt with the figure "97" and the words "Not Enough" on the back at the FA Cup final at Wembley Stadium earlier this month. It referred to the 97 fans of United's arch rivals Liverpool who were victims of a crush during an FA Cup semi-final match at the stadium in Sheffield in April 1989. White, 33, admitted a single charge of displaying threatening or abusive writing likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress. "It is hard to imagine a more... offensive reference to the 1989 Hillsborough disaster," judge Mark Jabbitt told him when he appeared in court in northwest London for sentencing. Jabbitt fined White £1,000 (\$1,280) with a £400 victim surcharge and ordered him to pay £85 in court costs. He also banned him from attending football for four years. White was arrested after photographs of him wearing the shirt were posted and shared online, prompting his arrest by police. When questioned, he initially claimed the shirt was a reference to his grandfather, who died aged 97 and "didn't have enough kids", the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) said. Douglas Mackay, CPS national lead prosecutor for sport, said it was working closely with football authorities, police and clubs to stamp out the "appalling and horrendous incidents of tragedy chanting and gesturing". "We are sending a clear message that we call on so-called fans to stop this vile behaviour of a minority which has a terrible impact on the bereaved and communities," he added. "If they do not then they face the risk of being excluded from the game they claim to love." Last week a Spurs fan was banned from football for three years for making gestures mocking the Hillsborough tragedy during a match at Liverpool's ground in April. The Premier League promised to act after supporters of United and Leeds traded sickening chants about the 1958 Munich air disaster that killed eight players from Old Trafford club, and the death of two Leeds fans in Istanbul in 2000. - APP

Enaam Ahmed's impressive start diminished by tyre malfunctioning

MONITORING REPORT

BRITISH Pakistani racer Enaam Ahmed finished 17th in the 2023 IndyNXT by Firestone race at Road America due to tyre issues, despite starting from the rear and battling for a top-10 position. Nevertheless, as a determined rookie, Enaam remains focused on achieving further success and breaking records in his racing career for the remainder of the season. Enaam Ahmed competed in the 6th round of the 2023 IndyNXT by Firestone this past weekend, taking on the historic Road America racing circuit. The track is one of the most famous and challenging race tracks in America, and has hosted many of the top American racing series over the past 68 years. Ahmed was forced to start near the rear of the field due to troubles with his car's performance during qualifying. He was not worried by the tough task ahead of him, however, and the 23-year-old put his considerable skills to work as soon as the race started. After just two laps around the four-mile course, the Pakistani Panther had muscled his way past four drivers. Ahmed went wheel to wheel

with Matteo Nannini on the opening lap, and was even able to complete the pass around the outside of the Carousel, the fastest and most difficult corner on the track. He was on a mission to get the most from his car, and was already well ahead of



his Cape Motorsports team-mate. When he was battling with Danial Frost for a position inside the Top 10, Ahmed's car suffered a flat spot on his front tyre. Ahmed attempted to drive through the problem,

but he pushed so hard that the tyre started to come apart while he was racing at over 170 miles per hour. He was forced to back off to prevent a catastrophic failure, and ended the race in 17th.

"Had a really good start, got into the top 10," said Ahmed after the race. "Car was fast. But unfortunately while fighting with Frost, I flat spotted my front left tyre. It just delaminated as the race went on and was completely down to the cords, which is why I went from the top 10 to basically the back. I'm lucky it didn't explode. I could just see it delaminating as I drove. So, very unfortunate weekend all around." With Ahmed racing against some of the most talented racers in the world, he knows that he cannot fight for the win every single weekend. The former British Formula 3 champion was still disappointed with the results, and vowed to come back even stronger for the remainder of the season. So far this year, despite competing as a rookie in the series, the British-Pakistani racer has logged two top-five finishes. Even though he is the most accomplished racer to come from Pakistan, Ahmed has his sights on breaking many more records in his racing career.

Spain snatch Nations League glory on penalties

ROTTERDAM: Dani Carvajal chipped home a Panenka penalty to win Spain the Nations League on Sunday, with a 5-4 shoot-out victory over Croatia, after a tense match finished 0-0 following extra-time. Spain goalkeeper Unai Simon denied Lovro Mayer and Bruno Petkovic from the spot, before Carvajal cheekily chipped home to earn La Roja their first trophy since Euro 2012 and break Croatian hearts. Zlatko Dalic's side, runners-up at the World Cup in 2018 and third in 2022, have never won a major trophy and were hoping Nations League success would cap a glittering international career for captain Luka Modric. The victory is a confidence boost for new Spain coach Luis de la Fuente after heavy criticism in March after a defeat by Scotland in Euro 2024 qualifying. It also avenged their 2021 final defeat by France. Dalic warned over 25,000 Croatian fans were expected to travel to Rotterdam and they filled the majority of the stadium, De Kuip a sea of red and white checkered squares, save for a modest area of Spanish fans. The Croatians chanted Modric's name in the 10th minute, matching his shirt number, a plea for him not to retire from international duty after the tournament, as had been rumoured. On the pitch Spain made the early running,

with Gavi drilling narrowly wide after pressing furiously to win the ball back. Just when the game started to fall into a slight lull, under the pink haze of smoke from Croatian flares, Spain were nearly caught out by Josip Juranovic's long ball over the top for Andrej Kramaric. The striker ran through on Unai Simon's goal but just as he pulled the trigger, Aymeric Laporte made a superb lunging block. Croatia had the momentum and Ivan Perisic

twice tested Simon with headers, which the Athletic Bilbao goalkeeper fielded well. Despite 14 goals in the three preceding games, the first half finished goalless, just as in the prior two Nations League finals, won by Portugal and France in 2019 and 2021 respectively. Dalic's side emerged the stronger and Tottenham wide man Perisic, playing at left-back, was a constant threat, as was Spain captain Jordi Alba. The former Barcelona defender found

Asensio with a dangerous cross which the forward headed on to the roof of the net. La Roja were unable to muster a shot on target in the first 80 minutes.

Mario Pasalic headed wide at the other end before being replaced by Petkovic, who was Croatia's semi-final star against the Netherlands - to the extent one Croatian newspaper described him as "Bruce Willis in football boots". It did not prove the case this time. Spain sent on their own semi-final match-winner in response, with Joselu replacing Morata, while Ansu Fati also entered the fray. It was the young Barcelona forward who came closest to scoring in the 90 minutes for either side, with his low strike cleared off the line by the diligent Perisic.

Croatia appealed in vain for a penalty after Nacho tangled with Borna Sosa, and Spain substitute Dani Olmo, who spent six years with Dinamo Zagreb, hammered over as extra-time continued in the same tight pattern. With the sides unable to separate, the match was decided on penalties. After Simon denied Mayer, Aymeric Laporte had the chance to earn victory but hit the bar. Athletic stopper Simon flung himself to his right at full stretch to save from Petkovic and set the scene for Carvajal to spark Spanish celebrations. - Agencies



Qureshi wants end to human...

FROM PAGE 01

"My deepest condolences go to the families of over 300 Pakistanis who lost their lives in the Greece boat disaster." He said that young men, women and children all victims of human smuggling networks, made to journey through unspeakable conditions that ultimately led to the loss of their lives. "May the families of all the victims be given the solace they need, to bear such a tragic loss," he prayed. However, Qureshi urged that the state must find, punish and put an end to human trafficking networks in Pakistan, adding that equally, they must create a Pakistan where people see and have a future. "No Pakistani should have to bear the brunt of a total economic meltdown, state sponsored censorship and this culture of fear and insecurity, leading them to find any means necessary to leave," he added.

Verdict reserved on petitions...

FROM PAGE 01

CEO Riaz Hanif Rahi, had challenged the vires of the Act. During today's hearing, Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor Usman Awan and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) lawyer Ali Zafar concluded their arguments, after which the top court reserved the verdict. "We will announce the verdict after discussing it, CJP Bandal said. Earlier, while starting his arguments, AGP Mansoor defended the right to appeal cases under Article 184-3 and said such cases had a separate jurisdiction for review. At this, CJP Bandal remarked that the government could legislate, but it does not seem right to give the right of appeal in revision. "The right to appeal in Article 184/3 cases should be decided very thoughtfully. In India too, there is no right of direct appeal in Article 184/3 cases," he remarked.

Audio leaks commission: SC...

FROM PAGE 01

impact on the independence of the judiciary. The apex court issued an order for the previous hearing of the petitions filed against the inquiry commission. In the written order, the SC stated that the Attorney General of Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor Awan had raised objections to the three judges included in the bench. During the hearing, Awan said that the three judges should separate from the bench, while the petitioner's lawyer gave counterarguments. After hearing the arguments of both parties, the court reserved its verdict, stating that the order of May 26 will stand till the objections raised on the formation of the bench are decided and the hearing of the case was adjourned for an indefinite period.

Zil Hajj moon sighted

FROM PAGE 01

Representatives of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, SUPARCO, Department of Meteorology, and Ministry of Science and Technology also attended the meeting. The decision was also announced after taking input from zonal committees of Ruet-e-Hilal that had met in their respective cities. The first Zil Hajj will be observed on June 20 (tomorrow), and Eid ul Adha will be celebrated in the country on June 29 (Thursday). The Met Office, earlier said that the birth of the moon was expected on June 18 at 9:37pm, which could be sighted on June 19. The Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee meets on the 29th of every Islamic month and makes the announcement after sighting the moon. A day earlier, the crescent moon for Zil Hajj was sighted in Saudi Arabia and the first day of the month is being observed today (June 19).

Briefs

Nearly 100 dead in Indian heatwave

NEW DELHI: At least 96 people have died following several days of intense heat in two of India's most populous states. Authorities have warned at-risk members of the public to stay indoors to avoid aggravating pre-existing health conditions. The deceased were primarily people over 60 who had prior health concerns in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh and in eastern Bihar, authorities said. All of the 54 deaths in Uttar Pradesh occurred in Ballia district, where hospitals have admitted a steady influx of patients seeking treatment for heat-related ailments including high fever, vomiting, diarrhoea, as well as breathing and cardiac issues. Uttar Pradesh's health minister, Brijesh Pathak, has opened an investigation into the high number of deaths in the state. Local governments have come under fire from opposition for "carelessness" in not warning the public about the potential health risks of the heatwave, the BBC said on Monday.—APP

Trump's trial sends 'terrible message' to world

NEW YORK: Former US Vice President Mike Pence, who is a candidate for the 2024 presidential election, said in an interview that the trial of ex-President Donald Trump sends a "terrible message" to the world about the country. Pence answered questions on NBC News' "Meet the Press" about the case, in which Trump was charged with possessing classified state documents at his residence. Saying that the trial of a former US president by the current administration sends a "terrible message" to the world about the US, he argued that the indictment against Trump has "only served to further divide our divided politics."

He said that although the allegations against Trump were "serious," the relevant institutions had not taken the same stance regarding classified documents found at President Joe Biden's home and office and allegations against his son Hunter. Noting that the Department of Justice should treat everyone equally, Pence refused to answer whether he would pardon Trump if he was elected president in 2024. "I don't know why some of my competitors in the Republican primary presume the president will be found guilty," he said.—APP

Protest in Amsterdam against EU migrant policies

AMSTERDAM: Hundreds of people gathered at Dam Square in the Netherlands' capital city of Amsterdam on Sunday to draw attention to human rights violations at Europe's borders and the difficulties faced by asylum seekers who want to come to Europe.

The demonstration - organized by MiGreat, a project focused on changing narratives around migration across Europe, and various civil society organizations - was attended by members of the public as well as activists from diverse ethnic backgrounds and communities, delivering the message that "Refuge is a human right." The demonstrators carried placards with slogans such as "Remove the borders," "Protect people, not borders," "Where is humanity?" "Close Frontex," "EU borders kill" and "Crossing to Europe: Death." Speakers called for the opening of Europe's borders and respecting people's freedom of movement. During the speeches, it was said that asylum applications in the Netherlands take a very long time, with institutions taking months to process them, which leads to the suffering of refugees, who are unable to enter the job market during this period. The activists also called for an end to wars, which cause migration.—Agencies

Afghan's 'gender apartheid' should be international crime

Akbar backed the call, urging the council to "support the inclusion of gender apartheid in the Draft Convention on Crimes Against Humanity"

GENEVA: The UN's top expert on rights in Afghanistan urged countries Monday to consider making "gender apartheid" an international crime, helping hold the Taliban accountable for its grave and systematic abuses against Afghan women. Since ousting a foreign-backed government in August 2021, the Taliban authorities have imposed an austere sharia law, barring girls from secondary school, pushing women out of many government jobs, preventing them from travelling without a male relative and ordering them to

cover up outside the home. "It is imperative that we do not look away," Richard Bennett told the UN Human Rights Council. Presenting his latest report, the UN special rapporteur on the situation in Afghanistan told the council that the Taliban's actions could constitute the crime against humanity of "gender persecution". In addition, "grave, systematic and institutionalised discrimination against women and girls is at the heart of Taliban ideology and rule, which also gives rise to concerns that they

may be responsible for gender apartheid," he said. Such "serious human rights violations, which although not yet an explicit international crime, requires further study," he insisted. Framing gender apartheid as an international crime would highlight that other countries and the broader international community "have a duty to take effective action to end the practice", the report said. "Women often talk about being buried alive, breathing, but not being able to do much else without facing restrictions and pun-

ishments," said Shaharad Akbar, the head of the Rawadari rights group and former head of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission. "Taliban have turned Afghanistan to a mass graveyard of Afghan women and girls's ambitions, dreams and potential," she told the council. The UN has already labelled the situation in Afghanistan under the Taliban as "gender-based apartheid", but the term is not currently recognised under the Rome Statute among the worst international crimes. Bennett

and others called Monday for countries to consider changing that. Akbar backed the call, urging the council to "support the inclusion of gender apartheid in the Draft Convention on Crimes Against Humanity." Bennett's report - drafted jointly with the UN working group on discrimination against women and girls - called on countries to "mandate a report on gender apartheid as an institutionalised system of discrimination, segregation, humiliation and exclusion of women and girls". This should be done, the

report said, "with a view to developing further normative standards and tools, galvanising international legal condemnation and action to end it and ensure its non-repetition". A number of country representatives also voiced support for the idea Monday. Among those was the South African representative Bronwen Levy, who urged the international community to "take action against what the report describes as gender apartheid, much like it did in support of South Africa's struggle against racial apartheid."—Agencies

Boris Johnson faces judgement of British MPs

LONDON: Politicians likely to vote later on report which said former Prime Minister should have been suspended from Parliament for 90 days had he not already resigned as an MP. Boris Johnson faces judgement from MPs in the UK today as they decide whether to back a report which said he deliberately misled parliament over parties held in Downing Street during lockdown. The former Prime Minister resigned after an MP seeing a copy of the report before it was published. It states that, had he remained, he should have been suspended from the House of Commons for 90 days. There is a possi-

bility that MPs will simply nod the report through. This means that, when the speaker says "that this house approves the fifth report from the committee of privileges", if no MP present objects then it passes without further discussion. However, if any MP objects then it will go to a vote. That possibility has left many in a difficult position. Current Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, who came to power stating "trust is earned, and I will earn yours", has not said how he will vote. He has declared it what's known as a "free vote" in Parliament - essentially, he will allow Conservative MPs to make their own

mind up, rather than forcing them to vote one way or another. He would only say that it is a matter for the House of Commons, "not the government". "That's an important distinction and that's why I wouldn't want to influence anyone in advance of that vote," he added. "This committee was established under the former prime minister. It commanded the confidence of the house at the time and I'm sure that they have done their work thoroughly and I respect them for that," he added on ITV's Good Morning Britain. This approach has been criticised by Labour leader Keir Starmer, who called

on the Prime Minister to show "leadership". Opposition Labour leader Keir Starmer called on Rishi Sunak to show "leadership" and attend the House of Commons for the vote later. Housing Secretary Michael Gove said that, while he welcomed many parts of the report, he disagreed with the 90-day punishment and said he would abstain from the vote. Complicating matters for Conservative MPs, Boris Johnson retains a level of support within the Conservative Party and some of the country's newspapers, including the Daily Mail, which last week hired him as a columnist.—APP

PCJCCI keen to boost Pakistan's dairy sector

LAHORE: Cooperation between China and Pakistan on dairy industry and multifarious demands for high-quality dairy products in China would provide a contemporary path of development for Pakistan's domestic dairy sector. Pakistan-China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) President Moazzam Ghurki stated this in a think-tank session, held here at PCJCCI Secretariat on Monday. He said that Pakistan was among the world's top five largest milk producers with over 60 million tonnes of milk production each year. Such ventures and exports could definitely add value to Pakistan's economy. He added that China learned that Pakistan was the most important exporter and producer of dairy products in South Asia. "Chinese technologies are low-priced, and if we adopt the techniques and technology, used by China, the country can flourish in this industry," he suggested. PCJCCI Senior Vice President Fang Yulong shared his views by saying, "We are willing to explore more about Pakistani dairy industry to see if we have the opportunity to be part of it." From 2011 to 2023, China's dairy imports rose at a compound annual growth of 12.3 per cent, and the demand was still expanding. Milk powder, liquid milk, high value-added dairy products such as whey, cheese.—DNA

UK opp sets out green energy policy

EDINBURGH: The UK's main opposition Labour party on Monday vowed to turn the country into a "clean energy superpower" if it wins the next election. A vote has to be held by the end of next year, and Labour is currently well ahead of Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's Conservatives in opinion polling. Outlining its green energy plans in Edinburgh, Labour promised that its plans to address the climate emergency would be "front and centre" of its economic strategy for government. Leader Keir Starmer pledged "100 percent clean power" by 2030 creating 500,000 new jobs, including 50,000 in Scotland, to deliver energy independence from the likes of Russia and cheaper household bills. "It is an ambitious goal. It will put us ahead of any major economy in the world. But at the moment we're nowhere near the front of the pack," he said in a speech. "This is a race we have to win," he added. The Conservatives under former prime minister Boris Johnson promised to hit net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. But Starmer claimed that too much time had been lost and there had been a lack of investment in green energy compared to countries such as the United States.—Agencies

Russian nukes in Belarus indefinitely

MOSCOW: The agreement between Moscow and Minsk to deploy tactical nuclear weapons on the territory of Belarus does not imply any time limits, a Russian Foreign Ministry official has said. The first batch of nuclear warheads had already arrived in Belarus last week.

Speaking to media on Monday, Alexei Polishchuk, who serves as the director of the Russian Foreign Ministry's second department of CIS countries, explained that Moscow's decision to proceed with the placement of its nuclear weapons in Belarus came as a "forced response" to the aggressive policies of the US and NATO. He noted that when the details of the Moscow-Minsk agreement were being ironed out, the two sides considered the "years-long destructive practices" of joint nuclear missions of NATO member states.

Polishchuk stressed, however, that "unlike American warheads in Europe," Russia's weapons will be located in close proximity to its own borders and on the territory of the Union State of Russia and Belarus.

The senior diplomat suggested that the Russian nuclear weapons could hypothetically be withdrawn from the territory of Belarus. However, he explained that Moscow would only consider such an option if the US eliminated its own nuclear infrastructure in Europe. "Of course, such a step on our part would have to be preceded by the complete withdrawal of all American nuclear weapons back to US territory and by the elimination of all relevant infrastructure in Europe," Polishchuk said.—APP

Volatility hits EU energy market

BRUSSELS: Gas prices in the EU plunged on Monday following a spike last week, amid overall market volatility linked to supply risks and hot weather. July futures at the Title Transfer Facility (TTF) hub in the Netherlands fell by 13.8% during morning trading. The benchmark Dutch front-month contract dropped to 30.18 per megawatt hour (MWh), or \$346.39 per 1,000 cubic meters. However, prices are still 15% higher this month, prompted by maintenance at Norwegian gas facilities. Last week's rise in gas prices was fueled by fears that hot weather in northern Europe and unplanned outages in Norway would increase demand for liquefied natural gas (LNG) and put the EU in a competition for supplies. "Until EU gas stocks are full, European day-ahead and month-ahead gas prices have significant upside potential, which is reflective of competition between users: current demand, mainly from power generators.—APP

Macron, Meloni seek to smooth frayed ties

DNA

PARIS: President Emmanuel Macron will Tuesday hold talks in Paris with Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, the French presidency said, as both sides seek to smooth a series of disputes that have frayed ties since she took the reins of Italy's government last year.

Centrist Macron, who regards himself as a bulwark against the far-right, is not a natural political bedfellow of Meloni who leads her country's most far-right coalition since World War II. Macron had in 2021 signed a major bilateral cooperation treaty with Meloni's predecessor Mario Draghi, the former European Central Bank chief with whom he had a close political relationship. The two leaders will discuss implementing the treaty as well as preparing for forthcoming EU and NATO summits this month and in July, said a French presidential official, asking not to be named. It will be Meloni's first visit to France since her election in 2022. The two leaders had met informally in Rome just after, then in bilateral meetings on the sidelines of international summits. Migration policy has been a sticking point between the two countries since a November 2022 incident that saw Meloni refuse to allow a humanitarian ship carrying 230 migrants to dock in Italy. The ship was allowed to dock in France, but Paris denounced Rome's "unacceptable" behaviour and suspended plans to receive 3,500 migrants from Italy. At the time, Meloni denounced France's reaction as "aggressive" and "unjustified". In February, she slammed Macron's invitation to his Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelensky to visit Paris on the eve of a European summit as "inappropriate". Meloni is in Paris to attend a conference where she will promote the candidacy of Rome to host the 2030 Expo, where it faces competition from Busan in South Korea, Riyadh in Saudi Arabia and Ukraine's Odesa. All the bidders are keen to have French support, with Saudi crown prince Mohammed bin Salman meeting Macron last Friday and South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol also due at the Elysee on Tuesday.



Europe is world's fastest warming continent

PARIS: Europe should brace for more deadly heatwaves driven by climate change, said a sweeping report on Monday, noting the world's fastest-warming continent was some 2.3 degrees Celsius hotter last year than in pre-industrial times. Crop-withering drought, record sea-surface temperatures and unprecedented glacier melt are among the consequences laid out in a report by the World Meteorological Organization and the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service.

The continent, which has been warming twice the global average since the

1980s, saw its warmest summer on record last year, with countries including France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom experiencing their warmest year on record. The world has warmed an average of nearly 1.2C since the mid-1800s, unleashing a devastating cascade of extreme weather, including more intense heatwaves, more severe droughts in some areas and storms made more ferocious by rising seas. Hardest hit are the most vulnerable people and the world's poorest countries, who have done little to contribute to the fossil fuel emissions that drive up

temperatures. But impacts are becoming increasingly severe across the world, with regions in the northern hemisphere and around the poles seeing particularly rapid warming. In Europe, the high temperatures "exacerbated the severe and widespread drought conditions, fuelled violent wildfires that resulted in the second largest burnt area on record, and led to thousands of heat-associated excess deaths," said WMO Secretary-General Petteri Taalas. Temperatures across the continent rose 1.5C in 30 years, from 1991 to 2021, according to the report, the State of the Climate in

Europe 2022. Severe heat left more than 16,000 people dead last year, the report said, while floods and storms accounted for most of the \$2 billion in damages from weather and climate extremes. "Unfortunately, this cannot be considered a one-off occurrence or an oddity of the climate," said Copernicus Director Carlo Buontempo in the report. "Our current understanding of the climate system and its evolution informs us that these kinds of events are part of a pattern that will make heat stress extremes more frequent and more intense across the region."—Agencies



Secretary Defence, LLGen (Retd) Hamood uz Zaman Khan alongwith Defence delegation in a group photo with Iranian defence officials in Tehran.—DNA

IMF favours rich countries, says UN Chief

Developing countries, including India and China, have long called for reform of the global financial institutions to make them develop realistic and effective programs and give developing countries their due treatment

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations criticized the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in a recent paper, saying that IMF has benefited rich countries instead of poor ones. He pointed out that IMF and World Bank's response to the COVID-19 pandemic which he called a "stress test" for the institutions is a "glaring failure" that left dozens of countries deeply indebted, according to a report carried by China Economic Net (CEN) on Monday. Guterres said that it's time for the boards

of IMF and World Bank to right what he called the historic wrongs and "bias and injustice built into the current international financial architecture". He said the institutions haven't kept pace with global growth. According to him, the World Bank has \$22 billion in paid capital and the money are used for low-interest loans and grants for government development programs, yet, as a percentage of global GDP, it is less than a fifth of the level of funding in 1960. At the same time, many developing countries are in a deep financial crisis, exacerbated by inflation, rising interest rates and a standstill in debt relief. Guterres added that IMF's lending rules un-

fairly favor wealthy nations. This is done according to the rules, but, this is "morally wrong," said Guterres. He called for major reforms such as strengthening



the representation of developing countries on the boards of IMF and World Bank, changing IMF quotas, and revamping the use of IMF funds. Guterres has also previously criticized the global financial institutions in public. He expressed his discontent using strong language during his visit to India in October 2022, saying that the international financial system is "morally bankrupt" as it favors the rich countries, and he expected India's involvement in reforming it. There has always been criticism of the two institutions. Maurice Kugler, a professor of public policy at George Mason University, told The Associated Press that

the institutions' failure to help the neediest countries "reflects the persistence of a top-down approach in which the World Bank president is a US national appointed by the US president and IMF managing director is a European Union national appointed by the European Commission." Developing countries, including India and China, have long called for reform of the global financial institutions to make them develop realistic and effective programs and give developing countries their due treatment. Although there have been improvements in recent years, the changes are not obvious and rich countries continue to dictate to them.

Briefs

North Korea says botched launch was 'gravest failure'

WEB DESK

SEOUL: An unusually candid North Korea has said the botched launch of a military satellite last month was the "gravest failure" but it vowed it would soon succeed in its quest, state media reported on Monday. North Korea's ruling party made the assessment of its May 31 launch at a three-day meeting that ended on Sunday, ordering workers and researchers to analyse the mission that ended with the rocket and its spy satellite payload plunging into the sea, and to prepare for another launch soon. Officials "who irresponsibly conducted preparations" for the failed launch were "bitterly criticised" at the meeting, the KCNA state news agency reported. The rocket failed "after losing thrust due to the abnormal starting of the second-stage engine", North Korea said at the time. Nuclear-armed North Korea had earlier said it would launch its first military reconnaissance satellite to boost monitoring of U.S. military activities, another step in a military programme that has raised fears of war.

UAE, Qatar reopen embassies

DNA

DUBAI: The United Arab Emirates and Qatar have announced the reopening of their embassies after a six-year-long break in ties. The two countries issued statements on Monday saying the Qatari embassy in Abu Dhabi and a Qatari consulate in Dubai as well as an Emirati embassy in Doha had resumed operations. The statements did not say if ambassadors were in place or if the missions were open to the public. The two countries' foreign ministers spoke by phone to congratulate one another on the reopening of the diplomatic missions, Qatar said. "The United Arab Emirates and the State of Qatar announced the restoration of diplomatic representation between the two countries," said a statement on the UAE's official WAM news agency. The UAE joined Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Egypt in imposing a boycott and blockade of Qatar in 2017 over what they called Doha's support for "terrorist" groups and becoming too close to Iran. Qatar has vehemently denied all the allegations.

Paris air show takes off with 500-plane Airbus deal

DNA

PARIS: Airbus (AIR.PA) announced a record 500-plane deal with Indian airline IndiGo (INGL.NS) on day one of the Paris Airshow on Monday, as strong demand for jets and missiles vied for attention with the industry's supply chain problems. The multibillion-dollar deal for single-aisle planes confirmed a Reuters report earlier this month, and eclipsed Air India's provisional purchase of 470 Airbus and Boeing (BA.N) jets earlier this year. The world's largest air show, which alternates with Farnborough in Britain, is at Le Bourget for the first time in four years after the 2021 edition fell victim to the pandemic. French President Emmanuel Macron flew in to the packed aerospace bazaar by helicopter and watched a flying demonstration including Airbus's latest jet development, the A321XLR, and air power including the French Rafale fighter. On the civilian side, plane-makers arrived with growing demand expectations as airlines rush for capacity to meet demand and help reach industry goals of net zero emissions by 2050.

US and China pledge to stabilize tense relationship

"The two sides have also made progress and reached agreement on some specific issues," he said, in a transcript of his remarks released by US state department. "This is very good"

NEWS DESK

BEIJING: The US and China have pledged to stabilise their tense relationship following US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's two-day visit to Beijing. Mr Blinken met China's President Xi Jinping for talks on Monday, restarting high-level communications between the rival superpowers. Mr Xi said they had made progress, while Mr Blinken indicated that both sides were open to further talks. But the top US diplomat made clear that there remained major differences. "I stressed that... sustained communication at senior levels is the best way to responsibly manage differences and ensure that competition does not veer into conflict," Mr Blinken told reporters after the 35-minute meeting at the Great Hall of the People on Tiananmen Square. "I heard the same from my Chinese counterparts," he said. "We both agree on the need to stabilise our relationship." But Mr Blinken, 61, said he was "clear-eyed" about China and there were "many



issues on which we profoundly - even vehemently - disagree". Relations between Beijing and Washington have plummeted in the wake of a Trump-era trade war, Beijing's assertive claims over Taiwan and the shoot-

ing down of an alleged Chinese spy balloon over the US earlier this year. But Mr Xi suggested relations could be moving in a positive direction. "The two sides have also made progress and reached agreement on some specific issues," he said, in a transcript of his remarks released by the US state department. "This is very good." The meeting with Mr Xi was not originally on Mr Blinken's schedule and was only announced an hour before it took place. It would have been widely viewed as a snub had it not happened, however, especially since Microsoft's co-founder Bill Gates met Mr Xi in Beijing earlier this week. Instead, the Americans will be able to point to the secretary's visit as a successful re-engagement with the Chinese government after months of frosty relations. Mr Xi was also sending a message to his own people that his government was reaching out to Washington. "It is absolutely vital that we have these kinds of communications," Mr Blinken said. "This is something we're going to keep working on." US President Joe Biden and officials in Washington have said they view the Chinese as rivals and competitors and not adversaries. It is a fine line to walk, however, as the competition - both militarily and economically - heats up.

Ukraine says 8 villages retaken from Russian forces

KYIV: Ukraine said on Monday it had driven Russian forces from an eighth village in its two-week-old counter-offensive, a settlement on a heavily fortified part of the front line near the most direct route to the country's Azov Sea coast. A Russian-installed official said on Sunday that Ukraine had taken control of the village, Piatykhvatky, in the southern Zaporizhzhia region. He later said Moscow had pushed them out and on Monday morning he said Ukraine was attacking again. Ukraine's Deputy Defence Minister Hanna Maliar said Ukrainian forces had not only retaken Piatykhvatky but had advanced by up to seven km (4.3 miles) into Russian lines in two weeks, capturing 113 square km (44 square miles) of land. "In the course of two weeks of offensive operations in the Berdiansk and Melitopol directions, eight settlements were liberated," Maliar said on Telegram, referring to two cities on the Russian-occupied coastline. The reported capture of the villages reflects incremental gains for Ukraine that highlight the challenge of breaking through lines Moscow has spent months strengthening. Piatykhvatky is significant, however, as it lies around 90 km from the coast. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy hailed the efforts of the troops and said he would continue talks with Western allies to get weapons and ammunition supplies to them as soon as possible. "Our troops are advancing, position by position, step by step, we are moving forward," he

said on Sunday evening. "The main thing is the speed of supply." Russia, hoping to dent Western resolve, said it had repelled numerous assaults and it released a video showing what its troops say is captured Western equipment, in this case a French-made tank reportedly seized in the eastern Donetsk region. It did not mention Piatykhvatky. Ukraine has acknowledged attacks along several parts of the 1,000 km front line in its long-anticipated counter-offensive to retake the 18% of its territory occupied by Russia, but carefully controls information for security reasons. Analysts say the main phase of the counteroffensive is yet to begin. Both sides appear to have taken heavy losses in recent fighting and both say the other side's are greater. "The enemy's 'wave-like' offensives yielded results, despite enormous losses," Russian-installed official Vladimir Rogov said on Telegram in reporting the Piatykhvatky fighting. An unidentified soldier in a Ukrainian Defence Ministry video said: "The Russians ran away leaving equipment and ammunition. Glory to Ukraine!" The conflict has killed thousands of civilians, destroyed towns and cities and driven millions of people from their homes while exacerbating global inflation and reshaping security arrangements. On a visit to Beijing, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said he had asked the Chinese government to be very vigilant on the possibility that Chinese firms may be providing Russia with technology that it can use in the war in Ukraine. - Agencies

Flood 2022: Roadmap for reconstruction 'almost devised'

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Monday informed the National Assembly that a comprehensive roadmap to carry out reconstruction and rehabilitation work in the flood-affected areas had almost been devised. "Immediate relief work has already been done throughout the country with the disbursement of Rs25000 per family through the BISP programme. Almost Rs100 billion have already been spent in addition to the assistance extended by NDMA in kind," the minister said on the floor of the National Assembly while responding to the concerns of Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) lawmaker Dr Nafisa Shah. The finance minister said the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the cabinet had recently approved Rs12 billion to replenish the stock of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), keeping in view the predicted threats of the monsoon and the cyclone. Following the widespread destruction caused by the heavy

raints and floods, Ishaq Dar said a comprehensive report had been prepared in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank (WB), Asian Development Bank (ADB), European Union and the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives that suggested the economic and physical losses stood at around \$30.3 billion. He said funds amounting to \$16.3 billion were required to execute the physical work like repair of damaged houses and infrastructure, under the '4RF' strategy i.e. resilient, recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction. In the General Donors Conference, the minister said less than \$400 million were received while the pledges were made for bearing 50 per cent financing for the reconstruction and rehabilitation work. He said a committee, comprising the Sindh Chief Minister, and federal ministers including Khursheed Ahmed Shah, Syed Naveed Qamar and Sherry Rehman, was holding meetings and the roadmap in this regard had almost been devised. "It (the reconstruction & rehabilitation) will be like a 45 year medium-term development plan. It is not an issue and will be resolved as there are no two opinions. Roughly \$11 billion, out of \$16.3 billion will be spent in Sindh under the 4RF policy," he said. He assured the PPPP lawmaker that "everything is under planning as work is going on it," so there was nothing to worry about. "The work is in progress and hopefully it will be concluded today." Commenting on another issue, he said originally the Charter of Democracy (CoD) was signed with the 'code of conduct' that whosever was elected to power, should not be backstabbed, adding afterwards civil-military relations, constitutional amendments as a result of which 18th, NFC award, legal reforms, truth & reconciliation commission. "I was in all that process." - DNA

Irani Naval Commander visits Naval Headquarters



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Commander of the Islamic Republic of Iran Navy Rear Admiral Shahram Irani visited Naval Headquarters Islamabad and called on Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi. Upon arrival at Naval Headquarters, Commander of the Iranian Navy was received by the Naval Chief and was presented a Guard of Honour. After wreath laying at Shuhada monument, the visiting dignitary was introduced to Principal Staff Officers at Naval Headquarters. Later, Commander of the Iranian Navy called on Chief

of the Naval Staff at his office. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest including bilateral & regional collaborations and maritime security in the region were discussed. The Naval Chief highlighted Pakistan Navy's initiatives to ensure maritime security and peace through Regional Maritime Security Patrols. The visiting Admiral appreciated and acknowledged Pakistan Navy's efforts and commitments in support of collaborative maritime security. Later on, Commander of the Iranian Navy was briefed on Pakistan Navy's operational capabilities. It is expected that the visit of Commander of the Iranian Navy will further enhance bilateral collaboration between the two navies.

OIC condemns Israel's storming of Jenin

DNA

JEDDAH: The General Secretariat of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) expressed its strong condemnation of the colonial crimes perpetrated by Israel, the occupying power, against the Palestinian territory and people. Furthermore, it condemned in the strongest terms the war currently waged by the Israeli occupying forces, with the continued bombardment of the eastern side of Jenin, leaving four martyrs and dozens wounded. The OIC described the storming and bombardment of the town and its camp by the Israeli occupying forces with Apache helicopters, as an indiscriminate open war against residential areas, an aggression that confirmed the gruesome behavior of Israel, the occupying power, and its escalation against the Palestinian people. The OIC said that the Israeli government's decision to speed up procedures for building and expanding settlements was part of the same colonial approach of this government and its relentless endeavors to circumvent international laws, norms and agreements.

Murtaza Wahab sworn in as Karachi mayor

DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Murtaza Wahab was sworn in as the mayor of Karachi today (Monday) after he won the elections and defeated Jamaat-e-Islami's (JI) Hafiz Naeem Ur Rehman. Wahab's oath was administered by Provincial Election Commissioner Sindh Ejaz Anwar Chohan. Following Wahab's oath, his deputy Salman Abdullah also took oath of office. The mayoral elections in the city were held on June 15 in which the PPP leader secured 173 votes while the JI's Karachi chief bagged 160 votes. The dramatic turnaround was followed by JI allegations that Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the Sindh administration used muscle power and money to ensure victory for their candidates, which the PPP leaders including Wahab rejected.

NAB ordered to submit report against Bushra till June 21

The judge then ordered the AAG to also seek reports from the Balochistan and KP police about the cases, if any, registered against Bushra Bibi

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court has given two more days to the NAB chairman to submit report about the reference against PTI Chairman Imran Khan's wife Bushra Bibi. LHC's Justice Muhammad Amjad Rafiq on Monday conducted proceeding on the petition filed by Bushra Bibi seeking detail of cases registered against her. In compliance with the court order, the inspectors general of police of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan submitted their reports. They told the court that neither there was any case against Bushra Bibi, nor did police seek her custody. The court asked the chairman NAB to submit reference report against Bushra Bibi to the court till June 21. During previous LHC hearing, conducted by Justice Amjad Rafiq, an additional attorney general told the court that Islamabad police lodged a case against the wife of the PTI chairman on charges of forgery in the sale of Toshakhana gifts. He further said that the anti-graft watchdog was also conducting an inquiry into the alleged corruption in Al-Qadir Trust against the petitioner. The judge then ordered the AAG to also seek reports from the Balochistan and KP police about the cases, if any, registered against Bushra Bibi. He also sought a report from the NAB on the inquiry pending against the petitioner. On June 14, the Lahore High Court granted protective bail to Bushra Bibi in the Toshakhana case till June 21. It is pertinent to mention here that an Accountability court in Islamabad on Monday approved interim bail to Bushra Bibi in Al-Qadir Trust case until July 4. - DNA

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