



# Islamabad POST

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**Erdogan to NATO: Sweden must stop Kurdish protests**

Detailed News On Page-08

**Russian power 'cracking' over war in Ukraine**

Detailed News On Page-07



**Arteta wants a stronger Arsenal squad**

Detailed News On Page-06



## May 9 incidents probe Lt Gen, others dismissed from service: ISPR

Strict disciplinary action also taken against 3 major generals and 7 brigadiers, trial of 102 arsonists underway, DG ISPR says



**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
RAWALPINDI: Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director General Major General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry said Monday that the military had dismissed an army officer of a lieutenant general rank and several others high-ranking officers from service for failing to protect the military installations on May 9. ISPR DG Major General Chaudhry made the announcement

### 41 suspects from UK, US, Canada identified

ISLAMABAD: The investigators have identified 41 people from the United Kingdom (UK), United States (US) and Canada who were directly involved in inciting and facilitating May 9 riots, ARY News reported on Monday. Progress was made in the investigation into the May 9 riots as the authorities identified 41 people in foreign countries including UK, US and Canada who incited and facilitated the rioters. Sources told media that most suspects were associated with a political party and its office bearers and workers. The identification of the suspects was made through photos and videos in which they chanted anti-Pakistan slogans and incited people to participate in anti-state activities. — DNA

during a press conference in Rawalpindi. The ISPR DG further said that disciplinary action has been taken against 15 officers including three major generals and seven brigadiers. He said three officers including a Lt Gen have been dismissed from service. He added that a granddaughter of a retired four-star general and a son-in-law of a retired four-star general have also been arrested in connection with the probe into May 9 riots. Moreover, a wife of a retired three-star general and a wife

and son-in-law of a retired two-star general are undergoing accountability process, he added. Maj Gen Chaudhry said the families of martyrs and all ranks of army are raising questions over the May 9 incidents and the desecration of martyrs' monuments in many parts of the country during the riots. "The May 9 incidents have proved that the what the enemy of Pakistan couldn't do was done by these miscreants," he added.

Continued on Page 06

### Staff-level agreement with IMF likely

SBP jacks up key rate to record high of 22%

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is likely to sign the staff-level agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) today (Tuesday), media reported citing sources. According to sources, Pakistan has met 90 percent conditions for the staff-level agreement with IMF. Sources said that Pakistan has also abolished the scheme to bring \$0.1 million to the country annually and the interest rate has been increased by one percent. The basic interest rate has been hiked from 21 percent to 22 percent. Meanwhile, following withdrawal of its guidance on imports, SBP Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) on Monday decided to jack up the policy rate by 100bps to 22% in an emergency meeting days after it had announced no change in the interest rate. Since January 2022, the central bank has raised rates by a total of 1,250bps. In a statement, the MPC explained the context of the emergency meeting as in the last meeting on June 12 it had decided not to jack up the policy rate. Back then it had viewed it as appropriate to achieve the objective of price stability "barring any unexpected domestic and external shocks". The memorandum of economic and financial policies which includes nine tables has been sent to IMF and the financial experts of the IMF will analyze the memorandum now, sources added. Source further revealed that talks for the staff-level agreement will take place tonight and Finance Minister Ishaq Dar will finalize the staff-level agreement with the IMF.

## Justice Mansoor recuses himself CJP hopes no one is 'tried' in military courts till verdict

SC directs authorities to provide "all facilities" to suspects detained



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial Monday hoped that no one would be tried in a military court until the case's final outcome pending before the Supreme Court, challenging the trial of civilians under army laws. The CJP's remarks came during the third hearing of the petitions challenging the government's decision to try civilians in military courts. Following the May 9 protests in which several government buildings and army installations were vandalised, the government announced that those involved in the incidents would be tried under military courts. The bench hearing the pleas also comprises Justice Ijazul Ahsan, Justice Muneeb Akhtar,

Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Ayesha Malik, and Justice Mazahir Ali Naqvi, was hearing a set of petitions trials of civilians in military courts. At the start of the hearing—the third since last week — AGP Awan took to the rostrum and said: "Justice Mansoor Ali Shah had asked earlier if we objected to his presence in the bench. At the time, I had said there was no objection to him." Justice Shah had previously informed the court that he was a relative of petitioner Khawaja and that if anyone had concerns about his inclusion on the bench, he would recuse himself. At this, AGP Awan said he had no reservations about his inclusion in the bench. Moreover, the AGP's request prompted CJP Bandial to remark: "The bench will not be made by your will." He then demanded to know on what basis the federal government has objected to Justice Mansoor. The attorney general reiterated that the objection was based on a conflict of interest. After the hearing reconvened with a six-member bench following the dissolution of the seven-member bench, the top judge asked the PTI lawyer to give arguments later. "[We] are recovering from the setback that took place this morning."

Continued on Page 06

## Demarche conveyed to the US Deputy Chief of Mission

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The US Deputy Chief of Mission was called to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs this evening and a demarche was made to him regarding the US-India Joint Statement, issued on 22 June 2023. Pakistan's concerns and disappointment at the unwarranted, one-sided and misleading references to it in the Joint Statement were conveyed to the US side.

It was stressed that the United States should refrain from issuing statements that may be construed as an encouragement of India's baseless and politically motivated narrative against Pakistan. It was also emphasized that counter-terrorism co-operation between Pakistan and US had been progressing well and that an enabling environment, centered around trust and understanding, was imperative to further solidifying Pakistan-US ties. — DNA

### Briefs Sanjrani signs finance (amend) bill

**DNA**  
ISLAMABAD: Acting President Sadiq Sanjrani — who has assumed the role as President Arif Alvi went on Haj — approved the amended Finance Bill 2023-24 and the Elections (Amendment) Bill 2023 on Monday. A day ago, the said bills sailed through the National Assembly. The Finance Bill was passed after the government had made several changes, including fiscal tightening measures, dictated by IMF in a last-ditch effort to secure critical funding. The National Assembly had also passed the bill seeking an amendment to the Elections Act 2017, aimed at limiting the disqualification of lawmakers to five years with a retrospective effect.

## PML-N, PPP leadership mull strategy in Dubai

Meetings focused caretaker setup and Nawaz' return to Pakistan

NEWS DESK / DNA

DUBAI: Pakistan Peoples Party's (PPP) top leaders, Asif Ali Zardari and Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, Monday met Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) Chief Organiser Maryam Nawaz in Dubai as Pakistani bigwigs are in the Gulf nation for mulling over "important" political matters. During the meeting, economy and politics came under discussion, with the PML-N's top leader taking Zardari and Bilawal into confidence over the ongoing situation, sources told media. The sources further said that leaders of the PML-N and PPP — two major partners in Pakistan's ruling coalition — would hold a meeting later to discuss further issues. The meeting in the oil-rich nation holds importance as there are reports of PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif's return and speculations around rifts between the PPP and the PML-N. Nawaz's return is expected after the National Assembly Sunday passed a law to limit the lifetime disqualification of parliamentarians to a maximum of five years.

Continued on Page 06

## PPP, PML-N seat adjustment likely

DNA

LAHORE: The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) is seeking the seat adjustment with the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) in Punjab and other provinces in the upcoming elections. Sources divulged on Monday the PPP requested the PML-N not give the ticket to its candidate in the constituencies represented by PPP bigwigs including Perwaiz Ashraf, Yousuf Raza Gilani. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif would reportedly travel from London to Dubai as well. The PML-N and PPP leadership meetings will also include the prime minister. According to sources, PM Shehbaz was acting as a "mediator" between the PML-N and PPP.

Continued on Page 06

## Inflation blocking buying of sacrificial animals

SITUATIONER

WAHEED HUSSAIN

**S**KYROCKETING inflation has crushed—really squeezed the blood of the masses. Heat of uncontrolled price hikes is being felt by the middle and upper middle classes, where a family could generate four to five hundred thousand rupees a month. This refers to the people living in the big metropolitan cities like Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad. Number of people who fall in this category is very low. What to say about millions living across Pakistan especially rural areas where the income generation is limited to agriculture. Middle of the rising gap between income and expenditure of the people, the Eid ul Azha, (Eid-i-Qurban) Eid of sacrifice has lost the attraction for a huge majority this year. I have personal experience of visiting the Bhatta Chook I-14, Islamabad sacrificial animal market, including a few other places and found that the buyers are missing. This year the Islamabad administration has allocated I-16, Islamabad sector for the sacrificial animals. Previously, the animals were available to the people

of twin cities at I-12 sector, Islamabad. Capital Development Authority and Islamabad District Management might have administrative and environmental consideration to shift the market. Both markets at I-14 and I-16 are situated across the Peshawar Road, Rawalpindi. While entering the market at Bhatta Chowk, I found two different enclosures, one allocated for the big animals like cows, ox etc, while, second was allotted for goat, sheep and ram. One can see different varieties of goats and sheep from various areas of Punjab, KPK, AJK and GB. However, the majority of the sacrificial animals have been transported from Talagang, Rajanpur, Multan and Bahawalpur. I spoke to various dealers about the rates, which overall gave an impression that all of them have a uniformity in prices. Approximately, forty KG goat price was fixed for 60 to 80 thousand rupees. One of the sellers said that last year the price of a goat was around 40 to 50 thousand rupees but that the prices had gone up. When I inquired about the sheep and ram prices, I was informed that they are being traded over 100 thousand rupees.

Continued on Page 06

### FIA takes Elahi into custody

STAFF REPORT

**LAHORE:** Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) President Perwaiz Elahi was arrested by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) again on Monday on allegations of suspicious transactions against him. The former Punjab chief minister was arrested by the FIA and taken from Camp Jail, Lahore, in an armoured vehicle. This is the sixth case for which the investigation agency arrested Elahi. The FIA produced the senior politician before a district court and sought his 14-day physical remand.

IPP to participate in election with 'Eagle' symbol

LAHORE: The Isteqam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) on Monday said the party would contest election with full zeal with the electoral symbol of 'Eagle' and the manifesto of the party would be an expression of aspirations of the Pakistani people.

Rwanda's development is an example for world

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's High Commissioner for the African country Rwanda Naem Khan has said that Africa region is very important for Pakistan. Africa is the largest consumer market in the world due to the lack of large-scale industry and production at the local level.



He said that the African region is of great importance at the political and diplomatic level in the whole world. Africa is well represented in all international forums including the United Nations, OIC.

employment and increase the level of education in a period of 20 years. Through political stability and continuity of policies, Rwanda has achieved a position that is now called the Singapore of Africa.

important region, Pakistan needs to take support from friendly countries China and Turkey, which have a lot of influence in the African region at the commercial and political levels.

rican region but the entire Africa with Pakistan. He said that the current trade volume between Pakistan and Rwanda is not encouraging. Pakistan needs to work on the target of taking its exports from 80 million to one billion dollars in the next 5 years.

Minister stresses precaution to stay healthy on Eidul Azha

LAHORE: Caretaker Punjab Health Minister Dr Javed Akram said on Monday there was great need to set aside personal wishes and observe caution to stay healthy on Eidul Azha.

Pre-monsoon stormy rains hit, inundate various parts of country

ISLAMABAD: Pre-monsoon stormy rains have lashed the country ending the spell of severe heatwave that has gripped the country for the last few days.

LCCI, IPO-Pakistan organise awareness session

LAHORE: The Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), in collaboration with the Intellectual Property Organisation of Pakistan (IPO-Pakistan), organised an awareness session on protection and registration of Geographical Indications (GIs), here on Monday.

tions at IPO-Pakistan, Muhammad Ismail delivered a detailed presentation on GIs. He emphasized that a GI is a distinctive sign used to identify products originating from a specific geographical area, known for possessing exceptional qualities and reputation.

(Federal Government), registrant, authorized user, and certification body. The presentation also covered the registration process for GIs and the benefits of GI protection.

Bangles, Sargodha Kinnow, Chausa Mango, and Sindhri Mango. The registration of these GIs serves to protect their authenticity and promote their economic value on a national and international scale.

SMEDA to sign MoUs with six public sector organisations

LAHORE: The Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) is going to sign six memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with six public sector organizations to celebrate June 27 (Tuesday) as the World SME Day.

of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) in any economy had declared 27 June as world MSME Day and the first MSME day was celebrated on 27th June 2017.

Strict security measures for cattle markets

LAHORE: Stringent security measures have been taken at the cattle markets in the provincial capital to ensure safety of traders and buyers.

Mayor assures citizens of municipal grievances

KARACHI: Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab Monday said citizens' complaints regarding cleaning and other municipal problems would be resolved on priority.

Murree's cleanliness top priority; CEO RWMC
RAWALPINDI: Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) Rana Sajid Safdar on Monday said that the cleanliness of the hill station Murree was a top priority as tourists from across the world visited to see its beauty.

Winning hearts and votes in Pakistani political landscape

How Party Leadership Should Strategically Connect with the Masses

IMRAN GHAZNAVI



In the dynamic realm of Pakistani politics, where public sentiment can sway elections, reputation management has emerged as a vital tool for political parties to secure the trust and support of the masses.

agement entails building, maintaining, and improving the public perception of a political party. It involves shaping the narrative surrounding the party, its leadership, and its policies.

diums such as social media, public addresses, and grassroots campaigns to connect with the masses. Engaging in meaningful discussions, actively listening to public grievances, and responding promptly are crucial steps in building a positive reputation.

for underrepresented voices will gain credibility and attract a wider range of voters. Moreover, political parties should place a strong emphasis on delivering on their promises and showcasing tangible results.

reputational damage. In conclusion, reputation management holds paramount importance for Pakistani political parties as they vie for the support of the electorate. By prioritizing transparency, effective communication, inclusivity, and tangible results, parties can strengthen their reputation and establish a strong connection with the masses.

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## Briefs

## WASA on high alert to cope with flooding

RAWALPINDI: Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) Rawalpindi was put on high alert to cope with urban flooding following heavy rain on Sunday night, said Managing Director (MD) of WASA. He informed that Rawalpindi and Islamabad received heavy rain on Sunday night, and all arrangements were finalized by the agency to deal with the flash flood.

He said that according to rainfall gauging stations, 47 mm of rain was recorded at Saidpur Village, 55mm at Golra, 58mm at Bokra, 52mm at PMD, 52mm at Shamsabad, 62mm at Chaklala while water level sensor data showed 10 feet at Kattarian and 9.5 ft at Gawalmandi and pre-alert for Gawalmandi area was issued at 4.18 am. WASA personnel were deployed in different city areas along with heavy machinery, the MD said adding, WASA staff was present at Liaquat Bagh, Committee Chowk, Waris Khan Sadqabad and along Nullah Lai. The water level in Nallah Lai was being monitored regularly, he said and informed that the water level had come down to 5 ft at Kattarian and 4 ft at Gawalmandi at 7.55 am on Monday. —APP

## NLC launches cargo service for Shanghai, Kashgar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: National Logistics Cell (NLC) has launched road cargo service for Shanghai and Kashgar from Karachi and Islamabad. In this connection, a convoy of NLC trucks carrying export goods left the Sost Dry Port in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) for China. Pakistan Customs, GB facilitated Pakistan-origin trucks from Silk Route Dry Port, Sost to China by road in accordance with the International Road Transport Convention (TIR Convention), according to an update shared on Sunday by Syed Fawad Ali Shah, Collector Customs, GB. This step will greatly enhance bilateral and regional trade through road, wrote Syed, who inaugurated the historical event in collaboration with NLC. Earlier this month, under a pilot project, Pakistan Customs facilitated the first ever export of cargo to Kazakhstan via China under Quadrilateral Traffic in Transit Agreement (QTTA). QTTA was signed between China, Pakistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to provide an alternative route for trade between these countries. The development is being seen in Pakistan as a major step forward in enhanced road connectivity between China and Pakistan. The cargo service is expected to add to the regional economy and also pave the way for full-scale implementation of QTTA, Gwadar Pro reported on Monday.

## Epidemic of children's mental health disorders

ISLAMABAD: Behind the innocent smiles of our children lie unseen battles that often go unnoticed. The alarming surge in mental health disorders among our youth calls for immediate intervention. By acknowledging and addressing these hidden struggles, we can pave the way for a brighter future where our children's well-being takes center stage. In recent years, the surge in children's mental health disorders has cast a spotlight on a pressing issue that often goes unnoticed. Despite the gravity of the situation, society has failed to provide adequate attention and support, leaving countless children struggling in silence. Experts in the field emphasize the critical role parents play in supporting children's mental health. Chief Executive Officer Mehfooz Bachpan (Child Protection Campaign), Bushra Iqbal highlights, "Understanding a child's personality physiologically, mentally, and physically by giving them a conducive approach provides a protective environment.—DNA

## CPEC liberated Pak from Burden of Geopolitics

The historical influence on Pakistan's decision-making has veered predominantly towards geopolitical considerations, while overlooking the significance of geoeconomics.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: During the inaugural ceremony of the 10th anniversary celebrations of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, the Minister of Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, said that Pakistan had previously been trapped in the clutches of global geopolitics and forced to assume the role of a pawn in regional conflicts. However, he emphasized that the construction of CPEC has proven to be a game-changer, propelling Pakistan onto a new developmental trajectory that prioritizes geoeconomics.

On June 22, 2023, the Ministry of Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives hosted the inaugural ceremony of CPEC's 10th anniversary celebrations. Mr. Iqbal, the Minister of Planning, attended the event and delivered a speech. Mr. Pang Chunxue, Acting Chargé d'Affaires of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan, along with Secretary Planning Mr. Syed Zafar Ali Shah attended the event, as did representatives from China's and Pakistan's media and business sectors.



The historical influence on Pakistan's decision-making has veered predominantly towards geopolitical considerations, while overlooking the significance of geoeconomics. This disposition has consistently cast Pakistan in the role of a tool for war, burdened by substantial military expenditures, and unable to fully explore the entirety of its potential in fostering amicable relations

with other nations. CPEC proved to be a game-changing shift for Pakistan, liberating it from the shackles of geopolitics and propelling the country into the realm of geo-economics." the minister said.

Over the past decade, China and Pakistan have achieved fruitful outcomes in key areas such as Gwadar, energy, infrastructure development, and industrial co-

operation in Pakistan. "Before CPEC, this country struggled to maintain uninterrupted power supply for more than 16-18 hours. People used to say that Pakistan was regressing to the Stone Ages", the minister stated. Thanks to the energy projects under the CPEC, many remote areas have bid farewell to candles. Nowadays, the energy projects have cumulatively provided one-

third of the national electricity supply in Pakistan. However, the construction of CPEC has not always been a smooth journey, as various forces have sought to interfere since its beginning. The minister recalled that initially, several lobbies became active in making CPEC controversial within Pakistan, with a particular focus on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. "So, while we conducted economic planning, we also made a concerted effort in effective communication to convey the true facts to the people", the minister said, then extended his gratitude to the security personnel who have been ensuring the safety of CPEC. Mr. Iqbal further stated that China's Belt and Road Initiative and the Global Development Initiative have provided new avenues for development in various countries, including Pakistan. CPEC is a project for Pakistan that will serve as a source of peace and prosperity, not only within the nation itself but throughout the entire region, reaping its abundant rewards, Gwadar Pro reported on Monday.

## China's diplomatic overture: strengthening European bonds

This diplomatic overture was aimed at reducing misconception and forging a path toward more collaboration between China and the Western nations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The just-concluded six-day visit of Chinese Premier Li Qiang to Germany and France holds great significance for the intricate fabric of political and economic relations between China and Europe. By intentionally selecting these two countries, which are perhaps the most vocal for European neutrality and independence, as his first-ever diplomatic destinations after assuming office, Premier Li has made a symbolic gesture of Beijing's strategic intent towards Europe, says a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Monday. This carefully orchestrated overture serves as a crucial component of China's broader drive-or charm offensive as per the Western media's terminology-to address the misunderstandings and misinterpretations surrounding China within the Western world. His proactive engagements with European leaders

presented an opportunity to both sides to bridge the gap and foster a deeper understanding of China's perspective. This diplomatic overture was aimed at reducing misconception and forging a path toward more collaboration between China and the Western nations. Li Qiang's European voyage entailed three objectives: forging connections with political and business leaders in Berlin and Paris, co-chairing the seventh China-Germany inter-governmental consultation, and participating in the New Global Financing Pact Summit in Paris. The world has been keenly observing this diplomatic undertaking from China in Europe, which has the potential for a more balanced and informed dialogue that could reshape global relations in a positive direction. For many years, Germany has stood as China's preeminent trading partner within the European Union. In fact, China has maintained its status as Germany's largest global trading partner for an impressive

seven consecutive years. In 2022, bilateral trade between the two nations soared to an impressive 300 billion euros (\$327 billion). Additionally, Germany holds the distinction of being Europe's leading investor in the vast Chinese market. This symbiotic relationship between two economic powerhouses typifies the immense potential for collaboration between China and Germany – and Europe. By fortifying ties with Germany and France, China is seeking economic benefits and shared prosperity, while creating a sort of counterbalance within the sphere of American influence in Europe. Embracing China's outreach is not only pragmatic but also holds the potential to reshape the economic landscape in ways that can yield long-lasting rewards for both parties involved. It was a very hectic trip by Li Qiang, who had unabated string of meetings, summits and then one-on-one meetings with German Chancellor Scholz and French President Macron as well. As expected, in all his personal

interactions – particularly with Scholz and Macron – Premier Li received a very positive response. Scholz emphasized Germany's staunch opposition to decoupling, making it clear that "de-risking" does not equate to "de-Sinicization." It is clear from the Scholz's meeting with Li that Germany remains fully committed to enhancing ties with China and augmenting bilateral exchanges and cooperation, thereby paving the way for stable and mutually beneficial relations. The current series of diplomatic engagements between German and China-which included Chancellor Scholz's visit to Beijing in December last year, then Wang Yi, director of the Office of Foreign Affairs Commission of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee visited Europe and met German leadership in February, followed by German foreign minister Annalena Baerbock's visit to China in April – signifies a transformative phase of cooperation between the two countries-as well as between China and Europe.

## CBCGDF fund assists Pakistani delegation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Pakistani business representatives visited Hunan, China for exchanges and connections with government institutions, business associations and relevant enterprises. The visit was organized and coordinated by the International Environmental Special Fund of China Biodiversity Conservation and Green Development Foundation (CBCGDF). According to the China Economic Net (CEN), the delegation, consisting of eight members, was led by Senator and General Abdul Qayyum, along with Sheikh Ejaz Asghar, Vice Chairman of the Pakistan-China Business Forum, Khalid Mahmood, CEO of Pakistan Green Energy Company, and Ms. Wang Lihua, General Manager of Pakistan Woda Limited. The business areas for connections covered new energy, automobiles, steel, household appliances, building materials, electronic products, food processing, and agricultural products. The delegation held forums with more than 60 Hunan enterprises. Representatives from the Hunan Provincial Department of Commerce introduced the overall situation of Hunan's industries and the current status of trade with Pakistan. They highlighted the prospects and opportunities that Hunan's industrial capabilities, particularly in engineering machinery, new energy, IT technology, and e-commerce, can bring to the upgrading and competitiveness of Pakistan's industries. The representatives of the Pakistani business delegation stated that Pakistan has a population of over 200 million and is currently at the initial stage of rapid development with a relatively low overall economic level. Due to the longstanding friendly relations, the government attaches great importance to trade connections and cooperation with China. They view China as a role model for development and expressed the urgent need for Chinese technology and products in the fields of communications, building materials, aviation, new energy, transportation, food processing, electronic products, agriculture, and household appliances.

## BISP resumes cash disbursement after break

ISLAMABAD: The Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) has resumed cash disbursement to the beneficiaries of the Benazir Kafalat from Monday which was earlier suspended for two days due to extreme heat wave conditions. According to the Spokesman, the cash disbursement process will continue from June 26 to June 28. These cash disbursement will remain closed during the Eid-ul-Azha holidays and again resume from July 03. These cash disbursement of Rs. 9000/- each to nine million families is continued across the country. The mothers of the children registered under Benazir Education Stipends are also being paid the education stipend amount. Since June 19, an amount of about Rs. 26 billion has been disbursed to more than 2934000 households. Under the instructions of Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Shazia Marri, the monitoring teams are also working to ensure transparent payment of these stipends. —APP

## Relentless efforts to improve Pakistan-Russia economic relations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry and the Chamber of Commerce of the Sakha Republic (Yakutia), Russia have signed an MOU desiring to contribute to the expansion of friendly relations in the future through the development of cooperation projects aimed at mutually beneficial development of joint business projects in the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) and Pakistan, guided by the desire to develop foreign economic relations between the Sakha Republic (Yakutia) and in Pakistan: The MOU was signed after a week of 75th anniversary on the establishment of bilateral relations between Pakistan and Russian Federation, at the Saint Petersburg economic forum 2023. Mr. Umar Masood Ur Rehman Vice President FPCCI and Mr. Bogoslovskaya Marina President CCR have signed the MOU. Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) is the largest republic of Russia, located in the Russian Far East, along the Arctic Ocean, and with a population of roughly 1 million Sakha comprises half of the area of its governing Far Eastern Federal District.

## IMF has become a highly political institution

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt said on Monday that the IMF, World Bank and other such institutions are promoting poverty and inequality in the world. Their aim is to increase the wealth and influence of Western countries by robbing the poor countries of their resources, he added. Shahid Rasheed Butt said in a statement issued here today that because of the tactics of these institutions, five percent of the world's population has occupied

eighty percent of the resources. The majority of the richest people in the world belong to a Western power, and the IMF is adopting every legal and illegal tactic to increase their wealth, he observed. The business leader said that at present more than seventy countries, including Pakistan, are unable to pay their debts. Self-interested elites who can sell the country's assets but cannot reduce spending control most of these countries. Shahid Rashid Butt said that dozens of countries have been ruined by the IMF's policies and have been forced to abandon national integrity and interests.

The ability of such countries to compete in the international market is lost, the economy falls, inflation increases and people's lives become more difficult. In these situations, rich transfer their resources while intelligent people leave their countries and go to Western countries to increase speed of their development, which is a serious brain drain issue. IMF has never stopped any country from corruption and spending spree, but has always victimized the common people. This institution has never brought any country out of crisis, but has worsened their situation, so the sooner the country gets rid of it, the better it is.

## New taxes will put huge strain on deprived

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Hanif Mughal, Senior Vice President of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) said on Monday that the recently announced tax measures will bring untold pressure on the poor masses facing unprecedented inflation and unemployment since last few years. The government

has made several changes to next fiscal year's budget, including fiscal tightening measures in a last-ditch effort to secure critical funding, but it will also hit the masses badly, he said. The government now aims to generate another Rs215 billion in taxes and cut spending by Rs85 billion without reducing the federal development budget or the salaries and pensions of government employees,

which will be difficult, he added. In a statement issued here today, Dr. Hanif Mughal the IMF orders will revise the revenue collection target to Rs9.415 trillion; put total spending at Rs14.48 trillion and the share of provinces would be increased to Rs5.39 trillion from Rs5.28 trillion. The government will collect Rs70 billion from fertiliser duty, Rs45 billion from hike in tax on buying, selling property, and Rs30 billion from increased tax on people earning above Rs200,000 per month. Govt has claimed to cut spending by Rs85 billion, raise Petroleum Development Levy from Rs50 to Rs60 per litre.

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## Briefs

**Row in India over Biden's remarks on Muslim rights**

WEB DESK

NEW DELHI: Leaders of India's governing party have criticised former US President Barack Obama for his recent remarks on Muslims in the country. Mr Obama said in an interview last week that India may "start pulling apart" if the rights of minorities weren't protected. He was responding to a question on how President Joe Biden should engage with "illiberal democrats". Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was in the US on a state visit at the time. The three-day visit was marked by a ceremonial welcome to the White House, a lavish state dinner and the signing of several crucial deals. Mr Modi also addressed a joint session of the US Congress. Mr Obama's remarks, made in an interview with CNN's Christiane Amanpour which was aired before the Congress address, were widely reported in India. Ms Amanpour referred to the "threat to democracy" from so-called "illiberal democrats" before referring to Mr Modi as one. "How should a president engage with those kinds of leaders, either in the naming of them or in the dealing with them?" she asked.

**Court declares Shahbaz Gill as PO**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A local court in Islamabad has ordered to block the identity card of PTI leader Shahbaz Gill in a case related to inciting rebellion against the state institutions. A District and Sessions Court started the process of declaring Gill as a proclaimed offender after the latter did not appear before the court in the treason case. The court ordered to paste the advertisement outside Islamabad, Faisalabad and F8 Kachheris. Additional Sessions Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra issued these directives on Monday after the constant absence of the PTI leader during the case hearings. The court further asked the FIA DG to immediately inform it if Shahbaz Gill landed at any Pakistani airport. Later, the court also sought a report from all the concerned institutions on July 26 regarding the process of declaring Gill as proclaimed offender. The court also sought the details of Gill's movable and immovable property from deputy commissioners of Islamabad and Faisalabad. The court recorded the statement of the ASI who appraised the court of the execution of non-bailable arrest warrants for the PTI leader. He said that the court order could not be executed as Gill had gone to America. On this, the court ordered NADRA to block Gill's identity card.

**Three die in Islamabad house roof collapse**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Three people, two children and their mother, died when roof of their house caved in due to heavy rain at Shahzad Town of Islamabad on Monday. According to sources in the police, one of the deceased children was 11-month-old while the other 11-year-old. They further said that police reached site of the incident and shifted the bodies to PIMS. Two little kids drowned in Kank area of Khuzdar when they fell into a stream, which was spilling over due to heavy rain. Family members of the deceased blocked the road in protest. They said that they had already protested against the construction of a dam near a human settlement. But still the authorities paid no heed to their concern and went ahead with its construction.

# Russian officials emphasise unity after aborted mutiny

Prigozhin and his fighters had been offered immunity from prosecution in return for their withdrawal. But state controlled news agencies reported on Monday that the criminal case against Prigozhin remained open and was still being pursued

NEWS DESK

MOSCOW: Senior Russian officials rallied around President Vladimir Putin on Monday, with questions still unanswered about a mutiny by mercenaries that appeared to pose the greatest threat to his grip on power of his 23-year rule. On the first working day after fighters of the powerful Wagner Group seized a military headquarters and marched on Moscow, officials still gave no details about the deal that abruptly ended the mutiny. Mikhail Mishustin, who leads Putin's cabinet as his appointed prime minister, acknowledged that Russia had faced "a challenge to its stability", and called for public loyalty. "We need to act together, as one team, and maintain the unity of all forces, rallying around the president," he told a televised government meeting.

There was no word about the revolt from Putin himself, who had said on Saturday the rebellion put Russia's very existence under threat and vowed to punish those behind it. The Kremlin released a video from him congratulating participants of an industrial forum, containing no indication of when it had been filmed. In another move apparently intended to convey normality, authorities released video showing Defence Minister Sergei

Shoigu. The mutineers had demanded he be sacked, leading to speculation that his removal might have been part of the arrangement that ended the revolt. There was still no public sign of Yevgeny Prigozhin, the boss of Wagner and mutiny leader, last seen on Saturday smiling in the back of an SUV as he left the southern city of Rostov-On-Don, captured by his men before he ordered them to stand down. Russia's national Anti-Terrorism Committee said the situation in the country was stable. Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin, who had told residents to stay indoors on Saturday as the mutinous fighters raced to within a few hundred kilometres of the capital, said he was cancelling a counter-terrorism security regime. Prigozhin and his fighters had been offered immunity from prosecution in return for their withdrawal. But state controlled news agencies reported on Monday that the criminal case against Prigozhin remained open and was still being pursued. Saturday's extraordinary events left governments, both friendly and hostile to Russia, groping for answers to what happened behind the scenes and what could come next. Russia's ally China, where a senior Russian diplomat visited on Sunday, said it supported Moscow in maintaining national stability. Ukraine and some of its Western allies said

the turmoil revealed cracks in Russia. "The political system is showing fragilities, and the military power is cracking," European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell told reporters in Luxembourg as he arrived for a meeting with ministers from across the 27-member bloc. German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said the invasion of Ukraine, which Putin calls a "special military operation" to counter threats, was destroying Russia, and the West would continue to back Kyiv. On Saturday, Wagner mercenaries fighting in Ukraine crossed into Russia, captured a headquarters for the war in Rostov, and drove most of the 1,100 km (700 miles) to Moscow, meeting no resistance on the ground before abruptly halting their advance. Their commander, Prigozhin, had demanded that Defence Minister Shoigu and the army's top general be handed over to him. Video released by the defence ministry on Monday showed Shoigu flying in a plane with a colleague and hearing reports at a command post. There was no evidence of when or where it had been filmed, and it had no sound. Valery Gerasimov, the Chief of the General Staff, has also not been seen in public since the events. The Kremlin said the question of personnel changes was the sole

prerogative of the president and could hardly have been part of any deal. In his televised address as events were unfolding on Saturday, Putin drew parallels with the chaos of 1917 that led to the Bolshevik revolution. NATO said the events showed the scale of the Kremlin's strategic mistake in waging war on Ukraine and that the Western defence alliance would not be intimidated into ending its support for Ukraine. Monday has been declared a non-working day in Moscow to allow time for things to settle, and there was little evidence of increased security in the capital. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who spoke with G7 and EU counterparts on Saturday, suggested the turmoil could take months to play out, saying more cracks had emerged in the Russian facade. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy discussed the events in separate phone calls with U.S. President Joe Biden and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who expressed support. "The world must put pressure on Russia until international order is restored," Zelenskyy said on Twitter. State television said Putin would attend a meeting of Russia's Security Council this week, without elaborating, and Belarus' Belta news agency said Putin and Lukashenko spoke again on Sunday, after at least two calls on Saturday.

## 2nd round of Pak-Kazakh dialogue held

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The second round of Pakistan-Kazakhstan Bilateral Political Consultations (BPC) was held on 26th June 2023 in Astana, Kazakhstan. Additional Secretary (Afghanistan & West Asia) Syed Ahsan Raza Shah led Pakistan side while Kazakh side was led by Mr. Kanat Tumyshev, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan. During the consultations, both sides held extensive discussions on various facets of bilateral relations in the political and diplomatic, trade, economic connectivity, science & technology and culture sectors. The two sides also exchanged views on issues of regional and global importance. Cooperation between two countries within the framework of United Nations, CICA, OIC, ECO and SCO was also reviewed. The two sides agreed towards early finalization of the Transit Trade Agreement which would become the catalyst for enhanced trade between the two countries. It was also agreed to enhance connectivity between the two countries and welcomed the resumption of direct flights commencing early next month.

# Erdogan: Sweden must stop Kurdish protests

Swedish foreign minister Tobias Billstrom on Wednesday said Turkey's parliament should begin ratifying Sweden's bid because Stockholm has met its obligations under a deal with Ankara



ANKARA: Sweden must stop protests by supporters of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Stockholm to get the green light on its NATO membership bid, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan told NATO's Secretary-General. Erdogan told Stoltenberg in a phone call on Sunday that Turkey had a constructive attitude, but Sweden's change of "terrorism" laws to meet demands from Ankara was "meaningless" while PKK supporters continued to hold protests in the country, the Turkish presidency said in a statement. Turkey has objected to Sweden's bid to join the Western military alliance, citing security concerns, but members of the bloc and NATO chief have expressed hope that it will become a member in time for a mid-July summit in Vilnius. Finland joined NATO in April but Turkey continues to block Sweden's membership. Last week, Erdogan said it should not expect a green light from Ankara at the Vilnius summit unless it prevents "anti-Turkey" protests. Ankara says Sweden harbours members of "terrorist" groups in the country, in particular belonging to the PKK, which has been designated a terrorist organisation by Turkey, the European Union and the United States.

## Punjab: At least 20 die in rain-related incidents

Taking notice of the situation in Lahore, PM Shehbaz Sharif directed the provincial government and district administration to take immediate steps for draining the standing water

LAHORE: At least 20 people died in rain-related incidents in Punjab over the last 24 hours. Rescue 1122 said in a statement issued on Monday afternoon. The statement, issued by provincial emergency service spokesperson Farooq Ahmed, attributed the deaths to electrocution, drowning and lightning. It stated that five people died in Narowal and two in Sheikhpura after they were struck by lightning. Meanwhile, seven people drowned in the province and six deaths occurred due to electrocution. According to the statement, 10 people were injured in incidents of wall and roof collapse in Lahore, three in Chinot and one in Sheikhpura. Separately, seven people sustained injuries after they were hit by lightning. Sixty-one cases of electrocution were referred to hospitals across the province of which 54 were provided immediate medical aid, the statement added. Meanwhile, journalist and author Raza Ahmad Rumi shared pictures of flooded roads, which he said were of Lahore's Garden Town. The pictures showed people wading through knee-high water on roads. "Clear signs of a failed model of urban development, thoughtless infrastructure and dysfunctional municipal governance," Rumi commented on the situation. Similarly, digital rights activist Night Dad also shared a video of Lahore's Captain Mubeen Shaheed Underpass where a vehicle was seen submerged in water up till the roof. Taking notice of the situation in Lahore, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif directed the provincial government and district administration to take immediate steps for draining the standing water. "Make arrangements for draining the water within 24 hours," a statement issued by the PML-N quoted him as saying. He also directed the authorities to mobilise teams from all relevant institutions in the rainy situation and constantly monitor the situation and take administrative measures. The PM also gave instructions to ensure the uninterrupted flow of traffic in the city and protective and preventive measures in other parts of the country. -DNA

## SBP raises policy rate to record 22%

Central bank eyes inflation between 5% and 7% by end of FY 2024-25

ISLAMABAD: The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), in an 'emergency meeting', raised its key interest rate by 100 basis points (bps) to 22 percent, days after it announced to keep policy rate unchanged. Taking to Twitter, the SBP's MPC explained that the potential upside risks to the inflation outlook had increased from its last meeting on June 12. "MPC views that these risks are mainly coming from the implementation of new measures in the fiscal and external sectors, which are important in the context of completion of the ongoing IMF (International Monetary Fund) programme." "MPC noted that today's action is necessary to keep the real interest rate firmly in positive territory on a forward-looking basis that would help in bringing down inflation towards the medium-term target of five to seven percent by the end of fiscal year 25," the central bank stated. In a press release issued today, the central bank stated that "two important domestic developments" since its June 12 meeting had slightly deteriorated the inflation outlook and could potentially increase pressure on the already stressed external account. "First, there are certain upward revisions in taxes, duties and petroleum development levy rate in FY24 budget as approved by the National Assembly on June 25. Second, the SBP, on June 23, withdrew its general guidance for commercial banks on prioritisation of imports," the press release reads. It added that while the MPC viewed these measures as "necessary" in the context of the ongoing IMF programme's completion, they had nonetheless increased the upside risks to the inflation outlook. -DNA

## Germany ready for troop presence in Lithuania

BERLIN: Germany is ready to deploy a robust brigade of some 4,000 troops to Lithuania permanently, in coordination with NATO's rethink on defence of its eastern flank in light of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Germany's defence minister said on Monday. "Germany stands by its commitment as a NATO member, as Europe's biggest economy, to stand up for the protection of the eastern flank," Pistorius said during a visit to Vilnius on Monday, without giving a timeline. In the past, Berlin said it would take Lithuania years to provide barracks, housing areas for the families, depots and sufficient training grounds. "Precondition (for the deployment) is that the necessary infrastructure is in place," he told reporters on a visit to Lithuania. Germany already leads NATO's multi-national battlegroup in Lithuania, a reinforced battalion of some 1,000 troops, meant to strengthen the alliance's eastern flank. Beyond this, a German brigade is on stand-by in Germany to rapidly reinforce troops in Lithuania if needed. Vilnius, however, has long demanded the permanent presence of a full German brigade. "We agree that the brigade will grow step by step as the infrastructure is established," Pistorius noted, adding that such a deployment could not be completed within "a few months". The endeavour must be compatible to NATO's regional plans detailing how the alliance would respond to a Russian attack, the minister stressed, referring to documents recently drawn up for the first time since the end of the Cold War. Pistorius and NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg travelled to Lithuania to attend an exercise that will test the swift reinforcing of the existing German-led NATO battlegroup to the size of a brigade, a scenario to be enacted in case of heightened tensions or a conflict with Russia. -Agencies

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