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Scholz defends deal to stop migrants at EU borders

Detailed News On Page-07

New Zealand PM disagrees with Biden remark

Detailed News On Page-07

Pakistan values strong ties with Turkiye

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Briefs

Dar gets angry over IMF question

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Ishaq Dar found himself at the center of controversy on Thursday when he engaged in a heated exchange with a journalist at the Parliament House. The incident occurred after Dar addressed a National Assembly session and was leaving the premises with his security guards when he was approached by a journalist, identified as Shahid Qureshi. In a video that has gone viral on social media, the reporter can be seen asking Dar if he would be willing to talk.

UN Chief asks Israel to abide by law

DNA

NEW YORK: The United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has expressed deep concern over the ongoing violence and loss of life in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. UN Deputy Spokesman, Farhan Haq, in a statement said the Secretary-General also expressed concern over events in Jenin killing of Palestinian and said Israel, as the Occupying Power, must ensure that the civilian population is protected against all acts of violence. The UN Chief also called on Israel to abide by its obligations under international humanitarian law.

Ghulam Sarwar quits PTI

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: PTI senior leader and former aviation minister Ghulam Sarwar Khan became the latest leader to part ways with the party over May 9 violent protests, saying he "strongly condemned the policy of confrontation with the state institutions". In a video statement on Thursday, the ex-federal minister also demanded punishment for rioters who attacked defence and public installations across the country following PTI Chairman Imran Khan's arrest in the Al-Qadir trust case last month.

IMP chief apprised of situation

PM hopes for release of crucial funds

"Pakistan willing to take further steps jointly with the IMF," says PM

CENTRELINE REPORT

PARIS: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had a meeting with International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva in Paris on Thursday and apprised her of the reforms introduced by his government to revive the fragile economy. The prime minister also expressed the hope that the IMF would release funds under Extended Fund Facility (EFF) at the earliest. The talks took place on the sidelines of the New Global Financing Pact Summit being held in Paris, which the prime minister is attending at the invitation of French President Emmanuel Macron. Shehbaz Sharif's meeting with Georgieva came as Pakistan's ninth review by the IMF under the 2019 EFF for the release of \$1.2 billion stays pending with less than 10 days remaining till the programme's expires on June 30. Pakistan was expected to get around \$1.2 billion from the lender in October last year as part of the EFF's ninth review, but almost eight months later, that tranche has not materialized as the IMF says Pakistan has been unable to meet important prerequisites. According to a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office on Thursday, Premier Shehbaz Sharif outlined the steps taken by the government for economic growth and stability in his meeting with the IMF managing director. "He underscored that all prior actions for the ninth review under the EFF had been completed and the government of

Continued on Page 06

PM meets Macron; Saudi Crown Prince

DNA

PARIS: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said that supporting the debt-burdened developing countries under New Global Financing Pact was the need of the hour for the relief of their people. The prime minister, in a meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron on the sidelines of the New Global Financing Pact Summit being held here, said the disastrous impacts of climate change had exacerbated the difficulties of the already suffering developing states. He appreciated the French president for hosting the Summit and inviting him to the event as well as for the warm hospitality. The prime minister paid tribute to the French president for taking a "bold step" towards the development of a system based on financial equity for the developing world faced with the challenges like the dearth of resources, debt burden, interest payments, and stalled development.

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Summons record of arrests SC to 'quickly' wrap up mily courts case

Justice Isa stated he did not consider "this bench a bench"

'Political motives behind petitions'

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Defense Minister Khawaja Asif on Thursday criticized those who have approached the Supreme Court (SC) to challenge the trial of civilians in military courts and said that they have political motives behind their actions. Speaking in the National Assembly, he emphasized that the practice of trying civilians in military courts was not new, with previous instances having occurred and been endorsed by the judiciary. Khawaja Asif recalled that during the previous government's tenure, military courts convicted 24 to 25 civilians.

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SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) on Thursday sought the record of all those arrested in the country post-May 9, when violent protests broke out in the country following the arrest of PTI Chairman Imran Khan. The directives came as a newly formed seven-member bench, down from a nine-member bench, resumed hearing a set of petitions challenging the trial of civilians in military courts. Earlier, a nine-member bench

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PARIS: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in a meeting with Ms. Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director International Monetary Fund, in Paris. - DNA

Khan slams alleged abduction of leaders' families

Says more and more people joining PTI

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan termed the unlawful arrests of Omer Cheema's wife and PTI Chakwal President Ali Nasir Bhatti's son, a school going boy, has also been picked up. "This level of fascism and oppression against women and children has never been witnessed before in our country, not even during the worst martial law days," he added. PTI Chairman said: "How low has this regime sunk simply to isolate me." However, he made it clear that the reverse was happening in fact, as our public is repulsed by all those in power while more and more people are joining PTI. Chairman Imran Khan strongly condemned the abduction of PTI ticket holder and Member AJK Assembly Ghulam Mohiyudin Dewan's wife and daughter.

Terrorism incidents Pakistan says no more peace talks with the TTP

Pakistan in constant contact with Greece over boat incident

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Thursday rejected holding peace talks with Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan due to its involvement in killing civilians and security personnel in the country. "Pakistan will not negotiate with individuals who are responsible for the killing of Pakistani civilians and law enforcement officials," the Foreign Office spokesperson said at a weekly press briefing, referring to an earlier statement of Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch was responding to queries regarding the statement of the spokesman for Afghanistan's Taliban government, Zabihullah Mujahid who offered mediation between the

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Pakistan urges engagement with Taliban govt

DNA

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan has urged the international community to open a sustained process of engagement with the Taliban to build mutual trust, suggesting incentives rather than punitive measures to achieve normalization in Afghanistan. "We should identify clear objectives; promote direct engagement with

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Israeli regime to be brought to its knees in West Bank - Page 06

Global security more threatened than ever in contemporary world - Page 07

Ukraine strikes bridge to Crimea, claims Russia - Page 08

Japan extends grant aid worth ¥315m via JICA

JDS is designed to support the social and economic development of the country



MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Japan has extended grant assistance

worth 315 million Japanese yen, to the Government of Pakistan through Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). An agreement to this effect for Exchange

of Notes and Grant Agreement between both countries regarding Human Resource Development Scholarship Program was signed in Islamabad Thursday. Acting Secretary of Ministry of Economic Affairs Muhammad Humair Karim and ITO Takeshi Minister/ Charge d'Affaires of Japan to Pakistan signed the grant agreement. According to Ministry of Economic Affairs, this will be the sixth grant given to Pakistan. Under this grant, young Federal Civil Service officers/Ex-Cadre officers are being offered Seventeen Scholarships for Masters and One for PhD and Doctorate Program in various universities of Japan. The Grant Agreement for the aforementioned program was also signed between

Continued on Page 06

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ATC dismisses bail petitions of Khadija Shah, others

LAHORE: An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Thursday dismissed post-arrest bail petitions of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) activists, fashion designer Khadija Shah, a daughter of ex-advisor to chief minister Punjab Salman Shah, Fahmida Begum, and nine other accused in Askari Tower attack case. The court also dismissed bail petition of PTI leader Yasmin Rashid due to non-prosecution and disposed of the bail petition of PTI leader Ijaz Chaudhry after being withdrawn. However, the court granted bail to six accused, Ali Nawaz, Sajawal Ali Khan, Ali Ahmad, Zahid Parvaiz, Shafiqat Mehmood, and Mukaram Tahir, in the case and ordered them to submit surety bonds of Rs 100,000 each for availing the relief. ATC Judge Ijaz Ahmad Buttar conducted proceedings on post-arrest bail petitions of 20 accused and announced the verdict after hearing detailed arguments of the parties. - APP

President Alvi stresses on varsties to use technology

DNA

PESHAWAR: President, Dr Arif Alvi here Thursday said that promotion of higher education was imperative for sustainable progress and development and stressed on the universities to use technology in order to increase the number of graduates for the benefits of Pakistan. The President expressed these views during a high-level meeting with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Ghulam Ali, Caretaker Chief Minister, Muhammad Azam Khan and members of the Provincial Cabinet here at Governor House. Chief Secretary and Inspector General of Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also attended the meeting. During the meeting, problems related to higher education sector and universities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa came under discussion. The President said that higher education was very important sector and the universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa could increase the number of graduates with the help of technology for prosperity of the country.

SABS University Jamshoro organizes design exhibition

FAISAL SHEIKH

Jamshoro (Press Release): The Shaheed Allah Buksh Soomro (SABS) University of Art, Design and Heritages Jamshoro organized a 3 days Design Exhibition at Communication Department. Vice-chancellor SABS University Prof. Dr. Arabella Bhutto inaugurated the exhibition. 37 students from 2nd and 4th year displayed their activity and product campaign design based projects in the exhibition under the supervision of faculty members Mumtaz Ali Mangi, Razaullah Abbasi and Muhammad Zaman Bhutto. The projects included eco life, trash can, art work board, wings of dreams, choose your department to show your interest, survey road, fem care, cure corner, connective corner, data map, questionnaire, photo booth, info rack, what is your symbol of happiness, jinga lala, Rabri wala and Shikarpuri Achaar.

Addressing the students Vice-chancellor SABS University Prof. Dr. Arabella Bhutto said that she was



highly impressed with the performance and innovative ideas of students

which depicts the feeling that students observe the issues of society with

keen interest and present their solutions. She said that the projects of stu-

dents are market oriented and will be displayed at grand level as the people

of industries may come to know about their talent and branding abilities.

OGRA Response to Media on OMAP's letter

ISLAMABAD: The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has perused the concerns raised by the Oil Marketing Association of Pakistan (OMAP) in their recent letter published in print media. We understand the importance of fostering a collaborative environment for the betterment of the petroleum industry in Pakistan. We would like to assure all stakeholders that OGRA is fully committed to its role as a regulator and is actively addressing the issues being faced by the oil and gas sector. We recognize the significance of resolving matters such as FX losses adjustment, price mechanism formula, OMC margin revision and smuggling of Iranian diesel, which fall within the purview of Federal Government. It has been observed in recent past, as soon as the oil industry takes up a matter with the regulator which is a quasi-judicial body, the industry circu-

lates the matter to all other forums giving an impression of influencing the decision-making process. This kind of practice is not mature, professional and not acceptable at all and will lead to non-resolution of the issues. While we understand the frustrations expressed by OMAP regarding previous engagements, we assure that we are actively working towards finding effective solutions. We have been collaborating closely with the Ministry of Petroleum and other industry stakeholders to address the challenges and create a conducive environment for the industry's growth. OGRA recognizes the importance of private investment and the impact it has on the petroleum industry and the overall economy. We are committed to fostering competition, attracting foreign direct investment, and ensuring the well-being and growth of the sector. - DNA

Minister orders monitoring transport fares

LAHORE: Caretaker Minister for Transport, Livestock and Dairy Development, Mines & Minerals Ibrahim Hassan Murad has ordered for strict monitoring of transport fares on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha. After assuming responsibilities as transport minister, Ibrahim Murad expressed his determination that overcharging from passengers going to hometowns on the Eid would be stopped in any case. He said that caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi ordered to provide all possible facilities to the passengers. Ibrahim Murad directed the Punjab transport secretary to form a special squad to prevent overcharging. "Setting up counters for passengers at bus stands should also be reviewed", he said. Provincial transport minister warned that immediate action would be taken on the complaints of passengers. "Strict action will be taken against bus stand on complaint of overcharging", said Murad. - DNA

Government will cooperate for establishment of industrial park

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister of Industry and Production Makhdoom Syed Murtaza Mahmood has said that despite the resources, the reason for Pakistan's problems is the lack of continuity in policies. We need to correct our direction, the government has taken many steps for industrial development to bring economic stability through increase in exports. The government has presented a budget in difficult circumstances, which includes measures to facilitate the business environment and speed up

the industry. The sustainable solution to Pakistan's economic problems is only in increasing exports, unless there is an increase in manufacturing at the local level, the dream of a large increase in exports cannot be fulfilled. He expressed these views yesterday while addressing the reception ceremony organized in his honor by the Islamabad Chamber. He said that the situation we are facing today is the result of the wrong policies of the last 75 years. Countries develop by making their own policies, unfortunately we adopted import policies and discouraged manufacturing. Our

SME sector has not been able to develop as it should have. As a minister, I am trying my best to adopt policies that will benefit the economy. Our exports are 30 billion dollars while imports are 80 billion dollars annually, there is no shortage of anything in this country. Only vision is needed, the government and the opposition should leave their personal egos behind and come on the same page for the country. Economic policies should be formulated not for five years, but for 25 years. If we use our resources properly, Pakistan can be included in the 25 largest economies.



PESHAWAR: President Dr Arif Alvi in a group photo with the Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Haji Ghulam Ali, Caretaker Chief Minister KP, Muhammad Azam Khan, and members of the provincial cabinet, at Governor House. - DNA

Ahsan wraps up Pak Learning Conference

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Learning Conference 2023: Building Foundations concluded on Thursday with a comprehensive action plan to transform early childhood education and foundational learning. The diverse gathering of global educators, policymakers, and experts delved into crucial topics, fostering the development of a bright future for children. Speaking at the end of 2nd day, Ahsan Iqbal, Minister of Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, congratulated the Education Ministry for addressing the crucial topic of Early Childhood Education (ECE) and foundational learning. He emphasized that we are currently in an era of knowledge revolution, innovation, and creativity, and highlighted the significance of the first 1000 days of a child's life as the most productive period for skill development. Furthermore, he stressed the importance of combining both formal and informal education within ECE and the strong connection that exists between early education and the

nation's progress. In his speech, he highlighted that a country's future is reliant on the extent to which creativity and innovation are integrated into the classroom and laboratory. He also emphasized the importance of fostering observational skills and critical thinking abilities in children. Additionally, he shared with the participants that a fund of PKR 25 billion has been established specifically for Out of School Children (OOSC) and added that a significant portion should be allocated for Early Childhood Education (ECE). He provided reassurance on behalf of the Prime Minister, affirming the government's unwavering commitment to ensuring that out-of-school children are enrolled in schools. Afterwards, Secretary Education, Waqar Ahsan Chaudhry talked about carrying the spirit of this conference forward through fostering innovation, inclusivity, and equity in early childhood education. He spoke about translating the event into "Pakistan Learning Movement". He added that with this movement, MOFEPT could create an educational landscape that em-

powers the children, equips them with essential skills, and nurtures their curiosity and love for lifelong learning. He informed the attendees that MOFEPT will be a hub for receiving feedback and inputs for aggressively contributing towards the movement. He thanked all the international and national participants for their dedication to advancing early childhood education and foundational learning. He

also appreciated them for their commitment to shape a brighter future for children. Before the closing session, Gailus Draugelis (World Bank Group), Jo Moir (FCDO), Salman Naveed Khan (PAMS) spoke about next steps and conference reflections. Their collective emphasis highlighted the importance of working together to address issues with regards to ECE and foundational learning.



IWMI holds journalists' field visit

LAHORE: The International Water Management Institute (IWMI) Pakistan arranged a capacity building media exposure field visit to Okara district for improved reporting on water governance, which was attended by print, electronic, and digital media journalists from Lahore and Okara. Journalism students from the University of Okara also participated in the media exposure field visit, to learn how to report on water and agriculture sector challenges. Dr. Habibullah Habib, Director - On Farm Water Management (OFWM) Research Farm (Renala Khurd), OFWM Punjab, gave the welcome note and urged the media to highlight the benefits of Laser Land Levelling, bed and furrow technology. - APP

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

JUNE

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

Hotels & Restaurants

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



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

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



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- 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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- RDA.....5555864
- TMA.....5770886
- Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Water Tank

- Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Military to military coop between Pak, Turkiye stressed

Air Chief highlighted that both the countries enjoy long-standing religious and historic relationship which is manifested through unprecedented strategic partnership

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A delegation led by General Atilla Gulan, Commander Turkish Air Force, called on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force in his office today. During the meeting, several key areas of mutual interest along with regional developments were discussed. On his arrival, a smartly turned out contingent of Pakistan Air Force presented General Atilla Gulan the guard of honour. He also laid floral wreath on the martyrs' monument. Later, the visiting dignitary was introduced to the Principal Staff Officers. During the meeting, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force, shared broad contours of PAF's modernization plan of smart acquisitions from allied countries, upgradation of infrastructure and revamping of training. Air Chief highlighted that both the countries enjoy long-standing religious and historic relationship which is manifested through unprecedented strategic partnership. He also reiterated his resolve to further enhance the existing bilateral ties in military-to-military cooperation, strategic alliance and the training domain. The Air Chief further said, "Pakistan values its strong diplomatic, economic and defence relationship with Turkiye which is based on convergence on



all important issues relating to regional peace, security and stability. The two brotherly countries have never left each other stranded in times of need and Pakistan Air Force will remain committed to providing training and capacity-building assistance to the Turkish Air Force." The Air Chief further remarked that PAF pilots are playing an active role in train-

ing Turkish aircrew on a variety of aircraft, including trainers and fighters. General Atilla Gulan, Commander Turkish Air Force, commended the professionalism of PAF and acknowledged its rising indigenous capacity in aviation industry. He also expressed keen interest in the National Aerospace Science and Technology Park which is being spearheaded by

Pakistan Air Force, and appreciated the unwavering commitment of the Air Chief in making the project a huge success. The visiting dignitary highlighted that both the countries enjoy cordial relations and reiterated his resolve to further enhance the existing bilateral ties between the two brotherly countries. Both the commanders agreed to explore further avenues of bilateral cooperation including collaboration for joint production of military hardware with special focus on fifth-generation aircraft and unmanned aerial platforms. During his visit, Government of Pakistan conferred Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military) upon General Atilla Gulan, which is the highest Non-Operational Military Award, in recognition of further strengthening the brotherly Bonds amongst the two Nations. The Turkish Air Force Commander also visited different installations and technological infrastructure established at Air Headquarters, Islamabad, including PAF's National ISR and Integrated Air Operations Centre (NIAOC) and PAF's Cyber Command, where he was briefed about the operational capabilities and ongoing projects of PAF's modernization drive.

Rising stars of Pakistan completion held at NUST

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The grand finale event for "Rising Stars of Pakistan" - a startup competition for women and minority entrepreneurs - was held here Thursday under the auspices of the United States Embassy and the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) to award seed financing for the top business ideas. Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S. Embassy, Andrew Schofer was the chief guest of the ceremony. In his opening remarks, Andrew Schofer said, "The U.S. Mission to Pakistan is proud to be part of cultivating a vibrant ecosystem of

entrepreneurship in Pakistan and empowering young people to dream big, take risks, and become the job creators and change-makers that Pakistan needs." He said Pakistan is a country with tremendous potential in various sectors including textile and agriculture offering diverse economic opportunities, however, the country needs innovation and technology to become truly competitive. Since 2012, the U.S. Embassy has funded over 181 entrepreneurship-related projects valued at \$14.7 million dollars. Andrew Schofer was joined by Pro-Rector NUST, Dr. Rizwan Riaz who acknowledged the efforts of the

U.S. government in supporting entrepreneurial activities in Pakistan. Dr. Riaz expressed appreciation for the ongoing collaboration between the U.S. Embassy and NUST to foster diversity and inclusion, and to increase the presence of diverse leaders in the entrepreneurial sector in Pakistan that contribute to Pakistan's long-term economic growth. He said, more than 800 emerging startups competed through the various competitions, resulting in an opportunity for the top-26 emerging entrepreneurs to travel to Islamabad to present their ideas at the grand finale event. The finalists include 23 women, two men, and

one transgender person. The finalists represented a range of religious and ethnic backgrounds, highlighting the competition's commitment to promoting inclusion and fostering a diverse entrepreneurial ecosystem. The top three business ideas were awarded seed financing in the amounts of Rs. one million, Rs. 700,000 and Rs. 500,000 respectively. Sponsored by U.S. Embassy Islamabad, the "Rising Stars of Pakistan" has been a collaboration between NUST and California-based Draper University, and included Pakistani American experts based in Silicon Valley as mentors for the emerging Pakistani founders

Shahzad highlights potential to achieve food autarky

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Rice Research and Development Board Punjab Shahzad Ali Malik emphasized that Pakistan has the potential to achieve food autarky by utilizing 18 million hectares of arable land and saving a significant amount of foreign exchange. Talking to a delegation of progressive farmers led by Momin Ali, he said last year \$14.5 billion were spent on agriculture-related imports to avert food insecurity, said a press release issued here on Thursday. He welcomed the substantial allocation for the promotion of the agriculture sector in the federal and provincial budgets however expressed reservations over the lack of setting aside sufficient funds for conducting modern research by plant breeders of public and private sectors. He pointed out that 93 new seed varieties were introduced in neighbouring countries last year and cotton's seed was pest free. Government must encourage plant breeders by offering a lucrative package of incentives for evolving the best quality high yielding pest-free seeds of rice, cotton and wheat," he added. He said in this regard, the private sector has taken the initiative as Guard Agriculture Research and Services has announced three cash awards of rupees 10 million each for developing new seeds of rice, cotton and wheat to boost agriculture production across the country. Shahzad Ali Malik said cultivating barren land can lead to increased agricultural output, which can contribute to food security and reduce the dependence on imports. This could have positive effects on the economy by increasing the availability of food and reducing the trade deficit, he added. —APP

H-8 college students explore National Book Fair

ISLAMABAD: Students of BS English at Islamabad Model Postgraduate College H-8 embarked on an enriching journey as they visited the Book Fair organized by the National Language Promotion Department (NLPD). Accompanied by their esteemed teachers, Prof Danish Yaseen and Prof Munir Fayyaz, the students delved into the world of literature and exhibited an unwavering passion for books. The students' keen interest in the vast array of books showcased at the fair was evident as they eagerly explored the different stalls, browsing through a wide variety of genres and literary works. Recognizing the value of books as trusted companions, the students immersed themselves in the realm of knowledge and imagination. Dr Rashid Hameed, the Director General of the NLPD, warmly welcomed the students, expressing his delight at their visit. He provided a brief introduction to the department. —APP



ISLAMABAD: Chairman CDA Noorul Ameen Mengal called on Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov. Both sides discussed matters of mutual interest.—DNA

"Narratives play essential role in constructing social reality"

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a roundtable discussion on a book 'Extremism and Counter Extremism Narratives in Pakistan: An Analysis of Narrative Building, the author, Dr. Sadiya Nasir urged state to be vigilant in creating message for public consumption, which, she added, had great impact on shaping the mindsets of people. She told the audience that extremism was not a new phenomenon in

the history of Pakistan, as it was rooted in a pre-partition political discourse, she argued. The event organized by the Institute of Regional Studies was well attended, with participants from academia, diplomats, media, and students. While speaking on the occasion, the discussant, Dr. Asma Khawaja, Executive Director of Centre of International Strategic Studies, AIK, stressed the need of comprehensive security approach comprising political and economic stability. She

also said that we need to prepare for impending conflict situations and plan accordingly. Another discussant Ms. Maryam Mastoor, Research Analyst at the Institute said that Dr Nasir's book was well argued that explained how naively a narrative supporting extremism was built over the years in the Pakistan. Ms. Mastoor argued that the suggestions put forward by Dr. Nasir were extremely important to understand the phenomenon of extremism in Pakistan.

Martyrs of Spinwam IED blast

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The funeral prayers of Sepoy Gul Rauf Shaheed (age 29 years, resident of District Laki Marwat) and Sepoy Abid Ullah Shaheed (age 23 years, resident of District Karak) who embraced shahadat on June 20 when an improvised explosive device (IED) exploded in general area Spinwam, North Waziristan District, were offered at Bannu and later at their hometowns. According to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release on Thursday, the Shaheeds were laid to rest with full military honours. Senior serving and retired officers and soldiers, relatives and large number of people attended the funerals. "Pakistan Army remains committed to ensuring the defence of the motherland at all costs," the ISPR said.

No leniency towards May 9 arsonists: Javed

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Javed Latif on Thursday stressed the need for giving exemplary punishment to all those involved in the May 9 vandalism of

military installations and memorials of martyrs so that no one could dare to indulge in anti-state activities. "If the proceedings against the elements in-

volved in the May 9 incident remain incomplete and they are kept acquitted, something bigger than it (May 9 tragedy) can happen in the future". —APP

AIOU creates knowledge through its 21 Journals: VC AIOU

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Vice Chancellor, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood said that we are taking all necessary steps to further improve the quality of research in AIOU. In a



statement, he said that the university is creating knowledge through its 21 journals publishing in different disciplines to pay special attention to matching the quality of our journals with international standards. Research is the backbone of universities, and we will provide full support to our faculty members and researchers in their research. Dr. Nasir said that it is a matter of pride for all of us that AIOU is currently publishing 21 research journals in various disciplines, all the journals are available in the university library and on the university website as well. He added that universities play a key role in the inventions and development of society through research journals and academic conferences. AIOU is striving hard for the promotion of research culture and organizing national and international conferences. It is pertinent to mention here that the university gives financial incentives to faculty members for research projects. AIOU awards certificates of appreciation and cash prizes to those who write a book or research paper.

Court Notice

In the Court of Mohsin Ali Civil Judge Gujrat

Title: Tahir Anwar. Versus Iftikhar Ahmad etc.

Notice to: 1-Iftikhar Ahmad Choudhry S/o. Choudhry Muhammad Hussain, 2-Amir Iftikhar S/o. Iftikhar Ahmad Cast Jutt R/o. Mohallah Daswandi Pora Gujrat. Suit for recovery of Damages

Whereas in the above mentioned case it has been proved to the satisfaction of the court that the above mentioned defendants are not served in ordinary way. It is therefore proclaimed under order 5 rule 20 CPC that if the said defendants will not appear personally or through a duly authorized agent or pleader in court at 8 AM on 25-07-2023, otherwise case will be decided ex party.

TENDER NOTICE

The THQ Hospital Kallar Syedan, District Rawalpindi invites sealed bids from eligible bidders, Manufacturers, authorized Sales & Service Dealers / Chain Pharmacies & Distributors for the supply of Medicines, Surgical & Disposable Items for the FY 2023-2024.

S#	NAME OF TENDER	BID SECURITY	LAST DATE & TIME OF SALE OF TENDER	Last Date & Time Of Receiving Of Tender	DATE & TIME OF OPENING OF TENDER
01	Framework Contract for local Purchase of Medicines, Surgical & Disposable Items (Day to Day & Bulk)	2% of Estimated Cost (Rs. 8.25 million)	07-07-2023 at 1:00PM	08-07-2023 at 10:00AM	08-07-2023 at 10:30AM

Tender Fee (PKR) = 1000/-

- Bidding shall be conducted through Open Competitive Bidding (Single Stage-Two Envelope) procedures specified in the Punjab Procurement Rules PPR 2014 (amended up to date), and is open to all eligible bidders as defined in the bidding document.
- Interested eligible bidders may obtain bidding documents and further information from the office of Procurement Officer, THQ Hospital Kallar Syedan, on submission of written application on letter head along with payment of non-refundable tender fee of PKR/- 1000/- (One thousand only). Bidding documents can be obtained from office of Procurement Officer, THQ Hospital Kallar Syedan at the mentioned time and date. Tender notice and checklist must be signed & stamp of head of department or procurement officer of THQ Hospital Kallar Syedan.
- Bidding documents are also available on Punjab Procurement Regulatory Authority website (www.ppra.punjab.gov.pk) until the closing date for the submission of bids.
- Sealed Bids (Single Stage-Two Envelope) accompanied by a 2% Bid Security (irrevocable) in the form of CDR, Pay Order, Demand Draft, or Banker's cheque from a Scheduled Bank of Pakistan to the name of Medical Superintendent, THQ Hospital Kallar Syedan must be delivered to the below mentioned office within the closing date.
- Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend at mentioned time on the same date in the Office of The Medical Superintendent THQ Hospital Kallar Syedan on the closing date.
- The bidders are requested to give their best and final discounts as no negotiations are expected.
- Taxes will be deducted as per applicable government rules. Registration Letter / Certificate of Valid National Tax Number, Income tax & General Sales Tax (where apply) and Valid Drug Sale License must be provided.

For obtaining any further information or clarifications, please contact at the following.

Medical Superintendent
THQ HOSPITAL KALLAR SYEDAN
Primary & Secondary Healthcare Department
Government of Punjab
IPL 4986

Briefs

FBR
surpasses
income tax
collection
target

ISLAMABAD: Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has surpassed the income tax annual target 10 days ahead of the close of the ongoing financial year. According to the FBR Twitter handle, so far it has collected Rs 3,035 billion against the target of Rs.3,026 billion, showing 41 per cent unprecedented growth as compared to the last year. "Inland Revenue Service FBR surpasses income tax annual target of Rs. 3,026 Billion, ten days ahead of the close of the ongoing Financial Year, showing 41 per cent unprecedented growth in comparison to the last year and has collected Rs.3,035 billion, till 21st June 2023", FBR tweeted.—APP

IHC grants
time to
Qureshi,
Umar for
appearance

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday granted more time to PTT's leaders including Shah Mehmood Qureshi and Asad Umar for appearance and adjourned hearing in their cases of their interim bails in a case registered by Tarnol Police Station. Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir heard the case wherein petitioner's counsel Ali Bokhari Advocate appeared before the bench. The lawyer said that both the petitioners had arrived IHC in the morning at 7:30 am but they were not allowed to enter. He prayed the court to grant time till tomorrow to his clients for appearance. The court accepted the request and adjourned further hearing of the case. It may be mentioned here that earlier a local court had dismissed the pre-arrest bail petitions of the two accused in the same case.—DNA

IHC seeks detail
of cases against
Rasheed

ISLAMABAD, Jun 22 (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday sought details from the Islamabad Police of the cases registered against former interior minister Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed. Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri of the IHC heard the case filed by the Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed. The petitioner's lawyer, Abdul Razzaq Advocate, argued that the police had tortured the servants of his client during raid at his house and also seized two vehicles.—APP

Court Notice

In the Court of Medum Afshan Younis Civil Judge Gujrat.
Title: Muhammad Akram Versus Ali Akbar etc..
Notice to:
Muhammad Yousaf S/o. Siaz Ullah, Orangzaib S/o. Shair Ahmad, Naseem Anjum S/o. Saif Ullah, Rasool BiBi D/o. Karam Dad, Sultan Ahmad S/o. Shair Muhammad, Ashraf S/o. Ghulam Qadir, Nighat D/o. Shair Muhammad, Ghazanfar S/o. Shair Muhammad, Sakeena BiBi D/o. Karam Dad Late Through, Umar Hayat Son, Zahida, Shahida Daughters Sakeena BiBi, Irshaad BiBi Widow of Shair Muhammad, Sardar BiBi widow of Karam Dad, Maqsood Ahmad S/o. Shair Muhammad, Muhammad Ashraf S/o. Karam Dad, Ghulam Rasool S/o. Nawab Khan, Nusrat D/o. Shair Muhammad, Sultan Salah ud Din S/o. Yousaf Ullah R/o. Village Khojanwala Tehsil & District Gujrat.
Suit for Partition along with Separate Possession
Whereas in the above mentioned case it has been proved to the satisfaction of the court that the above mentioned defendants are not served in ordinary way. It is therefore proclaimed under order 5 rule 20 CPC that if the said defendants will not appear personally or through a duly authorized agent or pleader in court at 8 AM on 20-07-2023, otherwise case will be decided ex party.

Graduation ceremony
of Air War course held

The Ceremony was also attended by various high-ranking civil and military officers in addition to senior diplomats from friendly countries

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Convocation & Graduation Ceremony of No 36 Air War Course was held at PAF Air War College Institute, Karachi today. Air Marshal Abdul Moeed Khan, Deputy Chief of the Air Staff (Air Defence), was the Chief Guest at the occasion. Addressing the graduating officers, the Chief Guest congratulated them on the successful completion of their course and achieving a distinguished accolade in their career. He emphasized that with changing geo-political landscape, complex dynamics of the national security and the ever-evolving character of war, the requirements for the acquisition of knowledge, to remain abreast of the technological



advancements and the prudent application of instruments of national power are of vital importance. He further stressed the importance of the joint application of military instruments and added that in modern warfare,

whether conventional or unconventional, no service could achieve success single-handedly and the role of joint strategic planning cannot be ruled out. He also reiterated the significance of Airpower application

in the realm of national security and as an essential instrument in the hands of state power for stability and to ensure sovereignty. Air Vice Marshal Husain Ahmed Siddiqui, President Air War College Institute, gave

an overview of the War course and its significant achievements. Later on, the Chief Guest awarded certificates to the graduating officers. PAF Air War College Institute is a premier institute of Pakistan Air Force, where senior and mid-level officers of Pakistan Armed Forces and friendly countries are prepared in domains of Air Power doctrine, strategy and employment for higher military leadership roles. The officers from the tri-services of Pakistan, along with military officers from Bahrain, Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe were amongst the graduates. The Ceremony was also attended by various high-ranking civil and military officers in addition to senior diplomats from friendly countries.

Unraveling complexities
of Modi's visit to the US

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Biden administration is showing all kind of pomp and splendor for Indian Prime Minister Modi's first-ever state visit to the United States, which includes an address to the joint session of Congress and a state dinner, is being apparently, the Biden administration, in a desperate attempt to allure Modi, is going extra mile to give the impression of its exceptional importance for India. The Biden administration appears to be actively courting PM Modi, with the aim of forging a robust front to confront China's ascending influence on the global stage and to create a wedge between New Delhi and Moscow, according to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Thursday.

Washington is sparing no effort to portray India as an "indispensable friend" in the current geopolitical landscape. But this extraordinary endeavor by the United States is likely to further complicate the current global power equilibrium - economical-

ly and politically. During Modi's visit, in addition to a series of lavish defense and tech deals, including the purchase of some MQ-9B Predator drones, many agreements on semiconductor chips and fighter jet engines manufacturing collaboration are expected to be sealed. The strategic goals of the Biden administration are twofold: firstly, to forge a robust tapestry of interconnected defense, technological, and trade alliances with India, thereby presenting a tangible counterweight to China's ever-expanding clout in the Indo-Pacific sphere. Secondly, the administration aims to sow seeds of uncertainty and estrangement in the chronic relationship between Russia and India. However, the Biden administration's pursuit of these objectives is fraught with complexities and potential pitfalls. The intricate web of challenges and potential obstacles that lie ahead for American strategy of enticing India are too big. Beyond the symbolism and ceremonial gestures, the Biden administration has a strategic interest in draw-

ing India closer within its manufacturing and defense sphere, a move that is targeted at reduction in New Delhi's dependence on Russian military equipment but also to facilitate the diversification of American supply chains away from China. During the Trump era, the United States generously granted India the Strategic Trade Authorization Tier 1 (STA-1) status. This strategic move effectively facilitated the seamless export of cutting-edge high technology products from American companies to their Indian counterparts. Under the Biden Administration, this high technology partnership has further deepened - as evidenced by the implementation of crucial policies. Among them, the initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology, jointly spearheaded by the National Security Advisors of both nations, is of strategic nature. Additionally, the reinvigoration of the US-India Strategic Trade Dialogue, focusing on the controlled export of dual-use items, further

underscores the mutual commitment to robust cooperation in the realm of advanced technology. Ironically, majority of American policy makers think that if New Delhi were to weaken its ties with Moscow, it would inadvertently strengthen the bond between two "adversarial" powers: China and Russia and this scenario would inversely lead to India's augmented reliance on the United States, potentially diverting resources from developmental priorities to defense expenditures. These hawks in the Biden administration, though frustrated over India's oil purchases from Russia and its precarious balancing act on the Ukraine conflict, believe that India is the most viable option to counter China in the Indo-Pacific. Modi's visit is being granted a distinct and exceptional treatment for precisely these reasons. Over the past decade, the United States and India have witnessed a visible transformation in their relationship, characterized by numerous avenues of engagement.

China, Pak joining
hands to introduce
more high-yielding
crop varieties

ISLAMABAD: China, Pakistan joining hands to introduce more high-yielding crop varieties to Pakistan, according to China Economic Net (CEN). On the testing field of Multan, chili, sorghum, cotton, and soybeans are growing exuberantly on a trial basis. "For the first time in our testing field, we grow jalapeno, or Mexican chili pepper. From each acre, we yield over 2.5 tons of dried jalapeno, far exceeding the local average of less than 1.5 tons", Mr. Xi Jianlong, Manager of China-pakistan agricultural cooperation project from China Machinery Engineering Corporation, the sponsor of the testing field, told China Economic Net. Exceptional high yield is also realized with sorghum for brewing purpose, which is also being cultivated on trial base for the first time. Grain from one ear, after being dried, weighs over 470 grams, at least five folds of the local variety. "Early sowing, moderate temperature, and cutting-edge technologies contribute to the expected high harvest", Mr. Xi Jianlong said. Such trial bases can also be found in Sahiwal and the vicinity of Lahore. With an aim to select superior strains, fine varieties will be promoted on a large scale after the trial planting, as has already done with chili. This year, red chili was planted on 750 acres of land in Pakistan, with a whole set of technologies in seeding, sapping, fertilization, ploughing, irrigation, etc. brought from China. Currently, they are being picked and sundried with an estimated output of over 1,500 tons, CEN learns from Mr. Xi Jianlong. Apart from selection of varieties with better performance and transfer of agricultural technologies, the agricultural cooperation has also facilitated the extension of Pakistan's industrial chain. "We aim to ship the jalapeno back to China for processing after harvest in future", Mr. Xi Jianlong said. In this way, the farm produce can move up the value chain and earn foreign exchanges for Pakistan.—DNA

Stage-1 of Concrete-
Starter Dam at Dasu
HPP completed

ISLAMABAD: In a significant development towards the implementation of the Dasu Hydropower Project (DHPP), WAPDA announced on Wednesday evening that Stage-1 of the Concrete-Starter Dam has been completed upstream of the main dam site. Stage-1 of the concrete Starter Dam was finished earlier this month, just before the high flow season in River Indus. WAPDA's statement described it as a major achievement for the project team, Gwadar Pro reported on Thursday. According to the project design, the Starter Dam for DHPP is divided into two stages. Stage-1 has been completed up to an elevation of 785 meters, while Stage-2 is planned up to an elevation of 798 meters above sea level. Following the high flow season in October this year, the construction of Stage-2 of the Starter Dam will commence and is expected to be completed during the upcoming low-flow season. With the onset of the high flow season, River Indus is now flowing through the two Diversion Tunnels, which were completed earlier this year. Additionally, some of the river water is overtopping the concrete Starter Dam as per design. China Gezhouba Group Company (CGGC) is serving as the Main Works Contractor for DHPP, with involvement from China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC), Power Construction Corporation of China Ltd (PCCC), Zhongmei Engineering Group Ltd, and CGICOP. DHPP is a crucial component of WAPDA's least-cost, green, and clean energy generation plan. The project is being constructed across River Indus, upstream of Dasu town in Upper Kohistan, KP. It is planned to have a total capacity of 4320 MW, divided into two stages of 2160 MW each. Once both stages are completed, Dasu will become Pakistan's highest annual energy generation project.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: Outgoing Sri Lankan High Commissioner being presented with a memento by the Foreign Secretary, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.—DNA

HSHM offers job opportunities
abroad to students

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Hashoo School of Hospitality Management (HSHM), the leading institute in the hospitality and tourism education industry, is proud to announce its recent accomplishments in expanding opportunities for its students. As the first batch of HSHM students prepares to graduate in September 2023, the school has secured key partnerships and signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) to enhance job prospects abroad and increase outreach. Recognising the growing demand for skilled professionals in the global hospitality industry, HSHM has attracted the attention of recruitment agencies seeking talented individuals for

overseas career opportunities. As a result, two MoUs were successfully established between HSHM and prominent recruitment agencies, Juniper Human Resources and Aruj Enterprises (Pvt) Limited. These partnerships will provide HSHM students with valuable job placements abroad and expose them to international work environments. Mr. Haseeb Gardezi, COO of Hashoo Group's Hospitality and Education Division, represented HSHM and signed the MoUs. On the other hand, Mr. Umar Ajmal, CEO of Juniper Human Resources (JHR), signed the MoUs on behalf of Mr. Maqsood Ahmad Butt, CEO of Aruj Enterprises (Pvt) Limited as well as JHR, solidifying their commitment to the partnership. "We are thrilled

to collaborate with Juniper Human Resources and Aruj Enterprises to open up exciting prospects for our students," said Mr. Gardezi on occasion. "These partnerships will serve as a solid platform for our grad-

uates to embark on successful careers abroad, gaining invaluable experience and contributing to the global hospitality industry. We believe in offering students a global curriculum taught by seasoned faculty members

from around the world," he further added. "By expanding our presence to other cities across Pakistan, we aim to connect with the country's talented youth and provide them with unparalleled education and career opportunities in the dynamic hospitality industry." HSHM's mission is to provide world-class education in hospitality, tourism, and hotel management, focusing on practical training, internships, and guaranteed job placements at Hashoo Hotels. In line with this vision, HSHM has previously partnered with IMSciences in Peshawar and recently established a collaboration with Iqra University in Karachi, a prestigious institution with over two decades of experience.



Court Notice

In the court off
Later Mr. Muhammad
Amin Sahib Additional
District Judge Sahib
Waziraba
Case: The cost of suste-
nance and dowry
Title: Nasira Rasheed,
daughter of Abdul Rashid
Qoum Khokhar, Maryam
Naveed, minor, daughter
of Muhammad Naveed
Qoum Ansari, resident of
Gali Gurkotha, Wazirabad
Tehsil, District Wazirabad
Advertisement Name:
Muhammad Naveed
son of Allah Dutta Qum
Ansari resident of House
No. 2 Street No. 19
Vandala Road Islamia
Colony Shahdara Lahore
Currently residing in
Saudi Arabia Muhammad
Ramzan son of Allah Dut-
ta Qum Ansari Resident
of House No. 2 Street No.
19 Vandala Road Islamia
Colony Shahdara Lahore
In any case, it is not pos-
sible for the defendant
to comply with the above
case in an easy
In any case, it is not pos-
sible for the defendant
to comply with the above
case in an easy way, so
the defendant is request-
ed through a newspaper
advertisement to appear
in the court on the next
date of appearance on
6/07/2023 at 8:00 AM
in person or as a lawyer,
otherwise the action will
be unilateral. Will be
implemented

Court Notice

In the court off
Later Mr. Muhammad
Amin Sahib Additional
District Judge Sahib Wa-
ziraba
Case: The cost of suste-
nance and dowry
Title: Nasira Rasheed,
daughter of Abdul Rashid
Qoum Khokhar, Maryam
Naveed, minor, daughter
of Muhammad Naveed
Qoum Ansari, resident of
Gali Gurkotha, Wazirabad
Tehsil, District Wazirabad
Advertisement Name:
Muhammad Naveed
son of Allah Dutta Qum
Ansari resident of House
No. 2 Street No. 19 Van-
dala Road Islamia Colony
Shahdara Lahore Current-
ly residing in Saudi Arabia
Muhammad Ramzan son
of Allah Dutta Qum An-
sari Resident of House
No. 2 Street No. 19 Van-
dala Road Islamia Colony
Shahdara Lahore
In any case, it is not pos-
sible for the defendant
to comply with the above
case in an easy
In any case, it is not pos-
sible for the defendant
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the defendant is request-
ed through a newspaper
advertisement to appear
in the court on the next
date of appearance on
6/07/2023 at 8:00 AM
in person or as a lawyer,
otherwise the action will
be unilateral. Will be im-
plemented.

Court Notice

In the Court of Mohsin Ali
Civil Judge Gujrat
Title: Mohsin Shahzad.
Versus Zubaida Begum
etc.
Notice to:
4-Tahir Najeeb S/o. Bashir
Ahmad (Late) cast Jutt
Rajput R/o. Mohallah Jogi
Jalalpur Jattan Tehsil &
District Gujrat.
Suit for Specific Perfor-
mance and Temporary
Injunction
Whereas in the above
mentioned case it has been
proved to the satisfaction
of the court that the above
mentioned defendants are
not served in ordinary way.
It is therefore proclaimed
under order 5 rule 20 CPC
that if the said defendants
will not appear personally
or through a duly author-
ized agent or pleader in
court at 8 AM on 05-07-
2023, otherwise case will
be decided ex party.

Pakistan
received \$26.6
million in FDI
from China
in May

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan received \$26.6 million in FDI from China in May, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Thursday. According to the latest statistics from the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Pakistan received \$26.6 million in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from China in May 2023, contributing to a total FDI inflow of \$149.6 million for the same month. The inflow from China in May amounted to \$28.1 million.—APP

Danger at sea

A massive operation is under way to find and save a stricken vessel and its passengers. As time passes, anxious families and friends wait with growing fear. The US coastguard, Canadian armed forces and commercial vessels are all hunting for the Titan submersible, which has gone missing with five aboard on a dive to the wreck of the Titanic in the north Atlantic. The UK's Ministry of Defence is also monitoring the situation. It is hard to think of a starker contrast with the response to a fishing boat which sank in the Mediterranean last week with an estimated 750 people, including children, packed onboard. Only about 100 survived, making this one of the deadliest disasters in the Mediterranean. Greece and the EU blame people smugglers, who overcrowd boats and abuse those aboard them. But both have profound questions to answer about their own role in such disasters. Activists say authorities were repeatedly warned of the danger this boat faced, hours before it went down, but failed to act. Greece has said that the vessel was moving steadily, was not at risk, and that passengers refused help; survivors and tracking data paint a very different picture. The Greek coastguard's record includes forcible and dangerous push-backs of asylum seekers, with a recent video showing a family including small children being set adrift on a raft. Frontex, the EU's border and coast guard, is also – rightly – under growing scrutiny. Ursula von der Leyen, the European Commission president, has praised Greece as the bloc's "shield" against migration – not only applauding its role, but using the language of combat and self-defence. Josep Borrell, the EU's foreign policy chief, last year described Europe as a "garden" and most of the world as a "jungle" which "could invade" it unless there was greater engagement. Following the backlash, he said he was sorry "if some were offended" and insisted he was referring to the rule of law in contrast with lawlessness. On the most generous interpretation, he showed a startling ignorance of the implications of such language. On a more cynical one, he pandered to it. The rhetoric of a hostile world's encroachment upon Europe is used in part to try to stem the advance of the far right, showing that mainstream politicians and officials are not ignoring the issues it exploits to win support. But this contributes to an environment in which there is a growing sense of an "us", living in safety and relative comfort, menaced by a "them" seeking the same things. Most of those on board the boat last week are believed to have been Pakistani nationals, who had grown desperate as the country's economic situation deteriorated. "Migrant" has become a word that disguises rather than illuminates the individuals behind the label – humans with the usual struggles, hopes and fears for themselves and their families, loved as dearly as any others, and as deserving of dignity, safety and concern.



Berlin and Beijing

Berlin's warm reception of visiting Chinese Premier Li Qiang, as well as the packed schedule of Li, who met with the German president, chancellor, cabinet members and business leaders over the past three days, show the sincerity of the two countries' friendly relations. It is good to hear that German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said during his meeting with Li on Tuesday that Germany opposes "decoupling", and that "de-risking" is by no means de-sinicization, noting that China's development and prosperity benefit the world. German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier's assurance of Germany's opposition to camp confrontation and trustworthiness as a partner during his meeting with Li on Monday is also welcome. China has always valued Germany's strategic autonomy as a leading player in the European Union and a major country on the world stage. And it has expressed its hopes that Berlin will continue to carry forward the positive momentum of Sino-German relations formed over the past decades. During that period of time, despite the two countries' different social and political systems, they have worked together to bring tangible benefits to the two peoples through pragmatic collaboration based on the complementarity of their economies. Rather than taking their differences as obstacles to cooperation, they have always sought to bridge them, regarding the process as one of mutual learning that helps foster mutual understanding and respect. Demonstrating this, when State Councilor and Foreign Minister Qin Gang called his German counterpart Annalena Baerbock on Monday, urging Berlin to oppose the attempts of some politicians in the country to "decouple" the two economies and break the global industry and supply chains, Baerbock responded that Germany is willing to make joint efforts with China to push for positive outcomes of Premier Li's visit and government consultations. That interaction between the two sides aimed to counter the possibility of the China hawks in Berlin hijacking Li's visit and ruining its fruit. Cautioning against equating interdependence with insecurity, Li apparently took his visit as an opportunity to send a message to other European countries. Speaking to his German hosts, Li said that China always supports openness and cooperation, and believes the biggest risk is non-cooperation and the biggest hidden security danger is non-development. That should be taken as a guarantee from Beijing of China's welcome to foreign companies, investments and talents. As always, China's development will continue to be a positive contribution to the world and an important opportunity for all countries. As Li said, in a world of turmoil and transformation, it is all the more necessary to think calmly and grasp the certainty amid uncertainties.

India's deadly train crash: Forget the truth, blame it on Muslims

Apoorvanand

The railway minister ordered an inquiry into the accident by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which has long given up the pretence of acting as an independent investigative agency and is principally used to target political opponents and probe cases along ideological lines laid down by the country's ruling masters. In this case, handing the case over to the CBI circumvents the normal process in such situations, which is an investigation by the commissioner of safety. The result: Instead of paying attention to flaws in safety measures, which could raise

It happens only in India that even a train accident is used as an opportunity to demonise Muslims. Just after the recent terrible train crash near Balasore station in the eastern state of Odisha, in which more than 280 people died, posts started circulating on different social media platforms and WhatsApp groups, blaming Muslims for the accident. Could it be a coincidence that it was a Friday when three trains collided with each other in Odisha? As if the Friday angle was not sufficient, a lie was invented that the station master was Muslim. To make it look more sinister, the photo of a religious shrine near the railway track where the accident had taken place was spread on social media claiming that it was a mosque, suggesting that there must be some link between the mosque and the accident. It was immediately exposed as a lie. It was a Hindu temple and not a mosque. But imagine if it had actually been a mosque – the baseless conspiracy theory would have received fresh wings. Sadly, fact-checking only cements doubts created by fake news in minds that are already prejudiced against Muslims and are being told day and night that Muslims are conspiring against the nation. These are minds trained to think that there is a need to keep an eye on Muslims and to subjugate them using laws and, if necessary, violence. The railway minister ordered an inquiry into the accident by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which has long given up the pretence of acting as an independent investigative agency and is principally used to target political opponents and probe cases along ideological lines laid down by the country's ruling masters. In this case, handing the case over to the CBI circumvents the normal process in such situations, which is an investigation by the commissioner of safety. The result: Instead of paying attention to flaws in safety measures, which could raise uncomfortable questions for the government, the investigation into the accident will now keep alive a criminal conspiracy theory. It aligns with the rumours spread just after the accident. Close on the heels of this accident, the chief minister of the state of Assam, Himanta Biswa Sarma, made a speech to discourage the use of chemicals in farming. Giving it an anti-Muslim twist, he vowed that "fertiliser jihad" would not be allowed. He was using this occasion to target Bengali Muslims in his state, whose main occupation is farming. Suggesting that they were spoiling the land by using chemicals, he was giving yet another justification for evicting Bengali Muslims and taking away their land, building on a campaign he has relentlessly pursued in recent years.

Sarma is recovering from the defeat of the BJP, his party, in the legislative election for the state of Karnataka, where he was a star campaigner. He, along with other leaders of the BJP, turned the election into an anti-Muslim hate campaign, saying that he had closed hundreds of madrasas and would ensure that all are closed. He also parroted familiar tropes about Indian Muslims, portraying them as against family planning. Statistics show that rates of polygamy are almost identical among Hindus and Muslims in India, and Muslim fertility rates have fallen sharply in recent decades. But facts are inconvenient when the aim is to spread lies about a religious minority community. Then there is the chief minister of Uttarakhand state, also from the BJP, who said that a background check would be done on all outsiders. This announcement, clearly aimed at targeting Muslims, was made just after a Muslim boy was arrested on allegations of trying to kidnap a minor Hindu girl. Posters are up in multiple towns in the state asking Muslims to leave the place and shut their business, or marking Muslim-owned shops with 'X' signs – reminiscent of Nazi Germany and the targeting of Jews. Rallies are being held demanding the expulsion of Muslims, and many of them have already fled. Instead of providing security to them, the chief minister is promising an identity check, apparently to prevent Muslims from entering the state. Again, this builds on similar lies peddled by the chief minister and his party alleging Muslims are engaged in land grabs, in part to set up religious structures. This was framed in the deliberately provocative language of an alleged "land jihad" and "mazar jihad". In yet another bizarre incident, violence broke out targeting Muslims in the state of Maharashtra over the alleged glorification of the Mughal King Aurangzeb and the former ruler of Mysore Tipu Sultan, in social media posts and in a rally. The BJP and its far-right allies blame these long-dead emperors as poster boys of alleged violence against Hindus by former Muslim rulers, though history shows they had far more complex and nuanced legacies. Instead of assuring safety to Muslims and restraining violent mobs, the deputy chief minister of Maharashtra, Devendra Fadnis, threatened that the "progenies of Aurangzeb" had no place in the state. He thus justified violence against Muslims. To any outsider, it would be difficult to understand why a social media post hailing Aurangzeb should invite this response or be treated as a criminal act. But all this is seen as perfectly normal in today's India. Horrific accidents like the recent train crash invariably claim the lives of ordinary

Muslims along with their Hindu compatriots. But an atmosphere of hate and division has been created that makes even collective grieving impossible. At a time when the nation is still asking how such an accident occurred when the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi claims to have revolutionised the railways, the response is unbridled Islamophobia. That is no coincidence. This is aimed at absolving the prime minister and his government of any responsibility in the accident. The country's top auditor has pointed out that the Modi government has not utilised the amount earmarked for safety in the railways and has instead used it for other purposes. The prime minister has been busy flagging off new trains while their safety remains neglected. The media, which should be busy asking questions, is hosting shows on "gaming jihad", claiming that gullible Hindus are being lured to convert to Islam through online gaming platforms. All of this works in India. An infallible prime minister who must not be asked questions and who is an expert in leading his people into a state of denial every time a mass tragedy occurs. A pliant and sycophant media that proactively incites violence against Muslims while endorsing all moves by the prime minister, helping ensure that people forget their right to ask questions from the government and make it accountable. In this narrative, even the messages of support that India has received from around the world since the train crash are being portrayed as indicative not of basic humanity but of the government's achievement in making the global community acknowledge the country's relevance. All of this is happening even as young Muslim scholars and activists like Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam, Khalid Saifi and Gulfisha Fatima remain in jail, their bail petitions repeatedly rejected by Indian courts over more than three years. What was their crime? Agitating peacefully against the government for the discriminatory Citizenship Amendment Act. And as I write this, a message reminded me that Javed Mohammad, a community leader and peacemaker, has completed a year in a jail in the state of Uttar Pradesh. Which brings me to the link between these arrests, Islamophobic campaigns by the top leaders of the ruling BJP and the train accident. Here's the harsh truth: Law is no longer an instrument aimed at delivering justice in today's India. It is instead a political sledgehammer, a tool used to often prosecute people based on their religion. Like the train in Odisha, India's legal system has been derailed. And those guilty won't be punished.

Courtesy: Al Jazeera

Empowering education: Building a strong foundation for success

Maham Bibi



The education system holds paramount importance in our lives as it serves as a conduit for developing a profound respect and appreciation for our values, identity, and individuality. Attaining higher education is no ordinary feat; it necessitates immense dedication and effort to secure good grades and progress successfully in life. My objective is to elucidate ways to enhance the educational system for those pondering on effective approaches. The education system in Pakistan faces numerous challenges, with one of the most significant being the improvement of education quality in public schools. While the reasons for these issues are multifaceted, it is widely agreed that the government needs to play an active role in addressing them. Nonetheless, numerous questions and objections arise regarding the feasibility and specific actions required for improvement. The education industry confronts a multitude of challenges today, and in order to ameliorate the education system's performance and development, substantial enhancements must be made across the sector. This article examines the pivotal components that necessitate attention in order to establish an effective improvement strategy. Educational institutions and industry stakeholders can adopt several strategies to tackle these challenges. These strategies include forging education partnerships, implementing personalized learning and training programs, adapting to emerging technologies, leveraging information systems to reduce costs, delivering customized or specialized training, and providing open or low-cost access to educational opportunities. The policies and programs within the education framework should aim for higher achievement standards and goals. Standards are formal documents that establish uniform educational criteria, methods, pro-

cesses, and practices, developed through an accredited consensus process. These standards should be based on guiding principles of openness, balance, consensus, and due process, and should be firmly established to meet technical, safety, regulatory, societal, and market needs. Moreover, they should act as catalysts for technological innovation and global market competition. The adoption of standards would benefit both students and their faculty mentors as they grapple with various challenges, enabling students to understand and assess their objectives and desired outcomes. The education sector encompasses a diverse range of potential standard requirements, including managing student records, research proposals and outputs, utilizing classroom interaction technology, supporting online distance and flexible learning, providing authentication and authorization services for accessing digital resources, and detecting plagiarism and utilizing digital assessments. Institutions, educators, and administrators serve as providers of instruction, curriculum, and guidance, thereby influencing students' outcomes. Consequently, an accountability strategy should be implemented to reward institutions exhibiting exemplary results while penalizing those with poorer outcomes. Establishing accountability in public or private education is an exceptionally intricate endeavor. The responsibility for students' lack of progress lies not solely with a single policymaker or provider but rather within a complex network of policymakers and providers. Strengthening accountability can be achieved through measures such as amplifying the voice of clients, improving management practices, providing better information to clients, clarifying roles and responsibilities, and enhancing incentives and consequences. Research consistently demonstrates that parental involvement in children's education positively impacts students' achievements. Most children have two primary educators in their lives: their parents and their teachers. Parents assume the role of prime educators until their child attends an early years setting or begins school, maintaining a substantial influence on their children's learning throughout their academic journey. Successful educational systems foster collaboration between schools and parents, as children achieve greater success when these two entities work in tandem. Parents can provide more effective support when they comprehend the school's objectives and how they can contribute. A successful system encourages increased parental involvement in selecting their child's education

and learning process. The school plays a pivotal role in determining the extent of parental involvement. Schools can explicitly outline their expectations of parents and regularly communicate children's learning objectives. Educational institutions must adapt to new technologies if they wish to maintain their competitiveness. Technology has become an integral part of most students' learning experiences, and educational institutions need to provide access to the latest technologies. It promotes innovative thinking, develops effective communication skills, instills personal, social, and civic responsibility, and ultimately leads to increased productivity. Additionally, utilizing technology offers students the opportunity to work with real-world tools, generating effective, relevant, and high-quality outcomes. Students are more likely to be attracted to companies or institutions that can keep pace with technological advancements. By employing updated technology and equipment, the learning experience can be enhanced, leading to improved productivity. Continuous revision of the curriculum for instructional programs is necessary to meet the demands of the 21st-century workforce. Even for the most skilled educational leaders, adapting to the demand for change in educational programs that meet the requirements of the 21st century is challenging due to the evolving values and needs of society. In today's global village, where new ideas and information are constantly emerging, it is imperative to update curricula by incorporating recent developments in relevant fields of knowledge. Regular revisions of the curriculum are necessary to keep students informed about current affairs. Adhering to conventional curriculum standards will not yield innovative outcomes. Periodic assessment records of students' academic and non-academic performance should be maintained, and reports should be regularly communicated to parents. This practice allows students, teachers, parents, and the public to access accurate information, fostering transparency within the educational system and resulting in improved outcomes. A business-education partnership involves collaboration between schools and various entities such as businesses, industries, unions, governments, and community organizations. These partnerships are established through agreements between two or more parties with shared goals and plans of action to achieve those goals. Business-education partnerships serve the interests of businesses and industries by offer-

ing activities such as in-service training for employees, use of facilities, student-led projects, software development, or marketing research. Educational institutions can establish mutually beneficial relationships with multiple businesses and engage other stakeholders, including parents, students, and community organizations. Such partnerships facilitate the achievement of desired learning outcomes by leveraging shared values and resources. Educational institutions can develop personalized learning approaches to overcome the challenges posed by standardized education. Advancements in technology have made a wide range of educational opportunities available, enabling the development of customized training courses tailored to individual needs and suitable for learners of all ages. Online courses provide students with more options to choose an educational service provider that aligns with their needs, abilities, financial resources, and personal preferences. To remain competitive, educational institutions must accommodate the need for flexibility by offering programs that prioritize certification and skill development. Collaboration between educational institutions and governments can promote personalized learning as a priority for both students and teachers. Educators can gather data to support flexible learning that meets the needs of all individuals, and teachers should be equipped with the necessary tools to facilitate the success of all students. In order to adapt to changing employment needs within the economy, employers and educators must provide customized training. Some companies are capitalizing on this growing market by offering personalized training programs tailored to meet specific company requirements. Personalized and specialized training can be delivered through training seminars, conferences, home study programs, and the publication of excellent books on contemporary topics. Similarly, there are training providers that specialize in specific business areas, technologies, or processes. Rather than providing generic solutions, instructors employ real-life scenarios to deliver training that resonates with participants, enabling them to address the specific needs of each team and training can be conducted directly. At the end, I am deeply grateful for Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer's mentorship, as his guidance has not only enhanced my writing skills but also enabled me to present a more nuanced and well-reasoned opinion.

—Department of Teacher Education mahambibi391@gmail.com

Briefs

PM hopes for release...

FROM PAGE 01

Pakistan was fully committed to fulfilling its obligations as agreed with the IMF," it said. Shehbaz Sharif, the statement said, expressed the hope that the funds allocated under the IMF's EFF would be released as soon as possible. "This would help strengthen Pakistan's ongoing efforts towards economic stabilization and bring relief to its people," it added.

Meanwhile, IMF's Georgieva shared her institution's perspective on the ongoing review process. The PMO added that the meeting provided a useful opportunity to take stock of the progress in that context. The meeting was also attended by Climate Change Minister Sherry Rehman, Economic Affairs Minister Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Information and Broadcasting Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Aisha Ghaus Pasha, Special Assistant to PM Tariq Fatemi and Pakistan's Ambassador to France Asim Iftikhar Ahmad.

PM meets Macron...

FROM PAGE 01

The prime minister appreciated President Macron for his effort toward evolving a global consensus. The French president thanked the prime minister for participating in the Summit. During the meeting, both leaders also discussed other matters of mutual interest and agreed to keep up the contacts. Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday met Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Prince Muhammad bin Salman here on the sidelines of the Summit for New Global Financing Pact. Besides discussing matters relating to mutual interests, the two leaders agreed to further expand the shared actions to promote bilateral cooperation in diverse areas.

Pakistan says no more...

FROM PAGE 01

Pakistan government and TTP. On the life loss of Pakistanis in the capsized boat off the coast of Greece, she said 12 Pakistani nationals were among the 104 survivors, who were in good physical condition. The spokesperson said the Greek authorities had recovered 84 bodies, however, the number and identification of Pakistani nationals among the deceased and missing was unconfirmed at the moment. Relevant authorities have started collecting DNA samples from the families of those suspected to be on board. She said Pakistan's ambassador Aamar Aftab and his team at the mission in Greece were working round the clock for the recovery and identification of Pakistani nationals.

Japan extends grant aid...

FROM PAGE 01

Mr. Saeed Ashraf Siddiqi, Joint Secretary of Ministry of Economic Affairs and Mr. KINOSHITA Yasumitsu, Chief Representative of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Pakistan Office. JDS is designed to support the social and economic development of the country by providing government officials with the opportunity to obtain Master's or Doctoral degree in Japan with aims to enhance their knowledge in public administration and to strengthen relationship between Japan and Pakistan. The participants of JDS program engaging in the formulation and implementation of such policies will be enrolled at the partner universities in Japan and are expected to acquire further knowledge in their field while learning about the Japanese culture and traditions. Since 2018 when JDS was launched in Pakistan, 31 government officials have successfully completed their degrees



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Denmark Jakob Linulf and President of Aga Khan Foundation Muhammad Akhtar signing MoU for fight against climate change. The CEO Serena Hotels South and East Asia Aziz Boolani is also seen in the picture. - DNA

Israeli regime to be brought to its knees in West Bank

Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei commended the strong sense of responsibility among the young and faithful Palestinian generation, as well as their individual and collective struggle against the Israeli occupation

NEWS DESK

TEHRAN: Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has praised the remarkable achievements of Palestinian resistance groups and the sacrifices made by the youth in the occupied territories, saying the West Bank is where the Israeli regime will be brought to its knees. Ayatollah Khamenei made the remarks in a meeting with Ismail Haniyeh, head of the political bureau of the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas, and his accompanying delegation in Tehran on Wednesday. The Leader commended the strong sense of responsibility among the young and faithful Palestinian generation, as well as their individual and collective struggle against the Israeli occupation. He emphasized that recent events in Jenin, where Palestinian youths have surrounded the Zionist mili-

tary, serve as clear examples of a new era and signal "a bright future with complete victory." Underscoring the centrality of the Palestinian issue, Ayatollah Khamenei stated, "Progress in resolving the issue of Palestine will also translate into progress on other matters concerning the Islamic Ummah." Ayatollah Khamenei also pointed to the noticeable changes in the conditions of Palestine over the past couple of years, particularly the increased presence of youths on the field, who draw strength from their faith in Islam. Highlighting the importance of enhanced unity and coordination among all resistance groups, the Leader said, "During the recent battle of Gaza, we witnessed the enemy's attempts to sow discord and divisions among the resistance groups. However, by the grace of God, their efforts were in-



vain." "Therefore, we should concentrate more on the issue of unity and coordination and tread this right path with strength," he noted. Ayatollah Khamenei described the Gaza Strip as the "epicenter of resistance," but added that "it is the West Bank region that will bring the enemy to its knees." "Who would have ever imagined that one day the Palestinian

youths in Jenin could tighten the noose on Zionist troops to the extent that they would be forced to use fighter jets to break the siege of the young fighters, but this happened a few days ago in Jenin," the Leader noted. Ayatollah Khamenei noted that despite all pressures, the international community stood by the Palestinian people. "On this year's Quds Day, in addition to Islamic states, rallies were even held in European countries, and the people of Europe voiced their opposition to the Zionist regime," he pointed out. The Leader reiterated the Islamic Republic's unwavering support for the Palestinian cause and said the late founder of the Islamic Revolution Imam Khomeini supported Palestine from the very beginning. Ayatollah Khamenei added, "The Palestinian land belongs to all Muslims, so it is incumbent upon all Muslims to enter the

scene [of fight] to liberate it, and this is a religious duty." Haniyeh, for his part, expressed his gratitude for Iran's unflinching support for the Palestinian cause and briefed the Leader of the Islamic Revolution on the latest developments in the occupied territories, not least the occupied West Bank. "Gaza is at the heart of the resistance, yet the forefront of today's pivotal and decisive battle lies within the West Bank," he stated. "The upper hand of the young fighters in the West Bank leaves the regime with no choice but to face either one of two scenarios, namely the bad scenario and the worse one," he added. Haniyeh assured the Leader that the resistance groups will steadfastly hold their ground in every inch of Palestinian territory. He affirmed that the unwavering path of struggle and resistance will persist until the ultimate liberation of al-Quds.

Pak urges engagement...

FROM PAGE 01

Afghan Interim Government by having them at the table; and move away from utilizing only "sticks" and instead try some "carrots" to advance the objectives of the international community," Ambassador Munir Akram told the UN Security Council on Wednesday. Speaking in a debate on the situation in Afghanistan, the Pakistani envoy said there were reasons for optimism and pessimism regarding the war-ravaged country. The security situation, he said, has vastly improved, the interim government is stable and secure, and there is no credible internal threat. Further, the government has managed the economy and revenue collection reasonably well, and engaged with all its immediate neighbours. However, Ambassador Akram noted that the humanitarian situation remains dire, under the impact of climate change and sanctions, while unacceptable restrictions on women and girls have increased. "The threat from terrorist organizations, within and from Afghanistan, persists," he said. "While Al-Qaeda is a shadow of its early self, Da'esh remains to be contained and the threat from the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is real and sizeable not only because of the external support it has received but also because of other regional factors." Citing the fifth dialogue between Afghanistan, China and Pakistan on 6 May, he called on the international community to engage constructively with the interim government, and other regional countries - particularly those of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) - to play a larger role.

'Political motives...

FROM PAGE 01

He urged the petitioners not to compromise the country's dignity and honor for their political gains, stating that the security personnel, who were our benefactors, continued to make sacrifices in the ongoing war against terrorism. Referring to an incident on May 9, where memorials of martyrs and military installations were attacked, the minister highlighted that political workers were allegedly motivated by their leader to assault the state.

Pakistan's medal tally soars in Special Olympics

SPORTS DESK

KARACHI: Pakistan's Usman Qamar won another gold medal in the ongoing Special Olympics World Games in Berlin, Germany on Thursday. After bagging a gold medal in the cycling event yesterday, Usman won the gold in the Cycling Time Trial event today. Zainab Ali Raza of Pakistan also won a gold medal in the Cycling event. So far, the number of gold medals won by Pakistan in the event has increased to six. Usman completed the time trial of the 2km road race distance in 7 minutes 21.59 seconds while Zainab Ali Raza completed the 2 km distance in the cycling event in 6 minutes 49.29 seconds. Usman Qamar has so far won 2 gold medals in the World Games. On the other hand, Mohammad Safir Abad Rizvi of Pakistan won the silver medal by completing the distance of 25 km race in 53 minutes 34.85 seconds. Pakistan's Maria Manzoor won a silver medal in the bench press and a bronze medal in the combined weight category of the 69 weight class category. In the quarter-finals of the athletics 400 meters race, Pakistan's Sana came fourth with a

time of 1 minute 26 seconds. Meanwhile, in Badminton, Bangladesh defeated Pakistan 21-18 and 21-15 while Macao China defeated Pakistan 21-17 and 21-15. In the field hockey mix event, Pakistan defeated Paraguay by 5-0. In the second match, Pakistan qualified for the semi-finals after defeating Bulgaria 5-4. In the women's basketball event, Bulgaria defeated Pakistan by 21 points against 11. In the unified men's table tennis event, Imtisham Danish and Adeel Khan of Pakistan won the bronze medal by winning 3-2 against France. In the women's event, Pakistan's Faiza Qamar and Iman Amir won the bronze medal with a 3-0 victory over Saudi Arabia. In swimming events, Pakistan's Hasan Patel finished sixth in the 25m freestyle, Pakistan's Amna Momin finished eighth in the women's 25 freestyle while Fatima Khan finished fifth in the 257m freestyle. All three Pakistani swimmers managed to improve their individual records at the World Games. Pakistan's Haider Ahmed won silver in the squat of 83 weight class category of the powerlifting event, bronze in the bench press, bronze in the deadlift and silver medal in combined weight with overall weight lifting of 250 kg.

AC Milan set to move for Lukaku

MILAN: The Italian club AC Milan are well prepared to push for a move for the Belgian striker Romelu Lukaku as reported by the Italian newspaper Gazzetta dello Sport on Thursday. Lukaku spent last season on loan at Inter Milan and the Italian giants are hoping to extend that loan for another year as the player remains reluctant to return to parent club Chelsea. However, as the Milan midfielder Sandro Tonali is closing in to join the English club Newcastle United for a record £60m fee, the Italian club is eager to reinvest the money to strengthen the squad for the next season. While Inter are only willing to take the Belgian for one more year on a loan deal, Milan could up to 40m. Milan wants to buy the Belgian for a permanent move as they want to pair him up with the French striker Olivier Giroud. - Agencies

PCB Chairman election on June 27

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) have announced the date for the elections of the new Chairman in a press release on Thursday. The elections for the PCB chairman are set to be held on Tuesday (June 27) at the PCB headquarters in Lahore. After the departments and service organisations have submitted their nominations, the election schedule will be published. Departments and service organisations have been contacted by the Election Commission office to nominate representatives. The PCB received the letter and the notification from the Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) Ministry which states that: "On completion of the tenure, the Management Committee of PCB stands dissolved, ceases to operate." The election commissioner Ahmed Shehzad Farooq Rana, who is also the Acting Chair of PCB, has established the PCB Board of Governors in accordance with Paragraph 10 of the 2014 PCB Constitution and the aforementioned letter and notification. The formation of the PCB Board Of Governors now stands as follows:

Muhammad Zaka Ashraf (PCB Patron's nominee)
Mustafa Ramday (PCB Patron's nominee)

National Bank of Pakistan
State Bank of Pakistan
Sui Northern Gas Pipeline Limited (SNGPL)
Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC)
President Larkana Region
President Dera Murad Jamali Region
President Bahawalpur Region
President Hyderabad Region
Shahzad Rana also said that the elections will be held in a fair and transparent way. - DNA

SC to 'quickly'...

FROM PAGE 01

comprising Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Isa, Justice Masood, Justice Ijazul Ahsan, Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Sayed Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi and Justice Ayesha Malik had taken up the case. However, Justice Isa had stated that he did not consider "this bench a bench". He also said that he could not be a part of any bench until the case relating to the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Bill 2023 - which aims to deprive the office of the chief justice of Pakistan (CJP) of powers to take suo motu notice in an individual capacity and which has since become law - was decided. At the same time, he said that he was not recusing himself from hearing the case. Justice Masood had agreed with Justice Isa's views. The hearing was subsequently adjourned after all the judges left the courtroom. However, CJP Bandial decided to move forward with hearing the case and formed a fresh seven-member bench, excluding justices Isa and Masood. The petitions in question were filed by former CJP Jawwad S. Khawaja, Aitzaz Ahsan, Karanmat Ali, and PTI Chairman Imran Khan. Khawaja, who filed the petition through his counsel Advocate Khawaja Ahmad Hosain earlier this week, requested the top court to declare the trial of civilians by military courts unconstitutional. The former CJP pleaded that Section 2(1)(d)(i) and (ii) of the Pakistan Army Act were inconsistent with the fundamental rights conferred by the Constitution and therefore void, and should be struck down. As an interim measure, all proceedings against civilians based on the sections should be suspended or, in the alternative, any military court should be restrained from passing a final order in any case against civilians based on the sections, the petition stated.

IOC banishes boxing governing body from Olympics

GENEVA: The International Boxing Association was banished from the Olympic family on Thursday, ending a years-long dispute fueled by defying advice and instructions from the IOC. Boxing, however, will keep its status as an Olympic sport at the 2024 Paris Games. The International Olympic Committee voted to derecognize the IBA at a specially called meeting - an outcome that was inevitable after being recommended two weeks ago by the executive board, a body chaired by IOC president Thomas Bach. The vote was 69-1, with 10 members abstaining. Boxing was never really in danger of being kicked out of the Olympics over the four years since the IOC suspended the sport's

governing body in an effort to force changes. "We highly value the sport of boxing. We have an extremely serious problem with IBA because of their governance," Bach told IOC members during their online meeting. The dispute centered on the IBA's management under presidents from Uzbekistan and Russia who the IOC disapproved of, its finances being backed by Russian state energy firm Gazprom, plus the integrity of bouts and judging. "The boxers fully deserve to be governed by an international federation with integrity and transparency," the IOC president said. The IOC is already overseeing boxing competitions for the Paris Olympics without IBA involvement, as it did for

the Tokyo Games in 2021. It was unclear if boxers representing national federations who stay affiliated to the IBA will be classed as eligible for the Paris competition. Boxing can now be confirmed on the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic program, which the IOC and Bach withheld as leverage against IBA. Boxing is "guaranteed" to be in Los Angeles, members were told Thursday. The sport is good for Olympic business with broad appeal - 25 different countries won boxing medals in Tokyo, with nine taking gold - and the IOC repeatedly said its problem was with boxing officials, not its athletes. "We appreciate boxing as one of the most global

sports. We embrace the values of boxing," Bach said, praising the sport's "important social role promoting inclusion." The IBA had not published a response more than two hours after the IOC decision, which it can challenge at the Court of Arbitration for Sport. Olympic boxing has had a tainted reputation for decades, typified by notorious judging at the 1988 Seoul Games that denied American light-midweight Roy Jones Jr. the gold medal against home fighter Park Si-hun. Jones, who now has Russian citizenship, was enlisted by the IBA last year to support its fight for Olympic status. There were allegations ahead of the 2012 London Olympics of cash

deals planned to fix medals, and further doubt cast by fighters on the integrity of bouts at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games. At those Olympics, the president of boxing's governing body, then known by its French acronym AIBA, was a long-time IOC member C.K. Wu of Taiwan. After Wu was ousted by boxing officials in 2017, the sport's problems with the IOC intensified. National federations defied IOC warnings in 2018 by electing Gafur Rakhimov as president. The businessman from Uzbekistan allegedly had ties to organized crime and heroin trafficking. Umar Kremlev's election to replace Rakhimov in 2020 followed another round of IOC elec-

tion warnings that went unheeded. The IBA's debts approaching \$20 million were cleared under Kremlev and the IOC objected to the boxing body's financial reliance on Gazprom. Kremlev announced last month at the men's world championships that the IBA was no longer sponsored by Gazprom, and his rhetoric against Olympic officials got more confrontational. Thursday's meeting went ahead after a late appeal by the IBA to CAS against the IOC board's recommendation failed this week. IOC vice president John Coates recused himself from the debate and vote on boxing because he has led the CAS management board for the past 12 years. - Agencies

Briefs

UAE leader welcomes Iranian FM

DUBAI: The president of the United Arab Emirates met with Iran's visiting foreign minister on Thursday in the latest sign of improving relations between Arab Gulf countries and the Islamic Republic.

The UAE, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries have long harbored suspicions about Iran because of its nuclear program and support for militant groups across the region, and have cultivated close defense ties with the U.S. But in recent months they have charted a more independent path, reaching out to U.S. adversaries as Washington increasingly focuses on Russia and China.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian "discussed the importance of building on positive developments to benefit the people of the region and enhance regional stability and prosperity," the UAE's state-run WAM news agency reported.

Iranian state TV said the two met for 90 minutes and discussed further cooperation in different fields. It said the Iranian foreign minister invited Sheikh Mohammed to visit Iran and that the UAE president invited Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi to visit the Emirates. The meeting follows similar recent outreach by Saudi Arabia, which agreed to normalize relations with Iran for the first time in seven years in a deal brokered by China in March. —APP

Lula calls for Ukraine peace talks

MOSCOW: Russia and Ukraine both need to compromise to achieve peace, Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva said on Thursday, as he reiterated his government's position on the armed conflict. Mediation would be best coming from parties not involved in the fighting, he explained. "The two parties both need to get something. Only the Russians and the Ukrainians know what they need to reach peace," the Brazilian leader said during a press conference in Rome. He noted that the EU's capacity for mediation in the conflict is limited because it is involved in it, as is the US. He named India, Mexico and African nations as potential neutral peace brokers, whom Brazil seeks to bring together. "I agree with Pope Francis. We need to get people to talk peace, to bring the parties to the negotiating table. It is necessary to stop the shooting and try to find a peaceful solution," he added. "It's not fair [to the needy people] to spend billions of dollars and euros on an unnecessary war, when we could be living in peace." The Brazilian president arrived in Rome on Wednesday to meet Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and other senior government officials as well as the Pope. Francis had a 45-minute private conversation with Lula and gave his long-time acquaintance a bronze bas-relief with the inscription 'Peace is a fragile flower,' according to Italian media. —Agencies

Turkiye hikes policy interest rate by 650 points

ANKARA: The Central Bank of Turkiye on Thursday raised its policy rate by 650 basis points to 15%, its first such rise in 27 months. The one-week repo rate rose to 15% from 8.5%, the bank said in a statement following its sixth Monetary Policy Committee meeting this year and the first under the helm of Hafize Gayer Erkan, the bank's new governor. "The Committee decided to begin the monetary tightening process in order to establish the disinflation course as soon as possible, to anchor inflation expectations, and to control the deterioration in pricing behavior," the bank said in a statement. Ahead of Thursday's announcement, economists' expectations for the rate hike ranged widely, from 14 to as high as 40 percentage points. The bank stressed the importance of the monetary tightening process to increase. —APP

Ambassador Hassan says...

Global security more threatened than ever in contemporary world

DNA

JAKARTA: The 20th ASEAN Regional Forum Security Policy Conference was held in Indonesia. The conference was attended by representatives of 25 of the 27 member countries of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) consisting of 10 ASEAN Countries and 8 Plus Countries and 9 other partners. Pakistan's delegation was led by H.E. Muhammad Hassan, Ambassador of Pakistan to Indonesia, Timor-Leste, and ASEAN. Under the theme "Navigating a Bright Future for Sustainable Peace, Prosperity, and Security", the conference focused its discussion on three issues namely, contemporary and future regional and global security challenges; regional cooperation to support the blue economy and mitigate the impacts of climate change; and measures to build mutual trust to maintain peace, prosperity, and security in the region.

Speaking at the conference, Ambassador Muhammad Hassan stated that global security was more threatened than ever in the contemporary world. Non-traditional security threats, such as poverty, inequality, uneven social development, environmental degradation, and climate change, compounded the traditional global security problems. Furthermore, poverty,



inequity, and injustice foster extremism and terrorism, making sustainable development goals a distant dream. The Ambassador stated that as a member of the ARF family, Pakistan shares those concerns. Pakistan strives to contribute constructively to global and regional agenda-setting, policy formulation, and normative developments to address these challenges. It also strives to be a leading voice on issues of sustain-

able and equitable development, climate change, debt relief, illicit financial flows, maritime security, and peacekeeping. Referring to the scourge of global terrorism, the Ambassador stated that for the last two decades, Pakistan had been one of the most vulnerable victims of terrorism. It had fought a protracted war against and won it but at a staggering cost of 80,000 lives and more than US\$150 billion of

economic loss. He stated that the international community had an abiding responsibility to protect terrorism victims. As a result, it must act against terrorism without letting political expediency and real politics dictate its actions. The international community should also address the root causes of terrorism and above all, state-sponsored terrorism, especially in areas under foreign occupation. As regards the blue

economy, the Ambassador stated that Pakistan hosted the most favorable conditions for blue economic growth and had massive untapped potential for it. Pakistan's Blue Economy mostly depends on marine transport through Port Qasim, Karachi Port, and Gwadar Port, the last being providing the shortest maritime routes to western China, Afghanistan, and Central Asian Republics (CARs), promoting regional cooperation through sea-route connectivity. He further stated that Pakistan also had the potential to develop the fishing industry, boat building, and ancillary industries. Apart from enormous potential for fossil fuel extraction, Pakistan's coastline, and the ocean itself also had renewable energy resources. This includes wind power, solar power, and hydropower. Referring to the threat posed by climate change to the world, the Ambassador stated that Pakistan was among the top ten countries impacted by climate change. In 2022, Pakistan faced floods of epic proportions, the most dreadful manifestation of a climate-induced disaster. Over 33 million people were affected across the country. Loss of life, livelihood destruction, and critical infrastructure destruction is also devastating. He urged the international community to take action on global climate action to mitigate its negative impacts before it was too late.

Ireland's govt rules out dropping neutrality policy

DUBLIN: Heated debate as country re-examines its military approach in the wake of the war in Ukraine. Ireland's government insists it will not join NATO and has no plans to abandon the country's long-held policy on military neutrality amid a row over a government-sponsored forum on international security. The forum, which begins on Thursday and will meet at venues across Ireland for a week, has been launched to consider "Ireland's policy position of military neutrality and an exploration of definitions, options, and implications of the policy of neutrality." While the set-up of such a forum isn't identical, Ireland previously organised citizens' assemblies to debate major changes such as ending an abortion ban and same-sex

marriage. As things stand, Ireland is able to provide non-lethal assistance in circumstances such as the war in Ukraine. However, it requires a mandatory resolution from the United Nations Security Council, a formal decision from the Irish government and approval by a resolution of Dail Eireann, the lower house of parliament, to deploy more than 12 soldiers to a combat zone. Speaking on Wednesday to the Committee on European Union Affairs in the Irish parliament, Dr Scott Fitzsimmons, senior lecturer in international relations at the University of Limerick, called for this triple-lock to be removed. He pointed out the permanent members of the UN Security Council "include countries that pose potent

threats to ourselves and to the rest of the EU. These countries should not be allowed to exercise a veto over our ability to defend Europe". He also criticised Ireland's current approach on military neutrality. "Ireland operates on the expectation that our EU allies, as well as the UK, will assist us in the event that we are attacked by an external aggressor. However, we will not reciprocate," he said. "This isn't neutrality, this is free-riding off of other countries who will sacrifice for us even if we will not commit to do the same for them." At the weekend, the country's president, Michael D Higgins, who holds a mostly ceremonial role, warned ministers were "playing with fire". In an interview with the Business Post newspaper, he

described Ireland's policy as being "one of positive neutrality, and it can be defined very simply as Ireland's right to belong to any group that it chooses in relation to non-militaristic international policy", he said. "If you interfere with that, there's no difference between you and Lithuania and Latvia." Both those countries are NATO members. "That's the fire that people are playing with," he said. Defending the review afterwards, the deputy head of government, Tanaiste Micheal Martin, said the forum was "not a binary discussion on neutrality and was never intended to be", and that the government "do not intend to change Ireland's policy of military neutrality." He later denied that ruling out a change to neutrality was a climbdown.

Yellen says it's critical to maintain US-China ties

PARIS: U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said Thursday that it's "critical" the U.S. and China maintain a relationship so they can "work together" on global challenges, coming just after President Joe Biden's remarks calling Chinese leader Xi Jinping a "dictator" drew condemnation from Beijing. Speaking at a news conference in Paris, Yellen said that "with respect to the comments, I think President Biden and I both believe it's critical to maintain communication ... to clear up misperceptions, miscalculations. We need to work together where possible." "But we have disagreements, and we are also forthright in recognizing we do have disagreements," she added. Yellen has recently advocated for improving relations between the U.S. and China, arguing cooperation is needed for the sake of maintaining global stability. Biden's remarks at a fundraiser Tuesday, when he also said China had "real economic difficulties," opened a new rift just after U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken concluded a visit to Beijing. The trip sought to break the ice in a relationship that has hit a historical low. China delivered a formal protest of Biden's remarks on Thursday, with Chinese Ambassador Xie Feng telling senior White House and State officials that Washington "should take earnest actions to undo the negative impact" of what Biden said or "bear all the consequences," a Chinese embassy spokesperson said in a statement. "With the latest irresponsible remarks about China's political system.—DNA

'Hungary broke the law over migrants'

BRUSSELS: The European Union's top court ruled Thursday that Hungary flouted the bloc's laws and infringed on migrants' rights by forcing asylum seekers inside the country or at its borders to start the process at its embassies in Serbia and Ukraine. Hungary's anti-immigrant government has taken a hardline on people entering the country since well over one million people entered Europe in 2015, most of them fleeing conflict in Syria. It erected border fences and forcefully tried to stop many from entering. After the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak in 2020, the government pushed through a law forcing people seeking international protection to travel to Belgrade or Kyiv to apply for a travel permit at its embassies there to enter Hungary. Only once back could they file their applications. The EU's executive branch, the European Commission, took Hungary to the European Court of Justice (ECJ) over the law, insisting that the country had failed to fulfil its obligations under the 27-nation's blocs rules. The rules oblige all member countries to have common procedures for granting asylum. People have the right to apply for asylum or other forms of international protection if they fear for their safety in their home countries, or face the prospect of persecution based on their race, religion, ethnic background, gender or other discrimination.—Agencies



MOGADISHU: Khadija Mohamed Al-Makhzoumi Minister for Environment received Qatar's Ambassador to Somalia, Ambassador Abdolla Salem Al and discussed collaborative efforts between two nations to address climate cresses & explored effective strategies to preserve our environment for future generation.—DNA

Scholz defends deal to stop migrants at EU borders

FOREIGN DESK

BERLIN: German Chancellor Olaf Scholz on Thursday reiterated ahead of the NATO summit in Lithuania that Ukraine's accession to the alliance is "out of the question before an end to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine." The Ukrainian government has itself also stated this, Scholz said in his address in the Bundestag, Germany's parliament. "That's why I'm campaigning for us to focus in Vilnius on what now has absolute priority: Namely, to strengthen Ukraine's actual combat capability," Scholz said. The NATO summit in Lithuania's capital Vilnius in mid-July will focus on how to bring Ukraine closer to NATO and what security guarantees it can be given after the war ends. The chancellor again pledged support to Ukraine for as long as it is needed. He pointed out that Germany's civilian and military aid now totaled 16.8 billion (\$18.4 billion).

He also pointed out that Germany would meet NATO's defense spending target of 2% of gross domestic product "starting next year." He said Germany would continue to focus its arms deliveries on armored combat vehicles, air defense systems, artillery, and the necessary ammunition. In this way, Germany is supplying precisely what Ukraine needs most urgently in the ongoing offensive to liberate its territories. Scholz also spoke out in favor of Sweden's rapid accession to NATO. He was "firmly convinced that Sweden should also sit at the summit table as a new ally alongside Finland," Scholz said. He appealed to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to clear the way for this now. He added that this had been jointly decided at the NATO summit in Madrid last year. Finland and Sweden applied for NATO membership soon after Russia launched a war on Ukraine in February 2022. A trilateral memorandum at a NATO summit signed among Turkiye, Finland

and Sweden in June last year stipulates that if Turkiye is expected to respond to Stockholm's expectations of accession to NATO, Sweden must also do its part on the PKK terror group ahead of the summit. EU asylum reforms. In his government statement, Scholz also defended European plans for asylum procedures at the EU's external borders. "This is a historic agreement because it shows that the EU can overcome its differences even on the most controversial issues," he said. The chancellor added: "Germany will also be relieved by such a new and fair system, because until now we have been the main target for largely unmanaged internal migration within the Schengen area." EU states had voted in favor of comprehensive reform plans in early June. Asylum applications from migrants who come from countries of origin with a recognition rate of less than 20% are to be examined at the EU's external borders within 12 weeks. During this time, those seeking

protection are to be obliged to stay in strictly controlled reception facilities. Those who have no chance of asylum are to be sent back immediately. It is possible, however, that the EU Parliament will still push through changes. Scholz called for an agreement to be reached with the European Parliament before the European elections next year. Germany, too, had to make compromises on the issue, he said. "But that was the right thing to do - in the interest of Europe's unity and ability to act," Scholz added. The current system does not work, he added. In the negotiations, the German government had advocated that families with children be exempted from the so-called border procedure. Ireland's govt rules out dropping neutrality policy DUBLIN: Heated debate as country re-examines its military approach in the wake of the war in Ukraine Ireland's government insists it will not join NATO and has no plans to abandon the country's long-held policy .

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EU lawmaker charged by Belgian court

BRUSSELS: Italian European lawmaker Andrea Cozzolino was released on parole after being accused of corruption, local media in Italy reported Wednesday. Cozzolino, a member of European Parliament, denied the charges while being questioned by police on Monday. A Belgian judge later ordered his release, Cozzolino's lawyers said, according to public broadcaster RaiNews. His release was subjected to certain conditions, including no contact with other suspects in the scandal and reporting his travels out of Belgium in advance, RaiNews added. Cozzolino spent over four months in preventive confinement in his home, located in southern Italy. Before his detention, he was held in Naples in police custody, under a European warrant issued by the then-investigating judge Michel Claise. The socialist legislator flew to Brussels on Monday for questioning after the revocation of his house arrest. The EU has been shaken by one of the biggest corruption scandals in its history after Eva Kaili, a Greek member of European Parliament, was arrested on Dec. 9 by Belgian police on corruption charges. Kaili, 44, from Greece's center-left PASOK-KINAL party and one of the European Parliament's 14 vice presidents, was arrested after her home was searched on corruption charges allegedly involving Qatar, which was accused of paying Kaili to lobby for the Gulf state's interests.—Agencies

NATO chief calls on Kosovo, Serbia to de-escalate tension

BRUSSELS: NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg on Thursday called on Kosovo and Serbia to de-escalate tension and continue EU-mediated talks. Speaking at a joint news conference after his meeting with Montenegro's President Jakov Milatovic, Stoltenberg reaffirmed NATO's "unwavering" commitment to the KFOR NATO-led peacekeeping mission in Kosovo. "We have increased our presence and will continue to take all necessary measures to ensure a safe and secure environment and freedom of movement for all communities in Kosovo," he said. He said that KFOR assumes its duty in an "impartial" way amid recent heightened tensions. Stoltenberg urged "all parties to de-escalate" and welcomed that leaders of Serbia and Kosovo meet in Brussels on Thursday. He said that reducing tensions is "key for the security of Kosovo and stability in the region." For his part, Milatovic stressed that Montenegro "strongly supports" the EU-facilitated Belgrade-Pristina dialogue. Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic and Kosovo's Prime Minister Albin Kurti meet EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell as tensions rose high in Northern Kosovo last month following municipal elections.—APP

NZ PM disagrees with Biden remark

AUCKLAND: New Zealand Prime Minister Chris Hipkins on Thursday disagreed with US President Joe Biden's remark that Chinese President Xi Jinping is a "dictator." "No, and the form of government that China has is a matter for the Chinese people," Hipkins told reporters when asked whether he agrees with Biden's "dictator" remark. His remarks were aired on state-run Radio New Zealand, which came just a few days ahead of his visit to China as he will depart for Beijing on Sunday. On Tuesday, Biden referred to his Chinese counterpart Xi as a "dictator." Biden said Xi was embarrassed over recent tensions surrounding a suspected Chinese spy balloon that had been blown off course over the US. "The reason why Xi Jinping got very upset in terms of when I shot that balloon down with two box cars full of spy equipment is he didn't know it was there. No, I'm serious.—Agencies



Briefs

Govt finally announces Arafah Day holiday

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Days after announcing a three-day Eid ul Adha holiday, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday also announced a public holiday on the Day of Arafah – June 28 (Wednesday) – media reported. “In supersession of earlier orders of even number dated 20.06.2023, on the above subject, the Prime Minister has been pleased to approve the public holidays on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha as follows: 28th, 29th a 30th June, 2023 (Wednesday, Thursday and Friday) for the offices observing five days working in a week; and 28th June to 1st July, 2023 (Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday) for the offices observing six days working in a week. Earlier, the government had approved a three-day holiday on account of Eid ul Adha, which will be celebrated on June 29, according to a statement issued by the Cabinet Division. The Central Ruet-e-Hil Committee announced the sighting of the 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 Khair Azad.

Fears grow over Indian state on brink of civil war

WEB DESK

NEW DELHI: Last week, a retired lieutenant general in India's army bemoaned the volatile situation in his native Manipur, a violence-wracked state in the north-east of the country. “The state is now ‘stateless,’” tweeted L Nishikanta Singh. “Life and property can be destroyed anytime by anyone just like in Libya, Lebanon, Nigeria, Syria etc.” Nearly two months after it was convulsed by ethnic violence, Manipur is teetering on what many believe is the brink of a civil war. Clashes between the majority Meitei and Kuki communities have left more than 100 dead and over 400 wounded. Nearly 60,000 people have been displaced and taken shelter in some 350 camps. Some 40,000 security forces – army soldiers, paramilitaries, police – are struggling to quell the violence. Only a quarter of the more than 4,000 weapons looted by mobs from police armouries have been voluntarily returned since the violence began. The level of mistrust between the warring communities has sharpened, with both accusing security forces of being partisan.

NAB again summons PTI chief in Toshakhana case

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Thursday again summoned PTI chief to appear for an inquiry regarding Toshakhana case on June 23. This is not the first time that the NAB summoned the PTI chief for the same inquiry. He was previously summoned on June 21, but due to some reasons, he was unable to attend and submitted a written reply through Barrister Gohar. According to the previous notice, the PTI chief was directed to appear in Islamabad on June 21 along with all the relevant records related to the case. However, the PTI chairman clarified in his written reply to the NAB that he could not appear on the designated date. In the fresh summons, the ex-PM has been asked to bring relevant records, including details and records of received state gifts, and records of sold state gifts and physically produce the state gifts retained.



GUJRAT: Guillaume Dabouis, Deputy Head of Mission of the French Embassy and Dr. Sabine Vermillard, Higher Education Attache witnessing an exhibition of antiques at the Farooq Riaz museum during their recent visit to Gujrat. Farooq Riaz has collected masterpieces of antiques at his museum. Former Punjab Education Minister Mian Imran Masood is also seen in the picture. – DNA

Restaurant explosion kills 31 in NW China

BEIJING: At least 31 persons were killed when a gas explosion ripped through a barbecue restaurant in the northwestern Chinese city of Yinchuan, state media said Thursday. The Wednesday night blast occurred on the eve of the three-day Dragon Boat Festival holiday, when many in China go out and socialise with friends. The explosion took place around 8:40 pm (12:40 GMT) at the Fuyang Barbecue Restaurant in a residential area of downtown Yinchuan, the capital of the Ningxia autonomous region. Footage on state broadcaster CCTV showed more than a dozen firefighters working at the site as smoke poured out of a gaping hole in the restaurant's facade. Shards of glass and other debris littered the darkened street, which is also home to a number of other eateries and entertainment venues. Nine persons, including the restaurant's “owner, shareholders and staff,” were held by police following the explosion, CCTV said, adding that “their assets have been frozen.” “A leak of liquefied petroleum gas... caused an explosion during the operation of a barbecue restaurant,” state news agency Xinhua said of the Wednesday evening blast, citing the regional Communist Party committee. Seven more people were injured, with one in a “critical condition,” the agency initially reported, adding later that six of them were “stable” while the other had been discharged from hospital with minor injuries. – Agencies

Foreign reserves reach \$ 8.86 billion

KARACHI: The total liquid foreign reserves of Pakistan stood at US\$ 8,863.8 million while reserves held by the central bank reached US\$ 3,536.9 million. The State Bank of Pakistan, in a statement issued here on Thursday, informed that foreign reserves of the central bank decreased by US\$ 482 million to US\$ 3,536.9 million due to external debt repayment in the week ended on June 16, 2023. Meanwhile, net foreign reserves held by commercial banks stood at US\$ 5,326.9 million, it added. The SBP spokesperson informed that SBP has received US\$ 300 million proceeds of GoP commercial loan during the current week but those inflows were not included in the report under review. Those proceeds would be incorporated in the reserves position report as of 23-June-2023 to be published in the next week, he added. In the previous week ending on June 09, 2023, total liquid foreign reserves held by the country was US\$ 9,378.2 million. – APP

Fawad Ch's arrest warrant issued by ECP

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has issued a bailable arrest warrant for former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry in contempt case. In August 2022, the ECP issued notices to Imran Khan and others for allegedly using “intemperate” language against Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikander Sultan Raja and the electoral watchdog. The ECP has informed the Islamabad police and asked for the compliance of Fawad Chaudhry's arrest warrant. The former federal has been directed to appear before the commission on July 6. During the last hearing of the ECP contempt case, CEC Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja decided to issue an arrest warrant for Fawad Chaudhry over his continuous absence. Earlier, the arrest warrants issued for the former prime minister and Fawad were suspended by the Lahore High Court. The LHC Rawalpindi bench in its verdict suspended arrest warrants issued for the PTI chief and Fawad in Election Commission of Pakistan contempt case.

Ukraine strikes bridge to Crimea, claims Russia

Vladimir Saldo threatened to retaliate for the latest attack by targeting a bridge linking neighbouring Moldova with Romania. Romania, a Nato member, and Moldova condemned his comments as unacceptable

WEB DESK

MOSCOW: Ukraine has attacked a bridge linking southern Ukraine to the Crimean peninsula with long-range British missiles, Russian officials say. The two parallel Chonhar bridges were both damaged, said the Russian-installed governor in occupied Kherson Vladimir Saldo. No-one was hurt. Mr Saldo said it was likely British Storm Shadow missiles were used in an attack “ordered by London”. The bridge is the shortest route from Crimea to the front line in the south. It is also an important link to the occupied city of Melitopol, which lies on the coastal route from the Russian border across southern Ukraine to Crimea. Photos posted by Vladimir Saldo showed a gaping hole in one of the two bridges, but he said repairs would be made quickly and vehicles would take an alternative route

temporarily. Another Russian-installed official, Nikolai Lukashenko, said repairs could take weeks. Russia uses the road as a land bridge to Crimea, and Melitopol is thought to be one of the targets of Ukraine's counter-offensive, which began in the southern region of Zaporizhzhia earlier this month. Russian forces seized the Crimean peninsula from Ukraine in 2014 and then in February last year they invaded Ukraine's southern coastal region too. Ukrainian forces have bombed Russian-controlled bridges in the region before. Last summer, in the weeks before they recaptured the city of Kherson on the east bank of the Dnipro river, they repeatedly attacked the Antonivskiy bridge to stop Russian forces bringing supplies from occupied Crimea. Then in October a bridge across the Kerch Strait linking Crimea to Russia was put out of action for weeks in a deadly attack condemned by

President Vladimir Putin called an “act of terrorism”. Even now the Kerch bridge is not open to all traffic. Vladimir Saldo threatened to retaliate for the latest attack by targeting a bridge linking neighbouring Moldova with Romania. Romania, a Nato member, and Moldova condemned his comments as unacceptable. Ukraine's counter-offensive in the south and east has made slow progress, with claims of eight villages recaptured so far. The campaign was made harder when the Kakhovka dam on the Dnipro river was destroyed this month in a suspected Russian sabotage attack. Areas downstream of the dam were flooded making crossing the Dnipro river much harder. Dozens of people have died, farms have been ruined and water supplies have been affected. Russian forces have continued to target Ukrainian cities including a residential area of President Volodymyr Zelensky's home

city of Kryvyi Rih and the southern port of Odesa overnight. President Zelensky told Ukrainians on Thursday that intelligence services had received information that Russia was preparing the “scenario of a terrorist attack” on the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant, seized during the full-scale invasion last year. The plant is the biggest in Europe and Mr Zelensky warned that “radiation has no state borders”. The Kremlin immediately rejected his comments as “another lie”. Ukraine's counter-offensive in the south and east has made slow progress, with claims of eight villages recaptured so far. The campaign was made harder when the Kakhovka dam on the Dnipro river was destroyed this month in a suspected Russian sabotage attack. Areas downstream of the dam were flooded making crossing the Dnipro river much harder. Dozens of people have died, farms have been ruined and water supplies have been affected.

Pak values strong relationship with Turkiye: Air Chief

DNA

ISLAMABAD, JUN 22 (DNA) – A delegation led by Commander Turkish Air Force, General Atilla Gulan called on Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force (PAF), Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu at Air Headquarters Thursday. During the meeting, several key areas of mutual interest along with regional developments were discussed, a PAF news release said. On his arrival, a smartly turned-out contingent of Pakistan Air Force presented General Atilla Gulan the guard of honour. He also laid a floral wreath on the martyrs' monument. Later, the visiting dignitary was introduced to the Principal Staff Officers. During the meeting, Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu shared the broad contours of PAF's modernization plan of smart acquisitions from allied countries, up-gradation of infrastructure and revamping of training. Air Chief highlighted that both countries enjoy long-standing religious and

historic relationship which is manifested through unprecedented strategic partnership, cooperation, strategic alliance and the training domain. The Air Chief further said, “Pakistan values its strong diplomatic, economic and defence relationship with Turkiye which is based on convergence on all important issues relating to regional peace, security and stability. The two brotherly countries have never left each other stranded in times of need and Pakistan Air Force will remain committed to providing training and capacity-building assistance to the Turkish Air Force.” The Air Chief further remarked that PAF pilots are playing an active role in training Turkish aircrew on a variety of aircraft, including trainers and fighters. General Atilla Gulan, Commander Turkish Air Force, commended the professionalism of PAF and acknowledged its rising indigenous capacity in the aviation industry. He also expressed keen interest in the National Aerospace Science and Technology Park which is being spearheaded by Pakistan Air Force, and appreciated the un-

wavering commitment of the Air Chief in making the project a huge success. The visiting dignitary highlighted that both countries enjoy cordial relations and reiterated his resolve to further enhance the existing bilateral ties between the two brotherly countries. Both the commanders agreed to explore further avenues of bilateral cooperation including collaboration for joint production of military hardware with a special focus on fifth-generation aircraft and unmanned aerial platforms. During his visit, the Government of Pakistan conferred Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military) upon General Atilla Gulan, which is the highest Non-Operational Military Award, in recognition of further strengthening the brotherly Bonds between the two Nations. The Turkish Air Force Commander also visited different installations and technological infrastructure established at Air Headquarters, Islamabad, including PAF's National ISR and Integrated Air Operations Centre (NIAOC) and PAF's Cyber Command, where he was briefed about the operational capabilities and ongoing projects of PAF's modernization drive.

US Coast Guard ship transits Taiwan Strait

SEOUL: A US Coast Guard ship “conducted a routine Taiwan Strait transit” on Tuesday, according to a statement released by the US Navy. “The Legend-class national security cutter USCGC Stratton (WMSL 752) conducted a routine Taiwan Strait transit on June 20 (local time) through waters where high-seas freedoms of navigation and overflight apply in accordance with international law,” said the statement released on Wednesday. The news of the transit comes days after US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's trip to China where he met with top officials and Chinese President Xi Jinping. During his visit, the top US diplomat said the US is not seeking to change China's government system or oppose Beijing by strengthening alliances with its allies and that the US does not support Taiwan's independence and has no intention of entering a conflict with China. It is the first solo transit of the strait by a USCG cutter since 2017, according to Collin Koh, a research fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore, who keeps a database of known Taiwan Strait transits. Koh's database notes two occasions where Coast Guard cutters have sailed the strait with US Navy destroyers. – Agencies

Titanic sub search reaches sea floor as oxygen feared run out

WEB DESK

LONDON: The desperate search for a missing submersible near the wreck of the Titanic entered a critical juncture on Thursday when air was expected to run out for the five people aboard, but officials vowed to continue scouring the remote North Atlantic. Five days since the Titan began what should have been a two-hour dive to the century-old shipwreck, a massive multinational hunt over thousands of square miles was still expanding. A remotely operated vehicle deployed from a Canadian vessel reached the ocean floor to begin searching, the U.S. Coast Guard said on Thursday morning, while another robotic craft from a French research ship was also preparing to dive to the seabed. The minivan-sized Titan, operated by U.S.-based OceanGate Expeditions, began its descent at 8 a.m. (12:00 GMT) on Sunday but lost contact with its support ship.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan, Khazar Farhadov calls on Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif. – DNA