



Islamabad POST

Saturday, July 08, 2023

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

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Japan PM heads to NATO to warn of East Asia risks

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Mussarat Hilali second woman judge in SC

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Jordi Alba set to reunite with Messi, Busquets

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Briefs

Imran Khan's interim bail extended

APP

LAHORE: An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Friday extended interim bail of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan till July 21 in five cases related to May-9 vandalism, including the attack on Jinnah House and Shadman Police Station. Imran Khan along with his counsel appeared before the ATC Judge Ijaz Ahmad Buttari on expiry of his interim bail in the cases. The court expressed serious annoyance over not joining the investigations of cases by Imran Khan and directed him to visit police headquarters and join the investigation process by July 14. Subsequently, the court adjourned further proceedings till July 21 and also extended the interim bail of the PTI chairman. Imran Khan and other PTI leaders were nominated in cases for attacking Jinnah House and Shadman Police Station, setting ablaze a container and vandalism at PML-N office, during May-9 riots.

CM condemns Holy Quran desecration

APP

LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi has said that religious sentiments of the Muslims have been hurt with the desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden. There is neither any place of Islamophobia in the society nor of the followers of hatred. Mohsin Naqvi stated that such condemnable religious incidents have caused damage to the efforts of religious tolerance and peaceful co-existence. Permission of such a provocative action under the garb of freedom of speech cannot be given. Such blasphemous incidents are highly intolerable and the United Nations should take its prompt notice, he added.

Holiday Notice

The offices of daily Islamabad POST shall remain closed on Saturday on account of weekly off therefore there will be no newspaper on Sunday.

- Editor

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Islamophobia condemned
Pak marks 'Sanctity of Quran Day'

PM urges OIC to chalk out strategy against rising anti-Muslim incidents

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Friday observed 'Yaum-e-Taqaddus-e-Quran' to lodge a strong protest against the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden - a country that has repeatedly allowed such vile acts. Demonstrations are being held nationwide, with people from different walks of life participating in the protests to express their resentment over the desecration of the holy book. A person, who migrated from Iraq to Sweden, burned pages of the Holy Quran outside a mosque in Stockholm on the first day of Eid ul Adha, prompting outrage in the Muslim world and condemnation from Pope Francis. On Tuesday, while presiding over a meeting in Islamabad, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif decided to stage countrywide protests over the incident and appealed to all the political parties and the nation to partake in the rallies. "Speaking with one voice, the whole nation will give a message to the evil minds," said the premier. He maintained that the nation will observe the "Yaum-e-Taqaddus-e-Quran" on Friday. Several demonstrations have been held throughout the country since the incident, with people belonging to other religions also partaking in them to express their annoyance over the desecration of the holy book. In a tweet, the PM said the nation stands united when it comes to Holy Quran,

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Sweden mulls banning Quran desecration

NEWS DESK

STOCKHOLM: Sweden's Justice Minister Gunnar Strommer said the government was examining whether it could ban the desecration of the Holy Quran or books belonging to other faiths illegal after the recent Holy Quran burnings "damaged" the country's security. A person, who migrated from Iraq to Sweden, burned pages of the Holy Quran outside a mosque in Stockholm on the first day of Eid ul Adha, prompting outrage in the Muslim world and condemnation from Pope Francis. The Swedish Security Services, in response to the incident, claimed that such action left the country less safe. The police, due to security concerns, have this year rejected several applications seeking permission to hold protests and burn the Holy Quran. But Swedish courts have overturned police decisions, claiming that such acts are protected under the

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IMF holds direct talks with political leaders
IMF delegation calls on PTI Chief, PPP leader separately

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Days before the International Monetary Fund (IMF) executive board meeting to review and possibly endorse a \$3 billion Standby Arrangement (SBA) for Pakistan, a delegation of the global lender called on Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan in Lahore. According to well-placed sources, during the meeting which lasted for over one hour at the Khan's Zaman Park residence, PTI Vice Chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi was also present. Former finance minister Shaukat Tarin also briefed the IMF delegation via a video link. It is pertinent to mention here that the IMF executive board will meet on July 12 to review the SBA for Pakistan. The cash-strapped country and the IMF had reached a long-awaited staff-level agreement (SLA) on \$3 billion SBA, the global lender announced on June 30. With sky-high inflation and foreign exchange reserves barely enough to cover

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Weekly inflation up to 28.5pc

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The weekly inflation, measured by Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.70 pc to jump to 28.55pc on a year-on-year basis for the week ending on June 6, official data showed. According to Topline Securities, this is the lowest rate since October 20, 2022, when SPI inflation clocked in at 27.1 percent. The short-term inflation rose by an all-time high of 48.35pc for the period that ended on May 4. During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 24 (47.06 percent) items increased, 10 (19.61 percent) items decreased and 17 (33.33 percent) items remained stable. The items, which recorded an increase in

Continued on Page 06

Ukraine says advancing near city of Bakhmut
Meanwhile US plans to send cluster munitions to Ukraine

NEWS DESK

KYIV: Ukraine said on Friday its troops had advanced by more than a kilometre near the eastern city of Bakhmut in the past day of fighting against Russian forces. The comments were the latest by Kyiv signalling that the counteroffensive it launched in early June is gradually making progress although Russian accounts of fighting in the Bakhmut sector differ from Ukraine's. "The defence forces continue to hold the initiative there, putting pressure on the enemy, conducting assault operations, advancing along the northern and southern flanks," Serhiy Cherevatyi, spokesperson for the eastern military command, told Ukrainian television. "In particular, over the past day, they have advanced more than one kilometre (0.62 mile)." General Oleksander Syrskyi, who is in charge of Ukraine's land forces, also said Ukrainian troops were pushing forward in the direction of Bakhmut. "The defence forces are making progress and advancing," he said, adding that some territory had been regained but providing no details. Meanwhile, the US is planning to send Ukraine a cluster munitions package to help in its counteroffensive against Russia, US media reports. Ukraine has been asking for the weapons for months amid an ammunition shortage. Cluster munitions - which are banned by more than 100 countries - are a class of weapons that contain multiple explosive bomblets called submunitions. The Biden administration is expected to announce the package on Friday, media reports. US officials had reportedly been hesitant to supply Ukraine with cluster munitions as they can kill indiscriminately over a wide area, threatening civilians. The US has a stockpile of these cluster bombs, which were first developed during World War II. The munitions are controversial because of their high failure rates, meaning unexploded bomblets can linger on the ground for years and possibly detonate later on

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif distributing laptops among high achievers of public sector university students under the Prime Minister's Youth Laptop Scheme. - DNA

Military courts Govt decides not to try women, underage

STAFF REPORT

LAHORE: The federal government has decided against trying women and underage suspects involved in attacks on civil and military installations during the violent protests in the aftermath of the arrest of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan on May 9. The riots were triggered almost across the country after the PTI chairman's arrest in the £190 million Al-Qadir Trust case on May 9 which led to the deaths of at least eight people and injured several others, prompting the authorities to arrest thousands of PTI workers. During the protests, the miscreants attacked the civil and military installations including - Corps Commander's House (Jinnah House) in Lahore Cantt and the General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi. The military called May 9 "Black Day" and has decided to try the protesters under the Army Act. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif termed May 9 as the "darkest day in the [country's] history" and announced to try the suspects in the military courts.

The National Security Committee had also endorsed the decision of the top brass to act against rioters under the Army Act. On June 23, the federal government informed the Supreme Court that a total of 102 suspects arrested from different parts of the country for their alleged involvement in the May 9 mayhem were in the military's custody. Sources privy to the development said that the women and people below the age of 18 involved in attacks on civil and military installations would be tried in civilian courts.

PM says future is bright

Distribution of one lac laptops to help youth be successful
Youth could help Pakistan develop at faster pace, says Shehbaz Sharif

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said billion of rupees have been allocated in the current fiscal year budget for distribution of one hundred thousand laptops on merit to the youth. Addressing a ceremony in connection with the distribution of laptops amongst the students of various Universities in Islamabad on Friday, he said if there will be resources, he will provide ten million laptops to the youth as Pakistan's development and prosperity lies in it. The prime minister said this ceremony reminded him of the days when as Chief Minister Punjab he distributed hundreds of thousands laptops among the students on merit. He said those laptops helped the students a lot during Covid pandemic days when they took their classes online while sitting home and also earned their bread and butter by working as freelancer.

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PM Youth Program game changer, says Marriyum

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb says Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has again started the implementation of the vision of PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif to make the youth the architects of the future and ensure their development. In a statement Friday, she said the process of distributing one hundred thousand laptops amongst the youth has been restarted. She said the Prime Minister's Youth Program will equip the youth with latest technology, education and skill, provide

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50 dead in rain-related incidents

LAHORE: As torrential monsoon rains grip Pakistan, at least 50 people - including eight children - have died in various rain-related incidents, officials said Friday. Every year, between June and September, monsoon winds bring rains to South Asia, accounting for 70% to 80% of the region's annual rainfall. These monsoon rains are a mixed blessing for the region. On the one hand, they are crucial to the livelihoods of millions of farmers and food security in a region of around two billion people. On the other hand, they bring landslides and floods. "Fifty deaths have been reported in different rain-related incidents all over Pakistan since the start of the monsoon on June 25," a National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) official

told AFP, adding that 87 people were injured during this period. The majority of the deaths were in eastern Punjab, and were mainly due to electrocution and building collapses, official data showed. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the bodies of eight children were recovered from a landslide in the Shangla district on Thursday, according to the emergency service Rescue 1122's spokesman Bilal Ahmed Faizi. He said rescuers were still searching for other children trapped in the debris. Officials in Lahore, Pakistan's second-largest city, said it had received record-breaking rainfall on Wednesday, turning roads into rivers and leaving almost 35% without electricity and water this week.

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Newly recruited judicial officers take oath

LAHORE: Newly-recruited judges of the Punjab district judiciary took oath of their office at a ceremony, held here on Friday. Lahore High Court (LHC) Registrar Irfan Ahmad Saad administered the oath to the judicial officers, including 20 additional district and sessions judges and 26 civil judges. LHC Chief Justice Muhammad Ameer Bhatti also attended the ceremony, while Director General District Judiciary Ameer Muhammad Khan, Sessions Judge Human Resource Chaudhry Abdul Rasheed Abid, Director General Punjab Judicial Academy Ashtar Abbas and relatives of the judicial officers were also present. LHC Chief Justice Muhammad Ameer Bhatti congratulated newly recruited judicial officers on becoming part of the judiciary. He said that the new judicial officers had taken the oath, which establishes a special connection between them and the Almighty Allah. This oath applies not only to the judges but also to their family and relatives, he said and added that if a judge's relatives encourage him to cross the line, he should make it clear to them that they did not have any right to interfere in judicial affairs.—DNA

Police urged to propagate services of DRCs

PESHAWAR: Blue Veins, a non-governmental organization working for women empowerment has urged Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police to propagate the services of the Dispute Resolution Councils (DRCs) and ensure that information about their existence and functioning is widely disseminated. It is essential for women across the region to be aware of the resources available to them for resolving disputes and seeking justice, it added. This can be achieved through targeted awareness campaigns, community outreach programs and collaboration with local civil society organizations. According to a press release issued here on Friday, the Blue Veins, in collaboration with Aurat Foundation and supported by UN Women.—APP

ECP to hold meeting on July 10

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has announced that an exclusive meeting, headed by Chief Election Commissioner Sikander Sultan Raja, is scheduled to take place on Monday. The primary agenda of the meeting will revolve around the meticulous planning and preparations for the upcoming local government elections in Islamabad and the Punjab province, with a special emphasis on ensuring their timely and efficient execution. This crucial gathering of the Election Commission signifies the commission's dedication and commitment to upholding the democratic process in the country.—APP

ICCI Int'l Tourism Summit starts, foreign envoys reached Skardu

DNA

ISLAMABAD/GILGAT: 3-day International Tourism Summit organized by Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry has started in Skardu, On Friday, under the leadership of President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, ambassadors from several countries including Turkey, Malaysia, Iran, Somalia, Bangladesh reached Skardu to participate. Foreign ambassadors and participants visited different tourist spots of Skardu, the ambassadors described the summit as the best effort of Islamabad Chamber. On arrival at Skardah Airport, the delegation was welcomed by Commissioner Skardu Alam Zeib Khan, DIG Farrukh Rasheed, Secretary General United Business Group Zafar Bakhtawari, former Vice President FPCCI Khalid Tawab and senior officials of the police and administration. The first ICCI International Tourism Summit for the promotion of



tourism in the northern regions of Pakistan started in Skardu. The summit will be held on July 7, 8 and 9. A delegation of foreign ambassadors arrived at Skardu Airport on Friday to participate

in the summit. The delegation included ambassadors of many countries including Malaysia, Turkey, Bangladesh, Nepal, Somalia, Sudan, Syria. While a delegation of 120 people from the

business community of the country including Islamabad is also participating in the summit. On the first day of the conference, foreign ambassadors and other participants in the delegation visited different areas of Skardu. The ambassadors praised the beauty of the area and termed the summit as a means of promoting tourism. The foreign ambassadors included in the delegation said that they had heard a lot about the beauty of the northern regions of Pakistan and got the opportunity to see these regions closely through the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce summit. They said that these areas have great potential to bring tourists from all over the world. Such a conference will not only promote tourism but also increase local industry and employment here. Islamabad Chamber has tried its best and this should be continued.

Funeral prayers of 8 children in Shangla offered

PESHAWAR: The funeral prayers of the eight children who died in a landslide in Martung area of District Shangla were offered on Friday. A large number of people from political, social and different schools of thought participated in the funeral prayer. However, the people in the area are depressed after the tragic accident where eight children were buried. It was certainly a big tragedy struck as the kids were playing cricket in a local ground when they were buried alive by the landslide. It is worth mentioning here that in the devastating incident, eight children lost their lives in a landslide near a cricket ground in the mountainous Shangla district of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa on Thursday last. The local residents initially started the rescue operation, but for two hours, there was no sign of official assistance. Eventually, the Rescue 1122 teams arrived at the difficult-to-access area and commenced the rescue efforts by recovering the victims trapped. The district had experienced heavy rainfall throughout the night, and the possibility of landslides was apparent in certain areas. Tragically, the children overlooked the risks associated with the weather conditions. In response to such monsoon-related disasters, the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), working in conjunction with the relief, rehabilitation, and settlement department, is developing a monsoon contingency plan for 2023. This plan aims to identify hazards, vulnerabilities, and risks associated with the monsoon season, as well as mapping resources to minimize disaster risks and ensure a coordinated response. Multiple pre-planning and orientation meetings have been held with representatives from provincial line departments to establish roles and responsibilities.—APP

Yaum-e-Taqqus-e-Quran observed across KP

PESHAWAR: Following the Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif's announcement of observing Friday as 'Yaum-e-Taqqus-e-Quran' (Sanctity of the Holy Quran), protest rallies were carried out across the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to lodge a strong protest against the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden. Demonstrations were held across the province, with people from different walks of life and political parties participating in the protests to express their resentment over the desecration of the holy book. A large number of people took out protest rallies on the main GT Road and Saddar Bazaar in Peshawar who chanted slogans against the Swedish government for allowing such a condemnable and disgraceful activity on its soil. Several demonstrations later joined the main protesting rallies on GT Road with people belonging to other religions also partaking in them to express their annoyance over the desecration of the holy book. After Friday prayer, the protestors gathered

near the Hashtnagri where the people carried placards inscribed with slogans against Sweden and desertion of the Holy Quran. They seemed quite angry with the most deplorable act of desecration of the holy Quran on the first day of Eid ul Adha in Sweden. The speakers on the occasion said that the Quran was our red line and no one would be allowed to cross this line. They said that the Quran was saved and protected in our hearts and it would be passed on to our generations till the Day of Judgment. They said the Quran teaches us to be patient in situations however, such incidents were tantamount to incite the sentiments of Muslim Ummah that were absolutely unacceptable. They were of the view that no one can desecrate our holy book as Allah Almighty has taken the responsibility to protect the Holy Quran. They said this shameful act depicted that the government of Sweden has failed to provide security to the people of other religions or otherwise has allowed

its people to play with the religious sentiments of believers of other religions. The speakers demanded of the Swedish government to arrest and award exemplary punishment to the man who desecrated the holy Quran in order to avoid the recurrence of such shameful incidents in the future. The protest rallies were also carried out in Kohat Bazaar, Bank Road Mardan, Shawa Adda Swabi, Tank Road Dera Ismail Khan, main bazaar Bannu, Cantt Road Nowshera, Charsadda Chawk and other cities. The Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif on Tuesday last, while presiding over a meeting in Islamabad, had announced to stage countrywide protests over the incident and appealed to all the political parties and the nation to participate in the rallies. "Speaking with one voice, the whole nation will give a message to the evil minds," said the prime minister. He maintained that the nation would observe the "Yaum-e-Taqqus-e-Quran" on Friday. The PM said the nation stands united when it comes to the

Holy Quran, noting that not only Pakistanis but the entire Muslim world was concerned over this vile act. He said that the people across the country would express their emotions over the heart-wrenching incident after Friday prayers, where "all the Muslims will raise the flag of the Holy Quran's honor and record their protest". Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in his statement over the issue, has said that the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden was another example of the rising Islamophobic mindset that seeks to dehumanize and denigrate Islam. "It is an act of blatant provocation to try to inflame sentiments and undermine Islam as a religion of peace, tolerance and acceptance," he said. It merits a mention here that a person, who migrated from Iraq to Sweden, burned pages of the Holy Quran outside a mosque in Stockholm on the first day of Eid ul Adha, prompting outrage in the Muslim world. The act was also condemned by Pope Francis. 4 col pic—DNA

WB approves \$46 mln for KPK's child healthcare services

ISLAMABAD: The World Bank has approved \$46 million to help increase access to child healthcare services and enhance citizen-centered service delivery in selected districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The WB's Board of Executive Directors approved the financing under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Citizen Centered Service Delivery Project. According to WB press statement, the project would support both supply and demand side interventions to improve health service delivery in the province, as well as the operations of citizen-centric administrative facilitation centers in the Newly Merged Districts. "The Project will support the government in expanding the provision of Child Wellness Grants targeted at mothers, provided they attend health awareness sessions", said Najy Benhassine, World Bank Country Director for Pakistan. "It will also help improve access to quality child health-related services," Benhassine added. Nearly 300,000 children under the age of two will benefit from Child Welfare Grants (CWGs), the statement said. To mitigate the financial barriers associated with the use of these services, families of these children will receive Rs.12,500 (approximately US\$45), spread over five visits, for attending the health awareness sessions and growth monitoring of their child. The project will also support the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government in the adoption of the one-window operation model of the Citizen Facilitation Centers (CFC) to promote essential service delivery to the local population. The CFCs, in addition to the provision of Child Wellness Grants, offer vital services to the local communities such as registration services including recording of birth, death, marriage, divorce, family registration etc. 560,000 individuals will be utilizing the services provided at the CFCs.—DNA

CM reviews facilities at hospitals

LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi paid visits to the Nawaz Sharif Social Security Hospital at Multan Road and Social Security Hospital at Ferozpur Road. During his visits, the CM thoroughly inspected various wards and assessed the medical facilities provided to the patients. He interacted with the patients, inquiring about their well-being and the quality of medical services they were receiving. The patients and their attendants expressed their satisfaction with the facilities available at the Nawaz Sharif Social Security Hospital, highlighting the availability of doctors and the provision of free medications. The CM announced the government's decision to open 22 social security hospitals, across the province, to the public to cater to their healthcare needs. He stated that an agreement would be reached between the government and the Punjab Employees Social Security Institution to facilitate this initiative. He revealed plans for the establishment of a rehabilitation center for disabled industrial workers, the installation of an MRI machine, and the creation of a burn unit at the Nawaz Sharif Social Security Hospital. He also mentioned that the Rehamat-ul-Alameen Institute of Cardiology (RAIC) would extend its services to the general public in addition to industrial workers.—APP



LAHORE: Civil society is protesting against the desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden at Charing Cross.—APP

PRCS initiates provision of model shelter houses to flood-affected families

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) has initiated the construction of model houses across various districts to assist families who were severely affected by last year's monsoon floods. The Red Crescent has aimed to build 5000 model houses across the flood-affected areas of the country with the support of International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners and other potential donors. The foundation stone laying ceremony for the first model house took place in the village of Badal Khan Brohi in Larkana. During the ceremony, Chairman PRCS Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari inaugurated the model house, which was equipped with essential household and hygiene items, and handed over the key to Sitta Bibi, a widow and mother of five children who lost her home in the devastating floods.

A separate ceremony marked the inauguration of a solar-powered water treatment plants installed at three different locations including Ratodero, district Larkana, Tehsil Thull, district Jacobabad and Tehsil Qubbo Saeed Khan district Qambar Shahdadkot. Each WTP has the capacity to produce 75,000 liters of clean drinkable water per day, working 24/7 hours, which will benefit millions of people from surrounding communities. The water treatment plants are installed with the support of IFRC and Norwegian

Red Cross and more will be installed in flood-affected areas of the country in coming days. On this occasion, PRCS Chairman also announced the support of PKR 1.5 million for the capacity building and smooth operations of district branch Larkana. This event signifies a tangible step towards addressing the hardships faced by flood victims and offering them genuine support. The torrential rains in July and August of last year resulted in destructive floods that affected a significant portion of the country,

causing extensive damage to properties, infrastructure, crops, orchards, and transportation systems. Speaking on this occasion, Chairman PRCS Sardar Shahid Ahmed Laghari highlighted the urgent focus on constructing model houses for families affected by the devastating floods. He explained that PRCS is providing a new type of shelter house, consisting of two rooms, a kitchen, and a washroom, to families who lost their homes during last year's floods. These model houses, costing approximately PKR 1.5 million




each, have been built using PRCS's own resources. They embody the "Building Back Better" concept, aiming to improve resilience during the recovery phase. PRCS aims to construct 5,000 model houses, with support from IFRC for 40 shelter houses. Discussions are ongoing with IFRC, movement partners, and other potential donors to secure further support. Additionally, talks have already taken place with Qatar Red Crescent to construct 2,000 model houses for families affected by the floods. Sardar Shahid Ahmed expressed his prayers for the successful assistance of all affected individuals, including flood victims, in overcoming their sorrows and challenges. He extended heartfelt gratitude to movement partners, national societies, and donors for their unwavering support. Secretary General PRCS Muhammad Abaidullah Khan, Assistant Commissioner Rato Dero Ghouse Bakash Jatoi, Chairman PRCS Larkana Branch Ahmed Mehmood Farouqi, representatives from the German Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross.



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National Days and Armed Forces Days

JULY

July 01/Japan
Self Defence Day
July 01/Singapore
Armed Forces Day
July 01 / Canada
National Day
July 01/Somalia
Independence Day
July 04/USA
Independence Day
July 05/Algeria
Independence Day
July 09/Argentine
Independence Day
July 09/Mongolia
Revolution Day
July 14/France
National Day
July 15/Brunei
Sultan's Birthday
July 21/Belgium
National Day
July 20/TRNC
Independence Day
July 23/Egypt
National Day
July 26/Cuba
National Day
July 26/Liberia
National Day
July 30/Morocco
National Day

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Monal.....0334-5421812



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



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Rescue (Police).....15
Bomb Disposal.....15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/
Islamabad.....1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance.1122
& Rescue Services.4451122
Motorway Police.....9266044
Motorway Police.9270601-20
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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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CDA.....9208301-04
Met Office.....9250360-6
RDA.....5555864
TMA.....5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Pak-Korea set to yield 160,000 tons of seed

The Committee approved these innovative projects, paving the way for their subsequent submission to the Rural Development Authority in Korea

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Project Steering Committee of Korea Program on International Agriculture (KOPIA) Pakistan Center was informed on Friday that "Pakistan-Korea Joint Program on Certified Seed Potato Production System" is set to yield an impressive production of 160,000 tons of certified seed potatoes.

The meeting was held with Chairman Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) Dr Ghulam Muhammad Ali in the chair and discussed collaborative efforts in various research projects,

focusing on the development of technologies for potato seed, chili, and fodder crop production. This meeting was also attended by Korean scientists, representatives from the Korean Embassy, Ministry of National Food Security and Research, universities and senior officials of allied departments, said a press release. These initiatives are being implemented through the joint efforts of PARC and the KOPIA and the successful outcomes of these projects are anticipated to significantly enhance both the quantity and quality of these crops. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Ali lauded the invaluable cooperation

extended by the Government of Korea in this regard and emphasized the potential extension of this cooperation to the livestock sector and the application of sex semen technology. He assured the Korean counterparts of PARC's commitment to maintaining close collaboration and acknowledged the people of Korea for their participation in various joint research ventures. Dr. Cho Gyoungrae, Director of the KOPIA-Pakistan Center highlighted both the current achievements and the future road map of the center. He provided the committee with a detailed update on the progress of various ongoing

projects, emphasizing their positive outcomes. He said that the project titled "Pakistan-Korea Joint Program on Certified Seed Potato Production System" is set to yield an impressive production of 160,000 tons of certified seed potatoes. Furthermore, Dr. Cho expressed a firm commitment to extending cooperation in the livestock sector, ensuring its continued growth and development. Addressing the meeting Hwang Myeong Hwan, Counselor at the Embassy of the Republic of Korea, emphasized the immense importance of Pakistan as a valued partner in the field of agriculture. He reaffirmed the commitment of the Korean gov-

ernment to extend its unwavering support through the KOPIA-Pakistan Center. The Project Coordinator, Dr. Aish Muhammad unveiled three new initiatives in areas such as breed improvement through the implementation of efficient artificial insemination services, utilizing Korean friesian sexed semen in cattle; the dissemination of improved technology for fodder production and the enhancement of chili export technologies through the production of high-quality chilies. The Committee approved these innovative projects, paving the way for their subsequent submission to the Rural Development Authority in Korea.



Taxila: US Consul General, Makaneole marveled at the Gandharan art and the Dharmarajika Stupa. Historical sites where art and spirituality entwine. —DNA

US CG visits Taxila Museum

DNA

WAH CANTT: US Consul General Lahore William Makaneole on Friday visited Taxila Museum and ancient Buddhist site of Dharmarajika stupa.

Punjab department of arachnology Muhammad Iqbal Manj and curator Taxila Museum.

The officials briefed the US diplomat about the history of Gandhara civilisation, various stupas, statues and other artifacts in the museum.

The envoy and his team were taken around the main hall which exhibits more than 70 stories of the life of Buddha i.e. from the time of his birth till death.

He also visited the Bodhisattva and Buddha galleries. The diplomat was informed that hundreds of monasteries and stupas were built together with Greek and Kushan towns such as Sirkap and Sirsukh, both in Taxila. The US diplomat has also visited various Buddha images and Buddha life stories. "Mainly the display consists of objects from 600 BC to 500 AD," he was informed. While recording his views in the comments book, Mr Makaneole has written "It was interesting to see just how important this area of the world is. I was impressed with the artifacts".

China's Huazhong Agr University to collaborate with UAF

ISLAMABAD: The University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, and Huazhong Agriculture University in China's Hubei province will promote mutual cooperation to increase agricultural productivity by using innovative modern approaches. For this purpose, the two universities will collaborate on ICT, drone technology, animal breeding, and modern technology for cotton, soybeans, and citrus fruits in the planned Pak-China Agricultural Technology Park at the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad. The objective is to achieve the goals of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday. The statement was made by UAF Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Iqbal Ahmad Khan after a meeting with a delegation from Huazhong Agriculture University, China. The UAF provided an update on the meeting. The VC mentioned that the technology park to be established at the UAF would be a milestone in agricultural development in Pakistan. It would not only ensure an increase in production but also introduce new innovations, including value addition and precision approaches. Earlier, the head of the Chinese delegation, Wu Yuelang, stated that a delegation led by UAF VC Dr. Iqbal had visited Huazhong Agriculture University the previous month to identify areas for mutual collaboration. He emphasized that the 9-member delegation from Huazhong Agriculture University, Hubei, represented a continuation of reciprocal mutual interest. He also mentioned that they had conducted a series of meetings with Punjab Agriculture Secretary Iftikhar Ali Sahu to explore ways to promote cooperation for agricultural growth and development.

Weekly inflation up by 0.70 pc

ISLAMABAD: The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.70 per cent for the combined consumption group during the week ended on July 06, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday. The SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 257.79 points as compared to 256.00 points during the past week, according to the PBS data. As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 28.55 per cent. The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 is covering 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. The SPI for the lowest consumption group up to Rs17,732, increased by 1.08 per cent and went up to 265.88 points from last week's 263.03 points.—APP

Pakistani businessmen admire China's mobile apps accepting debit cards

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani visitors and businessmen visiting China for the short term have admired the initiative of China's leading mobile payment apps to accept int'l credit and debit cards for purchase. Alipay and WeChat, China's two leading mobile payment apps will start the service from this month. The Pakistani visitors termed the initiative highly significant for international travelers and global commerce, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday. Alipay and WeChat, China's two leading mobile payment apps, will start accepting foreign credit and debit cards to purchase things inside the country without using cash. According to the official statement, users can now

link their international credit or debit card to both payment apps, enabling hassle-free payments and unlocking a convenient and secure way to navigate the Chinese market. Visitors will have access to a new universe of merchants and services, including shopping, dining, hotel accommodation, transportation, and more, spanning both online and offline experiences and covering all aspects of life in China."

The step will provide a great opportunity for international travelers to tap into the vast potential of digital payment solutions and connect with a global audience. Previously, foreigners had to open a Chinese bank account to use local payment platforms, making transactions in China difficult since many stores don't accept cash. "This is greatly significant given the fact that China

is generally a cashless country these days," said Khalid Abbas, a businessman from Yiwu, China. He said the development has opened up a world of possibilities for seamless transactions, whether you're a tourist exploring China or an international business owner engaging in cross-border commerce. "Foreigners can now look forward to exploring and shopping with just a scan of their phone," he added. Since 2010, mobile payments have become incredibly popular and widespread throughout China, offering a convenient payment method for Chinese residents. However, international tourists often face challenges when attempting to make payments in China, as mobile payments have largely replaced credit cards and even cash in both online and offline settings.

Shortage of Climate resources holding Pakistan back: Sherry

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change & Environmental Coordination, Senator Sherry Rehman on Friday said Climate Finance was uncharted territory for many developing countries due to a significant knowledge and capacity gap on this critical issue. Pakistan faces dual challenges of limited accessibility to climate finance and a lack of technical capacity, impeding its progress in achieving crucial climate adaptation and mitigation goals. The minister was delivering her key note address at the launch event of the Climate Finance Accelerator (CFA) organized by the UK Government, where she emphasized the significant role that programs like CFA could play in knowledge-creating, building capacity and new pathways within both the public and private sectors, a news release said. She underlined the challenge of prioritizing climate change in both sectors and highlighted the potential of such initiatives to elevate the government's narrative on climate finance. By creating awareness and aligning public interests with government objectives, these programs can effectively enhance the discourse on climate finance. The minister high-



lighted Pakistan's commitment to exploring Carbon Markets as part of its efforts under the Paris Agreement. She mentioned that the country was in the process of developing an interim framework for a voluntary carbon market and we had officially signed on a collaboration with Verra, a global standard-setting body, to share knowledge and educate stakeholders on carbon markets and the certification process for generating carbon credits. She spoke about the Delta Blue Carbon Project by the Sindh Government as a flagship in voluntary carbon markets, which was the world's largest blue carbon project, with a 60-year lifespan and aim of restoring 350,000 hectares of land in the Districts of Thatta and Sujawal in Sindh. She said

that the restoration of the mangrove forests has the potential to increase Pakistan's mitigation capacity by reduction in emissions worth 27 million tons of CO2e over the life cycle of the project. Most of the resources from that carbon trade will go into regenerating mangroves, and enhancing water conservation projects, as well as for building climate-smart agriculture opportunities for small farmers. The minister highlighted that Pakistan was an extremely climate-stressed country and drew attention to the increasing frequency of extreme weather events in the country and stressed that these events were no longer isolated or random occurrences but were a direct result of climate change. She emphasized that climate inaction had disrupted nature's ability to maintain its natural weather patterns, and it was crucial for society to take responsibility for creating an environment where nature could thrive and preserve its existing balance. She continued, "We need promises made at COP27 to materialize, but clearly the financial challenges faced by the international public sector in meeting the massive funding requirements of the developing world, which have gone to trillions from billions, fall far short of the quantum of funding now needed.

Alvi for accelerated efforts to provide jobs to PWDs

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Friday emphasized the need to accelerate efforts for the job placement of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in the public and private sectors to empower them financially. The president, chairing a meeting regarding the framework for the classification and severity of disability, said that the suitability of PWDs for different jobs in the market should be determined as per international standards, and they should be facilitated in finding jobs for their financial empowerment. Senior officials of the Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of National Health Services Regulation and Coordination, NAVTTC, and NADRA, as well as representative of the World Health Organization, Dr Maryam Malik, attended the meeting. The president said that prospective employers for the job placement of skilled Differently-abled People (DAPs) should be identified and, in the first phase, large employers in the private sector should be approached to accommodate DAPs as per their skill representation of and industrial created to make citizens of the country. The president emphasized the need for adopting the framework for classification of disabilities, developed in line with international standards and best practices, at the national and provincial levels.—APP



APSUP urges PM to address autonomy issues in higher education

ISLAMABAD: The Association of Private Sector Universities of Pakistan (APSUP) has penned a letter to the Prime Minister of Pakistan that expressed deep concerns over the recently proposed amendments to the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Ordinance 2002. APSUP, representing private-sector universities, highlights potential threats to the autonomy of higher education institutions and urges the Prime Minister to address these issues promptly. In a letter addressed to Prime Minister Sharif, APSUP Chairman, Prof. Dr. Chaudhry Abdul Rehman, emphasized the need to safeguard the autonomy and independence of universities for the advancement of academic excellence, research, and innovation in Pakistan. The amendments, as currently formulated, raise several critical concerns that could have far-reaching consequences for the quality and growth of higher education.

One of the key concerns raised by APSUP is the potential undermining of the HEC's autonomy. The insertion of a new clause in Section 2, defining the "Division concerned," has raised questions regarding the institution's independence and the possibility of external control and influence. APSUP further highlights the potential ramifications of the amendments to the 18th Constitutional Amendment. The changes proposed in Section 4, designating the HEC as the sole standard-setting and regulatory authority, could centralize power within the HEC while marginalizing the role of Provincial HECs and Higher Education departments. This shift may limit the autonomy of universities across different provinces and hamper their ability to cater to regional needs and aspirations effectively.—APP

Seven drug peddlers netted

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi police in an action against suspected drug peddlers conducted raids in different areas and rounded up seven accused on recovery of over seven kg charras. According to a police spokesman, Bani, New Town, Sadiqabad, Waris Khan, Naseerabad, and Race Course police conducted raids in their respective jurisdiction and held Farhan Khan, Sadam Khan, Zafar Khan, Sheikh Azhar, Saleem Khan, Mamoo Khan, and Wasif and recovered over seven kg charras from their possession. Separate cases have been registered against all accused while further investigations are underway. City Police Officer, Rawalpindi had directed the police officers to accelerate ongoing operations against drug peddlers, bootleggers, and other lawbreakers, he added.—APP

IHC instructs for recovery of Ali Nawaz's brother

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) Friday ordered the authorities to ensure recovery of missing a citizen Umar Nawaz Awan, the brother of PTI's leader Ali Nawaz Awan, within three days. The court instructed the Chief Commissioner ICT and Inspector General of Police (IGP) to appear before court in person if the missing person was not recovered within the said time. Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri heard the case regarding the matter where in the police officials also appeared before the bench. The wife of the missing citizen shared the evidences regarding the lifting Umar Nawaz with the police officials in USB. At the outset of hearing, Justice Jahangiri expressed annoyance with the police and said that the Safe City Cameras' system should be closed down if it was not helpful in such matters.—DNA

Briefs

IESCO notifies 2-day power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Friday notified 2-day power suspension programme for Saturday and Sunday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period on Saturday from 06:00 AM to 12:00 Noon, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Islamabad Feed Mill, Jhta Hatial, Bisali, Pind Jatla, Lab.I & II, Reliance Weaving Mill, Bhal, Jarrar Comp Feeders, From 08:00 AM to 1:00 PM, Islamabad Circle, COMST, Chhata Bakhtawar, Park Enclave, Lahtrar, Tramiree, ISI, Rahara, PHA, Kuri Road, CM Pak Zong, Isolation Hospital Feeders, From 07:00 AM to 12:00 PM Islamabad Circle, I-11/1, I-11/3, Metro Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, Nogzi, Bajnyal, New Milpur Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Old Rawat, New Rawat, CWO, AOWHS, SPARCO, Parkview, Pindi Board, Jail Park.1, Car Chowk.—APP

DC chairs emergency response committee

ATTOCK: Additional Deputy Commissioner General Adnan Anjum Raja while reviewing the overall performance of district emergency response committee for anti-dengue campaign has directed the relevant stakeholders activate the surveillance teams for eradication of dengue virus from the district Attock failing which any kind of negligence will not be tolerated. He was chairing the meeting here on Friday. Among others, the meeting was attended by Chief Executive Officer, District Health Authority Attock Dr. Asad Ismail, Deputy Director Public Relations Attock Mr. Shahzad Niaz and heads of provincial departments. Additional Deputy Commissioner General also directed the participants of the meeting that proceedings will be initiated against the delinquents in case a complaint of production of larvae is received from any corner of the district.—DNA

BISP proves to be successful social protection intervention

To provide relief to the flood-affected population, the Benazir Emergency Cash of Rs 70 billion had been disbursed to 2.8 million beneficiaries (Rs 25,000 per family), she added

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Shazia Marri Friday said the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) had emerged as the most successful social protection intervention in the history of the country due to its positive impact on the lives of the poorest segments. Speaking at the launching ceremony of a new initiative "Benazir Social Protection Accounts" for its beneficiaries, Shazia Marri said that the BISP, launched in the year 2008 and legalized in 2010, was conceived by Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto to provide financial relief to the poor families. The initiative was launched by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in a ceremony in the presence of Minister for Information and Broadcasting (MOIB) Marriyum Aurangzeb and Special Assistant to the PM on Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Faisal Karim Kundi. The programme due to its apolitical nature sustained through different political government tenures and achieved international acclamations for its performance, structure and



transparency. Highlighting the achievements of BISP, the federal minister stated, "The budget of the programme has been increased from Rs 235 billion in FY 2022 to Rs 404.2 billion in the FY 2023, registering a significant increase to extend its scope to more families. "The beneficiaries of BISP (Benazir Kafaalat)

have increased from 7.6 million to nine million families with an increase in the stipend up to Rs 8750 which reflect political commitment towards the welfare of downtrodden segments. " About the Conditional Cash Transfer initiative of Benazir Education Stipends, Shazia Marri highlighted that the enrolment of children

had increased from 2.6 million in FY 2022 to 7.52 million in FY 23, registering a 200 percent increase. She said, "The number of Benazir Scholarships for Undergraduates has increased from 82,000 in FY 2022 to 92,003 in FY 2023." "The program will be connected to the Poverty Score Card in future," she added. 'Benazir Nashonuma' Pro-

gram which caters for the nutritional needs of pregnant and lactating mothers and children to prevent stunted growth and malnutrition in children has been expanded from 15 districts (FY 2022) to all the districts of the country in FY 2023. "So far, 0.77 million beneficiaries have been enrolled in the programme through 488 Facilitation Centers established countrywide," she said. About the Fuel Subsidy program, which was initiated to mitigate the impact of increased fuel prices on poor segments, Shazia Marri said that the targeted subsidy of Rs 16.3 billion was given to 8.6 million families (Rs 2,000 per family). To provide relief to the flood-affected population, the Benazir Emergency Cash of Rs 70 billion had been disbursed to 2.8 million beneficiaries (Rs 25,000 per family), she added. The minister said that the 2.3 million households have been resurveyed during the four months under the ongoing dynamic survey aimed at identifying more poor households for registration in BISP. She also highlighted the initiative of including Transgender Persons in the Benazir Kafaalat program as well as the families with differently-abled persons with relaxation in Poverty Score.

LIMS to promote, revolutionize agri sector in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: The Land Information and Management System (LIMS) is an unprecedented project of the government of Pakistan and the Pakistan Army to promote modern agriculture, whereas the establishment of LIMS will help revolutionize the agriculture sector in the country. LIMS is the first comprehensive government initiative for the development of the agricultural sector in the country's history, an official source said. The main objective of LIMS is to reduce domestic agricultural imports, increase exports and meet the food needs of the growing population. Land Information Management System will also be helpful in enhancing food security of the country. The establishment of LIMS will provide farmers with simultaneous access to information on climate change, satellite crop monitoring, water, fertilizer and spray focus areas and direct access to markets. Under Land Information Management System, it will be possible to increase agricultural production by using modern technology on uninhabited and low-yielding agricultural lands. This revolutionary institute will work on land, crops, weather, water resources and pest control under one roof. Proper use of various resources and reserves, modern technology and irrigation system will bring such development in agriculture which will meet the shortage of food in every region of the country. Based on information and analytics, it will be easier to identify difficulties, obstacles and challenges, find appropriate solutions and take informed decisions. Due to this program, job resources will also be created for the people in the country whereas the LIMS objectives also focus on to rehabilitate waste and uncultivated land. Many projects are being partnered with Saudi Arabia, China, United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Bahrain, which will definitely increase Pakistan's exports. Moreover, new canals will be built to store floodwater, and modern irrigation techniques like modular drip irrigation, sprinkler irrigation and pivot irrigation will be implemented in this regard.—DNA

IHRA seals OT, NICU of private

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Healthcare Regulatory Authority (IHRA) took action on Friday by sealing the operation theater and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) of a private hospital in connection with a case involving the burning of newborn limbs. As per the IHRA report, the authority confirmed the sealing of these two departments, namely the operation theater and NICU, at the private hospital. Consequently, the hospital's operations will remain closed until the inquiry into the matter is completed. The report stated that this decision was made to ensure the safety of other patients, as six patients were currently admitted to the NICU of the hospital. Furthermore, it was revealed that the hospital was not registered with the health regulatory authority. The report also highlighted that the baby warmers in use were being manually controlled instead of utilizing automated temperature controls. Moreover, significant inconsistencies have been identified in the responses provided by the hospital staff.—DNA

Speakers stress for capacity building of provincial EMISs

ISLAMABAD: The speakers at a training session have stressed the need for capacity building of provincial/area Education Management Information Systems (EMISs) and education managers on SDG-4 data collection, analysis, reporting and use for planning & monitoring besides collaboration among stakeholders for better use of education statistics. The opening session was chaired by Salman Mufti, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training and Zafar Malik, Head of Education, UNESCO here on the other day. Dr. Muhammad Shahid Soroya, DG, Pakistan Institute of Education (PIE) welcomed the participants and apprised them about various projects, initiatives and interventions implemented/initiated by PIE during the last few months including development of training manual for these workshops, providing technical input for SDG-4 Mid-Term review. An exhaustive training needs assessment was

conducted to assess the capacity of the provincial/area EMIS teams and a customized training manual has been developed for knowledge/skills enhancement of the EMIS teams on the SDG-4 benchmarking, data collection, analysis, and reporting. The workshop sensitized the education managers and policymakers on the SDG-4 data production and utilization through advocacy workshops. Hands-on exercises, case-studies, and scenario exercises based on real-data were also conducted during the three days of the workshop. The training was also imparted on producing education indicators from various sources including administrative data, household surveys, monitoring, censuses, etc. The aspects of data quality, ethics, analysis and utilization were also discussed at length. The closing session was chaired by Youssef Filali-Meknassi, Representative and Director UNESCO Islamabad. He highlighted the importance of data especially after COVID-19

SCBA passes resolution condemning desecration of Quran

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) on Friday passed a resolution against the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden, strongly condemning the incident. "The SCBA expresses deep concern over the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden in strongest possible terms. The Holy Quran holds immense significance to millions of Muslims around the world as a source of spiritual guidance, moral teachings, and divine revelation. Its desecration not only causes anguish and pain to Muslims but also is a gross violation of the principles of respect, tolerance and freedom of religion that form the bedrock of any democratic society," it stated. The resolution stated that unfortunately, despite a number of similar incidents in past, international community has utterly failed to take coercive measures to reduce the menace of Islamophobia.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: Newly appointed Iranian ambassador to Pakistan, Reza Amiri Moghadam visits the Palestinian embassy.—DNA


CPEC to promote growth, social prosperity

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning and Development Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday said that the government was promoting China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Project (CPEC) to attain sustainable economic growth and social prosperity as envisaged by Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in the country. Addressing a seminar on CPEC, organized by the Bahria University Islamabad, the minister said that CPEC was a mega-development project, which included developmental projects related to basic infrastructure, energy generation, Gwadar Port development and industrial cooperation. The minister said that the project which was started 10 years ago on July 5, 2013 which provided employment opportunities to millions of people across the


country, besides speeding up the pace of development in various sectors of national economy. The CPEC has made significant progress due to the vision of the leadership of the Chinese President Xi Jinping, he said adding that Gwadar, energy, infrastructure and industrial development projects were agreed upon during the visit of the Chinese President. He said that 11 working groups were established in the context of CPEC projects, adding that there were key achievements in the construction and development of Gwadar port, adding that the port was fully functional, Gwadar airport, hospital, sea water potable plant and other projects have also been built. The minister said that the projects which were completed under CPEC were

contributing in economic development and employment creation and played a key role in improving the lives of the people. He said that the One Belt One Road initiative promoted economic and maritime cooperation in the world. The first memorandum of cooperation of CPEC was signed on July 5, 2013, which was the story of Pakistan's development, he said adding that the previous government threw away this opportunity for development. Ahsan Iqbal said that Pakistan had made a revolution in industrial development in the 60s, but later geographical and social inequality hindered the phase of development. He said that the competition in innovation, research and creativity was vital for sustainable economic growth and development. Despite

the challenges, the government has successfully completed the CPEC projects within a year, he said and further acknowledged the valuable partnership between Pakistan and China which has enabled the successful implementation of CPEC projects and emphasized the importance of continued cooperation to maintain this momentum. Federal Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives Prof Ahsan Iqbal on Friday inaugurated the installation of a 200kw solar PV system at the ministry to promote environment-friendly electricity. The ceremony was held at the Ministry's auditorium which was attended by the Secretary, Ministry of Planning Syed Zafar Ali Shah, Additional Secretary (AS) and officials of the ministry, said a press release issued here.—DNA



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Earth breaking heat records

Brace yourself. The last three days have probably been the Earth's hottest on record. Last month was the hottest June ever recorded. Punishing, deadly heat has hit large swaths of the planet, and oceans are experiencing heat waves with surface temperatures hitting new highs. The long-predicted hotter future fueled by climate change is happening now. The global average daily temperature hit 62.6 degrees on Monday, which was the highest since modern record-keeping began more than four decades ago, according to the University of Maine's Climate Reanalyzer project, which uses satellite data and computer simulations to measure the world's weather conditions. Although 62 degrees may not sound startling, it is a global average that includes parts of the world that are in the middle of winter. The record was quickly broken Tuesday and Wednesday when the global average temperature hit 62.9 degrees. The record-breaking heat was backed up by other models as well. And climate scientists now think 2023 could be the warmest year on record. Part of the reason for the higher temperatures is the return of El Niño, a climate pattern associated with hotter, more volatile weather. Human-caused climate change can amplify normal climate patterns and turn them into extreme weather events. There have always been heat waves and floods and wildfires – but climate change is fueling unprecedented heat waves that stretch over days and weeks, frequent flooding and megafires. It's frightening to see how fast the planet is warming and what that portends for countries across the globe that are feeling the effects of extreme weather, including intense heat waves, wildfires and drought. In China this week, 15 people have died and some 20,000 have been displaced by monsoonal flooding that has been especially severe. Last month, the eastern U.S. was cloaked in smoke from wildfires in Canada. And powerful heat waves in recent weeks claimed lives in Texas, Mexico and the Southwest, and across the globe in India. The time for incremental steps has passed. World leaders can't ignore or hope to avoid the pain of global warming now that it's here. They have an obligation to act. More than a century of burning coal, oil and gas has caught up to us. Each record broken and new extreme is a warning that the planet is in distress. We are not doing enough to slow climate change and avoid greater suffering. But the human occupants of Earth are not powerless. The course forward is clear, though not easy or cheap. It requires dismantling the machinery of fossil fuels and replacing it with clean, renewable energy, electric vehicles and zero-emission technology. This week's record-breaking temperatures are another alarm warning that the window of opportunity to avoid climate devastation is closing. Will we wake up, or just hit snooze until the next extreme weather event?

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Message sent and received

China's announcement that it will impose controls on exports of some gallium and germanium products from Aug 1 has sparked consternation. The metals are key materials for high-speed computer chips and electric vehicles, as well as for the defense and renewable energy sectors. About 40 percent of the world's germanium, a metal even rarer than gold, is in China, which accounts for over 67 percent of the global supply. The US possesses about 45 percent on its territories, but due to pollution concerns and strategic considerations, it produces little and exports even less. China has the largest resources of gallium, known as the "backbone of the electronics industry", and it produces about 95 percent of the global supply. The control on exports of eight gallium and six germanium products mean the authorities will reject export applications if they are to be employed for military use or purposes that may undermine China's national security and interests. While Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said such control on exports is a common international practice, and clarified that it does not target any specific country, the timing of the Ministry of Commerce's announcement is telling. The announcement came just ahead of US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen's visit to Beijing, which begins on Thursday, with the timing widely interpreted as sending a message to the Joe Biden administration, which has been attacking China's chip sector with export restrictions and putting pressure on other countries to follow suit, that Beijing has the means to fight back. The move is Beijing's second response to the United States' continued weaponizing of export restrictions to target the country's high-tech sector, and its co-opting and coercing of other countries to join its offensive. In May, it introduced a ban on some key domestic industries from purchasing products and services from US memory chipmaker Micron. Peter Arkell, chairman of the Global Mining Association of China, was reported as saying that Beijing's latest move "has hit the American trade restrictions where it hurts". Gallium and germanium are just two of the metals that China is the dominant producer of and which are important for a range of tech products, and Arkell said "it is a fantasy to suggest that another country can replace China in the short or even medium term". Those challenging China's decision should challenge the US, Japan and the Netherlands on their chip or equipment export controls targeting China. It is they that should be blamed for necessitating such an action by Beijing, which is just defending the country's interests in the face of their concerted tech attack.

After Karachi port, steel mill is being sold...

Qamar Bashir



In the P&L statement for 2022, sales were stated to be Rs. 3.998 billion, cost of sales to be Rs. (10.056 billion), and gross loss to be Rs. 6.058 billion. This loss was compounded by adding distribution costs (45 million), administrative costs (Rs. 4.156 billion), financial costs (Rs. 14.69 billion), and operating costs (Rs. 1.47 billion), resulting in a net loss of (Rs.20.36 billion). It's fascinating to see how this loss was turned into profit. In the profit and loss statement, the number for "other incomes" was Rs. 31.491 billion. The breakdown

The government of Shabbaz Sharif is considering privatizing the Pakistan Steel Mill (PSM), however before doing so, it appears that the PSM's books of account have been given a facelift. Interestingly, many unusual entries have been found in the 2021-22 financial statement when compared to the previous year. One such entry was the re-evaluation of property and plant, which was Rs. 489 billion in 2020-21 but unexpectedly increased to Rs. 751 billion, representing a gain of Rs. 262 billion labeled as "Remeasurement of investment property" at fair value. As a result, net comprehensive income reached Rs. 276.24 billion by adding profit of Rs. 7.1 billion and gratuity of Rs. 62 billion, which by any definition is a notional income, not hard cash. Similarly, liabilities increased from Rs. 549.3 billion in 2021 to Rs. 838.67 billion in 2022, including the liabilities owed by the GOP of Rs.102 billion in principal and Rs.48 billion in interest, National Bank of Pakistan of Rs.38 billion in principal and Rs.38 billion in interest, and SSGCL of Rs.23 billion principal and a disputed amount of LPS on this amount. The second eye-catching item was announcing an after-tax profit of Rs 7.45 billion in 2021-22, which can be seen at he Profit and Loss (P&L) statement in the audited accounts available at (<http://www.paksteel.com.pk/Financial%20Reports/FAR2022.pdf>). In the P&L statement for 2022, sales were stated to be Rs. 3.998 billion, cost of sales to be Rs. (10.056 billion), and gross loss to be Rs. 6.058 billion. This loss was compounded by adding distribution costs (45 million), administrative costs (Rs. 4.156 billion), financial costs (Rs. 14.69 billion), and operating costs (Rs. 1.47 billion), resulting in a net loss of (Rs.20.36 billion). It's fascinating to see how this loss was turned into profit. In the profit and loss statement, the number for "other incomes" was Rs. 31.491 billion. The breakdown of other incomes is considerably more intriguing. It includes Rs. 291 million in revenue from short and long term deposits, Rs. 2.0 billion in scrap sales, Rs. 27.745 billion in gain from remeasurement of investment property at fair value, and Rs. 1.746 billion in miscellaneous profits for a net income of Rs. 31.491 billion. According to the profit and loss statement its total income was declared at Rs. 31.491+.083=31.574 less total cost of the sales and expenses of losses 26.35 bn reaching to net profit of Rs. 5.083. This profit was increased to Rs. 7.15 billion by including deferred taxation of Rs. 2.065 billion. The reason for the addition of tax was given in note No. 37 which said that because the mill had not paid tax since 2016, the deferred tax was remaining with the mills and was therefore believed to be revenue. All sources of income were mostly notional and unrelated to the selling of the steel mill's key products but the expenditures were real and tangible. Furthermore, it is clear knowledge that the mill has been losing money since 2008 and was shut down in 2015; how can it possibly be profitable? A steel mill is key for economic and industrial development of any country. It provides raw material in a wide variety of products,

including cars, buildings, roads, bridges, and other infrastructure. It provides basic raw material for making weapons and military equipment and hardware and ensures regular supply of this essential element in times of war or other emergencies. It is recyclable and can be used and reused, conserving resources and reducing the amount of waste. Creates a significant number of direct employment in the mill and indirect employment in the supply chain and in the downstream industries. Decrease dependence on other countries for its steel supply and shielding it from vulnerability to supply disruptions and price volatility. A steel mill is a complex operation that requires a high level of technological expertise which help the country in training its human resources to further expand or setup new mills without requiring the assistance of other countries. Steel is a critical material to boost economic and industrial development and growth and prosperity of a nation, therefore setting up of steel mills has always been the top priority of any nation to achieve sustained economic and social development. We also took this project on top priority and established Pakistan Steel Mills (PSM) which was incorporated in 1968 at the cost of Rs. 24.7 billion which commenced production in 1981. The mill was the biggest producer of steel in Pakistan and the only major manufacturer of flat and long bars and billet. Mills net assets included land measuring about 19000 acres out of which the plant and the machinery was located on 4457 acres of land (core land) besides the land of downstream industrial estates. The mill was initially profitable, however soon after it started facing issues due to our trademark inefficiencies, mismanagement, corruption, political interference, and over-employment. It was finally shut down in June 2015 during the last tenure of PML(N). Since its closure, the country has lost over \$18bn in foreign exchange for import of steel products which used to be produced by the PSM. According to the audited Accounts, the mill is incurring losses since 2008-09 and upto the year 202-2021 it has accumulated total losses of Rs. 227.987 billion. The Steel mill is indeed a bleeding wound which is becoming unsustainable specially one that it is closed second it is incurring losses on the average at Rs. 20 billion per year with accumulated losses of over Rs 227 upto 2021. Besides in its current shape there are no chances of its revival, as the technology used was outdated and inefficient, would need outright modernization and automations to become competitive which would require immense amounts of capital and is a time-consuming process. The mill is heavily indebted and without a regular earning source, there is no way to repay its debts. The mill has a history of poor management and financial mismanagement which cannot be easily addressed. Moreover, the country is currently facing daunting political and economic challenges including high inflation and a weak currency, dwindling foreign reserves and does not have enough liquidity to revive PSM. Several governments attempted to unload this white el-

phant using various strategies such as Public Private Partnership (PPP), reorganization, disinvestment, and liquidation, but all were unsuccessful owing to political considerations or court involvement. The Council of Common Interests (CCI) voted to privatize Pakistan Steel Mills in 1997; however, in the year 2000, General Pervez Musharraf chose to reorganize and refurbish the steel mill, which temporarily propped up the company but failed to remain afloat. Mr. Shaukat Aziz planned to privatize it again in 2006, but the Supreme Court of Pakistan (SC) blocked his plans with its decision in the case of Wattan Party and others versus Federation of Pakistan and others. The SCP's larger bench declared the submission of the \$ 362 million bid for privatization of PSM null and void, observing that the process was flawed and unfair, that the Privatization Commission of Pakistan (PCP) failed to: provide all bidders with access to the same information about PSM, that the PCP did not give all bidders equal time to submit their bids, that the PCP did not properly evaluate the bids that were submitted, and that the PCP did not follow due process in conducting the auction. However, the government should come prepared this time, just as it did when it auctioned berths 6 to 9 at Karachi Port. Prior to doing so, the government enacted the Inter-Governmental Commercial Transactions conduct of 2022, which prohibited any court in the country from hearing an application, petition, or suit challenging any procedure or conduct performed or done, intended or purported to be undertaken or done under this Act. The government can also look to the successful privatization models of the United Kingdom, India, Brazil, and Mexico, where similar actions were taken to address financial issues, modernize technology, and improve management before offering the steel mills for privatization. The government should also select the most appropriate privatization model, which are: selling the mill to the highest bidder in the most transparent and fair manner, selling the company to another government, and circumventing litigation on the strength of the Intergovernmental Commercial Transactions Act, 2022. Management buyouts, in which the firm's management team buys the company from the government, have proven effective on many occasions, as have employee buyouts, in which the company's employees buy the company from the government. Above all, the government should ensure that the buyer, whether local or foreign, has only one option to revitalize or reestablish a steel mill with equal or better capacity of producing steel and its byproducts, as well as bringing state-of-the-art technology through innovation, automation, AI, and modern management systems. It should hire or rehire agreed upon number human resources from Pakistan purely on merit and be free to bring in a certain number of trained, experienced, and highly productive human resources from abroad, and above all, it should prohibit the buyer from selling its land or making any other use of the Mill's tangible and intangible assets other than related to the Steel Mill or its associated business processes.

Beyond the Secrecy: WikiLeaks and the struggle for openness

Umm-e-Aimen



Julian Assange established Wikileaks in 2006 as an online platform for whistleblowers to anonymously submit classified material to the organization. The primary objective of the organization is to publish material that is in the public interest, with a particular focus on governments, corporations, and other powerful entities. Wikileaks operates servers in various countries

Wikileaks is an independent, non-profit organization that publishes classified information and news leaks from anonymous sources to the public domain. The organization was founded in 2006 by Julian Assange, an Australian computer programmer and activist. In 2010, WikiLeaks released a cache of confidential U.S. documents on the internet, which included military logs of Iraq and Afghanistan wars and diplomatic cables between the U.S. and other nations. This action propelled WikiLeaks to global recognition. This paper will discuss Wikileaks, its founding, operations, and achievements. Julian Assange established Wikileaks in 2006 as an online platform for whistleblowers to anonymously submit classified material to the organization. The primary objective of the organization is to publish material that is in the public interest, with a particular focus on governments, corporations, and other powerful entities. Wikileaks operates servers in various countries and utilizes advanced encryption techniques to safeguard the anonymity of its sources. Whistleblowers can submit confidential information to the organization through an electronic submission system, which encrypts the data and protects the source's identity. The core activities of Wikileaks involve receiving, decrypting, and publishing classified information. The organization maintains a team of journalists, volunteers, and technological experts who collaborate to ensure the accuracy and authenticity of the information before its release. Redaction techniques are employed to protect sensitive information that may pose harm to individuals, the military, or national security. The functioning of Wikileaks is based on principles of openness, transparency, and accountability. Once information is received, it undergoes review, verification, and subsequent release for public consumption. Wikileaks has a strict policy of never revealing the identity of its sources, which has shielded the organization from legal action and backlash from political and other entities. Since its inception, Wikileaks has achieved several significant milestones. Notably, the release of classified information, including military logs and diplomatic cables pertaining to the U.S. military's operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, had a profound global impact. This critical

information altered the narrative surrounding the wars and the U.S.'s involvement in them. The disclosure of these documents resulted in the arrest and prosecution of U.S. soldier Chelsea Manning, who faced charges such as theft and espionage. The leaks also prompted the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq and heightened public scrutiny of U.S. foreign policy. Another notable achievement of Wikileaks was the exposure of classified information concerning various governments and corporations worldwide, ranging from China, Russia, and Iran to the United States, Britain, and France. The leaked files encompassed instances of financial corruption, human rights violations, political scandals, war crimes, and atrocities. The release of such information promotes transparency and accountability, contributing to a more informed and democratic society. Wikileaks has gained international recognition as a vital tool for freedom of speech and one of the most significant sources of information in the digital age. Wikileaks has exerted significant influence on various facets of society, including politics, media, diplomacy, and the military. Some notable impacts include: Exposing unscrupulous aspects of political leaders and administrations, leading to increased mistrust and disillusionment with governments. For instance, the release of diplomatic cables unveiled the U.S.'s surveillance of world leaders, eliciting international outrage and condemnation. Influencing election campaigns, particularly concerning issues of corruption and unethical behavior by politicians. Experts argue that Wikileaks' involvement may have influenced the 2016 US presidential election through Russian interference. The leaked documents provide opportunities for the media to uncover hidden truths about governments and powerful entities. However, the ethical and editorial decisions surrounding Wikileaks' releases have sparked controversy. The organization's collaboration with journalists post the 2010 cable release resulted in the US government searching their devices and emails, raising concerns about journalistic freedom. The publication of classified documents has undermined efforts to build and strengthen relationships between governments, necessitating greater caution and carefulness in diplomatic dialogue. These disclosures also dealt

a severe blow to the military's reputation and mission. The military has faced controversy regarding its treatment of whistleblowers, exemplified by Chelsea Manning's conviction. Wikileaks' work allows citizens to stay informed about their governments' activities and hold leaders accountable for their actions. Public scrutiny fosters democratic discourse and policymaking, fundamental elements of a functioning democracy. This protection ensures that those with information of public interest can disclose it without being silenced or victimized by those with greater power. These discussions often lead to societal and institutional reforms, as public outcry can pressure governments and corporations to rectify unethical practices and prevent future transgressions. However, it is important to acknowledge that Wikileaks also faces certain threats and criticisms. Compromising national security and endangering lives through the release of classified information related to military operations and diplomatic negotiations. There are ethical questions regarding privacy, governance norms and editorial standard. The organization's use of anonymous sources and encryption methods raises concerns about the vetting process and the determination of whether releasing information is in the public interest. Legal challenges from governments and corporations which classified information have been published by Wikileaks, which can pose a significant threat to the organization's sustainability. Wikileaks has had a substantial impact on global politics, media, diplomacy, and the military. It has exposed hidden truths, fueled public debate, and fostered transparency and accountability. However, it also faces threats and ethical challenges that raise important questions about privacy, national security, and the balance between freedom of speech and responsible information dissemination. At the end, I thank to Respected Sir Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer who has shown in my growth as a writer. His belief in my abilities and their dedication to helping me succeed has been an invaluable source of motivation. His mentorship has empowered me to explore new perspectives, challenge my own assumptions, and develop a stronger and more confident voice.

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Briefs

Pak marks 'Sanctity of Quran Day'

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noting that not only Pakistan but the entire Muslim world was concerned over the vile act. The premier said people across the country would express their emotions over the heart-wrenching incident after Friday prayers, where "all Muslims will raise the flag of the Holy Quran's honour and record their protest". "Quran is in our hearts. The Quran is not only a recitation for us but a guideline for living," the prime minister added. Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari said the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden is another example of the rising Islamophobic mindset that seeks to dehumanise and denigrate Islam. "It is an act of blatant provocation to try [to] inflame sentiments and undermine Islam as a religion of peace, tolerance, and acceptance," the top diplomat said. "Pakistan will be raising this issue at the UNHRC urgent debate in Geneva on behalf of the OIC Group on 11 July on the premeditated acts of desecration of Holy Quran." Climate Change Minister Sherry Rehman said the desecration of the holy book not only dehumanises Islam, but also deliberately seeks to provoke Muslim sentiment and ignite emotions to undermine the basic teachings of Islam as a religion of peace, tolerance, and acceptance. "Pakistan will be raising this issue at the UNHRC urgent debate in Geneva on behalf of the OIC Group on 11 July on the premeditated acts of desecration of Holy Quran."

Sweden mulls banning...

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country's far-reaching freedom of speech laws. However, while talking to Aftonbladet paper, Stromer said Thursday that the government was analysing the situation and considering whether the legislation needs to be amended. "We have to ask ourselves whether the current order is good or whether there is reason to reconsider it," the justice minister told Aftonbladet. He added that Sweden had become a "prioritised target" for attacks. "We can see that the Quran burning last week has generated threats to our internal security," he said.

Ukraine says advancing near city...

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US law prohibits the transfer of cluster munitions with bomblet failure rates higher than 1% - meaning more than 1% of the bomblets in the weapon do not explode - but President Joe Biden is able to bypass this rule. A spokesperson for the armed forces general staff said Ukrainian forces had had "partial success" near the village of Klishchiivka, just southwest of Bakhmut. Ukrainian military analysts have said that securing Klishchiivka would help Ukraine take back Bakhmut, which was captured by Russian forces in May after months of fighting. Russia's RIA news agency cited a Russian army source as saying this week that Moscow's forces had repelled an attack on Klishchiivka and were mopping up remaining Ukrainian troops in the area. Moscow, which began its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, sees Bakhmut as a stepping stone to attacking other cities. Russia still holds Bakhmut but Ukrainian forces hope to encircle the city.

PM Youth Program game...

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capital for job and business opportunities and promote healthy activities and sports amongst the youth. She said this will defeat the mindset which incites the youth for violence for nefarious designs instead of giving laptops to them.

Kvitova, Kostyuk through to 3rd round as Badosa retires

Two-time Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova beat Belarusian Aliaksandra Sasnovich 6-2, 6-2 to advance to the third round of Wimbledon, matching her result from last year as she continues her campaign for a third title at SW19

SPORTS DESK

LONDON: Ukraine's Marta Kostyuk reached the Wimbledon third round for the first time after her Spanish opponent Paula Badosa retired with an injury during their match on Friday. The 21-year-old Kostyuk was leading 6-2 1-0 when Badosa pulled out with a back problem. Badosa, the 25-year-old girlfriend of Greek Stefanos Tsitsipas who will renew his battle with Andy Murray later on Friday, missed the French Open due to a spinal stress fracture. Badosa was scheduled to play with Tsitsipas in the mixed doubles but she has pulled out of the tournament saying the "smartest thing" to do was to stop playing. "The injury is the same as I have been struggling the past weeks. It's the stress fracture," Badosa told reporters. "I tried my best to try to play here, but yesterday when I woke up I already, after my first-round match, felt it again. It's a little bit worse. So I will need a few days off and talk to my team and see what I do in the next days and the next weeks." Kostyuk de-

feated eighth seed Maria Sakkari in the first round and will hope to continue her run against 25th seed Madison Keys. Fans will have to wait to watch Paula Badosa and Stefanos Tsitsipas team in mixed doubles after Badosa was forced to withdraw from the event at Wimbledon due to injury. Tsitsipas and Badosa, who recently made public their relationship, were due to compete together for

ing 2-6, 0-1 on Friday due to a lower back injury, leading to their withdrawal. It is the same injury that forced the former World No. 2 to miss Roland Garros in May. "No I won't be able [to]," Badosa said when asked if she could still play with Tsitsipas. "The injury is the same as I have been struggling the past weeks. It's the stress fracture. I tried my best to try to play here, but yesterday when I woke

talk to my team and see what I do in the next days and the next weeks." World No. 5 Tsitsipas will continue his singles quest on Friday when he resumes his match against Andy Murray. The Greek will walk onto Centre Court trailing by two sets to one after play was suspended on Thursday night due to the 11 p.m. curfew.

Two-time Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova beat Belarusian Aliaksandra Sasnovich 6-2, 6-2 to advance to the third round of Wimbledon, matching her result from last year as she continues her campaign for a third title at SW19. The Czech was in fine form throughout as she brushed aside the considerable challenge of Sasnovich. Having won the title in Berlin during her build-up to the Championships, Kvitova remains a strong contender for the title.

Kvitova, ranked No. 9, will face the winner of the match between Serb qualifier Natalija Stevanovic and German lucky loser Tamara Korpatsch next. Petra Kvitova beat Italian Jasmine Paolini (6-4, 6-7 (5), 6-1) ahead of her victory. In the previous round of The Championships, Sasnovich, ranked No 69, won against Spaniard Nuria Parrizas Diaz (6-2, 6-1).



British Grand Prix: Max Verstappen tops first practice

WEB DESK

LONDON: Max Verstappen led team-mate Sergio Perez in a Red Bull one-two in first practice at the British Grand Prix. Williams driver Alex Albon was an unexpected third fastest, 0.253 seconds off the pace, an indication that other teams have not reached their ultimate potential this weekend. Fernando Alonso's Aston Martin was the first established front-runner behind the Red Bulls in fourth. He headed Ferrari's Charles Leclerc in fifth place by just 0.012 seconds. Alonso was 0.668secs slower than Verstappen, who is looking for a sixth consecutive victory this weekend, with Perez 0.448secs off the benchmark set by his team-mate. Verstappen's pace, despite complaints from the Dutchman about a lack of grip that he said felt "like driving on ice", confirmed the expectation pre-race that Silverstone's high-speed swerves would emphasise the Red Bull's advantages over the rest of the field. Esteban Ocon put in a promising showing and set the sixth fastest time in the upgraded Alpine, which has a new front wing, ahead of Ferrari's Carlos Sainz and the McLaren of Lando Norris. Norris, too, has a new front wing in addition to the major upgrade that improved the performance of the McLaren at the Austrian



Grand Prix last weekend. Mercedes had a difficult session. Lewis Hamilton and George Russell were only 12th and 14th fastest, despite both cars being fitted with yet another new front wing as Mercedes continue to deliver upgrades aimed at returning them to a competitive position. Russell complained that the car was "all over the place in Turns Six and Seven" as both drivers seemed to be battling with a lack of rear grip, a perennial problem for Mercedes since the start of 2022.

Mercedes did not run the soft tyre, which will have affected their positions. The teams were having their first experience of the new Pirelli tyre, introduced for the rest of the season with a stronger construction to reduce chances of failure. The session took place under blue skies in temperatures of close to 25C and in front of packed grandstands, with a total of 480,000 expected at Silverstone over the three days of the race meeting.

Unsettled weather with the chance of rain is expected over the weekend. Those there will have the chance to see Hollywood superstar Brad Pitt driving in a modified Formula 2 car as filming starts for the new Apple F1 movie. The Oscar winner, who has been practising at Silverstone in the lead up to the race, is playing a veteran racer who returns to the sport to mentor a rising young star.

Top players get better treatment at Wimbledon: Cornet

LONDON: Lower-ranked players are not treated as equals to the big names at Wimbledon, France's former world number 11 Alize Cornet said on Thursday after losing in the second round. Cornet's 16th Wimbledon was ended by defending champion Elena Rybakina as she suffered a 6-2 7-6(2) defeat. The 33-year-old, now ranked 74th and playing in a women's professional era record 66th successive Grand Slam, said she noticed the difference at the All England Club this year. "It's a different treatment on every Slam," she said. "When I'm at home, in Roland Garros, I have priorities over the courts, I know everybody, I can ask when I want to play. I think the organisation does everything for the French player to be successful there. Then in Wimbledon, you have a huge difference between the seeded players and the other players. This is not new. The difference of treatment and tickets." Asked to elaborate, Cornet said she had only been given two tickets for her first round victory on an outside court but had received 40 for her match against Rybakina on Centre Court - not surprisingly perhaps as Centre Court has 15,000 seats. "That explains everything," Cornet told reporters. "Nobody could come. I couldn't even invite one of my best friends who was there. Two tickets on the outside court, it's too little. You need to give a little more credit to players that play on the outside courts. This tournament exists because of all the players, not only the ones that play on the big courts." - Agencies

Alcaraz gains first win on Centre Court

LONDON: World number one Carlos Alcaraz gained his first victory on Centre Court as he defeated France's Alexandre Muller to move into the third round of Wimbledon. The 20-year-old Spaniard won 6-4 7-6 (7-2) 6-3 against the world number 84. Alcaraz lost to Jannik Sinner in the last 16 on Centre Court in 2022, but defeated a battling Muller on Friday. Elsewhere, there were wins for third seed Daniil Medvedev and sixth seed Holger Rune, but 15th seed Alex de Minaur was beaten by Matteo Berrettini. The unseeded Italian, a finalist here in 2021 when he lost to Novak Djokovic, gained a 6-3 6-4 6-4 victory to eliminate Australian De Minaur, who will also be

involved in mixed doubles action later on when he teams up with girlfriend Katie Boulter, the British women's number one. This is Alcaraz's third year of playing at Wimbledon and in 2021 he won on court six, before losing on Court One. His three wins in 2022 included two victories on Court One and another success on court two ahead of the loss to Sinner. He won his opener this year on Court One on Tuesday, with today's win over Muller surely the first of many on the sport's most famous stage. "I'm really, really happy," said Alcaraz. "It's my second match on Centre Court and I lost the first one last year, so I'm really happy to play here again. "It's something I wanted to



enjoy every single second of and I did. "It's important to start the tournament well, having great feelings and I think I'm playing really, really well on grass. "I'm not as experienced as other players but I think I'm playing at a great level, getting

more experience and getting better each match I play. "Playing here at Wimbledon is something special, you feel different compared to other tournaments. I try to enjoy playing tennis and make people enjoy watch tennis." - Agencies

Spanish coaches offering blueprint for success

BARCELONA: In the wake of Pep Guardiola's stunning treble with Manchester City and Paris Saint-Germain turning to Luis Enrique, it is clear Spanish coaching is in vogue. The duo, both treble winners at Barcelona, are joined by plenty of compatriots at other top-flight sides on the continent. Arsenal's Mikel Arteta, Guardiola's former assistant, ran City close for the English title last season. With a different approach to the game, Unai Emery has pulled up trees with Aston Villa, Bournemouth sprang for the exciting Andoni Iraola, while Julen Lopetegui helped Wolves avoid the drop and Marseille appointed Marcelino Garcia Toral in June. Spanish coaches have been increasingly appealing since the country dominated world football between 2008 and 2012,

La Roja winning European Championships in those years, as well as the 2010 World Cup. Nations League victory this summer, under Luis de la Fuente, who replaced Luis Enrique in December, is a further boost after a fallow period. With Spain's football so dominant - at club level La Liga teams have won 11 of the last 24 Champions Leagues and 12 of the last 20 Europa Leagues - overseas clubs watched with covetous eyes. That interest leads to a "brain drain" effect but the Spanish FA's coaching school quickly produces replacements. "We are the reflection in the federation of how they work at the clubs and in the youth academies," said Spain U21 coach Santi Denia after leading his team into the Euro 2023 final for that age category. "The level of

erating in England, three in France including Luis Enrique, and one in Germany. Almost 27 percent of teams across Europe's top five leagues have a Spaniard at the helm, as of July 2023. Without the spending power of other leagues - out-

side of Spain's big three of Barcelona, Real Madrid and Atletico - many clubs focus on coaching players rather than buying new ones. Instead of the power, speed and frantic nature English football is known for, in Spain teams have often looked to hone some of the more technical and tactical aspects of the game. Even though elsewhere teams defend with more brawn, backlines in Spain are often tougher to break down because they control spaces superbly. In the Premier League supporters sometimes derided passing the ball out from the back or considered it too risky, but an increasing majority of teams now employ the strategy. While the "tiki-taka" style in its purest form has faded, with even Guardiola moving on, the key elements of it still propel City's game. Combining that level of

technique and positional play with the physicality and velocity the Premier League is known for has found the apex of the two styles. Guardiola's treble-winning team has an imposing spine, from Erling Haaland to Rodri to regularly lining up with four central defenders, but still dominating with the ball. That union of styles is reflected in the personality of Luis Enrique, a forceful presence both as a player and in the dug-out, but a staunch advocate of possession football while in charge of Spain. Perhaps it also explains how so many coaches have come from one province of Spain's Basque country - Guipuzcoa. Iraola, Emery, Lopetegui and Arteta all hail from there, along with current Real Sociedad coach Imanol Alguacil and Bayer Leverkusen's Xabi Alonso. - Agencies



Distribution of one lac laptops to...

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He informed that he as CM Punjab also provided scholarships to the talented youth under Punjab Education Endowment Fund (PEEF), and the beneficiary of these programmes was now serving the country in various areas including health, IT and Engineering. The prime minister maintained that this had been his mission to provide every youth with a laptop machine to enable them to successfully move forward in their respective areas. He informed that apart from the 100,000 laptops approved for the previous financial year, he also got another 100,000 laptops approved for the current fiscal year. He said the laptop distribution process would totally be on merit and no influence will be accepted in this regard. For the youth from rural areas, he said the government had allocated Rs 5 billion to provide agriculture loans, while another Rs 5 billion had been allocated for the provision of skilled-based training to the youth. Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Youth Affairs Shaza Fatima Khawaja said Muslim League (N) in its every tenure, had empowered the youth.

50 dead in rain-related incidents

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The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has predicted more heavy rainfall nationwide in the days ahead and warned of potential flooding in the catchment areas of Punjab's major rivers. The province's disaster management authority said Friday it is working to relocate people living along the waterways. Scientists have said climate change is making seasonal rains heavier and more unpredictable. Last summer, unprecedented monsoon rains put a third of Pakistan under water, damaging two million homes and killing more than 1,700 people.

IMF holds direct talks with...

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one month of controlled imports, Pakistan has been facing its worst economic crisis in decades, which analysts say could have spiralled into a debt default in the absence of the IMF deal. "I am pleased to announce that the IMF team has reached a staff-level agreement with the Pakistani authorities on a nine-month Stand-by Arrangement (SBA) in the amount of SDR2.250 million (about \$3 billion or 111 per cent of Pakistan's IMF quota)," Nathan Porter, the IMF's Mission Chief to Pakistan, had said in a statement. The \$3 billion funding, spread over nine months, is higher than expected for Pakistan. The country was awaiting the release of the remaining \$2.5 billion from a \$6.5 billion bailout package agreed in 2019. The deal comes after an eight-month delay and offers some respite to Pakistan, which is battling an acute balance of payments crisis and falling foreign exchange reserves. Earlier, Federal Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar held a crucial meeting with Ester Perez Luis, the country representative of the IMF.

Weekly inflation up to 28.5pc

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their average prices during the week over the previous include tomatoes (42.25 percent), onions (8.70 percent), potatoes (4.79 percent), wheat flour bag 20 kg (4.05 percent), gur (4.01 percent), sugar (3.48 percent), shirting (3.02 percent), hi-speed diesel (2.95 percent), garlic (1.90 percent), matchbox each (1.66 percent), curd (1.43 percent), pulse mash (1.29 percent), milk fresh (1.20 percent), rice irri-6/9 (0.74 percent), rice basmati broken (0.67 percent), mustard oil (0.59 percent), tea prepared (0.56 percent), long cloth 57/ Gul ahmed/ Al Karam (0.51 percent), nutron (0.40 percent), beef with bone (0.39 percent), toilet soap (0.24 percent), powdered milk Nido 390 gm polybag each (0.13 percent), georgette (0.08 percent) and cooked daal (0.04 percent).

Briefs

6 killed in Rohingya camps after ICC prosecutor visit

Cox's: Six Rohingya refugees were killed in Bangladesh relief camp clashes that broke out hours after an International Criminal Court prosecutor visited the settlements to gather testimony, police said Friday. Bangladesh is home to around a million members of the stateless minority, most of whom fled a 2017 military crackdown in neighbouring Myanmar that is now subject to a genocide probe at the UN court. This week's violence was the latest in a series of deadly clashes between the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) and the Rohingya Solidarity Organisation (RSO), two rival insurgent groups operating in the camps. Faruq Ahmed, a spokesman for the Armed Police Battalion that looks after security in the refugee camps, told AFP that five people had been shot dead in a gunfight before dawn on Friday. "All five who were killed in the gunfight are members of ARSA including a commander," he said, adding that security had been stepped up in the camps as a result. Ahmed said that the violence came hours after the murder of Ebadullah, a refugee community leader, apparently at the hands of ARSA members.—DNA

UN food aid deliveries by AI robots could begin next year

GENEVA: AI-powered robotic vehicles could deliver food parcels to conflict and disaster zones by as early as next year in a move aimed to spare the lives of humanitarian workers, a World Food Programme (WFP) official told Reuters. Attacks against aid workers have intensified in recent years amid the highest number of violent conflicts since World War Two, according to the United Nations. WFP, the U.N.'s food aid agency, alone lost three workers earlier this year in Sudan's conflict. "Sometimes it's too dangerous to send in a driver or WFP staff. So using that technology could actually be a step change," said Bernhard Kowatsch, who heads the WFP's innovation department. Kowatsch was speaking at the sidelines of a conference organised by the International Telecommunication Union in Geneva to make the case for AI to help reach U.N. global goals, such as eliminating hunger. The trucks are amphibious and can carry about 1-2 tonnes of food each. They were first conceived during the battle for Syria's Aleppo, between 2012 and 2016, when humanitarian workers struggled to get aid to besieged parts of the city, Kowatsch said.—APP

Twitter threatens legal action over Meta's new app

WEB DESK
CALIFORNIA: Twitter is considering legal action against Meta over its fast-growing rival app Threads. Threads, which was launched to millions on Wednesday, is similar to Twitter and has been pitched by Meta bosses as a "friendly" alternative. Twitter's Elon Musk said "competition is fine, cheating is not" — but Meta denied claims in a legal letter that ex-Twitter staff helped create Threads. More than 30 million people have signed up for the new app, according to Meta. That is less than a tenth of the estimated 350 million users on Twitter, according to Statista. According to an SEC filing from 2013, it took Twitter four years to build the same number of users that Threads gained in a day — though Twitter grew its userbase from scratch, while Threads was able to tap into the pre-existing two billion monthly users Meta says Instagram has. The look and feel of Threads are similar to those of Twitter, technology reporter James Clayton noted.—Agencies

FPCCI, Chambers' of Commerce greet Kazakh-Pak direct flight

Direct air between Kazakhstan and Pakistan is a milestone in promoting mutual business and economic integration with Kazakhstan and Central Asia

ISLAMABAD: The Federation Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) and various federal and provincial chambers of commerce and industry of the country greeted the Kazakhstan-Pakistan direct flight to be inaugurated on July 8th of current months and called it an important step in promoting mutual economic cooperation and business between the two countries. Direct air between Kazakhstan and Pakistan is a milestone in promoting mutual business and economic integration with Kazakhstan and Central Asia, President FPCCI, Irfan Iqbal Malik said this while talking to APP here Friday. Pakistan Federation Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Peshawar and Quetta Chamber of Commerce and

Industry, Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Gujranwala Chamber of Commerce and Industry called the direct flights between Kazakhstan and Pakistan an important development for the promotion of economic and trade relations between the two countries and economic integration with the Central Asian states. President of Pakistan Federation Chamber of Commerce and Industry Irfan Shaikh while talking to APP said that the direct flight between Kazakhstan and Pakistan which will be inaugurated on July 8 will increase the possibilities of economic cooperation between the two countries and the economic and trade relations between the two countries will increase. He said that the coming of

two flights a week from Almaty, the industrial centre of Kazakhstan, to Lahore, will give an opportunity to local businesses and businessmen to increase economic activities. He said that the Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan, Yerzan Kistafin, deserves to be commended for playing an important role in the launch of a direct flight between Lahore and Almaty for promoting mutual trade. Meanwhile, Karachi Chamber of Commerce President, Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry Muhammad Tariq Yousaf said that the economic relations between the two countries will improve further with the start of direct flights between Kazakhstan and Pakistan. He said that the business community of Karachi appreciates this connection between the two countries and wants trade relations

with Kazakhstan and Central Asia. On this occasion, the President of Lahore Chamber of Commerce, Kashif Anwar said that Kazakhstan is an important country in Central Asia with which direct air flight is a good step. He said that direct flights between Lahore and Almaty, the commercial city of Kazakhstan, will strengthen the business relations between the two countries, and for this, the Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan, Yerzan Kistafin, certainly deserves tribute. President of the Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce Dr. Khurram Tariq said that direct flight from Lahore to Almaty city of Kazakhstan will play an important role in trade, tourism and cultural relations and exchanges between the two countries. He said that his chamber hailed the Islamabad Embassy of Kazakhstan for

crossing this milestone on behalf of the business community of Faisalabad, which has included its national airline Scat in the operation. Meanwhile, the President of Quetta Chamber of Commerce Wali Muhammad Nozai said that Central Asia and Quetta Balochistan have a historical mutual connection and the launch of direct flight between Kazakhstan and Pakistan is an important development. He said that such connections should be made in other cities including Quetta in future. President of Peshawar Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ijaz Afridi said that Peshawar Chamber considers such links as welcome and our businessmen are commercially connected with Central Asia. President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce Ahsan Bakhtavari said that Kazakhstan is the largest

economy in Central Asia, with which Pakistan's direct air flight connection is a milestone. He said that he will soon visit Kazakhstan with a large delegation of businessmen from Islamabad where there will be agreements on bilateral trade. The president of Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry Saqib Rafiq has said that Rawalpindi Chamber values the relations with Central Asian states, especially Kazakhstan, and in the near future, they will cooperate with the Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan Yerzan Kistafin under a comprehensive policy. Also, Steps will be taken to promote trade. President Gujranwala Chamber of Commerce and Industry also appreciated the direct air flight between both nations from Lahore to Almaty.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Service Long March Tyres and Chaoyang Long March Tyres led by their Chairman Mr Li Qingwen calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.—DNA

Three-day training for DROs, ROs concluded

ISLAMABAD: The three-day training by the leading trainers for District Returning Officers (DROs) and Returning Officers (ROs) ahead of the upcoming general elections was successfully concluded at Pakistan's Electoral Academy for Democratic Practices, Research, and Management (PADRM) here Friday. A total of 33 officers from the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) were imparted comprehensive training during this intensive session. They will play a pivotal role in disseminating their knowledge to a larger group, including 142 DROs and 859 ROs hailing from all four provinces of the country. The training session encompassed a wide range of topics crucial to ensuring the smooth conduct of the upcoming general elections. The participants received comprehensive instruction on electoral procedures, legal frameworks, and best practices in managing the electoral process. Equipped with this valuable knowledge, the trained officers are now well-prepared to fulfill their vital roles during the upcoming elections. To acknowledge the successful completion of the training, Zafar Iqbal Hussain, Special Secretary of the ECP, presented certificates to all the participants. This recognition underscores the commitment of the ECP in strengthening the skills and expertise of electoral officers, ensuring the highest standards of professionalism and efficiency in the electoral process.—Agencies

MoU signed to promote Pak-China furniture collaboration

BEIJING: A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the International Famous Furniture Fair (Dongguan) and the All Pakistan Furniture Makers Association (APFMA) to promote communication and cooperation between Chinese and Pakistani furniture enterprises. The MoU signed between APFMA & Dongguan Famous Furniture Association in presence of Acting Consul General of Pakistan in Guangzhou, Sardar Muhammad. Sardar Muhammad expressed his appreciation for this move, recognizing the potential benefits for both countries in collaborating within the furniture sector. Gwadar Pro reported on Friday. According to the MoU, cooperation will be fostered through business negotiations, technology exchange, market promotion, and other projects. This agreement aims to provide a platform and opportunities for collaboration between Chinese and Pakistani furniture enterprises, promoting mutual benefits and achieving win-win situations. The MoU seeks to leverage the advantageous resources of the furniture industries in both countries to enhance overall competitiveness and international influence. Additionally, it aims to provide comprehensive support for joint exhibition events, ensuring they become more influential and inclusive by offering richer, more professional, and authoritative assistance.—DNA

Japanese PM heads to NATO to warn of East Asia risks

TOKYO: Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida will join NATO leaders in Lithuania on Tuesday to remind an alliance focused on Ukraine to pay heed to Chinese and Russian activity in Asia, which Japan sees as a threat to global security. Kishida's second visit to a North Atlantic Treaty Organization gathering, along with the leaders of South Korea, Australia and New Zealand, comes as Japan doubles defence spending to deter Chinese and Russian forces in the waters and skies around Japan. With Japan feeling it can no longer solely rely on its old ally the U.S. to back it up, Kishida is also courting new security partners. "Japan talks about principles such as territorial integrity, but the message to Europe is 'don't forget about the Indo-Pacific, no matter how difficult the situation with Russia is,'" said Michio Tsuruoka, a NATO expert at Keio University. In its most recent annual national security assessment, Japan said it was surrounded by nuclear-armed actors, including China, North Korea and Russia, which is also a neighbour to six NATO members. Tokyo worries about getting sucked into a conflict over Taiwan, which is only 100 km (62 miles) away.—Agencies

US jobs data fails to give equities a boost

LONDON: Wall Street stocks sputtered Friday as investors still bet on the US Federal Reserve hiking interest rates further despite jobs data showing hiring slowed more than expected last month. The government figures had been eagerly awaited by investors as a gauge whether the Fed will need to raise interest rates once or twice again this year in order to bring down inflation. The world's biggest economy added 209,000 jobs last month, down from a revised figure of 306,000 in May. The employment figure was below the median expectation of 240,000 new jobs in a survey of economists conducted by MarketWatch. Briefing.com analyst Patrick O'Hare said what the "report won't change is the Fed's view that additional tightening action is likely going to be appropriate". While the data fits the narrative of a soft landing of the US economy from the impact of interest rate hikes, the Fed will unlikely be reassured by growth in average hourly earnings accelerating. Data Thursday showed US private firms created twice as many jobs as expected in June, while the crucial services sector saw solid growth. O'Hare said the market is expecting an interest rate hike in July, but so far see less than 50 percent chances of hikes in September, November and December meetings of Fed policymakers.—Agencies

Indian court rejects Rahul Gandhi's plea

NEW DELHI: An Indian high court rejected an appeal by opposition leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday to suspend his conviction in a defamation case, quashing for now his hope of returning to parliament and contesting national elections due next year. Abhishek Singhvi, Gandhi's lawyer and spokesperson for his Congress party, called the judgment "legally wrong" and said he would soon appeal against it in the Supreme Court, the last option. Gandhi was convicted in March in a case brought by Purnesh Modi, a Gujarat state lawmaker from the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), over comments he made in 2019 deemed insulting to Prime Minister

Narendra Modi and other people surnamed Modi. "How come all thieves have the name Modi?" Gandhi had asked in an election campaign speech, referring to two fugitive businessmen, both surnamed Modi. Rahul Gandhi, 53, scion of a dynasty that has given India three prime ministers, was sentenced to two years' imprisonment but the jail term was put on hold and he was given bail. He also lost his parliamentary seat following the conviction, since lawmakers sentenced to jail terms of two years or more are automatically disqualified. They are also barred from running for election for six years after the end of the two-year jail term. Gandhi has separately challenged

the conviction in a district court, which has yet to hear the case. Justice Hemant Prachhchhak of the High Court in the western state of Gujarat said in his order on Friday that a stay of conviction is not a rule but an exemption to be resorted to in rare cases. "The refusal of stay of conviction would not in any way result in injustice to the applicant," the judge said. "There is no reasonable ground to stay the conviction of the applicant in view of the facts and circumstances of the case." There was no immediate response from Gandhi regarding the verdict. His lawyer Singhvi said Friday's judgment did not address the main issues he raised to question the conviction. "We have full faith in the

judiciary, and in particular in the apex court where we are now proceeding," he told reporters. During the hearing of the case, Singhvi argued that the crime for which Gandhi had been convicted is not "serious" and not being allowed to contest elections for eight years is "virtually semi-permanent in politics". Gandhi is only the second lawmaker in India to be disqualified from parliament after being convicted. The other case was in January this year, but the lawmaker was subsequently reinstated. Gandhi's disqualification spurred India's main opposition parties to sink their differences and join hands to plan a united challenge to the BJP in the 2024 national elections.—Agencies

Pakistani brands attract visitors

CHENGDU: Carpets, shawls, high-end jade handicrafts... A wide array of made-in-Pakistan products attracted visitors at the 19th Western China International Fair held here in recent week. Muhammad Kamil, a Pakistani exhibitor, is not new to the fair. During the five-day fair, he was impressed by the incessant flow of visitors lingering at his booth. "Post pandemic, the dynamism is all back. Visitors are showing a growing interest in products from Pakistan, especially the crafts made of jade and stone," he told China Economic Net (CEN) reporter. "This year, I have witnessed and participated in a number of fairs and expos held in China. They have enabled more Pakistani products to be available to Chinese consumers," he added. The 36-square-kilometer Pakistan Pavilion is part of the Belt and Road International Cooperation Pavilion that was set up to celebrate the 10th anniversary of BRI. As the first national-level major exhibition held in western China this year, the fair attracts the participation of more than 3,500 enterprises from 56 countries and regions, as well as over 60,000 honored guests.—Agencies

Chinese enterprises invited to invest in NEV industry

BEIJING: Consul General of Pakistan in Shanghai, Hussain Haider has invited Chinese businesses and enterprises to invest in Pakistan's New Energy Vehicle (NEV) industry, which was one of the most promising areas of bilateral cooperation, and to take benefits from a large and growing market and the incentives provided by the government. Welcoming the participants at China-Pakistan New Energy Vehicle (Electric Vehicle) Industry Cooperation Seminar in Shanghai, he highlighted the importance of bilateral cooperation in the NEV sector. As part of the celebrations of the Decade of the CPEC and the efforts to strengthen bilateral cooperation under BRI and CPEC, the Mission, in coordination with ICT Belt & Road Union Shanghai, organized the seminar. During the seminar, the experts and representatives of companies in the NEV industry and government officials

shared their insights on China's systematic advantages in EV and potential and opportunities for bilateral cooperation with Pakistan in view of its large market and key needs. Over 100 representatives from China and Pakistan in the new energy, technology, and transportation industries, industrial chain parts, manufacturers' associations, and leading design and manufacturing enterprises, participated in the forum through on-site and video connections. China Economic Net (CEN) adds: In her opening remarks, Zhao Baige, Vice Chair of the 12th NPC Foreign Affairs Committee of the People's Republic of China, noted that new energy vehicle technology has become an essential track for the fourth industrial revolution. She stated that the growth of the new energy vehicle industry requires supportive policies and production. Zhao shared that China has been the world's

largest producer and seller of new energy vehicles for eight consecutive years, with sales increasing over a thousand-fold from less than 6,000 in 2011 to 6.887 million in 2022. After over a decade of development, China has established policy systems to support the rapid development of new energy vehicles in areas like development planning, consumption subsidies, hedging policies, research investment, government procurement, and standard formulation. Usman Ali, Manager (Policy), Engineering Development Board (EDB), Ministry of Industries & Production, Pakistan, presented on the incentives for electric vehicles in Pakistan under the Auto Industry Development & Export Policy (AIDEP). He stated that the policy includes incentives for electric vehicles such as 2-3 wheelers, cars, SUVs, buses, trucks, etc. To promote EV manufacturing in Pakistan, the import of charging.—APP

Pak, Afghan possess huge potential of trade

He accepted the offer of Afghan officials for participation of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa investors

PESHAWAR: KP Caretaker Minister for Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Mohammad Adnan Jalil has said that Pakistan and Afghanistan have huge potential for bilateral trade and economic ties. He expressed these views during a meeting with an Afghan delegation led by the Afghan Consul General Hafiz Mohibullah here at the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment and Trade (KPBOIT) on Friday. Director Business Development KPBOIT Bilal Sarwar, Coordinator FPCCI Sartaj Ahmed Khan, Economic Advisor Industries Department Abdul Rehman and other officials assisted the minister during the meeting. The provincial minister said that apart from sharing religious and cultural relations, Pakistan and Afghanistan also enjoy cordial relationships, based on closed proximity and neighborhood between the two countries. He said that people of both countries feel brotherly sentiments for each other while Pakistan wishes for sustainable peace in Afghanistan, which is a catalyst for the stability of the whole region. The provincial minister discussed matters of mutual interest with the Afghan diplomats, focusing on further expansion of trade and business activities between the two countries, increasing the volume of Pak-Afghan trade and taking benefits from cross border investment opportunities. The minister also invited Afghan relevant authorities, traders and business community to visit Pakistan and participate in the upcoming Pak Afghan Expo scheduled in September this year. He accepted the offer of Afghan officials for participation of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa investors and relevant officials, in the Afghan Business Conference, to be held in Afghanistan in near future.—Agencies

NATO to grapple with Ukraine push at summit

BRUSSELS: NATO leaders at a summit next week will underscore a vow that Ukraine will join the alliance in the future, its chief Jens Stoltenberg said Friday, as Kyiv seeks faster progress. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky is set to attend the two-day gathering in Lithuania to make the case that his country should join when Russia's war ends. I expect allied leaders will reaffirm that Ukraine will become a member of NATO and unite on how to bring Ukraine closer to its goal," Stoltenberg said. NATO's 31 members are still haggling over the final wording for a statement on how to address Ukraine's membership. Eastern European countries back Kyiv's calls to be granted a pathway into NATO for when the conflict ends. But key powers the United States and Germany are reluctant to go beyond a 2008 promise that Ukraine would join one day, without setting a clear timeframe. "The exact wording will be made public when we have agreed," Stoltenberg said.—Agencies

Briefs

Adv. Shoaib Shaheen appointed PTI legal spox

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Advocate Shoaib Shaheen has been appointed as Spokesperson on Legal Affairs, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Friday. PTI Secretary General Omar Ayub issued the notification of his appointment with the approval of PTI Chairman Imran Khan.

Brain-eating amoeba kills one in Karachi

DNA

KARACHI: The Naegleria, a brain-eating amoeba, claimed another life in Karachi Sindh health department said Friday. According to the health department spokesperson, Salman Ahmed, a 21-year-old resident of DHA, was admitted to a private hospital on 18 June after developing a fever. Despite receiving ventilator support, his health continued to deteriorate, and passed away on July 6. The total number of deaths due to Naegleria in the ongoing year has reached six. Earlier, Sindh Information Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon had asked the people of Karachi to take preventive measures to avoid becoming a victim of Naegleria fowleri – a rare but deadly waterborne amoeba that thrives in freshwater sources. The minister expressed these views at a press conference here. Sharjeel Inam Memon urged public to refrain from swimming in pools that have not been properly chlorinated. He further advised the public to avoid activities that may cause water to enter the nose. As it was feared with the advent of the sizzling summer, naegleria has begun claiming human lives and the situation demands greater measures on part of the relevant authorities as the germ finds little resistance because of poor chlorination in most parts of the city. Chlorination is the key method to kill the germ and keep the life-taking disease at bay. Another way is to use boiled water while cleaning nose as the germ enters through the nasal cavity of its victim and attacks the brain.

FIA arrests six more human traffickers

DNA

GUJRAT: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on Friday claimed to have arrested six more human traffickers during the ongoing countrywide crackdown linked with the migrant boat tragedy off the coast of Greece. In a statement, the FIA spokesperson said that the agency arrested six human traffickers – members of a notorious gang involved in sending Pakistanis to Europe 'illegally'. The suspects, according to investigation agency, were arrested from Kharian, Malkwal, Jhelum, Lahore and Gujrat. The arrested accused were identified as Aslam Darian, Hasnain Shah, Safdar, Arshad Gujjar, Ashraf and Mumtaz Hussain. The FIA spokesperson noted that the suspects took millions for rupees from Pakistani citizens to send them to Europe. The accused received Rs2.5 million to 2.7 million per person from a number of citizens. "Several cases were registered against the arrested accused", the spokesperson said, adding that the suspects had also links with the international smuggling group. It is pertinent to mention here that an Italy-bound fishing trawler reportedly carrying at least 800 people – including hundreds of Pakistanis – capsized off Greece. Only 104 people are known to have survived and the chance of finding more survivors was seen as virtually nil.

US embassy celebrates US-Pak green alliance

US-Pakistan Green Alliance framework is a transformative initiative addressing today's most pressing environmental challenges, especially around water management, climate-smart agriculture, and renewable energy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The U.S. Embassy in Islamabad hosted a reception on July 6 to commemorate the 247th anniversary of the independence of the United States of America. Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif is the guest of honor, representing the people and government of Pakistan. In addition to celebrating Independence Day, the event recognized the achievements of the U.S.-Pakistan Green Alliance framework and looked ahead to the many opportunities for continued and expanded partnership between the United States and Pakistan.

The U.S.-Pakistan Green Alliance framework is a transformative initiative addressing today's most pressing environmental challenges, especially around water management, climate-smart agriculture, and renewable energy. Beyond mitigating climate change and its effects, the partnership recognizes that green choices also present tremendous economic opportunities, opening doors for increased bilateral trade and investment, as well as the creation of new jobs and industries. The initiative actively promotes the inclusion of women in the economy to ensure that the path to a greener, more



sustainable future is empowering for all. Last year's flooding in Pakistan served as a stark reminder that climate change

is not a distant threat. As Pakistan continues to recover from the devastation and prioritizes a transition to

clean energy and environmental stewardship, the United States will remain a steadfast partner. The United States has already pledged over \$215 million to support the Pakistani people's recovery and resilience to future disasters. In his remarks, U.S. Ambassador Donald Blome noted the importance of values like innovation and creative problem-solving to the Green Alliance framework, which builds upon more than 75 years of friendship between the United States and Pakistan: "From the Green Revolution of the 1960s to today's U.S.-Pakistan Green Alliance, we have forged a partnership that has weathered many challenges and become stronger. The past year has been a testament to the breadth of our relationship, with productive dialogues on health, the environment, energy security, and counterterrorism that strengthened our joint efforts to combat serious threats." As we celebrate the anniversary of U.S. independence, we do so recognizing the importance of partners like Pakistan. Through our long-standing relationship and joint efforts through initiatives like the Green Alliance framework, we embrace the power of collaboration and acknowledge that we can achieve far more together than we can alone.

Israeli forces kill 2 Palestinians in West Bank raid

Palestinian health ministry announced "two martyrs and three injured as a result of the occupation (Israeli) aggression on Nablus"

NABLUS: Israeli forces killed two Palestinian militants Friday in the occupied West Bank, a day after the United Nations urged a "meaningful political process" to stem renewed violence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. A firefight erupted during an Israeli military raid on the northern West Bank city of Nablus, Israeli and Palestinian officials said. The Palestinian health ministry announced "two martyrs and three injured as a result of the occupation (Israeli) aggression on Nablus". The Israeli army reported "no injuries" among its forces.

The army said it had entered Nablus to arrest two individuals wanted over a shooting earlier this month at Israeli police in a West Bank settlement that resulted in no casualties. The Palestinian health ministry in a statement identified the two dead as Khairi Shaheen, 34, and Hamza Maqbul, 32, who the army said "were killed following an exchange of fire with security forces." "During the activity, weapons which were used by the terrorists were confiscated," the army added. Witnesses told AFP Israeli troops entered Nablus on Friday morning and surrounded a house in the Old City, a stronghold of armed Palestinian groups, before calling on those inside to turn themselves in. The Abu Ali Mustapha Brigades, the armed wing of the leftist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), claimed Shaheen and Maqbul as its members. Friday's raid came amid a rising tide of violence in the region. On Thursday, an Israeli soldier was shot dead by a Palestinian attacker near Nablus. The Israeli army said the assailant had been shot, but his condition remained unclear. The Palestinian Islamist movement Hamas claimed the shooting, calling it a "reaction" to an Israeli raid on Jenin refugee camp days earlier.

Zelensky meeting Erdogan to push Ukraine NATO bid

ISTANBUL: President Volodymyr Zelensky was set to hold talks with Turkish leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan on the latest leg of a tour to push Ukraine's bid to join NATO and secure more weapons from allies. The talks in Istanbul come on the eve of the 500th day since Russia's invasion, with Zelensky admitting Ukraine's counteroffensive was progressing slowly. He called on the United States and other allies to provide long-range weapons and artillery during a two-day visit to Prague. "Without long-range weapons, it is difficult not only to fulfill an offensive mission, but it is also difficult to conduct a defensive operation, to be honest," Zelensky told reporters. US media reported earlier that the Pentagon was preparing a new package of arms and ammunition that could include controversial cluster bombs dispersing multiple small explosives over a wide radius. While Ukrainian officials hailed the prospect, human rights groups condemned it saying the bomblets can go undetonated and endanger civilians later on. After Prague, Zelensky visited Bratislava, where he said that NATO did not seem united on Swedish and Ukrainian membership. "And this is a threat to the strength of the alliance" which is due to hold a summit in Vilnius next week, he added. "That is why we expect positive results or at least some steps towards this positive outcome. This is very important for the security of the whole world." Zelensky is seeking NATO accession for his country, which has been battling Russia's invasion since February 2022, and has said he wants the summit to lead to an "invitation" to join the bloc. NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg said he expected its leaders to "reaffirm that Ukraine will become a member of NATO and unite on how to bring Ukraine closer to its goal". – DNA



ISLAMABAD: Honorable Chief Justice Mr. Justice Umar Ata Bandial (left) is administering the oath to Justice Supreme Court judge of the Hon'ble Ms. Justice Mussarat Hilali, Chief Justice Peshawar High Court as Judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan. – APP

Mussarat Hilali becomes 2nd woman judge in SC

ISLAMABAD: Justice Mussarat Hilali was sworn in as a Supreme Court judge Friday, making her the second woman since Pakistan's independence to be elevated to the apex court. Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial administered the oath to Justice Hilali at the top court in a ceremony attended by SC judges, Attorney General for Pakistan Mansoor Usman Awan, and members of the legal fraternity. With her appointment, the top court now has a total of 16 judges, with one slot vacant. Justice Hilali – the first woman chief justice of Peshawar High Court – will serve as the top court's judge for a period of three years before her retirement. She was also the first woman to become the CJ of any high court in the country. Justice Ayesha A Malik became the first woman to be elevated to the top court in 2022. Born in Peshawar on August 08, 1961, Justice Hilali received a law degree from Khyber Law College, Peshawar University and enrolled as an Advocate of District Courts in 1983, as an Advocate of the High Court in 1988 and as an Advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan in 2006. – DNA

Neutral Swiss, Austrians join Sky Shield defence

The continent is unstable, and for many European countries an upgrade of air defences has become inevitable. The Swiss govt says working with European neighbours on a common system makes both strategic and financial sense

NEWS DESK

BERN: Switzerland and Austria have signed a declaration of intent to join the European air defence system Sky Shield. The system was initiated by Germany following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and is designed to allow European countries to buy defence systems together, and train together. It's being viewed as a historic moment for neutral Switzerland. But some Swiss fear the move compromises their country's long standing neutrality. Joining a Europe wide defence system would have been unthinkable just a few years ago, but Russia's invasion of Ukraine has focused minds. The continent is unstable, and for many European countries an upgrade of air defences has become inevitable. The Swiss government says working with European neighbours on a common system makes both strategic and financial sense. Austria is also a neutral country, and

the government in Vienna argues that by pooling military resources it is able to maintain that status. This is not the first dent in Switzerland's traditionally strict neutrality. As part of Nato's partnership for peace it has had a peacekeeping battalion in Kosovo for two decades. And, to Moscow's anger, it has joined EU sanctions against Russia. Nineteen countries have now signed up for the Sky Shield initiative, including the UK, the Nordic and Baltic countries, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria. But some right-wing Swiss politicians fear Sky Shield is a compromise too far. If an attack heading for one of its Sky Shield neighbours flew over Switzerland, for example, would the Swiss shoot it down, even if it wasn't involved in the conflict? In signing an agreement to join the initiative, Switzerland and Austria have stressed their neutrality remains unchanged, but that hypothetical question hasn't really been answered. Probably they are hoping

such a situation would never arise. But the debate over sanctions, and now over Sky Shield, is just part of a wider Swiss soul-searching over neutrality. Its historic origins dating back to the 19th Century have become obscured by the myth. At the time, Switzerland was sandwiched between much bigger, often warring powers, and it suited them to have a neutral buffer in between. During World War Two, the Swiss defended their borders, but carefully stayed out of the conflict by making compromises with both Allied and Axis powers. Their population, and their cities, emerged virtually unscathed - which contributed to Switzerland's economic success today. But now Switzerland is a member of the United Nations, and the UN has said Russia's invasion is a violation of the UN Charter. Last month the Swiss parliament voted against a proposal to allow Swiss-made weapons and ammunition to be sent to Ukraine. The decision is out of step with

Switzerland's neighbours and some here have become frustrated by what they see as an outdated construct of neutrality. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky made a direct appeal to Swiss MPs, saying his country needed Swiss weapons to restore peace. Switzerland has Leopard tanks languishing unused at home when they could be deployed in Ukraine. Negotiations are continuing in parliament over how to find a way to adapt the laws on weapons exports, to allow support for Ukraine. "Traditional neutrality is not sustainable, it's not morally acceptable in my view," Social Democrat MP Jon Pult told me earlier this year. "If Swiss neutrality means we're somehow the advocates of international law and of the UN charter then I'm ok with neutrality, because then Switzerland can be a power of peace and freedom and rules-based world order." But the far-right Swiss People's Party has condemned the signing as pushing the country into the arms of Nato.

US Treasury Secy says 'impossible to part ways with China'

WEB DESK

WASHINGTON: Just a day after landing in Beijing for talks with the officials in her four-day trip, US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said it was impossible to cut commercial ties with China as it would have repercussions on the global markets. Her trip comes just a month after a high-level visit of the US Secretary of State Antony Blinken in which he met with President Xi Jinping. In recent months, the US said it is seeking to "de-risk" from China by limiting the country's access to advanced technology deemed crucial to Washington's national security. The US has banned a number of Chinese firms to prevent them from having access to the most advanced chips while pushing allies to follow suit. Yellen Friday stressed that the US was not seeking a "wholesale separation of our economies." "We seek to diversify, not to decouple. A decoupling of the world's two largest economies would be destabilising for the global economy," Yellen told a meeting with representatives of US businesses at a session hosted by the American Chamber of Commerce in Beijing. "And it would be virtually impossible to undertake." Ahead of Yellen's trip, Beijing imposed new export controls on key semiconductor manufacturing metals citing national security concerns. The Treasury secretary Friday told American businesspeople Washington was "concerned" about the curbs.

World breaks hottest-day record for 3rd time this week

DNA

NEW YORK: The world recorded its hottest day ever on Thursday, breaking previous highs set on Monday and Tuesday as global average temperatures continue to climb, according to data from the US National Centers on Environmental Prediction. The global average temperature hit 17.23 degrees Celsius on Thursday, according to the government agency. The record comes days after intense heatwaves in the United States and China, while another killed more than 100 people in Mexico, as temperatures soar globally. On Thursday, the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service said June was the hottest month ever, smashing the previous June record in 2019 by a substantial margin. "Such records are the predictable consequence of a short-term El Niño temperature boost coming on top of the long-term global warming trend due to mankind's greenhouse gas emissions," said Robert Rohde, lead scientist for climate science nonprofit Berkeley Earth, on Twitter.

Three Indian rail workers arrested over deadly train crash

NEW DELHI: Indian police said Friday they had arrested three men over a triple-train collision that killed nearly 300 people last month, one of the worst rail accidents in the country's history. June's train crash in eastern Odisha state occurred when a packed passenger train was mistakenly diverted onto a loop line and slammed into a stationary goods train loaded with iron ore. The derailed compartments then struck the carriages of another fast train, the Howrah Superfast Express from Bengaluru, which was passing in the opposite direction. Three railway employees had been charged with culpable homicide and destruction of evidence in a case filed against them on Thursday, a statement from the Central Bureau of Investigation said. – APP