

# Islamabad POST

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**Putin says Russia will use cluster bombs if it has to**

Detailed News On Page-07

**John Kerry in China to restart Climate talks**

Detailed News On Page-07



**Shaheen Afridi completes 100 test wickets**

Detailed News On Page-06



**Briefs**

**'PTI given collective punishment'**

AGENCIES



LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan strongly condemned abduction of Haji Nasrullah Wazir father of PTI Ex-MP Naseer Ullah by KP police along with namaloom afraad. PTI Chairman, in his strong reaction over abduction of Haji Nasrullah Wazir, said: "PTI is being subjected to collective punishment where women, children and even the elders are not spared, houses vandalised and robbed, businesses are being shut down." Imran Khan said that even friends and distant relatives were being victimised.

**Asif blames PTI for bad economy**

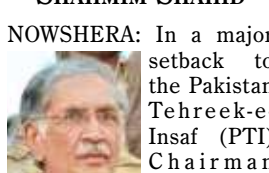
DNA



SIALKOT: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Sunday lambasted the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), saying the party weakened the country's economy by introducing the "flawed" policies. Addressing the workers' convention, Asif: "We are determined and will soon succeed in bringing the country out of darkness". Praising Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Asif said, "Premier has gathered all political parties to support the national economy". "Unfortunately, the PTI was brought into power in 2018 through a rigged elections," he maintained.

**Khattak's new party on horizon**

SHAHMIM SHAHID



NEWSHERA: In a major setback to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan and his PTI, party leaders from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter are set to form a new political party, media reported Sunday. Credible sources said that the manifesto and flag of the new party, to be spearheaded by former defence minister and KP chief minister Pervez Khattak had been finalised.

**No complete term Assemblies to be dissolved next month**

PM says Nawaz-led PML-N leadership will change the destiny of the country

DNA

SIALKOT: As uncertainty surrounds the tenure of the incumbent National Assembly, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has announced that his government will leave before completing its tenure. "Next month our government will complete its tenure. We will leave before the completion of our tenure and an interim government will come," he said while addressing a laptop distribution ceremony at the Government College Women's University in Sialkot on Sunday. The statement is contrary to what the PM had said a few days earlier about his government where he had hinted that his government would complete its tenure. Pause PM Shehbaz back then had stated that the coalition government's tenure will end on August 14 and the date for the next polls will be announced by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) either in "October or November". The premier's statement suggested that the incumbent rulers are not contemplating dissolving the National Assembly before its scheduled date which is due to expire on August 14 this year. The general elections take place after 60 days when National Assembly completes its Constitutional tenure. However, if the government dissolves the lower house of parliament before its constitutional term ends then the polls date can be extended to 90 days of the dissolution. While addressing the ceremony in

Continued on Page 06

**Elections on 2017 census: Minister**

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The government has decided not to notify the latest census and hold the upcoming general elections on the population count of 2017, media reported on Sunday. The statement was made by Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah while speaking on TV show. "The Council of Common Interests (CCI) has to complete its term. If this new census is not notified by then, the elections will be held on the basis of the previous census and delimitation. "The government has decided it will not notify this [new census] and when the assemblies will be dissolved after completing their terms, the Election Commission of Pakistan will be bound to conduct the elections on the basis of the previous census," he said. When asked if he meant the CCI would not notify the new census, Sanaullah said the

Continued on Page 06

**Over-speeding 6 dead as tourist bus plunges into ravine**

PM, FM Bilawal express deep grief and sorrow

STAFF REPORT / DNA

GILGIT: At least six people were killed in an unfortunate incident as a tourist bus plunged into a deep ravine on its way to Gilgit via Karakoram Highway in the Thalchi area of Diamer district, rescue officials said Sunday. The bus was over-speeding the eye-witnesses said. As many as 17 others were injured as the bus - from Islamabad - travelled on Karakoram Highway, which is located at a high altitude along the River Indus. The reason for the accident was still unknown. Police and rescue teams, including Rescue 1122, are carrying out efforts to shift the injured and dead to hospitals. The police sources initially reported 12 casualties citing the locals who counted the number of bodies found at the site of the accident. However, the number of deceased was later revised to five, including a child and women. Meanwhile, the police and rescue teams working on the site shifted the injured to a local 10-bed civil hospital for first aid, to be later transported to Gilgit. Taking

notice of the accident, Gilgit-Baltistan Chief Minister Haji Gulber Khan expressed deep grief over the loss of lives and ordered the provision of free of cost medical aid for the injured. A statement released by the office of the Gilgit Commissioner Najeeb Alam said that efforts to contact the families of the deceased were underway for the hand-over of bodies. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed deep grief and sorrow over the lives lost in the accident. He also ordered an inquiry to ascertain the facts leading to the fatal accident. The premier directed the relevant authorities to undertake immediate relief activities, while also directing federal departments to lend their assistance. He directed authorities to provide medical treatment to those injured and also prayed for their early recovery. Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari also expressed grief and sorrow over the loss of lives in the accident. He consoled the bereaved families of the bus passengers and also prayed for the early recovery of the injured. The FM further stressed the need for preparing a strategy to avert such incidents in the future.



SIALKOT: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif distributes laptops among students. - DNA

**Flood water likely to fall in Sutlej river**

Scattered wind thunderstorm of moderate intensity predicted

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Meteorological Department's (PMD) Flood Forecasting Division (FFD) said on Sunday that the Sutlej river at Sulemanki was at the medium flood level and likely to fall while all other major rivers were below the low flood level. Pakistan's central region had been facing a flood situation for several days as the northern states of India, where the catchment areas of the Sutlej and Ravi rivers are located, witnessed torrential downpours. On Friday, Punjab caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi said over 14,000 people had been evacuated by Rescue 1122 from the province's flood-affected areas so far.

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**37 die in Korea due to heavy rains**

DNA

SEOUL: Rescuers battled on Sunday to reach people trapped in a flooded tunnel in South Korea, where at least 37 people have died and nine are missing after heavy rains caused flooding and landslides. South Korea is at the peak of its summer monsoon season, and there has been heavy rainfall for the last four days, causing a major dam to overflow. The interior ministry reported that 37 people were killed and another nine were missing nationwide in the heavy

Continued on Page 06

**Cracks in the PDM? Balochistan CM lashes out at PDM over mistreatment**

Says Balochistan had expectations but there is no progress yet

BUREAU REPORT

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister (CM) Abdul Qudus Bizenjo lashed out at the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) led government for their unfair treatment towards the province, media reported. As per details, the chief minister said that the federal government's attitude towards Balochistan is unfair as the damage caused to the province is more than Rs 300 billion because of including Balochistan in NFC. The matter related to Pakistan Petroleum Limited (PPL) payment is also pending and despite constant contact with the federal government, no positive response has been given so far, he added. He said that Balochistan had expectations from the government especially PM Shehbaz Sharif because he took the reservations seriously but there is no progress in this regard yet.

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**PML-N decides to join GB govt Power-sharing has been finalized**

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) has also decided to join Gilgit Baltistan government after Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), media reported citing sources. According to sources, the power-sharing formula regarding the Gilgit Baltistan government has been finalized and the power will be shared on the basis of majority. Sources said PPP will get three posts in the government, they will be given

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**Pak, Iran vow to counter terrorism in border areas**

COAS Asim Munir also called on Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahain

DNA

TEHRAN: RAWALPINDI: Pakistan and Iran have expressed resolve to eradicate terrorism in border areas



THERAM: COAS General Asim Munir called on President of Iran Ebrahim Raisi, during his recent visit to Tehran. - DNA

through "intelligence sharing and effective actions" against terrorists' networks, and explore avenues for enhancing cooperation in security domain, media reported on Sunday, quoting military's media wing.

According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), an understanding of this effect came at a meeting between Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir and Iran's military leadership during his two-day successful visit to Iran. During his visit, COAS had detailed meetings with Iran's military leadership including Chief of General Staff of Armed Forces, Major General Mohammad Bagheri. The military commanders of both sides agreed that terrorism was a common threat to the region in general and both countries in particular. Both sides vowed to eradicate menace of terrorism in the border areas through intelligence sharing and effective actions against the terrorists' networks, and explore avenues for enhancing cooperation in security domain.

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## Uplifting of Sindh province PPP's main motto: Kundi

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister Faisal Kareem Kundi on Sunday said that the members of the Pakistan Peoples Party were committed to uplifting the Sindh province as Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) given it in a bad condition. Talking to a private news channel, he said that our party was focusing on the productive development projects in Sindh province adding that those people were in a crucial condition and our main motto was to facilitate them so that they could easily survive with their kids. Replying to a question he said that elections would be held at its specific time and period as PPP was cooperating with their coalition partners. Commenting on the economic stability of the country, he said it plays a vital role in the progress of any country.—DNA

## PHC closes down 670 illegal treatment centres in Punjab

LAHORE: The Punjab Healthcare Commission sealed 670 illegal treatment centres during the last four weeks. PHC sources said here on Sunday, the enforcement teams of the Commissioner conducted inspections of 2,879 treatment centres in 29 districts of the province, of which 685 illegal centres were found to have been converted into other legal businesses. Qualified physicians were found treating patients in 88 centres. The PHC will keep surveillance of another 1,394 centres. Major anti-quackery activities were carried out in Faisalabad, where 94 illegal businesses, 60 in Gujrat, 58 in Lahore, 55 in Gujranwala, whereas 51 each in Bahawalnagar and Pakpattan, and 41 in Sialkot were closed down. The PHC spokesperson added that so far the Commission has raided around 162,000 treatment centres, and sealed over 45,000, while businesses on 36,671 centres, previously run by quacks.—APP

## 11 held; drugs, arms, ammunition recovered in Dera

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: The district police on Sunday claimed to have arrested 11 accused and recovered arms and ammunition from them during search operations in different areas of the district. According to a police spokesman, following the instructions of District Police Officer (DPO) Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani the police conducted search and strike operations in different areas in the limits of Gomal University and Shaheed Nawab Khan police stations. During the operations, a team from Gomal University police station led by SHO Malik Sajid checked 35 houses. The police arrested four accused including Sakhta Mir son of Jan Mir, Inayat Ullah son of Khuda Bakhsh, Mushtaq son of Khuda Bakhsh and Umar Farooq son of Hakeem Jan. The police also recovered two pistols, one rifle and 14 cartridges from their possession. Meanwhile, the Gomal University police also arrested three suspects and registered a case against Shahjahan son of Allah Jan under National Action Plan.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: A shopkeeper displays sacred items used in Azadari for Muharram-ul-Haram at his shop attraction for costumers at Bari Imam area—Online

# Pakistani leaders unite in historic interfaith press conference

LAHORE: Pakistan's Muslim and Christian religious leadership set a great precedent of religious harmony and held a joint press conference along with the copies of the Holy Quran, Torah, Zabur and Injil. For the first time in the history of Pakistan, the leadership of the Muslims and the Christians hold a press conference along with the four heavenly books have appealed to the world to respect the holy books Chairman Pakistan Ulama Council, President International Interfaith Harmony Council Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi held a press conference with the Muslim and Christian leadership at Jamia Manzul Islamia Lahore. The religious leadership of Pakistan's Muslims and Christians set a great precedent of religious harmony and addressing a press conference along with Torah, Zabur, Injil and the Quran said that all the heavenly religions and their holy things are worthy to be honoured and respected. No individual, community, country, or organisation should be allowed to give the right to desecrate any divine



book or Prophet and Messenger of Allah Almighty. In Sweden it is unacceptable to allow the burning of the Torah, Zabur and Injil after the burning of the Holy Quran. We are grateful to all those who refuse not to burn the Torah. Addressing a joint press conference here on Sunday at Jamia Manzul Islamia Lahore, organized by Pakistan Ulama Council and International Interfaith Harmony Council, Chairman of Pakistan Ulama Council Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, Allama Abdul Haq Mujahid, Maulana Muhammad Rafiq Jami, Maulana Asad Zakaria Qasmi, represent-

ative of the Church of Pakistan Pastor Emanuel Khokhar, Pastor Salim, Maulana Nauman Hasher, Maulana Muhammad Shafi Qasmi, Maulana Asadullah Farooq, Allama Zubair Abid, Maulana Aslam Siddiqui, Qari Abdul Hakeem Athar, Allama Tahir Al Hasan, Maulana Muhammad Ashfaq Patafi, Maulana Aziz Akbar Qasmi, Mufti Falak Sher, Mufti Syed Nasimul Islam, Mufti Rehmat Deen, Qari Abdul Majid Haqqani, Qari Kifayatullah, Maulana Abdul Jabar, Qari Muhammad Aslam Qadri, Maulana Qari Mubashir Rahimi, Maulana Abdul Ghaffar Farooqui, Maulana Nasir Haqqani, Qari Faisal Amin,

Qari Sajid and others said that it is sad and reprehensible to allow the burning of Torah, Zabur and Injil after the burning of the holy Quran in Sweden. The European Union and the United Nations should immediately take notice of this and legislate on it and make a law to respect the sanctities of all heavenly religions at the global level. The religious leadership said that Islam and all the heavenly religions teach peace, security, moderation and tolerance, the teachings of any religion are not about violence and extremism. The elements who spread violence and extremism are not representative of any religion.

The religious leaders said that with the support and coordination of the Church of Pakistan, Pakistan Ulama Council and the International Interfaith Harmony Council, a vigorous campaign will be made across the Pakistan for the promotion of interfaith harmony. The religious leaders also said that the minorities in Pakistan have full rights, and anyone can not be allowed to usurp the rights of the minorities in Pakistan. The constitution of Pakistan is the protector of the rights of the minorities, the leaders condemned the Israeli delegate's statement against Pakistan in the United Nations Human Rights Council. The religious leaders said that for the establishment of peace and order during the month of Muharramul Haram, all the religious schools of thought will fully abide by the Paigham-e Pakistan code of conduct and pursue the message of neither to leave one's religious sect, and nor to intervene in others religious sects. No one is allowed to spread chaos in the country and under the auspices of Pakistan Ulama Council and International Interfaith Harmony Council.

## SM accounts exposed for spreading blasphemy

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony has emphasized the urgent need for awareness among all sections of society, particularly religious scholars, professors, journalists, lawyers, traders, political and social leaders, and institutions in the country in an effort to prevent the misuse of social media platforms for spreading derogatory and inappropriate content. It called upon them to play their responsible role in the campaign to curb offensive material and, in every circumstance, to utilize legal avenues to combat such content by reporting it to the relevant cyber crime authorities and the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), it said. According to details released by the Ministry, nefarious elements have been actively using social media to launch a well-organized campaign aimed at undermining the ethics, behavior, and beliefs of our youth for several years. The negative and harmful effects of social media on society have become a matter of great concern. While indecency itself is intolerable, the situation has escalated to the point of blasphemy, which is an extremely grave offense. As per the Ministry's statement, highly organized campaigns on social media platforms are being conducted to spread extremely blasphemous material against the most revered figures, including Allah Almighty (God), the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), the Ahl al-Bayt (Prophet's family), the Mothers of the Believers, the Companions of the Prophet, the Holy Quran, and the national flag. Such offensive content is being shared through images and videos on specific applications and groups. The Cyber Crimes wing of the FIA has apprehended individuals involved in these crimes, including doctors, professors, engineers, chartered accountants, lawyers, and people from various walks of life.—DNA



PESHAWAR: Australian High Commissioner Neil Hawkins enjoying famous Charsi Tikka, during his recent visit to Peshawar. — DNA

# Climate change-driven hazards damaging country's agriculture, living conditions

LAHORE: Despite this year's cool March, experts on Sunday warned that Pakistan and the rest of the region could be under threat from climate change-driven hazards, likely to have catastrophic effects on the country's agriculture and living conditions. It may be recalled here that domestic olive oil production during the last season was estimated at 70 million tonnes as compared to the output of over 100 tonnes of the corresponding period of last year, whereas the availability of olive fruit for value-added products was recorded at over 100 tonnes. During the period, having badly influenced by the impact of climate change, rising temperatures during the flowering stage, and torrential rains, the local output remained less than

last year's production, as the output of olive oil was reduced by 30 per cent. However, the government, in collaboration with the Italian government, embarked upon a programme to train olive farmers in the country to revive and develop local production of oil protecting it from climate change impacts which will also help reduce reliance on the costly imported commodity. The government was also working on promotion of olive farming and prepared a programme to convert wild olives into productive olive plants to increase the farm income of farmers in marginalized areas of the country. It may be mentioned that the third meeting of the steering committee on 'Olive Culture' was chaired by Italian Ambassador in Pakistan

Andreas Ferrarese and the Secretary, Ministry of National Food Security & Research (MFSR). Official source from the Ministry of climate Change and Environmental coordination, emphasized the importance of agriculture for sustaining life and the economy, and the need for sustainable agriculture practices to address challenges like low productivity and climate change. Agriculture is the primary source of food and raw materials for various industries, such as textiles, pharmaceuticals, and biofuels, the sources said, adding that Pakistan is an agricultural country, with the sector accounting for a significant portion of the country's GDP and employing a large proportion of the population, they said. Agriculture contributes


more than 23 per cent to Pakistan's GDP and employs 37.4 per cent of the labour force, but productivity is currently below par, with decreasing cultivation area, climate impacts, a population-production gap, and agricultural imports amounting to \$10 billion annually, they said. Secretary Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) Muhammad Ishaq, while talking to APP, highlighted the salient features of the climate change impacts on agriculture controlling which could boost revival of agriculture that bring economic prosperity for the country. He also shed light on the landmark steps, being undertaken by the government to exploit full potential in agriculture and other domains under the ambit of the recently

launched Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC). He said around \$50 billion investment and technology shifting in the next five years, primarily from Gulf states, is expected under the green initiative in the agriculture sector, that will help combat climate change impacts, besides yield productivity. Giving an example, he said that earlier, as a scientific achievement, Pakistani agriscientists had introduced 20 new high-yielding and disease-resistant varieties of wheat and maize in a changing environment mod. Mahmood Khalid Qamar, a noted environmentalist told APP that the agriculture sector was facing several climate challenges, such as low crop and livestock productivity, poor soil quality, and climate change impacts.—APP

## Hamza blames PTI govt for country's economic woes






LAHORE: Former Punjab chief minister and PML-N leader Hamza Shehbaz said on Sunday that the country found itself in a difficult situation due to the 'flawed' economic policies of the last PTI government. Talking to media in Lahore, he said that PTI Chairman Imran Khan destroyed the country's economy when he was the prime minister. "People were forced to commit suicide when he was at the helm of affairs," Hamza said. He went on to say that these days the country was passing through difficult circumstances. "Had Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif not met with the IMF MD, the country would have defaulted," he claimed, adding it had been the present government's endeavor for the last 15 months to save the country from default. PML-N leader emphasized that the present coalition government would complete its term. "The future of this country lies in free and fair elections," he said. He added that it was the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) that had to announce the election date. Hamza emphasized that the current economic plan needed the government's protection for 10 years. "There is no gainsaying the fact that people are facing inflation," he said, adding, "I pray to the God to give the next government the strength to work for the welfare of masses." He hit out at the last government for violating its deal with the IMF. — DNA

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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/Argentina
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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Turkish Airlines.....8494949



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Fire Services Rawalpindi/  
Islamabad.....1122 & 16  
Emergency Ambulance.1122  
& Rescue Services.4451122  
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CAA.....9281092



### Hospitals

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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

# Operation against illegal constructions in Murree

A comprehensive renovation plan should be made to enhance the beauty of Murree, he said adding, all necessary funds would be provided to complete the project within the shortest possible time frame

RAWALPINDI: Chief Secretary Punjab, Zahid Akhtar Zaman has directed the administration to accelerate operations against illegal construction in Murree. According to a district administration spokesman, the Chief Secretary Punjab Zahid Akhtar Zaman while chairing an important meeting held in Murree regarding illegal constructions, traffic problems and renovation projects instructed the authorities concerned to take strict action against the violations of building by-laws and encroachments. Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Liaquat Ali Chatha, Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi Hasan Waqar Cheema, DG, PHA Ahmed Hasan Ranjha, ADCR Murree Qasim Ijaz and AC Murree Kamran Hussain attended the meeting. The DC gave a detailed briefing about different projects. The Chief Secretary said that commercial buildings constructed in Murree should be audited and strict action should be taken on violation of approved building plans. The commercial buildings without parking on the roadside should be immediately sealed, he added. Patch work of the roads in Murree should be completed as soon as possible and all the roadside buildings should be painted to

give a beautiful look, Zahid Akhtar Zaman ordered. A comprehensive renovation plan should be made to enhance the beauty of Murree, he said adding, all necessary funds would be provided to complete the project within the shortest possible time frame. He instructed the administration to expand the Monsoon afforestation campaign and fill Murree with flowers and ornamental plants. Special steps should be taken regarding cleanliness in Murree, the Chief Secretary directed. Tourist points should not be littered and garbage removal and disposal system should be made effective, he added. All the departments concerned are active and playing their role to restore the natural beauty of Murree, the Commissioner said. PHA had made special arrangements to grow roadside flowers during monsoon, Liaquat Ali Chatha informed. Zero-tolerance policy against illegal constructions in Murree was strictly being implemented, the DC said. A comprehensive traffic control system had been formulated and important measures were taken to regulate traffic and avoid traffic congestion, Hasan Waqar Cheema informed. Economic turmoil, IWCCI proposes a technocratic

## Tourists urged to follow traffic rules in Murree

RAWALPINDI: The tourists visiting Murree have been urged to strictly abide by the traffic rules to avoid traffic congestion and road mishaps at the hill station. According to a City Traffic Police (CTP) spokesperson, the department had finalised all the arrangements for the summer season to ensure the security of the visitors. He informed that the Rawalpindi City Traffic Officer Taimoor Khan had requested the tourists to observe traffic rules on the roads of Murree to avoid traffic mess and any untoward incidents during the summer season. Special teams had been formed to facilitate the tourists and resolve their problems if any in Murree, he said adding that parking vehicles outside parking areas was prohibited. "There was a complete ban on illegal parking on the roads in Murree particularly at exit and entry points besides restrictions on cooking at the roadside." The spokesperson informed that single and double parking was not being allowed on roads except at designated parking places. Motorcyclists without safety helmets were not being allowed to enter Murree, he added. Several roads including Bank Road, GPO Chowk to Kashmir Point, Hall Road, Lalazar to Kashmir Point, View Fourth Road, View Fourth Road to GPO Chowk, Guldana Road, GPO Chowk to Guldana Chowk, Dilkusha Road, Imtiaz Shaheed Road to Lari Adda via Dilkusha Hotel, Cecil Road, Imtiaz Shaheed Road to Cart Road via Cecil Apartments, and Pindi Point had been declared one-way roads to facilitate the motorists, he said.—APP

structure Technocratic set-up imperative to address economic challenges: Samina Fazil

A political government will always avoid difficult choices required for survival.—APP

# Samina calls for a technocratic govt

## DNA

LAMABAD: Samina Fazil, founder president of the Islamabad Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IWCCI) said on Sunday that the current government should be succeeded by a technocrat setup which will be able to take necessary measures imperative for the survival of the country. Usually, an interim government comes for a short period of time to hold general elections, but it will also be able to steer the country out of problems that is facing an economic freefall, she said. Talking to the business community, she emphasised the need for a caretaker technocratic government as soon as



the tenure of the present National Assembly comes to an end. Samina Fazil said that while the recent financial support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has improved the country's financial condition to some extent and minimised the risk of default, a lot still has to be done. Handing over power to technocrats is essential for steering the country out

of its economic problems, she said, adding that the appointment of technocrats based on their expertise, particularly in vital areas such as finance, commerce, industry, investment, water and power, and women's empowerment, will help change the situation for the better. Explaining further, Samina Fazil stated that technocrats do not run for office in elections. In certain countries, the Prime Ministers are both economists and technocrats. Sometimes a technocratic setup is introduced when political parties fail to deliver. Samina Fazil acknowledged that technocratic governments are known for making tough decisions that political governments often shy away from, fearing a

loss of support. In some instances, a technocratic government is formed through consensus among all parliamentary parties when a regular government cannot be established. She added that Pakistan has witnessed technocratic governments in the past, during the eras of General Zia and General Pervez Musharraf. Highlighting the current state of Pakistan's economy, Samina Fazil expressed concern that the nation has fallen behind other developing countries, making the survival of its economy a difficult task. She emphasized the need to bolster the confidence of the business community, promote exports, and encourage Pakistani expatriates by providing additional incentives.

# Equine therapy to make special children productive part of economy

ISLAMABAD: The Lord Sarfraz Foundation has organized a Certificate Distribution Ceremony for children with disabilities on achieving Level 1 of the Equine Therapy Program for making them a productive part of Pakistan's Economy. In a society like Pakistan's, where disability is stigmatized, it is difficult for special needs children to take part in basic socio-economic activities, said a press release issued here Sunday. The Lord Sarfraz Foundation believes in breaking barriers of social exclusion and creating an enabling environment.

An environment that has reduced the barriers that hinder the participation of special needs children in society. In this regard, a Certificate Distribution Ceremony was organized to acknowledge and appreciate these differently abled children and their abilities for achieving Level 1 of the Equine Therapy Program. The Lord Sarfraz Foundation is able to offer Equine Therapy as part of its comprehensive balance of psychological, spiritual, and recreational treatment components at its Equine Therapy Center. It is an excellent case example of

a mental health treatment facility that utilizes a sophisticated Equine Therapy Program as an integral part of treatment with children. The Lord Sarfraz Foundation is a respected actor in the humanitarian and development field. They have been consistent and effective in their response to the immediate and long-term needs of children with disabilities, people living in poverty and those affected by disasters. Ms Iram Haider, Program Manager at The Lord Sarfraz Foundation, kick-started the event by highlighting the importance of an inclusive society

for children with special needs. She appreciated the parents for trusting the Foundation and this non-traditional form of therapy and encouraged them to engage their children in physical activities as they have a key role in making these children useful citizens. She said that The Lord Sarfraz Foundation is committed to create awareness and foster inclusive culture for the special needs children in Pakistan. Only the establishment of special schools is not enough – providing opportunities to these children in every sphere of life should also be our priority.—APP

# Water scarcity - another cartel in the making

ISLAMABAD: The growing population and subsequent growth of residential settlement had put the capital's natural resources under severe stress with its wetlands, cleaner environment and water resource depleting gradually. Once known for its serene evenings, open spaces, less congested population areas and healthy lifestyle, Islamabad in recent years, has gone through several transformations from road infrastructure to taller buildings and a large number of private housing societies developed in the suburbs. Due to the ill planning of the city masters, the Islamabad Capital Territory witnessed a massive population influx during the last two decades or so showing a 150 percent increase in its populace during the period 2008-2018. This phenomenon not only polluted Capital's air and natural clean water streams but also exerted extreme pressure on groundwater with its table gone down from 80 to 100 feet two decades back to 250 to 300 feet presently. As residents come across severe water shortages during summer, they are compelled to buy water from private operators through water tankers and these operators are now emerging as a cartel fleecing the citizens in the name of water provision in the absence of any declared tankers rates mechanism. "It is an apathy that we regularly pay water bills to our societies but they fail to meet our water needs. Therefore, we have to buy it from tanker owners who charge us as per their desire," said Adil Mahmood, a resident of Doctor's Town. "We fail to understand why the authorities do not gauge this situation while according to approval to the owners for developing a housing society," he said. "It is unjust that on one side they charge for routine water supply and on the other sell us water in tankers." The tube wells installed to pump out groundwater are often choked due to depleting water tables leaving the residents particularly in summer leaving at the mercy of the water tanker mafia who charge Rs 2000 to 4000 for each tanker and sometimes more if water is required urgently. Although the housing societies also provide cheaper water tankers yet they take 24 to 48 hours to reach one's residence.—APP

# Foolproof security for Muharram

RAWALPINDI: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi Hasan Waqar Cheema has directed the authorities concerned to ensure foolproof security for Muharram ul Haram processions and Majalis. According to a district administration spokesman, the DC had ordered foolproof arrangements for the security of Muharram processions and Majalis. Hasan Waqar Cheema said, walk-through gates should be installed at entry points of the Muharram processions and Majalis. Encroachments should be removed besides completing patchwork of the routes of the processions, he ordered. A special traffic plan should also be prepared regarding Muharram so that people do not face any difficulties, Hasan Waqar Cheema said adding, CCTV cameras should also be installed to monitor the processions. The DC directed the officers to make special arrangements for electricity and other wires to clear obstructions if any on the routes of the processions. Rescue-1122 had also been directed to complete all arrangements for Muharram, he said and added, no one, except license holders, would be allowed to organize 'Sabils' at the routes of the processions and Majalis. He instructed the authorities to ensure the implementation of timings of the processions and Majalis.—APP

# Rwp Safe City Project to prove highly effective

RAWALPINDI: Secretary, Housing and Urban Development Punjab, (HUDP) Sajid Zafar Dall has said that Safe City Project would prove to be highly effective in combating crime in Rawalpindi City. According to a district administration spokesman, the secretary along with Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Liaquat Ali Chatha and Regional Police Officer (RPO) Rawalpindi Syed Khuram Ali here the other day visited different city areas including Kutchery Chowk, Peshawar Road, IGP Road, Pirwadhai and Liaquat Bagh and reviewed Safe City project. The Secretary was briefed that the security situation of Rawalpindi city would be improved further through Safe City project. The project would increase the sense of security among the citizens, he added. The use of technology to improve security had become indispensable, the Commissioner said adding, the Safe City project was being launched in Rawalpindi and Murree. The project would improve the law and order situation as it was a project to ensure public safety, the Commissioner said. The administration was fully mobilized regarding the Safe City project and all available resources would be utilized for the safety and protection of the citizens, the Commissioner added.—APP

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## Cabinet approves CERTs Rule 2023: Amin

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for IT and Telecom Syed Amin ul Haque has said that move to strengthen the country's cyber-security posture, the Federal Cabinet of Pakistan has given its approval to the Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) Rule 2023. In a statement, the minister said that the decision comes after a thorough consultation process that involved various stakeholders, with the Ministry of IT and Telecommunication (MoITT) taking the lead in formulating the CERT Rules. According to an official statement, under section 51, read with section 49 of the Prevention of Electronic Crime Act (PECA), 2016, and in compliance with the National Cyber Security Policy (NCSP), 2021, the Ministry of IT and Telecommunication (MoITT) as a designated organization of the Federal Government to deal with Cyber Security has formulated the CERT Rules in consultation with the concerned stakeholders. The consultation session with the government bodies and regulatory authorities was started in August 2021. Subsequently, sector regulators carried out extensive consultations with their respective private entities. IT Minister further said that CERT Rules - 2023 provides a legislative umbrella to handle ever-emerging cyber-security risks and vulnerabilities at the National, Sectoral, and Organizational levels by laying out a working mechanism in the form of technical support, operational facilities, and capacity-building services. "These Rules further provide a state-of-the-art proactive and integrated risk management process for identifying and prioritizing protective measures regarding cyber-security". He said that a CERT council will be established as a forum for a consultative and coordinating process to advise CERTs for the effective implementation of its functions and services. The definitions and constitutions of National CERT, Government CERT, Critical Information Infrastructure CERT, Sectoral CERT, Federal CERT, and Provincial CERT are discussed separately, he added. The specific responsibilities, functions, and services of the National CERTs and Sectoral CERTs are also outlined in the rules. Federal IT Minister said that as far as the impact on Cyber Security Landscape is concerned, CERTs at National and Sectoral Levels will enhance the overall cyber-security posture.—APP

## Briefs

## Recent rise in electricity tariff unacceptable

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt, said on Sunday that the new increase in the price of electricity is condemnable. The public and businesses already reeling under unprecedented inflation and other problems cannot afford the new price of electricity, he said. The decision to revise the power tariff will open floodgates for inflation in the country, because of which poverty and unemployment will increase, he added. Shahid Rasheed Butt said in a statement issued here today that instead of making electricity more expensive, theft should be controlled, private power plants should not be given massive profits, and the facility of free electricity should be withdrawn from the privileged classes. The business leader said that per unit price of electricity has been increased by 4 rupees and 96 paise, which will burden the public by billions of rupees. Now people will get per unit electricity for more than 50 rupees, which will further increase their problems, he observed. According to NEPRA, the reasons for increasing the price of electricity include rupee depreciation, inflation, heavy interest rates, interest payments on loans, and payments to IPPs, but these government agencies have never been concerned about power theft worth billions of rupees per day or the provision of free electricity to privileged people. He noted that the IMF has never asked to increase electricity rates but has always said that electricity should not be sold at a loss so that the circular debt does not increase. Government officers and officials are responsible for the losses in the electricity sector and not the public; therefore, they should be made to pay for it. He said that people are already braving the high price of flour, sugar, pulses, vegetables, fruits, ghee, eggs, milk, and other essential items, and the burden on them is being increased by continuously increasing the electricity and gas tariffs, which is sad.

## People enjoy rainy weather

ISLAMABAD: Families and youngsters thronged public parks, open spaces, and hilly areas to enjoy rainy weather with their family and friends after a scorching heat. According to a private news channel, the youngsters are busy arranging parties at picnic points to enjoy the weather with their friends. Traditionally, people used to go to Ayub Park and Nawaz Sharif Park but now both places seem too crowded and there is little for enjoyment. Other attractions in the federal capital include Japanese Park, the Zoo, and the whole track up to Pir Sohawa. However, Lake View Park has all the facilities available in one spot, making it the most attractive place for visitors. Thousands of merrymakers, including families and groups of youngsters, belonging to the twin cities and surrounding areas thronged the limited public places in Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

## Confucius playing role to spread Chinese culture

DNA

ISLAMABAD: "The Confucius Institutes in Pakistan are critical and will have an important role to spread Chinese culture and to enhance understanding between our countries; Similarly, Urdu language centers and Pakistan Study Centers in China are playing a similar role." This was stated by Mumtaz Zehra Baloch, Spokesperson and Additional Foreign Secretary at Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She was Chief



ISLAMABAD: PIAF Chairman Faheemur Rehman said that the low growth shows the government is finding it difficult to achieve the industrial growth and export target, leading to more pressure on foreign exchange reserves of the country.—Online

## Incentives for industry can put economy on right track

PIAF Chairman Faheemur Rehman said that the low growth shows the government is finding it difficult to achieve the industrial growth and export target, leading to more pressure on foreign exchange reserves of the country

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF), stressing the need for putting the economy on a sustainable growth trajectory by providing incentives to the industry, lamented that the economy is facing multiple challenges of falling exports, high inflation, and low growth, with fiscal accounts under immense pressure on account of heavy interest payments. PIAF Chairman Faheemur Rehman said that the low growth shows the government is finding it difficult to achieve the industrial growth and export target, leading to more pressure on foreign exchange reserves of the country. He asked the government to address the underlying structural vulnerabilities through smooth energy supply at competitive rates, as country's overall export proceeds continued to shrink. Faheemur Rehman Saigol said that the government has increased the gas and electricity tariffs and, at the same time, also the subsidy has been phased

out, which will further increase the cost of production. Month on month increases in consumer prices may be countered by a further mean reverting international commodity prices and some exchange rate stability due to decreased pace of depreciation. The overall money supply growth remains compatible with a return to low and stable inflation. But the outlook of M2 is broadly dependent on fiscal accounts which are under immense pressure on account of heavy interest payments and rehabilitation spending. The State Bank of Pakistan is also enacting a contractionary monetary policy to contain inflationary pressure. However, a larger portion of volatility in the current price level is explained by supply-side factors. As imports fell more than the decline in exports, the trade balance of goods and services improved. Exports are constrained by domestic production issues related to the slowdown of demand in the main export markets and high domestic production costs. Imports are currently constrained by sluggish domestic demand and administrative measures to protect

the official foreign reserves level. Since no immediate reversal of these developments is envisaged, the trade balance may further stabilize or further improve somewhat in the upcoming months. The textile exports remained weak mainly due to the demand and supply challenges being faced by the sector. Global recession, which reduced the purchasing power in key export markets, also resulted in lower bookings of orders, he added. Quoting the data, he pointed out that foreign direct investment dipped by 654 million dollars (58 percent decline), portfolio investment plummeted from negative 45.5 to negative 1032 million dollars, Public Sector Development Program decreased by 122 billion rupees (48.4 percent) and credit to private sector from 1043.1 to 703.6 million rupees which contributed to a decline in Nov 2021 Large Scale Manufacturing Sector growth of 6 percent to negative 5.50 percent in the comparable period this year. Consumer Price Index rose from 12.3 in 2021-22 to 24.5 2022-23, while PSX index declined by 2.8 percent, market capitaliza-

tion in rupees by 8.8 percent and in dollars by a whopping 28.8 percent. Rising prices of wheat are the key factors responsible for affecting the general price level. International commodity prices are showing a downward trend on a YoY basis and its impact will ultimately be transmitted into domestic prices with some lags after adjusting the currency devaluation. While the government kept the administered prices at their current level to stabilize the overall prices but post floods persistent shortfall of essential crops is preventing inflation to settle down. He observed that the drop in textile and clothing exports is gaining momentum over the past five months owing to multiple factors including high energy costs, stuck-up refunds and a slump in global demands despite the massive depreciation of the rupee. He believes that one of the main reasons behind falling exports was the exchange rate instability. The discontinuation of duty drawbacks on local taxes and levies by the government has also created liquidity issues for the export sector.

## 15-member Pakistan delegation leaves of China

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Upon invitation from Fudan University, Shanghai, a 15-member composite delegation from Pakistan including diplomats, senior academics, researchers and media persons, will depart for China today on a week-long visit. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General ISSI, shall lead the delegation. The other members include: Prof. Dr. Engr. Attullah Shah, Vice Chancellor, University of Karakoram; Dr. Ayesha Alam, University of Hazara; Prof. Dr. Ayesha Sohail, University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir; Amb. Babar Amin, Former Ambassador; Mr. Dost Mohammad Barrech, University of Balochistan; Dr. Fouzia Hadi Ali, University of Punjab; Prof. Dr. Kausar Takrim, University

of Peshawar; Mr. Muhammad Ali Baig, Research Fellow, ISSI; Dr. Mukesh Khatwani, University of Sindh; Dr. Tahir Mumtaz Awan, COMSATS University, Islamabad; Dr. Talat Shabbir, Director China-Pakistan Study Centre (CPSC), ISSI; and Ms. Misbah Mukhtar, Research Associate, ISSI. The delegation members come from all provinces of Pakistan as well as from Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan. As practitioners and academics, they have long-standing experience of China studies, regional and global matters, Pakistan-China relations, and China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The delegates will participate in a Seminar hosted by Fudan University in Shanghai and the 3rd Pakistan-China Think Tank Forum hosted by the China Institutes of Contemporary Relations

(CICIR) in Beijing. Besides, a visit to the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs also scheduled. The delegation shall also visit various academic and commercial facilities and receive briefings for first-hand information. The delegation's visit would serve to further promote academic and people-to-people exchanges between Pakistan and China. Interaction with Chinese academicians, scholars and government officials would help identify opportunities for enhanced cooperation in diverse sectors including trade, technology, and infrastructure development. The delegation's members would also be keen to foster academic collaboration, facilitate knowledge exchange, and enhance mutual understanding and bilateral cooperation in the field of education and beyond. The delegation will return to Islamabad on July 23, 2023.

## SBB varsity's final year DVM students to do internship in China


DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Sakrand has sought

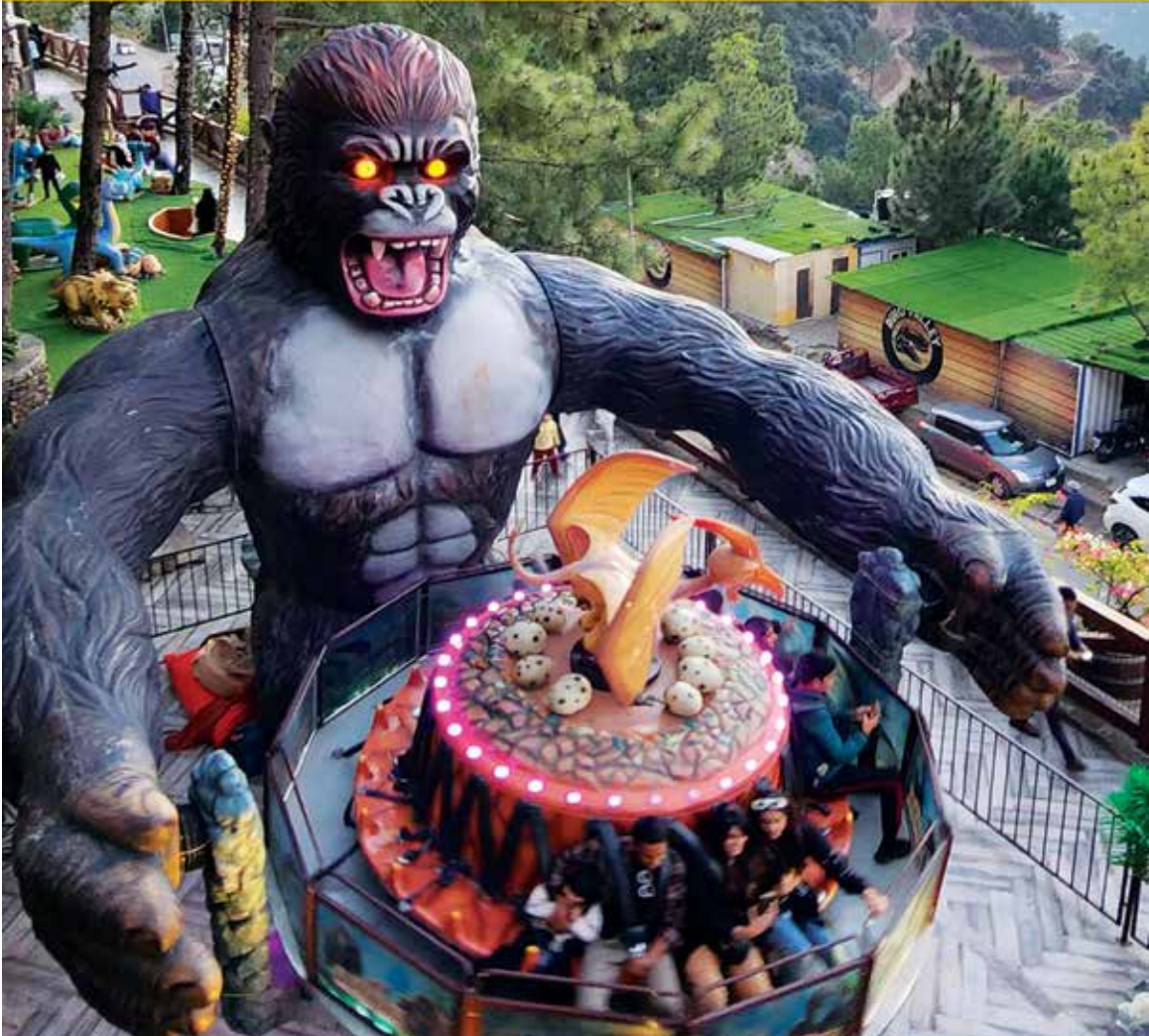
applications from final year students of the Doctor in Veterinary Medicine (DVM) degree program for internship in China. According to an update by the university, the DVM students of 2019 batch

will avail a 9-week internship opportunity at China, starting September 2023. The eligible students of DVM Final Professional (currently enrolled in the 10th Semester), can apply until July 31st for

the internship, Gwadar Pro reported on Saturday. Accommodation and food facilities will be provided by the Chinese government while fair charges will be borne by the students.



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## Sugar mafia drives prices to the highest point in nation's history

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) said on Sunday that the influential sugar mafia has pushed the price of sugar to the highest level in the country's history. If the sugar exports are not stopped, the price will exceed two hundred rupees per kg in the open market, he said. In a statement issued here today, Dr. Murtaza Mughal said that allowing exports despite the decline in production is an injustice to the people which benefits the sugar mafia. Sugar will become scarce in the country before the next crushing season if exports continue at this pace, he warned. He informed that now sugar is fetching 150 to 160 rupees per kg in different parts of the country, and its price is continuously increasing. If the export of sugar is not immediately banned, it will exceed two hundred rupees per kg, which will be unaffordable for the majority. He said that the people's interests have been put aside to benefit the sugar mafia, and they have been allowed to export the commodity while sugar smuggling is also on the rise. The price of sugar in the wholesale market has increased by Rs19 in twenty days, but the authorities are not paying attention to this, which is encouraging hoarders.

## NHMP traces lost diamond ring, returns to owner

ISLAMABAD: National Highways and Motorway Police on Sunday returned a diamond ring to its owner. The Motorway Police found the missing diamond ring and returned it to the owner. While traveling from Swat to Peshawar along with his family on the Swat Expressway, a precious ring of a commuter Luqman fell in tunnel number one near Pulai. The value of the ring is said to be Rs 120,000. The family started searching for the ring, after some time the Motorway Police also reached the spot and started helping.— APP

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## ASEAN countries uphold cooperation

**S**PEAKING at a meeting with his Southeast Asian counterparts in Indonesia on Friday, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said that the United States and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations "share a vision of a free, open, prosperous, secure, connected and resilient 'Indo-Pacific'," in which all countries in the region are "free to choose their own paths and partners", and that issues can be resolved openly rather than through coercion. He was clearly attempting to rally ASEAN members to the US banner. But his entreaty has not been answered, as the ASEAN countries are holding him to his word and choosing their own path, which is not to choose sides between the US and China. This was made clear by Singaporean Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan, who told reporters ahead of the ASEAN Regional Forum on Friday that the ASEAN countries do not want to be divided or vassal states, "or worse, an arena for proxy wars".

Everybody knows that the US has the habit of using others as proxies, and they only have to look at Ukraine to see for themselves the consequences of accepting that role. For the US, the meeting in Jakarta was just another opportunity to try and drive wedges between China and ASEAN countries. But while there are disputes on some maritime issues between some of the ASEAN members and China, Blinken's words show that the strategists in Washington underestimate the strength of the cooperative relations that have been forged between the two sides over a long period of time. That ASEAN is now China's largest trade partner is testimony to the two sides' shared will to not let their differences and disputes disrupt regional development. The trade volume between ASEAN and China was 3.08 trillion yuan (\$431.3 billion) for the first half of this year, according to latest official data, an increase of 5.4 percent compared with the same period last year. Blinken's remarks show that contrary to China's vision of the region as a community with a shared future, in the eyes of the US, Southeast Asia should be part of a "free and open Indo-Pacific" in which the US alone can get to call the shots. The region bears too many scars from history for ASEAN countries to accede to the US' dissembled colonialism.

The Joe Biden administration should give up its insistence that it can turn Southeast Asian nations against China. The meetings in Jakarta indicated that the ASEAN countries do not want the US to make the region another arena for its destructive power games. The ASEAN countries want peace, stability and development, not division, conflict or chaos. This was evidenced by the completion of the second reading of the text for a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea, and the adoption of a guideline document for its early conclusion, which sent a clear signal that the region will not allow any seeds of discord to take root.

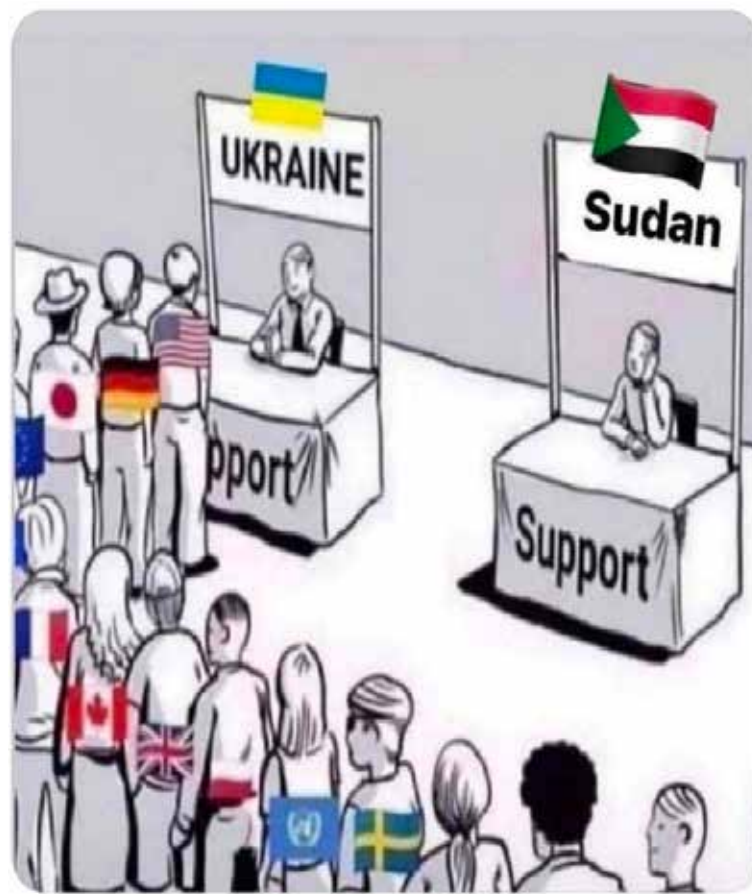
## Immigration bill will only add to migrant pain

**T**HE government's announcement last week that it would award public sector workers wage increases in line with the recommendations of the independent pay review bodies came with a sting in its tail. It was the minimum that teachers, police officers and doctors – who have seen their real pay decline over the past decade – should have been able to expect. But not only have ministers failed to rule out that these pay rises will be paid for with public service cuts elsewhere; they have said they will be partly funded through huge increases in the fees levied on migrant workers.

The immigrant NHS surcharge will now increase by more than £400 to just over £1,000 per person per year. Immigration and nationality fees are also being put up by 15% to 20%. A family of four moving to the UK will now be liable for fees of at least £33,000 over five years in order to permanently settle here; this is significantly higher than the equivalent fees and charges in many other European countries and the United States. The outcome will be greater hardship for those who come here to work, and fewer people who decide they can afford to do so. This is now a stated objective of government policy – Rishi Sunak has said that net migration levels are "too high". Yet the sharp inconsistency in his position is that net migration hit a record high of just over 600,000 as a result of the significant liberalisation of the non-EU immigration system that he has overseen in order to fill skills gaps, including in the NHS and the care sector. Sunak is trying to have it both ways: to rely on immigration to keep public services running and boost economic growth, but also to send a signal that he is more anti-immigration than his track record may imply.

Even worse than the government's dissonance on immigration is its morally abhorrent position on refugees. It has rebranded people fleeing countries like Syria and Afghanistan as "illegal migrants" if they claim asylum after arriving in the UK through irregular routes, as is their right under the 1951 Refugee Convention. To listen to ministers, one would think Britain is overrun with people who have abused the asylum system and the generosity of the state.

It last week emerged that immigration minister Robert Jenrick ordered the painting over of child-friendly murals at an immigration reception and detention centres where children are accommodated. Ratcheting up immigration fees; culling efforts to make traumatised children slightly more at ease; these are expressions of performative nastiness from a party that is bereft of ideas and has substituted unkindness to people from elsewhere in the world for a governing purpose. It is those fleeing conflict and torture, to whom we owe only compassion and kindness, who will pay the highest price.



# A Majestic Journey to Neelum Valley Azad Kashmir

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



Approximately two hours from Islamabad, there is a business center called Neelum Point situated on the bank of the Jhelum River. It should be noted that this place has no association with Azad Kashmir or Neelum Valley, and tourists should be cautious of potential scams. After crossing the Kohala Bridge near this location, the state of Azad Jammu and Kashmir begins. Muzaffarabad city is around an hour away from Kohala. Depending on their schedule, tourists should decide whether to stay overnight in Muzaffarabad or proceed to Neelum Valley

**N**EELUM Valley, being a border area, experiences significant mobile service issues. Only SCOM SIM services are available in this region, providing coverage to most areas, including 4G internet. However, Ufone SIM cards work on roaming but do not offer internet facilities. Therefore, it is advised to obtain an SCOM SIM when traveling from Muzaffarabad to Neelum Valley. Apart from Muzaffarabad, SIM cards can also be obtained from Nausiri on the way, as well as from Kandalshahi, Kattan, or Athmaqam within Neelum. For tourists planning to visit Azad Kashmir, it is recommended to travel to Neelum Valley from any city in Pakistan via the express highway from Islamabad through Murree. At the end of the express highway, continue on Murree Road to reach Muzaffarabad, the capital of Azad Kashmir (guests coming from Hazara should use Hazara Motorway). Approximately two hours from Islamabad, there is a business center called Neelum Point situated on the bank of the Jhelum River. It should be noted that this place has no association with Azad Kashmir or Neelum Valley, and tourists should be cautious of potential scams. After crossing the Kohala Bridge near this location, the state of Azad Jammu and Kashmir begins. Muzaffarabad city is around an hour away from Kohala. Depending on their schedule, tourists should decide whether to stay overnight in Muzaffarabad or proceed to Neelum Valley. Generally, traveling to Neelum Valley at night is considered unsafe for tourists. If arriving in Muzaffarabad in the evening, it is advisable to stay overnight in the city. Muzaffarabad offers a range of accommodation options, including hotels and guesthouses, with prices varying from Rs. 2500/3000 per room to PC-Hotel. If arriving in Muzaffarabad during the day and planning to continue the journey, take the main highway or the Nalochhi Gujra bypass road towards Chehla Bandi. The journey to Neelum Valley commences from Chehla Bandi. Along the way, visitors can explore various tourist attractions such as Panjgarn Waterfall, Dhani Waterfall, Neelum Jhelum Dam, and Lion of Control Chalhana. After approximately three hours, Kundalshahi will be reached. Tourists can choose to stay overnight at Kundalshahi Waterfall or proceed to Kattan. These locations offer several guesthouses for accommodation, with prices ranging from 2500 to 8000. Depending on their budget, visitors can select suitable accommodations. If there is no availability in these places, Athmaqam or Keran can be considered for overnight stays. Athmaqam is a 35-minute drive from Upper Neelum, which holds a special significance

in Neelum Valley tourism due to its picturesque beauty and proximity to the Line of Control. After an overnight stay, tourists can embark on a mesmerizing journey to Patlian Lake, located approximately 20 minutes from Cairn via the link road Luat Bala. The jeep track leading to Patlian Lake offers a breathtaking view and takes around three and a half hours to traverse. Typically, the jeep fare for this route ranges from 14 to 15 thousand. The jeep can take travelers almost to the last point, and there is also a base camp at the top, which requires a 10 to 15-minute walk. After spending the day exploring the area, then return to Cairn for the night. An overnight stay, the next morning, after having breakfast, if your intention is to visit Ratigali Lake, there is a link road that leads to Ratigali Lake from Dawarian village, which is approximately 30 minutes away from Cairn. In case you do not have your own 4WD vehicle, you can rent a jeep from Dawarian at a cost of around 10 to 11 thousand rupees. If you plan to trek on foot, it is advisable to carry energy foods such as energy biscuits, instant powder juices, milk, etc. Additionally, souvenirs from Azad Kashmir can also be useful. Even if you have your own 4WD vehicle, it is recommended to hire a local driver from Dwariya at a suitable time. Inexperienced individuals should avoid self-driving on the Ratigali road. The distance between Dawarian and Ratigali Base Camp is approximately 18 km, which marks the limit for vehicle access. This 18 km stretch typically takes around 2.5 to 3 hours to cover. Visitors have the option to stay overnight at Ratigali Base Camp and can either bring their own tents or rent them at reasonable rates. From Ratigali Base Camp, a morning trek of about 40 minutes leads to Ratigali Lake. After enjoying a memorable day at Ratigali Lake, visitors should assess the weather conditions for the day and aim to return to the base camp by 12 o'clock. From there, they can begin their journey back to Dawarian, followed by a two-hour drive to Sharda. It is important to note that the road conditions beyond the roundabouts are suboptimal, so caution must be exercised while driving. Sharda offers various hotel and guesthouse accommodations, and visitors can also engage in activities such as motor boating and a visit to the ancient Sharda University by crossing the Sharda Bridge. If time permits and one wishes to venture further, it is possible to reach Kiel after approximately 1.5 hours of careful driving from Sharda. Upon arrival, visitors can park their vehicles in the designated parking lot and take a chairlift from Kiel to Urang Kiel. Following the chairlift ride, a hike of about 35 to 40 minutes awaits. It is worth noting that the chairlift often ceases operations before sunset.

Visitors can spend the night in Urang Kiel, waking up early in the morning to relish the scenic beauty of the valley. Subsequently, they can return to Kiel and depart for Taubat via a jeep or a private 4WD vehicle. The distance from Kiel to Taubat spans roughly 40 km and takes approximately 3 hours to traverse. The jeep booking fare typically amounts to around 12 to 13 thousand rupees. It is advisable to spend the night in Taubat; however, if the plan is to return, visitors should aim to be back in Kiel by 2 o'clock in the afternoon. Kundal Shahi or Kattan can be reached by nightfall.

After an overnight stay, visitors should depart the following morning for Baboon Valley via Jagran. It is possible to drive one's own car to Jagran or, alternatively, take a 4WD vehicle from Kundal Shahi or Kattan, which generally costs between 10 to 12 thousand rupees. The journey from Jagran to Baboon Valley takes approximately 2 hours, and upon arrival, visitors will undoubtedly be captivated by its awe-inspiring beauty, prompting exclamations of admiration. After spending the day marveling at the wonders of nature, it is advised to return to Qiyam Kundal Shahi or Kattan in the evening. Neelum Valley is a mountainous region, so exercise extreme caution while driving, especially considering the risks of drowsy driving. When visiting Neelum Valley, it is essential to carry warm shawls, clothing, jackets, hats, gloves, and socks according to personal requirements. Given the limited accessibility of hospitals and medical facilities in Neelum Valley, it is advisable to carry emergency medicines such as fever, cold, diarrhea, vomiting, and constipation remedies, as well as bandages and antiseptic solutions. Due to the high altitude of Rati Gali and Baboon Valley, it is recommended to use high-quality sunscreen creams to protect the skin from harmful ultraviolet rays. The currents of Neelum River are powerful and dangerous, so it is imperative to avoid entering the river or streams. Taking selfies or photographs on canals or wooden bridges can be fatal. Protect yourself and your loved ones. While visiting any area, appreciate the natural beauty and ensure responsible behavior by collecting food and drink wrappers in a shopping bag and disposing of them in designated areas. Be a conscientious citizen. Respect the local people and their privacy while visiting any area. Seek permission before taking photographs of houses or individuals to avoid conflicts and resentment. Driving vehicles other than 4WD vehicles on dirt or gravel roads is hazardous and should be avoided. Jeep fares may vary, so the aforementioned fixed rates should not be considered as definitive.

# Women's Empowerment in Islamic Perspectives

Maryam Iiaqat



Economic empowerment is another crucial aspect of women's empowerment in Islam. Islam places great emphasis on social justice and wealth redistribution, and many Muslim scholars argue that these principles can be harnessed to support women's economic empowerment. For instance, the concept of zakat (charity) mandates...

**W**OMEN'S empowerment refers to the process of equipping women with the tools, resources, and opportunities necessary for them to take control of their own lives and make decisions that influence their well-being, as well as the well-being of their families and communities. This includes granting women access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities, and enabling their participation in political and social life on equal terms with men. Women's empowerment is crucial as it fosters gender equality, reduces poverty, and enhances overall social and economic development. Women's empowerment in Islam is a multifaceted issue that has generated considerable debate and interpretation. While some argue that Islam is inherently patriarchal and oppressive toward women, others contend that the religion can be interpreted in a manner that supports women's rights and empowerment. One of the fundamental principles often invoked in discussions about women's empowerment in Islam is the concept of tawhid, which emphasizes the unity of God. Some interpret this principle as the basis for gender equality, as it implies that all human beings are equal in the eyes of God and should be treated accordingly. Another crucial principle relevant to women's empowerment in Islam is the concept of ijtihad, which entails using reason and independent judgment to interpret Islamic law. Certain scholars assert that this principle can be employed to reexamine traditional Islamic texts and practices in ways that uphold women's rights and empowerment. There are numerous examples of Muslim women who have made significant contributions to their communities and societies, both historically and in contemporary times. These women often draw on Islamic principles to support their endeavors, challenging conventional gender roles and stereotypes in the process. Additionally, there are various specific practices and teachings within Islam that can be seen as promoting women's empowerment. For instance, Prophet Muhammad encouraged women to seek knowledge and education, and numerous Muslim women throughout history have been scholars and educators in their own right. Another example is the concept of hijab,

which is frequently misunderstood as a symbol of women's oppression. In reality, many Muslim women view hijab as a form of empowerment, as it allows them to exert control over their bodies and identities, challenging misconceptions about Muslim women. Similarly, the practice of salah (prayer) can be seen as empowering for women, providing them with a space to connect with God and assert their spiritual and religious identities. Nonetheless, Muslim women face various challenges and obstacles in their pursuit of empowerment, including discrimination, poverty, and limited access to education and resources. Nonetheless, numerous individuals and organizations within the Muslim world are actively working to address these issues and promote women's rights and empowerment. Economic empowerment is another crucial aspect of women's empowerment in Islam. Islam places great emphasis on social justice and wealth redistribution, and many Muslim scholars argue that these principles can be harnessed to support women's economic empowerment. For instance, the concept of zakat (charity) mandates Muslims to allocate a portion of their wealth to those in need, and some scholars argue that this can be utilized to promote women's economic independence and entrepreneurship. Likewise, political empowerment holds significant importance in women's empowerment within Islam. While historical examples demonstrate Muslim women occupying positions of political power, numerous barriers still impede women's political participation in many Muslim-majority countries. Scholars argue that Islam can be instrumental in supporting women's political empowerment, as the religion emphasizes social justice, human rights, and the common good. The concept of shura (consultation) is often cited as a foundation for democratic decision-making, with some scholars positing that this principle can be employed to facilitate women's involvement in politics and governance. Many Muslim women are actively engaged in promoting political empowerment and participation within their communities and societies. These women challenge traditional gender roles and stereotypes, advocating for increased rep-

resentation and participation in political decision-making processes. It is essential to acknowledge the vast diversity within the Muslim world, recognizing that women's experiences of empowerment can vary significantly based on geographical, cultural, and socioeconomic factors. Nonetheless, a growing movement of Muslim women is working collectively to advance women's rights and empowerment while challenging stereotypes and misconceptions about Islam and Muslim women. Another critical facet of women's empowerment in Islam is education. The Prophet Muhammad is reported to have emphasized that "seeking knowledge is obligatory on every Muslim, male and female," and numerous Muslim women throughout history have been scholars and educators in their own right. Nevertheless, barriers to women's education persist in many Muslim-majority countries, including poverty, limited access to resources, and cultural attitudes regarding women's roles and responsibilities. Some scholars argue that these obstacles do not stem from Islam itself but rather from patriarchal interpretations of the religion and cultural practices imposed on Muslim societies over time. Muslim women are actively working to promote education and literacy within their communities and societies. These women challenge traditional gender roles and stereotypes, advocating for greater access to education and resources for girls and women. Education is widely recognized as a crucial tool for women's empowerment in the Muslim world, as it equips women with the knowledge, skills, and resources needed for full participation in their communities and societies. I thank to Respected Sir Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer for his valuable source of guidance to write this piece. He generously shared his time and knowledge, providing me with valuable feedback and constructive criticism that has significantly improved the quality of my work. His patience, encouragement, and willingness to engage in meaningful discussions have been truly inspiring.

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Briefs

Assemblies to be dissolved next month

FROM PAGE 01  
Sialkot, the prime minister said that the decrease in the price of petroleum products, announced by the finance minister a day earlier, was due to the agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The IMF agreement, he also said, strengthened the rupee against the dollar which in turn made the purchase of oil cheaper. He added that the government in turn gave relief to the people by decreasing the price of petroleum products. Coming to the laptops being distributed to the students by his government, PM Shehbaz said that 100,000 machines will be provided in the fiscal year 2023-24 and the ones being distributed right now are those that were allocated in fiscal year 2022-23. He also thanked Finance Minister Ishaq Dar for allowing the import of the laptops. "I want to tell the nation's girls that it wasn't a favour to give you laptops but it is being provided on merit," he added. The premier also said that this year Rs5 billion has been allocated for projects related to women. He added that the nation cannot succeed till its women participate in it. "All girls who get an education must enter the practical field," PM Shehbaz further said. All over the world women are working day and night alongside men, he went on to say.

"If we get a chance again under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif then every girl will get laptops," he said.

Elections on 2017 census: Minister

FROM PAGE 01  
government would not be notifying the census as it had "issues". Moreover, various stakeholders also had concerns over it, he added. Pressed further on the reservations of Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P), an ally of the government in the Centre, over the 2017 census, Sanaullah said the party was dissatisfied with the new digital census. "They don't [even] accept this new census."

Pak, Iran vow to counter terrorism in border areas

FROM PAGE 01  
COAS Asim Munir also called on President of the Iran Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian. During discussions, significance of Pakistan-Iran bilateral relations for regional peace and stability was highlighted. The Army Chief was presented with the Guard of Honour by a smartly turned-out contingent of Iranian Armed Forces at the Military Headquarters on his arrival. The understanding came after four Pakistan Army personnel embraced martyred in a terrorist attack on the Pakistan-Iran border in April. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement that the terrorists started firing on the security personnel patrolling at the Jal Gayi sector on the Pakistan-Iran border. The martyred soldiers include Naik Shair Ahmed, Lance Naik Muhammad Asghar, Sepoy Muhammad Irfan and Sepoy Abdur Rasheed. ISPR said that Pakistan has demanded effective and immediate action from the Iranian officials.

37 die in Korea due to heavy rains

FROM PAGE 01  
downpours, mostly buried by landslides or after falling into a flooded reservoir. Hundreds of rescue workers were still struggling to reach more than 10 cars and an unknown number of people trapped in a 430-metre (1,410-foot) underground tunnel in Cheongju, North Chungcheong province, the ministry said.

Australia retain Women's Ashes as England beaten by 3 runs

Set another record chase of 283 to win, Sciver-Brunt struck a magnificent 111 not out off 99 balls but could not quite see England over the line with 15 needed from final over

LONDON: Despite a heroic, unbeaten hundred from Nat Sciver-Brunt, Australia retained the Women's Ashes with a thrilling three-run win over England in the second one-day international at The Ageas Bowl. England needed a fourth-straight white-ball victory in order to take things to a decider on Tuesday, but Australia's victory sees them lead 8-6 on points and even if the hosts were to triumph in the final ODI in Taunton to tie the series, Australia retain the Ashes as current holders. Set another record chase of 283 to win, Sciver-Brunt struck a magnificent 111 not out off 99 balls but could not quite see England over the line with 15 needed from the final over. Sciver-Brunt, who was dropped on 97 in the penultimate over the ball before bringing up her ton, struck Jess Jonassen's third ball for four to reduce the equation to nine needed from three. That became five from one after a pair of quickly-scattered twos, but Sciver-Brunt was unable to find the boundary from the final ball. Tammy Beaumont also struck an impressive 60 at the top of the order for the hosts before being bowled by a beauty from Alana King (3-44), one of three wickets for the leg-spinner recalled to the Australian side for the game. Ashleigh Gardner also pitched in with 3-54. England will look back ruefully on the final over of Australia's innings in par-



ticular, with Georgia Wareham smashing Lauren Bell for 26, including three sixes and two fours, to propel them up to what proved a match-winning score. Heather Knight's side had otherwise done reasonably well to restrict Australia after winning the toss, despite two costly drops of Ellyse Perry who went on to score 91. Perry was put down on 50 by Sarah Glenn, off her own bowling, and on 63 by Kate Cross at mid-off. Sophie Ecclestone also put down Gardner (33) when on just four as errors were again prominent in England's fielding display. Although expensive late on, Bell (3-85) had given the hosts the per-

fect start, dismissing both Australia openers cheaply, Phoebe Litchfield (4) pinned lbw and captain Alyssa Healy (13) caught at short third. Perry and Beth Mooney (33) rebuilt with a 61-run partnership, before the latter fell to Ecclestone, top-edging an attempted sweep to short fine leg. Tahlia McGrath (5) came and went quickly - caught behind off Glenn (1-56) before Perry again enjoyed sizable stands with Gardner and Annabel Sutherland (50), who struck a maiden ODI fifty. Ecclestone picked up Perry nine short of her hundred and added Sutherland later in the same over as England looked to be finishing the

stronger until Wareham's crucial late cameo. In reply, the scratchy Sophia Dunkley (13) shared in a 66-run opening partnership that Beaumont dominated and was eventually bowled by Wareham when looking to paddle one fine. Spin was to be a constant threat throughout England's chase, with the captain Knight (12) next out lbw to King, albeit hugely aggrieved by the decision as she believed she laid some bat on it that went undetected by the umpire and UltraEdge on review. Beaumont, soon after bringing up an 18th ODI fifty, was bowled by a beauty from King that pitched in line, turned away and kissed the top of her off stump, while Alice Capsey (2) somewhat gave her wicket away to the leg-spinner, holing out to deep mid-wicket. It was then over to Gardner, who accounted for Danni Wyatt (8) and then Amy Jones (37) and Ecclestone (1) in the same over after a 57-run stand between Sciver-Brunt and the England wicket-keeper. With the hosts reduced to 203-7, with 80 still required from the final 11.2 overs, it looked like England's chance was gone, only for Sciver-Brunt's sensational effort and a hugely-valuable, unbeaten 22 from Glenn to take them close. But they ultimately left themselves a little too much to do and England's Ashes hopes were dashed by an agonising three-run defeat. - Agencies

Angelo Mathews, Dhananjaya de Silva help SL fight back against Pakistan

GALLE: Angelo Mathews and Dhananjaya de Silva scored crucial fifties as Sri Lanka made a comeback on a rain-hit opening day of the first Test against Pakistan in Galle on Sunday. Dhananjaya was unbeaten on 94 runs, with the help of 10 fours and three sixes, as Sri Lanka reached 242-6 at stumps. The home side had slipped to 54-4 but Mathews and Dhananjaya stitched a century stand, 131 runs in 198 balls, for the fifth wicket to bring Sri Lanka back in the game. However, spinner Abrar Ahmed struck on the stroke of tea after Mathews edged one to wicketkeeper Sarfaraz Ahmed. He scored 64 runs with the help of nine fours. Earlier, pacer Shaheen Afridi starred after Sri Lanka won the toss and decided to bat against Pakistan in the first Test. Afridi, who made a comeback in Test cricket after almost a year, claimed three wickets during the morning session on day one. The 23-year-old also completed 100 wickets in Test cricket after dismissing Sri Lankan opener Nishan Madushka (4) in the third over of the innings. Afridi is the 19th Pakistani cricketer to bag 100 wickets in the longest format of the game. The left-artermer also sent Sri Lankan captain Dimuth Karunaratne (29) and Kusal Mendis (12) back to the hut. Naseem Shah also bagged one wicket, Dinesh Chandimal (1), for the visitors. Towards the close of play, Imam-ul-Haq took a stunning catch at short-leg on the bowling of Agha Salman as Sadeera Samarawickrama

(36) made his way back to the hut. It must be noted that the match was stopped due to rain in the sixth over with Sri Lanka 18-1. Play resumed after one and half hours as players stepped out on the field once again. The match was interrupted due to rain in the final session as well with only 65.4 overs bowled during the day. In the seven Tests to date in Galle between the two sides, Sri Lanka have won four times, in 2009, 2012, 2014 and 2022, while Pakistan registered victories three in 2000, 2015 and 2022. Sri Lanka: 1 Dimuth Karunaratne (capt), 2

Nishan Madushka, 3 Kusal Mendis, 4 Angelo Mathews, 5 Dinesh Chandimal, 6 Dhananjaya de Silva, 7 Sadeera Samarawickrama (wk), 8 Ramesh Mendis, 9 Prabath Jayasuriya, 10 Kasun Rajitha, 11 Vishwa Fernando  
Pakistan: 1 Abdullah Shafique, 2 Imam-ul-Haq, 3 Shan Masood, 4 Babar Azam (capt), 5 Sarfaraz Ahmed (wk), 6 Saud Shakeel, 7 Agha Salman, 8 Nauman Ali, 9 Naseem Shah, 10 Abrar Ahmed, 11 Shaheen Shah Afridi  
16-20 July - First Test at Galle International Cricket Stadium  
24-28 July - Second Test at Singalese Sports Club, Colombo. - Agencies



Shaheen completes 100 test wickets

GALE: Pakistan's ace fast-bowler Shaheen Afridi joined elite company after completing 100 wickets in Test cricket on Sunday in Galle. The lanky pacer achieved the feat after dismissing Sri Lankan opener Nishan Madushka (4) in the third over of the innings. After the latest milestone, Afridi has joined legendary pacers Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis as the only Pakistani fast-bowlers to pick up 100-plus Test wickets at the age of 23. Afridi donned the whites for Pakistan after almost a year since he was on the sidelines due to a knee injury. The left-artermer is the 19th Pakistan cricketer to bag 100 wickets in the longest format of the game. Earlier, Shaheen was excited about making a comeback in the Test side after a long injury lay-off. "I am very excited to be making my Test comeback in the country where I was injured. Injuries are part of an athlete's life, but it is good to be back. I enjoy red-ball cricket a lot and I am one wicket away from a century of Test wickets, which would be a big achievement for me," Shaheen told PCB Digital on Thursday. - Agencies

Airfares soar ahead of India-Pakistan World Cup clash

NEW DELHI: The airfares are six times more expensive ahead of the ICC World Cup 2023 clash between India and Pakistan in Ahmedabad. The airfares have skyrocketed since the demand has reached an "all-time high" according to Nishant Pitti, who is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and co-founder of EaseMyTrip. There has been a massive surge in ticket prices for October 14, one day before the match, between the Delhi-Ahmedabad and Mumbai-Ahmedabad sectors. Currently, a one-way direct flight from Delhi to Ahmedabad and Mumbai to Ahmedabad is priced between Indian Rs15,000 to Rs22,000. "Even if people book three months in advance, airfares are six times more expensive than usual. An economy class Delhi-Ahmedabad ticket in August and September would be around Indian Rs3000. But the same ticket a day before the match, would cost Rs20,000," Pitti was quoted as saying by the Hindustan Times. "The demand for flight tickets and searches on our website reached an all-time high. Majority of people keen to attend the match have already started booking the tickets in advance," he added. Earlier, hotel room rates for the India-Pakistan match in Ahmedabad had also skyrocketed after the International Cricket Council (ICC) confirmed the fixture for the ODI Cricket World Cup on June 27. The unmatched demand for the most-anticipated match of the World Cup has led to an increase in the fares with the arch-rivals set to take on each other at the Narendra Modi Stadium on October 15. Rents have gone up to ten times almost, despite many of them already sold out for the day, and some hotels are even charging an amount near to Indian Rs100,000. - DNA

Wheelchair Cricket Asia Cup 2023 in September

ISLAMABAD: The second edition of the Wheelchair Cricket Asia Cup 2023 has been pushed to September due to the expected heavy rains in Nepal during the ongoing month. Pakistan Wheelchair Cricket Council (PWCC) said. The event, being hosted by Pakistan at the neutral venue of Kathmandu, Nepal was earlier scheduled to take place during the ongoing month. "The month of July is considered a rainy season in Kathmandu. Hence, we have decided to move the tournament to September," the President of PWCC Rookhsana Rajpoot told media. - APP

Tanveer leaves for CZ to compete at World Archery Para C'ships

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's visually impaired archer Tanveer Ahmed will fly to Czech Republic on Monday to participate in the World Archery Para Championships 2023. The week-long Championships are taking place in Pilsen from July 17 to 23. Talking to APP on Sunday, Tanveer said, "I will be flying to Pilsen on early Monday for the event". He said that that was his first appearance in the event and he will return home with a silver medal. Now I'm targeting another medal; hopefully gold this time," added Tanveer, who has low vision and shoots blind folded. The 39-year-old Tanveer claimed the first ever silver medal for the country in the last edition of the Championships that was held in Dubai, last year. Tanveer has won several medals in national and international competitions since taking on archery in 2017. Prior to that he was a blind cricketer where he showcased his talent for 16 years. "I've been a cricketer. But it is archery that gave me real recognition." The 2022 has been a year of success for him as he earned five international medals in it, including the first ever mix team gold medal in Andorra International Open for VI Archery, silver medal in 30 metre individual event of VI Archery and bronze medal in 18 metre individual event of VI Archery in Andorra International Open for VI Archery. - APP

Challenges plague Pakistan women's football

The surprises continued with the announcement of the camp, as vice-captain Malika-e-Noor was missing from the list, despite her smooth captaincy during the Olympic Qualifiers

DNA  
KARACHI: Supporting the Pakistan national women's team becomes difficult without harboring resentment towards the Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) Normalization Committee (NC), which seems determined to mock the sport and the players. Originally scheduled to play a friendly match on July 15 as part of a hastily arranged tour, the women's team now departed for Singapore on July 16, with the match taking place on July 18. Last month, the NC initiated a training camp for the women's team and announced the list of potential squad members on June 17, hoping to secure a friendly fixture. Initially, there were reports

of a match against Kyrgyzstan, then the Maldives, but at the last moment, the host country changed to Singapore. Following their participation in the first-ever Asian Olympic Qualifying round in April, where they finished third in Group E after defeating Tajikistan 1-0 at Hisor Stadium, the players regrouped. However, their journey was marred by defeats against the FIFA Women's World Cup-playing side, the Philippines (4-0), and Hong Kong (2-0), before finally clinching a victory. Unfortunately, the long-standing issues of nepotism and lack of transparency persist within the Pakistan women's camp. The problems begin with the selection of players for the camp, as the PFF NC has not conducted any

trials or domestic tournaments for women this year, making it difficult to gauge the potential of the existing talent pool in the country. While high-performing athletes were observed during the National Games, where more experienced players excelled, they were not welcomed back to the national camp by Head Coach Adeel Rizki, who was present in Quetta to make the selections. The surprises continued with the announcement of the camp, as vice-captain Malika-e-Noor was missing from the list, despite her smooth captaincy during the Olympic Qualifiers. She was replaced by Kayla Siddique, who is based in the United States. Moreover, the PFF NC replaced the team's manager with Eman Ahmed, an experienced figure from Rizki's own Karachi City FC. On the other hand, the national team appears to be Captain Maria Khan's personal project. The PFF NC announced the appointment of Iraqi Lebanese assistant coach Lyne Ismail on June 26 via social media. Rizki has previously faced accusations of mistreatment and verbal abuse from several players who participated in the South Asian Football Federation Championship last year. These players were subsequently removed from future assignments for speaking out against the mistreatment in a letter addressed to PFF NC Chief Haroon Malik. Blatant favoritism and preference for diaspora players have been evident, while no efforts have been made to

establish pathways for local footballers who consistently participate in the sport. After extensive investigation and confirmation from multiple sources, The Express Tribune discovered that Ismail was appointed by Rizki and Maria without undergoing any interviews or selection procedures. It was revealed that Ismail and Maria had played together at the same club in the UAE. Similar circumstances surround Ahmed's inclusion, as she was seen in pictures posted by the PFF NC. Furthermore, it was revealed that even the PFF NC's Human Resources department was unaware of Ismail's appointment, and Eman was hired as the manager without undergoing any interviews or standard hiring procedures. The Express Tribune reached out to the PFF NC for clarification, but received no response. Meanwhile, there has been a tumultuous saga regarding the issuance of the NOC (No Objection Certificate) required for all national teams to officially represent Pakistan in international fixtures. The PFF NC raised concerns when the government denied them the NOC to participate in Singapore, despite submitting the required documents late. Although the NOC was eventually granted, the PFF NC once again failed to handle the team affairs professionally, leading to the discovery that the visas for the team were not issued. As a result, the two planned friendly matches have been reduced to just one.

Balochistan CM lashes out at...

FROM PAGE 01  
Earlier, Balochistan Chief Minister (CM) Abdul Qudus Bizenjo lambasted the federal government for 'ignoring the province and not providing funds. In a policy statement, the chief minister claimed that not a 'single penny' out of the Rs10 billion grant announced by Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif for the rehabilitation of flood affectees was provided to his province. CM Bizenjo expressed concerns over the non-fulfillment of promises and the cold-shoulder attitude of the federal government toward the problems of the province where a sense of deprivation already prevails. "Despite several requests, the prime minister is not giving time for a meeting," he added. "We are allies of the government in Centre but the promises made to us are not being fulfilled," he complained. In this situation, the Balochistan government was unable to present a "balanced budget" for the fiscal year 2023-24, he added.

PML-N decides to join GB govt

FROM PAGE 01  
the office of deputy speaker Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly and two ministries, and PML-N will also get two ministries. PPP has nominated candidates for the ministries including Engineer Ismail and Shehzad Agha. Peoples Party have four, Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz three members in the GB assembly.

Flood water likely to fall in Sutlej...

FROM PAGE 01  
In the update, the FFD said that yesterday's trough of westerly wave over Northern parts of the country persisted. "Moderate moist currents from Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal are penetrating to upper parts of the country up to 5,000 feet," it said, adding that a monsoon low had developed in the north of the Bay of Bengal and the adjoining area. It predicted scattered wind thunderstorm/rain of moderate intensity with isolated heavy falls in the upper catchments of all major rivers as well as Islamabad, Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan, Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Sargodha, Lahore, Faisalabad, Multan, Sahiwal, Dera Ghazi Khan and Bahawalpur divisions.

Chairman SCCI departmental committee chairs meeting regarding T-10 tournament

SIALKOT: The meeting of the Departmental Committee for Sports Activities of Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) was held under the chairmanship of Malik Faisal Khurshed. A detailed discussion was held in the meeting regarding the management and organization of the first T-10 Sialkot Chamber of Commerce (SCCI) Cricket Tournament between Pakistan Chambers (Sialkot, Lahore, Gujranwala, Gujarat, Jhelum and Wazirabad Cutlery Association), says a news release issued here on Sunday. On the occasion, Chairman Faisal Khurshed Malik and committee members Muhammad Ejaz Ghori, Mian Asif Ali, M. Shahbaz Saim, Abdul Wahab Mir and Moazzam Ishaq Secretary Department Committee expressed their satisfaction on the arrangements of tournament. Chairman SCCI Departmental Committee on Sports Activities Faisal Khurshed Malik and committee members Muhammad Ejaz Ghori, Mian Asif Ali, M. Shahbaz Saim, Abdul Wahab Mir and Secretary Department Committee Moazzam Ishaq expressed their satisfaction on the arrangements of the tournament and said the tournament would be an important event in the history of Sialkot which would certainly help in promoting sports activities in the region. - APP

Briefs

UK officially joins trans-Pacific trading bloc

LONDON: The UK has now officially joined the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), according to an official statement on Sunday. Business and Trade Secretary Kemi Badenoch officially signed the treaty in New Zealand, solidifying the UK's entry into CPTPP, a trade bloc in the Indo-Pacific region with a staggering gross domestic product (GDP) of \$12 trillion (nearly \$16 trillion). The government has released new statistics indicating that businesses affiliated with CPTPP employ 1% of the UK workforce, and with membership, further investment in the UK is expected to rise. Under this agreement, more than 99% of current UK goods exports to CPTPP countries will be eligible for zero tariffs. Dairy farmers, for example, will benefit from reduced tariffs on cheese and butter exports to Canada, Chile, Japan and Mexico. "I'm delighted to be here in New Zealand to sign a deal that will be a big boost for British businesses and deliver billions of pounds in additional trade, as well as open up huge opportunities and unparalleled access to a market of over 500 million people," Badenoch said.—DNA

Kerry arrives in China to restart climate talks

Beijing: US climate envoy John Kerry arrived in China on Sunday, state media reported, to restart stalled talks between the world's two biggest emitters of planet-warming gases. Starting on Monday, "China and the United States will have an in-depth exchange of views" on climate issues, state broadcaster CCTV said on Kerry's arrival in Beijing. Kerry's trip to China, where he will meet with his counterpart Xie Zhenhua, follows weeks of record-setting summer heat that scientists say is being exacerbated by climate change. Bilateral climate talks stalled last year after Nancy Pelosi, then speaker of the US House of Representatives, visited self-ruled Taiwan and infuriated Beijing, which considers the island its territory. But Kerry, a former secretary of state, has enjoyed comparatively cordial and consistent relations with China despite Washington and Beijing locking horns over Taiwan and a number of other thorny issues, including advanced semiconductors. His trip to Beijing is his third as President Joe Biden's climate emissary and also comes after two other high-profile visits by US officials — first Secretary of State Antony Blinken, then Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen — aimed at stabilising US-China ties.—Agencies

S. Korea pledges military aid to Ukraine

SEOUL: South Korea has pledged to provide a "package of security, humanitarian and reconstruction assistance" to war-hit Ukraine, which will include additional military supplies. The pledge was made during talks between South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and his Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelenskyy, following a three-day surprise visit to the war-torn country on Saturday, Seoul-based Yonhap News reported. Addressing a joint press conference with Zelenskyy at the presidential palace in Kyiv, the South Korean president said his country would be a "partner in Ukraine's reconstruction of freedom, peace and prosperity." Yoon said Seoul would provide a "comprehensive" package of security, humanitarian and reconstruction assistance, dubbed the "Ukraine Peace and Solidarity Initiative," which will include additional military supplies that are larger in scope than last year's and the effective implementation of \$150 million worth of humanitarian aid, or \$50 million more than last year.—APP

# Spanish PM woos disappointed voters ahead of snap election

A prime minister who has governed for years and who questions (the action of the executive) in the middle of an electoral campaign sends a confused message to his electorate," said Martin

MADRID: Ahead of a snap election on July 23, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez is struggling to win back moderate voters who were put off by controversial positions pushed by his far-left governing partners. Sanchez's Socialists have since January 2020 governed in a minority coalition government with Podemos, born out of grassroots anti-austerity "indignados" protests. Sanchez once said the thought of such a tie-up prevented him from sleeping, but he was forced to agree to it after two inconclusive general elections. It is Spain's first coalition government since the country returned to democracy in the 1970s and it has been marked by high-profile feuds between the two parties over contested policies that have alienated moderate Socialists. "There has been a transfer of votes from the left to the

right," said Maria Martin of private pollster GAD3. About ten percent of former Socialist voters who said they voted for Sanchez during the last general election in November 2019 now say they will vote for the main opposition conservative Popular Party (PP), she added. That is roughly 700,000 voters who Sanchez could lose in the upcoming election which surveys tip the PP will win. The issue that has contributed the most to this transfer of votes is a loophole in a new sexual violence law adopted last year that saw over 1,000 imprisoned offenders have their sentences reduced, Martin said. Roughly 100 offenders were eventually released, prompting Sanchez to apologise and his government to amend the law which had been put forward by Podemos. Dubbed the "only yes means yes law", it has



become an effective weapon with which to bludgeon Sanchez. "It is a problem which will follow you forever," PP leader Alberto Nunez Feijoo said during a TV debate on Monday with Sanchez. Far-right party Vox has put up a giant billboard in central Madrid depicting a bearded man wearing a black hoodie that covers his eyes, with his hand covering the mouth of a young woman to stifle her scream. "Sanchez has

put hundreds of these monsters on the streets," reads a message in block letters above the image. There is also a "confrontation at the centre of the left between the more classical feminism represented by the Socialist party and that defended by Podemos," said Jose Pablo Ferrandiz of polling firm Ipsos. At the centre of the row is a law adopted in February and proposed by Podemos which allows anyone 16

and over to change their gender on their ID card on the basis of a simple statement. The Socialists blocked the draft law for months while they tried in vain to amend it. Part of the feminist camp — including former Socialist deputy prime minister Carmen Calvo — openly criticised the law on the grounds that it jeopardised the decades-long fight for equality between the sexes. This view was shared by a part of the electorate, which was uncomfortable with the "very ideological position" defended by Podemos regarding social issues, said Martin. Podemos has also railed against meat consumption for the good of the planet, which has hurt support for the Socialist in rural areas, she added. Sanchez tried to distance himself from the far-left party's position, saying for him "a me-

dium-rare steak is hard to beat". The premier is aware of the disaffection of moderate voters and is trying to "mobilise this segment of the Socialist electorate which is close to the centre and is very sizeable," said Ferrandiz. In TV and radio interviews, Sanchez has recognised his government has made "mistakes". "According to several polls, men, but also women, feel uncomfortable vis-a-vis certain feminist discourses," Sanchez said during one interview, adding he had friends who felt this way. Analysts warned criticising his government's measures was not a winning strategy. "A prime minister who has governed for years and who questions (the action of the executive) in the middle of an electoral campaign sends a confused message to his electorate," said Martin.—Agencies

# Pakistan seeks Chinese investment to upgrade agriculture, IT, mining, housing sectors: Ahsan Iqbal

BEIJING: Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal has said that Special Economic Zones (SEZs) will provide an opportunity for Chinese investments to take advantage of incentives that Pakistan offers to foreign investment with concessions. "We are working on nine special economic zones. The first Rashakai Special Economic Zone will be inaugurated later this month. Similarly, the other economic zones are also in the advanced stages, in Sindh, Punjab, and Baluchistan," he told APP during his recent visit to China. Pakistan, he said, also has a great advantage in low cost of labour. As in China, many industries are experiencing high costs of production due to increased levels of cost and are now moving to Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Pakistan also has a



great advantage in terms of low cost of production. The minister said, Pakistan has a very good infrastructure and then it has the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework. So, it becomes a very attractive destination for Chinese enterprises to relocate to these economic zones in Pakistan. About specific Chinese companies who are looking forward to cooperating in this regard, he said, there are many Chinese companies which are coming. Many have invested in Gwadar free zone. "But, we are

now really looking forward to developing our agriculture sector based on new technologies. We are seeking cooperation to upgrade the quality of our seeds so those companies which have research and seed development can help us," he added. Ahsan Iqbal said Pakistan is also looking for new irrigation technologies to conserve water and bring efficiency to agriculture, adding, "We are also looking for a food processing industry that has a great opportunity." Regarding great opportunity in the mining sector, he said, Pakistan has huge marble deposits, which can be tapped with new technology and similarly, Pakistan has other mines like lithium and other material which is used in electric vehicles. "So, we can develop that. He said Pakistan is also looking for joint cooperation and technology, particularly information technology. Pakistan has a young population with

very good IT skills. "Many Chinese technology companies are shifting to Pakistan to take advantage of the low cost of human resources and high skills that our young population has. So, I think agriculture, industry, mining, IT, energy sector all these areas are very promising for Chinese enterprises to invest in Pakistan," he added. The minister said big Chinese real estate companies can come and invest in the housing sector and added, "We have a huge shortage of housing so they can come and address urban housing issues with investments. We are offering very attractive terms for public-private partnership." Responding to a question about the security of CPEC projects, he said, the government of Pakistan is taking extra precautions for the security of the Chinese. We have provided four layers of security to CPEC projects. But, the CPEC is a very strategic project.—APP

# Supply of cluster munitions should be treated as 'crime'

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Sunday that Washington's supply of cluster munitions to Ukraine should be treated as a crime. "The US administration itself gave an assessment to these munitions through the mouths of its employees some time ago, when the use of cluster munitions was called a crime by the US administration itself. I think this is how it should be treated," Putin said in an interview to the TV channel Rossiya-1. Putin further said that his country retains the right to "mirror actions" in the case where cluster munitions are used against Russia, adding that Moscow has a "sufficient stock of various types of cluster munitions." "Until now, we have not done this, we have not used it, and we have not had such a need, despite the well-known shortage in a certain period of time, and we also have ammunition, but we have not done this," Putin said. He also said that he believes the US is supplying Ukraine with cluster munitions due to a general shortage of ammunition. "The Ukrainian army spends up to 5,000-6,000 155-caliber shells per day of hostilities, while the US produces 15,000 per month. They don't have enough, and Europe already doesn't have enough (shells). But they did not find anything better than to propose the use of cluster munitions," he added. Cluster munitions release bomblets that scatter in the target area and may explode years later causing civilian casualties. The 2008 UN Convention on Cluster Munitions prohibits the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of cluster munitions.—DNA



# Japanese PM arrives in S. Arabia

Riyadh: Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida arrived in Saudi Arabia on Sunday, commencing a three-day Middle East trip aimed at enhancing bilateral relations between several countries in the region and Japan. Kishida held meetings with Saudi officials to boost ties with the Kingdom in key sectors such as energy, business opportunities for Japanese enterprises, and to promote an open international order outlined in the G7 Hiroshima Summit, according to Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "We continue to guarantee oil supply to Japan and maintain our position as the most reliable partner," Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman said. "Saudi is Japan's biggest oil exporter fulfilling 40 percent of its total needs." The Kingdom will continue cooperating with Japan in clean hydrogen and recycled carbon fuels, the minister added. "Our relations with Japan in the field of energy for more than 50 years are solid and continue to grow and diversify," Prince Abdulaziz said. Saudi has signed 26 cooperation agreements with Japan across different sectors, Saudi Minister of Investment Khalid al-Faluh said.—DNA

# Elon Musk says Twitter has lost half its advertising revenue

NEW YORK: Twitter has lost roughly half of its advertising revenue, according to owner Elon Musk, since he bought the social media platform for \$44 billion last October. Musk, who has been outspoken about the difficulties facing the company, broke the figures in a tweet response to a user who was giving suggestions on financing for the platform. "We're still negative cash flow, due to ~50% drop in advertising revenue plus heavy debt load," the billionaire tweeted Saturday.

"Need to reach positive cash flow before we have the luxury of anything else," he added, without further elaboration. Insider Intelligence has reported that Twitter was set to earn less than \$3 billion in revenue in 2023, down one-third from 2022. Changes instituted by Musk since his takeover of Twitter have turned off users and advertisers alike. Earlier this month, Musk announced that Twitter was limiting verified accounts to reading 1,000 tweets a day, in a bid "to address



extreme levels of data scraping" and "system manipulation" by third-party platforms. Non-verified users — the free accounts that make up the majority of users — are limited to reading 1,000 tweets per day, while new unverified

accounts are limited to 500 tweets. Twitter has also said TweetDeck, a popular program that allows users to monitor several accounts at once, will only be available to verified users from next month. The changes came as Threads, an app launched by Facebook parent Meta as a rival to Twitter, registered more than 100 million users in its first five days. Earlier this year, the artificial intelligence app ChatGPT, created by OpenAI, took two months to reach the same number of active users.—DNA

# Pakistan and India's constitutional evolution

SYED QUSAIN HAIDER GILLANI



The article provides an academic overview of the Government of India Act of 1935, also known as the Indian Act of 1935, and its significant impact on India's political landscape during the colonial era. The act aimed to increase regional autonomy while maintaining British rule over India, as indicated by its title. This essay examines the key provisions of the Indian Act of 1935 and analyzes their effects on India's struggle for independence. The research utilizes historical analysis, comparative analysis, statistical analysis, and case studies to investigate the implications of the Act on India's political and constitutional development. The Government of India Act of 1935 played a pivotal role in shaping the political climate of colonial India. This

essay aims to explore the Act's influence on the development of India's political and constitutional system. It investigates how the Act impacted India's political environment and constitutional evolution, emphasizing its significant provisions and providing a brief historical background. The Act established a federal system of government in India, consisting of both central and regional authorities. Provincial governments were granted increased legislative authority and responsibility, leading to the decentralization of power. The Act also introduced a two-tiered system of provincial governance, with elected ministers and governors sharing responsibilities. The Act brought about changes in India's political landscape by allowing the existence of two chambers in provincial legislatures and granting limited voting rights to a specific group of Indians. These provisions influenced the political climate under British colonial control, resulting in the emergence of political parties based on religious and racial lines, leading to disputes and acts of violence between different communities. The Indian Act of 1935 exerted a significant influence on the evolution of the Indian constitution and the establishment of the post-independence Indian state. It introduced a federal form of government, granting substan-

tial autonomy to the provinces while retaining considerable power for the governor through the diarchy system. The act also contributed to increased caste and religious divisions by implementing communal representation and a restricted franchise system. This article thoroughly examines the impact of the 1935 Indian Act on the development of Indian constitutional law. The passing of the Government of India Act in 1935 marked a crucial constitutional turning point in Indian history. Enacted by the British Parliament, the act established a federal system of administration in India, providing provinces with the opportunity to establish autonomous governments. The Indian Constitution was significantly influenced by the act through its provision for the establishment of an Indian federal court, which served as the highest court of appeals in the country and interpreted the provisions of the act. Additionally, the act paved the way for the establishment of a federal public service commission and a federal railway authority. One of the most important effects of the Government of India Act of 1935 was the dissemination of the concept of federalism in India. The act introduced regional governments with a certain degree of autonomy, alongside a federal government with policy-making powers. This concept of federal-

ism was later incorporated into the final draft of the Indian Constitution in 1950. Another significant aspect of the act was the provision that allowed provinces to establish legislatures with two chambers, resulting in the advancement of India's representative democracy. However, the act also granted voting privileges to a limited segment of the Indian population, reflecting British attitudes of superiority over Indians during that period. After India gained independence, the limited franchise system was abolished, and voting rights for adults were extended to all citizens. In accordance with the Indian Act of 1935, communities in India were allocated seats in provincial legislatures based on their population. This further deepened religious and caste divisions, as conflicts emerged between various communities. The communal representation system, employed as a divide-and-conquer strategy by the British, failed to represent the interests of the Indian population as a whole. Following independence, the system of community representation was transformed into one that reserved legislative seats for members of disadvantaged communities. The Indian Act of 1935 laid the foundation for the current Indian government and had a significant influence on the development of

the Indian constitution. It established a federal structure of administration, granting administrative autonomy to the provinces. The act also introduced a restricted franchise system and collective bargaining. Subsequently, the 1935 Indian Act shaped India's constitution after independence, establishing a federal system of government and incorporating provisions for social justice and the protection of fundamental rights. In terms of the political climate, the Indian Act of 1935 had a substantial impact on Indian politics. Enacted by the British government in response to the growing demand for Indian self-rule, the act aimed to provide a framework for Indian governance while maintaining British control over the nation. While it contributed to the development of political movements and institutions in the years leading up to independence, it also sustained British influence over Indian politics. The governor-general, appointed by the British government, held extensive powers, including the ability to reject laws passed by the Indian legislature. Additionally, the act perpetuated social divisions based on socioeconomic status, race, and religion, hindering the development of a strong Indian political identity. The Indian Act significantly influenced the rise of communal

# Death toll from South Korea rains climbs to 32

SEOUL: The death toll from flooding and landslides caused by heavy rains in South Korea has shot up to 32 as rescuers recovered six more bodies from a bus trapped in a flooded underground tunnel in the central town of Osong, Seoul-based Yonhap news reported on Sunday, citing government and rescue authorities. Over 10 people are missing while thousands evacuated their homes due to rain damage. The death toll from the underpass flooding stood at seven, as of Sunday morning, and is expected to rise further as several people are believed to be trapped inside the tunnel. Most fatalities were reported in the southeastern province of North Gyeongsang, where 17 people died due to landslides and housing collapses, and nine others are missing. One more person was reported missing in Busan, the office said. Thirteen people have also been injured nationwide as a result of the recent downpours. Over 7,000 people from 13 cities and provinces have so far evacuated their homes. Heavy rains have also left 211 roads closed. All train operations have been suspended, although KTX bullet trains on some sections resumed operations. The central Chungcheong provinces and the southern Jeolla and Gyeongsang provinces may experience up to 300 mm of additional rain through Tuesday, according to the state-run weather agency. Landslide warnings across the nation have also been upgraded to the highest level of "grave."—DNA

# Dangerous heatwaves strike globe as wildfires rage

ROME: Scorching weather gripped three continents on Sunday, whipping up wildfires and threatening to topple temperature records as the dire consequences of global warming take shape. Predictions of historic heat hung over swathes of Asia, Europe and the United States. Japan issued heat-stroke alerts to tens of millions of people in 20 of its 47 prefectures as near-record high temperatures scorched large areas and torrential rain pummeled other regions. "Every time we're visiting somewhere there seems to be a heatwave or like a rare weather disaster," said Texan tourist Anthony Fernandez in Tokyo. "It's kind of becoming like the new normal... climate change is a big concern," the 29-year-old said. National broadcaster NHK warned the heat was life-threatening, with the capital and other places recording nearly 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit). Japan's highest temperature ever — 41.1C first recorded in Kumagaya city, Saitama, in 2018 — could be beaten, according to the meteorological agency.—APP

## Briefs

### Removing tariffs on China premature: US official

DNA

**GANDHINAGAR:** US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen on Sunday called for the de-escalation of tensions between Beijing and Washington but termed the elimination of Trump-era tariffs on China "premature", reported Bloomberg. "It would be useful to look for ways to de-escalate over time," Yellen told reporters in Gandhinagar, India. The US official is in India to meet her Group of Seven (G7) counterparts from around the world this week. The US treasury chief said that a four-year review of the tariffs imposed on China was near completion and that she had brought up the issue during her recent trip to Beijing. But any move to lift the tariffs this year would lead to a political reaction at home as the Republican party makes a bid to take back the White House from Joe Biden. "The tariffs were put in place because we had concern with unfair trade practices on China's side — and our concerns with those practices remains," she said. "So perhaps over time this is an area where we could make progress, but I would say it's premature to use this as an area for de-escalation, at least at this time."

### Iran's 'morality police' return

WEB DESK

**TEHRAN:** Iran has relaunched patrols by the so-called morality police as authorities escalate their efforts to enforce the country's mandatory hijab rules. Saeid Montazeri, the spokesperson for the Iranian law enforcement force, confirmed on Sunday that police patrols were now operational on foot and with vehicles to crack down on people whose covering is not deemed appropriate in the Islamic Republic. The morality police would "issue warnings and then introduce to the judicial system people who unfortunately insist on their norm-breaking behaviour without concern for the consequences of their covering that is outside of the norm", he was quoted as saying by state media. Montazeri said police expect everyone to conform to accepted dress codes so officers will have more time to deal with "other vital police missions". The officers are tasked with warning women — and sometimes men — to correct the way they are dressed. This could range from ordering women to adjust headscarves to demanding a change of clothing to something that is more loose-fitting and deemed more appropriate.

### Police arrest suspect behind rape at hiking trail

DNA

**ISLAMABAD:** The Islamabad police have arrested the suspect involved in the recent alleged rape of a woman at one of the trails of the capital's Margalla Hills, it said on Sunday. In the early hours of Friday, the Islamabad police had registered a first information report (FIR) after the woman had complained that a man had lured her with the prospect of a job and raped her at gunpoint on Thursday afternoon after taking her to the Margalla Hills' trail 3 — an old hiking track that starts from Margalla Road in F-6 and leads to Viewpoint. In a statement issued today, the Islamabad Police said it was successful in arresting the suspect after a three-day effort. It added that it arrested the man late last night on "technical bases" after searching for him, claiming that the victim was not assisting the police in the investigation.

# 800-year-old mosque in BJP-led state shut down

"By then, the collector had already been conducting hearings. In a restricted time, we were asked to defend our case. And on July 11, the collector simply passed a restraining order," Aslam, one of the ad-hoc members of the trust committee, said

NEWS DESK

**NEW DELHI:** Authorities in an Indian state banned Muslims from offering prayers in an 800-year-old mosque. The Wire reported Saturday, in the latest attack on the minority community by the Modi-led Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The district collector in BJP-ruled Maharashtra's Jalgaon passed an interim restraining order while hearing a complaint filed by a right-wing organisation, according to the news outlet. The government official, under section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, immediately banned prayers, summoned police in the area, and asked the tahsildar to take charge of the mosque, claiming that it was

"disputed". The order and the collector's powers have been challenged in the Bombay high court. But Aslam, a member of the Jumma Masjid Trust, is fearful that the latest move against the Muslim community "marks the beginning of the communalisation of a centuries-old mosque in the state". Aslam, for as long as he remembers, has seen Muslims praying five times a day inside Jumma Masjid in Jalgaon's Erandol. The 800-year-old masjid is registered under the Waqf Board and is an essential place of worship for the locals. "Pandavada Sangharsh Samiti", an unregistered organisation, had filed the application against the mosque, pushing the centuries-old mosque into controversy. The complainant, Prasad Madhusudan Danda-

wate, had filed the complaint before the collector, Aman Mittal, in May. According to his Facebook profile, the complainant is a member of the extremist Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), and Bajrang Dal. In his complaint, Dandawate claimed that the mosque was built over a Hindu place of worship and is illegal and should be taken over by the state authorities. The complainant also claims that the Jumma Masjid Trust has "illegally" encroached over the space. The mosque's trust members told The Wire that they did not know about the complaint until they received the district's collector's notice in June. "By then, the collector had already been

conducting hearings. In a restricted time, we were asked to defend our case. And on July 11, the collector simply passed a restraining order," Aslam, one of the ad-hoc members of the trust committee, said. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has also backed the trust's claims that it is an ancient structure. The Waqf Board, under which the mosque has been registered, has also challenged the district collector's powers. "The collector can interfere to the extent of handling the law-and-order aspects here; everything else is the Waqf board's responsibility. The property has been registered with the board since 2009 and there is no ambiguity in that aspect," Moin Tahsildar, the CEO of the board, told The Wire.



**SIALKOT:** A delegation of lawmakers from Sialkot call on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. — DNA

## Azerbaijan accuses Russia of failing Karabakh deal

The European Union urged Baku and Yerevan to refrain from "violence and harsh rhetoric"

WEB DESK

**BAKU:** Azerbaijan has accused Russia and Armenia of failing to fulfil a ceasefire deal in the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave as Moscow offered to host new peace talks while the European Union urged Baku and Yerevan to refrain from "violence and harsh rhetoric". The Azeri government's criticism of Russia on Saturday came as Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan met in Brussels for talks aimed at resolving their decades-long conflict for the control of Nagorno Karabakh. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the neighbours have fought two wars over the small mountainous enclave that is part of Azerbaijan but populated by about 120,000 ethnic Armenians. After heavy fighting and a Russian-brokered ceasefire, Azerbaijan in 2020 took over areas that had been controlled by ethnic Armenians in and around the mountain enclave. Baku and Yerevan have since been discussing a peace deal in which Russia is also pushing to retain a leading role and in which the two countries would agree on borders, settle differences over the enclave and unfreeze relations. Tensions, however, have flared again with Azerbaijan blockading and closing the sole land link between Karabakh and Armenia earlier this week. It blamed the shutting of the Lachin corridor — which is policed by Russian peacekeepers — on "smuggling" by aid agencies.

# Peak hours extended, consumers to pay more

DNA

**ISLAMABAD:** In a bid to meet the conditions of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the government has decided to increase the duration of electricity's peak hours, media reported Sunday, effective from July 1. Peak hours are the hours of the day during which electricity demand is the highest. During this period, people are charged the highest amount per kilowatt-hour used. The peak hours have now been increased by two hours, i.e., instead of 6pm-10pm, the time has been changed to 5pm-11pm, according to the publication. The Power Division has decided that consumers using time of use metre would pay Rs49.35 per unit during peak hours from 5pm-11pm, and after peak hours, they will pay Rs33.3 per unit from 11pm-5pm. Those with three-phase metres will now

pay Rs50 per unit during peak hours as opposed to Rs34 per unit earlier. To cover the line losses and control the power sector's circular debt, the government aims to collect more than Rs3 trillion from the masses — and increasing peak hours is a way to increase revenue. The government has also directed the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) to draft a plan to increase gas rates. The Ogra, meanwhile, has plans to move up the gas rates by up to 50%. The government has taken several measures to meet the IMF's demands — including increasing power tariffs, petroleum rates, and income tax. However, this has burdened the masses further as inflation continues to remain at high levels. The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) received \$1.2 billion from the IMF earlier this week as the first tranche of a \$3 billion bailout to stabilise the economy. Having teetered on the brink of a sovereign

## Protests swell in Tel Aviv for 28th week

**TEL AVIV:** Tens of thousands of protesters packed the streets of Tel Aviv on Saturday night, marking the 28th straight week of demonstrations against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's plan to overhaul the country's judiciary. Protest leaders promised further "days of disruption" lie ahead. Netanyahu's government gave initial approval to a key portion of the overhaul earlier this week, breathing new life into the grassroots movement. The bill still needs to be approved in two more votes, expected by the end of the month, before it becomes law. Saturday night protests have become a mainstay of the grassroots movement — but this week's was larger than usual. In Tel Aviv, protesters unrolled a massive banner reading "SOS." They threw paint powder into the sky, streaking it pink and orange. "Handmaids" — women dressed in red robes as characters from the dystopian novel and TV series "The Handmaid's Tale" — once again took to the streets. Their jarring appearance is meant to drive home the notion that, if the overhaul passes, women could be stripped of their rights. — Agencies

## Saudi Arabia, Japan to strengthen bilateral relations

DNA

**RIYADH:** Bilateral relations between Saudi Arabia and Japan are on track to strengthen, according to Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, who started his three-day visit to the Middle East on Sunday. In a statement to Al-Riyadh newspaper, Kishida stressed the importance of the "strategic" partnership, which has witnessed steady growth over the years to include many sectors besides oil. The prime minister also noted that the Kingdom supplies Japan with about 40 percent of its crude oil needs, which further highlights the importance of a strategic collaboration between the two countries. In addition, Kishida spoke about the Kingdom's pioneering role in the Arab and Islamic world and its continuous attempts to establish peace and security in the region. He also stressed Japan's keenness to work closely with the Kingdom in providing expertise and modern technologies within the framework of the Saudi-Japanese Vision 2030, which was launched by the two countries back in 2016.

## Japan, South Korea, US hold joint drills

**SEOUL:** Japan, South Korea and the United States have held a joint naval missile defence exercise to counter North Korea's "nuclear and missile threats", days after Pyongyang launched an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). The drill on Sunday was conducted in international waters between South Korea and Japan and brought together destroyers equipped with Aegis radar systems from the three countries, the South Korean Navy said. A naval officer said the exercise focused on practising procedures to detect and track a computer-simulated ballistic target and share related information. North Korea fired its latest Hwasong-18 missile, which Pyongyang describes as the core of its nuclear strike force, off its east coast on Wednesday in what it said was a "strong practical warning" to its adversaries. The launch followed heated complaints from North Korea in recent days, accusing US spy planes of flying over its exclusive economic zone waters, condemning a recent visit to South Korea by a US nuclear-powered cruise missile submarine and promising to take steps in reaction. Seoul, Tokyo and Washington denounced the ICBM launch, saying it constituted a "clear, flagrant violation" of multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions and posed "a grave threat to peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and beyond". The South Korean Navy said Sunday's joint drills "served as an opportunity to enhance our military's response capabilities against ballistic missiles and improve security cooperation" between South Korea, Japan and the US. — Agencies

## 7.4 magnitude earthquake jolts Alaska Peninsula

**ALASKA:** United States Geological Survey (USGS) said Sunday that an earthquake of magnitude 7.4 shook the Alaska Peninsula, triggering a tsunami warning, with no casualties reported so far. Hours after the quake, the US Tsunami Warning System withdrew a warning it had issued for coastal areas of South Alaska and the Alaska Peninsula. The USGS said that the quake was a relatively shallow one, striking at a depth of 9.3 km (5.78 miles). It said that little or no landslide was expected, but some landslides could have occurred in highly susceptible areas. According to Alaska Earthquake Centre, the event was felt widely throughout the Aleutian Islands — an area far from the mainland — the Alaskan Peninsula and Cook Inlet regions. — Agencies

## Sudan army returns for talks in Jeddah

**KHARTOUM:** Sudanese army representatives have returned to Jeddah in Saudi Arabia for talks with their paramilitary foes, according to news agencies citing government sources, as the war between rival generals entered its fourth month. "A delegation of the armed forces has returned to Jeddah to resume negotiations with Rapid Support Forces (RSF) rebels," a government source told the AFP news agency on Saturday. There was no immediate comment from the RSF on returning to the talks in Jeddah, which Saudi and US mediators adjourned last month after a series of violated ceasefires. Separately, a mediation attempt launched by Egypt began on Thursday, an effort welcomed both by the Sudanese army — which has close ties to Egypt — and the RSF. On April 15, a power struggle between army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and his former deputy, RSF commander Mohamed Hamdan Dag-

lo, burst into an all-out war, killing at least 3,000 and displacing more than three million people. The delegation in Saudi Arabia signalled a return to diplomatic efforts by the army, after it boycotted talks last week in Ethiopia hosted by East African regional bloc, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Khartoum's foreign ministry had objected to Kenyan President William Ruto's leadership of the IGAD quartet, accusing Nairobi of siding with the RSF. Before the Jeddah talks were suspended, US mediators had grown increasingly frustrated with both sides' reluctance to work towards a sustained truce. Experts believe that both Burhan and Daglo have opted for a war of attrition instead, hoping to extract greater concessions at the negotiating table later. For three months, barely a day has passed for residents of the capital Khartoum without their homes shaking from air raids, artillery blasts and gun battles. To escape the brutal urban warfare and rampant looting, 1.7 million people have fled the capital, according to the United Nations. Millions remain in the city, sheltering at home as the violence shows no signs of abating. Witnesses again reported "clashes using various types of weapons" in the capital's northwest on Saturday as well as air raids from army fighter jets in the south. — Agencies

# China, Russia to hold joint drill in Sea of Japan

The defence ministry said on its official WeChat account Sunday: "The Chinese flotilla comprised of five warships and four ship-borne helicopters, left the eastern port of Qingdao and will rendezvous with Russian forces in a predetermined area"

**BEIJING:** Chinese defence ministry announced Sunday its flotilla left Sunday to join Russian naval and air forces in the Sea of Japan for a joint military drill for "safeguarding the security of strategic waterways", as the cordiality of both countries has increased with leader Xi Jinping terming relations as "no limit partnership". Code-named "Northern/Interaction-2023", the exercise marks enhanced military cooperation between Beijing and Moscow since Russia began its special military operation in Ukraine in February 2022. The defence ministry said on its official WeChat account Sunday: "The Chinese flotilla comprised of five warships and four ship-borne helicopters, left the eastern port of Qingdao and will rendezvous with Russian forces in a predetermined area."

The ministry stated Saturday that the Russian naval and air forces would participate in the drill taking place in the Sea of Japan. A military officer adjusts a Russian flag ahead of a welcome ceremony hosted by Chinese President Xi Jinping for Russian President Vladimir Putin outside the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China June 8, 2018. — Reuters A military officer adjusts a Russian flag ahead of a welcome ceremony hosted by Chinese President Xi Jinping for Russian President Vladimir Putin outside the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China June 8, 2018. — Reuters This would be the first time both Russian forces take part in the drill, state newspaper Global Times cited military observers as saying. Gromkiy and Sovershenniy, two

Russian warships taking part in the Sea of Japan drill, had earlier this month conducted separate training with the Chinese navy in Shanghai on formation movements, communication and sea rescues. Before making port at the financial hub of Shanghai, the same ships had sailed past Taiwan and Japan, prompting both Taipei and Tokyo to monitor the Russian warships. Days before Russia commenced its special military operation, President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi declared their partnership aimed at countering the influence of the United States. When China's Defence Minister Li Shangfu met with the head of the Russian Navy, Admiral Nikolai Yevmenov, in Beijing this month, both sides reiterated pledges to strengthen military ties.

Chinese military Chief of Joint Staff Liu Zhenli and Russia's top soldier, Chief of General Staff Valery Gerasimov made the same pledge during a video call in June. China and Russia carried out a joint air patrol over the Seas of Japan and East China last month, and the flights prompted South Korea to deploy fighter jets as a precaution. It was the sixth such China-Russia patrol in the area since 2019. When China's Defence Minister Li Shangfu met with the head of the Russian navy, Admiral Nikolai Yevmenov, in Beijing this month, both sides reiterated pledges to strengthen military ties. Chinese military Chief of Joint Staff Liu Zhenli and Russia's top soldier, Chief of General Staff Valery Gerasimov made the same pledge during a video call in June. — Agencies