



# Islamabad POST

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**Wagner fighters on Polish border in attack position**

Detailed News On Page-07

**Economic ties with China are necessary**

Detailed News On Page-07

**Hijab-clad Benzina creates history**

Detailed News On Page-06



## JUI-F gathering targetted 40 killed in Bajaur blast

Over 200 injured; JUI-F tehsil amir among those killed; Maulana Fazl demands inquiry into attack, Iran condemns blast; blast on the day of visit of Chinese high profile official intriguing?

**President Alvi, PM Shehbaz condemn blast**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi and the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif have strongly condemned blast at workers convention of JUI-F at Khar area of Bajaur district. In their separate messages, they also expressed deep grief and sorrow over the loss of precious lives in the incident. The President prayed for eternal peace for the departed souls and commiserated with the bereaved families. Dr. Arif Alvi also wished early recovery of the injured and emphasized on timely provision of the medical assistance to them. The Prime Minister condoled with the JUI-F Chief Maulana Fazalur Rehman as well. He also directed to provide best medical facilities to the injured. The Prime Minister expressed sympathy with the bereaved

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SHAMIM SHAHID / DNA

BAJAUR: At least 40 people, including a Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) local leader, were killed in a suicide blast that took place on Sunday at the workers' convention in Bajaur's Khar. Caretaker Information Minister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel told media that more than 200 people have been injured during the blast that took place during the speech of a JUI-F leader. The district emergency officer shared that the injured are also being shifted to Timergara and Peshawar. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Inspector General of Police (IGP) Akhtar Hayat Khan confirmed that the initial investigation revealed that it was a suicide attack. He added that the investigation teams are collecting evidence from the site of the blast. The district emergency officer shared that the injured are also being shifted to Timergara and Peshawar. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Inspector General of Police (IGP) Akhtar Hayat Khan confirmed that the blast was a suicide attack. He added that 10kg of explosives were used in the blast and ball bearings were found from the crime scene. He added that the investigation teams are collecting evidence from the site of the blast.

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**Marriyum condemns explosion**

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Sunday condemned the blast that occurred at the workers' convention of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) in Bajaur. The minister, in a condolence message, grieved over the martyrdom of JUI's office bearers and workers including Ziaullah Jan. She also prayed for early recovery of the injured persons. Marriyum said innocent people were targeted in a brutal way in Bajaur which was highly condemnable. She termed terrorists the "mortal enemy" of Pakistan. All those who were involved in the blast would be brought to justice, she added. The minister said those people who were targeted in the blast advocated Islam. She prayed to the Almighty to rest the departed

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ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah receives Chinese Vice Prime Minister He Lifeng upon his arrival in Pakistan. - DNA

**British HC-designate, Jane Marriott arrives in Islamabad**



DNA

ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner-designate to Pakistan, Jane Marriott CMG OBE, has arrived in Islamabad to take up her new posting at British High Commission Islamabad. Jane arrives at an important time for UK-Pakistan relations, with a significant uplift in UK aid spend in Pakistan focussed on strengthening climate resilience and reducing humanitarian risks. Last month the UK also launched the new Developing Countries Trading Scheme, which will help Pakistan to boost exports by reducing tariffs

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## 10 years of CPEC Chinese Vice Premier in Pakistan to celebrate CPEC

Lifeng would also hold meetings with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President Dr Arif Alvi during the visit

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng on Sunday arrived in Pakistan on a three-day visit during which he will attend a ceremony planned to mark 10 years of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project. A statement issued by the Foreign Office (FO) earlier on Saturday said that the Chinese vice premier will be in Pakistan from July 30 (today) to August 1 (Tuesday) at the federal government's invitation to attend a ceremony celebrating a decade of CPEC as the chief guest. It added that Lifeng would also hold meetings with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President Dr Arif Alvi during the visit. The FO had acknowledged Lifeng's "prominent role" in China's international economic relations and implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative, of which CPEC is a

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**Ahsan Iqbal highlights CPEC achievements**

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Sunday highlighted milestone achievements made under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) during the last 10 years and the deepening relations between the two countries also known as "Iron Brothers" with each passing day. Addressing a news conference here ahead of the visit of the Deputy Prime Minister of China in connection with

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### Briefs

**Benazir's wax statue unveiled**

DNA

DUBAI: A wax figure of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto is unveiled at the Madame Tussauds museum in Dubai on Sunday. According to media, Benazir's wax figure would be the first of a Pakistani personality at the museum's Dubai location. Benazir's son and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, who arrived in UAE earlier in the morning today on a one-day visit, attended the unveiling of the figure along with other dignitaries and diplomats. During his visit, Bilawal would also discuss the entire spectrum of bilateral relations between Pakistan and UAE in a meeting with his Emirati counterpart Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Foreign Office said in a tweet.

**Forex reserves at \$14 bn: Dar**

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The Senate was told that foreign exchange reserves of Pakistan have swollen from eight billion dollars to around 14 billion dollars due to prudent economic policies of the government. This was stated by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, while responding to various points of orders raised by the lawmakers in the Upper House. The Finance Minister recalled that he had consistently been saying that Pakistan would not default and fulfilled all its sovereign commitments.

## 'Prevention of Violent Extremism Bill' Bill dropped after MPs' reservations

PML-N allies complain they were not taken on board before introduction of the bill in the House

KHAYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani Sunday took a decision to drop an item, which pertained to 'The Prevention of Violent Extremism Bill, 2023,' from the house's agenda due to reservations expressed by several members of parliament. Clarifying his position, he said the session was not summoned on the holiday due to this particular bill being introduced on behalf of Minister for Interior Rana Sana Ullah Khan for the prevention of violent extremism. The chairman further made it clear that it was decided in the meeting of the advisory committee with the mutual understanding of all parliamentary leaders to summon the session on this day. However, Minister of State for Law and Justice Shahadat Awan, terming the bill in the national interest said this legislation was made in the backdrop of United Nations Security Council Resolutions

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## Asad for end to propaganda against PTI

STAFF REPORT

SWABI: PTI leader Asad Qaiser called for an end to what he called was ongoing "propaganda" against his party, and urged for "powerful quarters" to ensure free and fair elections in the country. In a video statement, Qaiser, who unlike many of his peers did not leave the PTI in the aftermath of the May 9 violence, said: "The one-sided propaganda under way against the party and Imran Khan at this time, what do those in power and the PDM (Pakistan

Continued on Page 06

## PM says development projects hallmark of govt

Says sitting govt have nothing to do with ban on PTI Chairman on the national hook-up; claims Nawaz sentence was a conspiracy to keep him out of politics



LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif inaugurates 1263 MW Punjab Power Plant Dist Jhang. - DNA

LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said that the incumbent government believes in serving the nation and started various development projects across the country. He said this while talking to the media at the inaugural and laying the

Continued on Page 06

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# FDE faces backlash as teachers struggle with insufficient rental ceiling funds

For three consecutive fiscal years, authorities at FDE have failed to secure adequate funding, leading to a substantial backlog of unpaid rent

ISLAMABAD: Teachers and non-teaching staff working in various schools and colleges under the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) are facing dire circumstances due to the continuous lack of sufficient annual budget allocation for rental ceiling. For three consecutive fiscal years, authorities at FDE have failed to secure adequate funding, leading to a substantial backlog of unpaid rent. As a result, the owners of houses are threatening eviction of teachers and staff, causing immense stress and hindering the quality of education in educational institutions. An Assistant Professor at Islamabad Model College for Boys (IMCB) H-9 while talking to APP, expressed concerns over the reduced allocation of rental ceiling for the fiscal year 2023-24, which was further decreased compared to the previous year. The situation is no different at IMCB F-10/4, where the rental ceiling allocation has also been reduced, aggravating the financial strain on teachers and employees. Meanwhile,

an associate professor from Islamabad Model Postgraduate College H-8 lamented the failure to clear rent arrears from the previous year, despite the allocation remaining the same for the current year. This insufficient budget allocation has left the teachers struggling to meet their rent obligations, jeopardizing their living conditions, and, consequently, their ability to focus on delivering quality education in the classroom. Istikhar Ahmed, a retired professor from Islamabad Model College of Commerce H-8/4 told APP, "I have retired from government service, and my department did not clear my pending rental ceiling of 19 months. I am running pillar to post to get my pending dues, but to no avail." Blame has been directed at the authorities of the FDE for not diligently pursuing the case at the Finance Division, resulting in the continued lack of proper funding for rental ceiling. Teachers and employees feel neglected and ignored, with

mounting anxiety and frustration over the situation. In response to the worsening conditions, the Press secretary of the Federal Government College Teachers Association (FGCTA) argued that other government departments, divisions, and ministries have consistently received sufficient budgetary allocations for rental ceiling, leaving the teachers puzzled as to why the government always seems to overlook their needs. He sought to draw attention to teachers' plight and demand fair treatment and sufficient budget allocations for rental ceiling to secure the living conditions of teachers and ensure a conducive environment for quality education. He urged the Federal Minister for Education to take immediate action to address this pressing issue, advocating for the rights of teachers and ensuring the smooth functioning of educational institutions for the betterment of students and educators alike.



ISLAMABAD: Mrs Luqman Ali Afzal (Middle), wife of Dean of Diplomatic Corps and Lubna Qureshi posing for a picture on the occasion of farewell dinner hosted by CEO Monal Group Luqman Ali Afzal for the outgoing Ambassador of Jordan Ibrahim Al Madani, at the Asian Wok.—DNA

## DG PMNH calls for investing more in science

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Director General of the Pakistan Museum of Natural History (PMNH), Prof. Dr. Muhammad Akram Shaikh has urged the government to invest more in the science and technology sector in the country for achieving social and economic development. "Those countries that have invested in the science and technology sector have achieved substantial progress and development", the DG said during an interview with APP. Highlighting the performance of PMNH, Dr. Akram Shaikh said, "The PMNH is eager to complete the construction of the remaining six blocks of the only science museum in the country which has been pending for the last many years."

He said, "Rs 500 million has been approved for the construction of these blocks in this year's budgetary allocation which would help address the issue of space shortage hindering the display of more specimens."

PMNH, established in 1976, is an attached department of the Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF) for the collection, preservation, and identification of flora fauna, rock fossils, gems, minerals, etc. with a two-fold objective of exhibiting these to teach the general public and visitors about the bio-diversity and natural history and conducting research through field study by the scientists for identification and cataloguing. The DG informed, "PMNH has recently completed the project of 'Outdoor Volcano Display' which is aimed at providing education to the general public especially students about the volcano eruption."

## 'Muharram processions, Majalis provided best possible security'

RAWALPINDI: City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Syed Khalid Hamdani has said that best possible security arrangements were finalized for Muhammad processions and Majalis of Rawalpindi district. In a statement issued here Sunday, the CPO informed that over 6000 cops had been deployed to guard 447 processions and 1925 Majalis of Rawalpindi district. He said that Rawalpindi District Police had finalized all the arrangements to ensure foolproof security arrangements for Muharram ul Haram. The CPO said that over 6000 police personnel were performing security duties while more than 1000 officers and personnel of traffic Police were also deployed to ensure traffic arrangements. He informed that special security arrangements had also

been made for 40 sensitive processions of the district. The officers of district police, ladies police, Elite Force, Traffic Police and Dolphin Force were performing their duties while over 5000 volunteers were also on security duty. The CPO informed that SSPs and Divisional SPs while reviewing routes of the processions were ensuring foolproof security arrangements. Special briefing sessions were also being organized for police personnel. Before the start of the holy month, 'Aman Carvan' of police and leading scholars met with local scholars and administration in Taxila, Murree, Kahuta, Gujjar Khan and Rawalpindi to ensure law and order during Muharram, he added. Ban on display of weapons and use of loudspeakers

was being implemented strictly, he said. Rawalpindi Police control room was monitoring law and order situation 24/7 and special snipers were deployed on the rooftop at the route of the processions, he said adding, no one was being allowed to join the processions and Majalis without body search. All streets and link roads on the route of the Muharram processions were sealed. Special arrangements had also been made to monitor social media and strict action was being taken against those who were posting and spreading religious and communal hatred. He further said that Rawalpindi Police were utilizing all available resources to ensure foolproof security during Muharram. —APP

## Ombudsman orders Rs 14.137m financial relief for applicants

LAHORE: The Punjab ombudsman has ordered provision of cumulative financial relief of Rs 14.137 million to applicants hailing from various districts. In a statement issued on Sunday, a spokesman said the ombudsman's office had received applications for provision of financial relief, death grant, talent scholarships, outstanding dues, and resolution of employment-related issues, including non-payment of pension, leave encashment, GP fund matters, and creation of an OSD [officer on special duty] post, among others. The ombudsman provided justice to Rana Muhammad Ali by ordering his son's appointment as a junior clerk in BPS-11 to the Technical Education & Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) in Okara. Similarly, the School Education Department was directed to appoint Abrara Saadia from Toba Tek Singh and Shahnaz Bibi's son from Bahawalnagar as naib qasid under Rule 17-A of the Punjab Civil Servants (Appointment and Conditions of Service) Rules, 1974. Moreover, the Punjab Government Servants Benevolent Fund Board was directed to release an educational stipend of Rs 22,000 to Atta-ul-Haq Bhatti's daughter from Okara, Rs 32,000 to Gulshan Parveen's son from Talaq, and monthly grant arrears amounting to Rs 187,000 to Rao Muhammad Anwar from Bhakkar. Additionally, Tariq Nazir from Chakwal received a farewell grant of Rs 95,750 on the directions of the ombudsman, the spokesman added. In another development, the Workers Welfare Board disbursed a death grant of Rs 6 lakh to a complainant, Saima Razaq, after the ombudsman office got involved. Furthermore, the ombudsman office successfully ensured the release of petrol bills worth Rs 130,010 for a local petrol station in Narowal, the spokesman added. Also, the office's intervention led to the availability of clean drinking water from the newly installed tube-well in the Jinnah Park locality of Rahim Yar Khan, benefiting the local population.—APP

## ICAP donates Rs.5 m to PM relief Fund

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan (ICAP), Muhammad Ali Latif here on Sunday presented a cheque for Rs.5 million as donation in the Prime Minister's Relief Fund for Floods, Earthquake and Calamities on behalf of ICAP. He presented the cheque to Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar during a call on meeting with the minister, according to tweet by finance ministry. "Mr. Muhammad Ali Latif, President Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan (ICAP) called on Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, today and presented a cheque for Rs.5 million as donation in the PM Relief Fund for Floods, Earthquake & Calamities on behalf of ICAP", the ministry tweeted.



## AIOU commences final examinations from Sept. 1

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is conducting examinations of open courses, certificate courses, Matriculation, F.A, and I.Com programs offered in the spring 2023 semester from September 1, 2023, to October 5, 2023, throughout the country. The date sheet is available on the university website www.aiou.edu.pk, said the press release issued by the AIOU. Roll number slips are being uploaded to students' CMS portal and will be dispatched to the students at their addresses as well. Vice Chancellor, AIOU, Prof Dr. Nasir Mahmood has instructed the examinations department to ensure transparency and provide all facilities to the students during the conduct of examinations. Examination centers are being established across the country in nearby and easily approachable vicinities of the students for their convenience.—DNA

## Minister directs Pindi admin to access damages of fire

RAWALPINDI: Provincial Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare and Population Welfare Dr Jamal Nasir here on Sunday inspected the fire-affected plazas on Benazir Bhutto Road and reviewed the rescue operation. The provincial minister directed the district administration to assess the damage in Rabi Center, Gulf Center and China Center Plazas affected by the fire and asked to conduct a detailed inspection of the three plazas so that there was no possibility of fire again. He asked the police to assist the traders in securing their remaining goods and praised the role of Rescue 1122 staff for timely controlling the fire.

On this occasion, Rescue 1122 official informed the minister that the fire was brought under control and apparently the cause of the fire was a short circuit, adding an investigation was also underway to determine the particular root. He said that due to timely action, there was no life or loss while major financial losses had been saved.—APP

## 'Markets will not be closed in the name of security'

Is such security also given to Pakistani Prime Minister in China? Khalid Chaudhry - Ghaffar Chaudhry

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President All Pakistan Anjman Tajran and Traders Action Committee Islamabad Ajmal Baloch, Secretary and Convenor Traders Committee ICCI Khalid Chaudhry, President of Jinnah Super Asad Aziz, President of F-10 markaz Ahmed Khan, President of Blue Area Raja Hasan Akhtar, President of Sitara Market Syed Altaf Hussain Shah, President of PWD Chaudhry Riasat Ali, Waleed Khalid, General Secretary J-9markaz, President of Steel Market Chaudhry Irfan, Raja Fayyaz Gul President of I-8 markaz, Akhlaq Abbasi, President of G-10 markaz, Raja Zahid Dhaniyal President Bhara Kahu, President Blue Area East Raja Imad Bin Arif, Raja Khurram Niaz, president of G8 markaz, President of G-8/1 Nasir Chaudhry, General Secretary Chaudhry Abdul Ghaffar, Shehzad Shabbir Abbasi, president supermarket. Raja Javed, President of G-9 markaz, Akhlaq Abbasi President G-10 markaz, General Secretary Aabpara Market Akhtar Abbasi, President Auto Market Salawar Khan, Ismail Khan, General Secretary of F-8 markaz, and Mehboob Ahmed Khan, President of G-12 have said that suddenly after three holidays of Muharram, The government has announced two more holidays in the capital in the name of the security of the Chinese vice-premier, which is completely anti-business and closing the capital in the name of security is absolutely not appropriate. The market representatives Islamabad have decided that the markets of Islamabad will not be closed under any circumstances. It is understandable in the red zone, but shutting down the entire ICT is beyond understanding. Inflation has already broken the back bone of businessmen due to electricity bills, rent, Gas bills and other expenses are difficult to cover. They questioned whether the Pakistani Prime Minister is given similar security in China. It seems that the imported officers of Islamabad are deliberately destroying the business of the federal capital. They asked Prime minister Mian Shahbaz Shreef & Federal Interior Minister Rana Sana ullah to reconsider the decision and issue orders to withdraw the holiday notification. He has asked all business representatives to avoid overcrowding in view of the security situation and cooperate with the district administration in keeping traffic on the roads to a minimum.


## LG Department, NADRA ink MoU for citizen facilitation in KP

PESHAWAR: The Local Government and Rural Development Department (LG&RDD) and National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the facilitation of people of the province in getting their

birth certificates. The MoU was signed for a period of 2 years to ensure that the joint services, being provided to the citizens through Village and Neighbourhood Councils continue uninterrupted. A ceremony was held in the Directorate General LG&RDD, Hayatabad Peshawar, said a






hand out issued here on Sunday. The Minister for Local Government, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sawal Nazeer presided over the ceremony. Secretary Local Government Amer Afaq, Director General Local Government Iftikhar Alam, Director General CRMS NADRA HQ Islamabad.—APP

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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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Monal.....0334-5421812



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



### Emergency

Rescue (Police).....15  
Bomb Disposal.....115  
Fire Services Rawalpindi/  
Islamabad.....1122 & 16  
Emergency Ambulance.1122  
& Rescue Services.4451122  
Motorway Police.....9266044  
Motorway Police.9270601-20  
Women Police Stations  
Islamabad.....9222596  
Rawalpindi.....9270601-20



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Railway Exchange9270831-5  
WASA Rawalpindi.5555489  
CAA.....9281092



### Hospitals

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



### Departments

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

### Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

# Marriyum reiterates govt commitment to upgrade PTV, Radio

She stressed that the government was determined to leverage PTV and Radio Pakistan to enhance Pakistan's global presence and counter negative narratives about the country

### DNA

RAWALPINDI: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb Sunday reiterated the government's commitment to upgrade Pakistan Television (PTV) and Radio Pakistan which were indispensable to promoting national heritage and narrative at the global level. "The national broadcasting institutions are more than just structures as they hold a paramount position in representing the country's identity to the entire world," the minister said while talking to media men after laying the foundation of 1000 KW Digital DRM Medium Wave Transmitter Project at Radio Pakistan, Rawat. Marriyum regretted that the previous regime of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was bent upon auctioning the national institutions including Radio Pakistan and others. Highlighting the pivotal role of these national broadcasters, she stressed that the government was determined to leverage PTV and Radio Pakistan

to enhance Pakistan's global presence and counter negative narratives about the country. At the outset of the media talk, the minister said Radio Pakistan accomplished a milestone today as the first time in history a Digital Radio Mondiale (DRM) technology had been launched. She said Radio Pakistan was based on analogue and short-wave technology since 1947 and most of its transmitters had already completed their life. The broadcaster was in dire need of DRM as analogue and short-wave technologies became obsolete a long ago, she added. Marriyum said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif directed Finance Minister Ishaq Dar to release funds for transforming Radio Pakistan on modern lines. The minister extended gratitude to PM, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, and Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal for the initiative. With the implementation of the 1000 kilowatt digital DRM medium wave transmitter, she said Radio Pakistan's reach would transcend borders, resonating in more



than 52 countries. She said the initiative would help promote Pakistan's narrative, news, heritage, and culture across the world. Out of 20 existing transmitters of Radio Pakistan, 14 had already become obsolete. The cutting-edge technology incorporated in the 1000kw medium wave transmitter would yield significant cost savings for Radio Pakistan, with an estimated 33% reduction in electricity consumption, she added. Marriyum said the project which was launched today would complete in the next two years. She recalled that a group of ar-

sonists set the Radio Pakistan archive and building on fire in Peshawar on May 9. Similarly, the same people attacked the building of Pakistan Television in 2014. The minister said the building of Radio Pakistan in Peshawar and Chaghi Studio had been restored. Meanwhile, the upgradation of Radio Pakistan was started today. It was a historic initiative that would enable overseas Pakistanis to access the Radio Pakistan broadcast across the world, she maintained.

The minister said PTVflix had also been launched by digitalizing the entire archive of Pakistan Television. Likewise, the national archive of Radio Pakistan had been digitalized and would be inaugurated by PM Shehbaz Sharif this week. She said apart from the subcontinent, audiences in Central Asia, the Middle East, the Far East, Turkey, and Greece would now be able to access Radio Pakistan. "This initiative translates the vision of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif regarding digitalization," she said adding the 1000KW trans-

mitter installation would create job opportunities for the youth by increasing their engagement with Radio Pakistan. He said the initiative would also improve efficiency of the Radio Pakistan. Marriyum congratulated Secretary Information Sohail Ali Khan, Director General of Radio Pakistan Tahir Hassan, and all the employees of the national broadcaster on the launch of the project.

She said the problems of the employees would be addressed by ensuring the efficient working of institutions and financial viability. The minister said business models for the institutions of the Ministry of Information had been worked out in consultation with the finance ministry which would eventually address pension and salary-related issues of its employees once and for all. She said a media city would be set up in Rawat soon after completion of its feasibility study which was underway. "Our vision and mission are aimed at increasing job opportunities and efficiency of Radio Pakistan,"

she said, adding this was a reflection of the vision of the PM who wanted the same for other institutions through digitalization. Marriyum said, "The Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) has been established with the aim of promoting the development of Pakistan's institutions and youth." The country could get rid of its debts and ensure economic stability by attracting investment in various sectors. She said in 2016, Nawaz Sharif charted the country on the path of progress and prosperity by completing the IMF programme for the first time in history. The country could ensure its sustainable development through the use of information technology, she added. The minister said, "Radio Pakistan had been transformed on modern lines today, and our aim is to make such institutions the identity of Pakistan." She thanked all the ministries that contributed to the digitalization of all the institutions working under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor displayed mud pottery on hand carts along the road side at Sector G-7 as the stuff, which were the necessary part of the houses in last decades, are now replace by plastic and ceramic stuff across the world.— Online

# ANF seizes over 371 kg drugs in 12 operations; arrests 10

### DNA

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting 12 operations across the country managed to recover over 371 kg drugs and arrested 10 accused including three women and a foreigner. Spokesman of ANF Headquarters told on Sunday that one kg hashish was recovered

from a woman, resident of Charsada arrested near Motorway Toll Plaza Islamabad. In another operation, 1.8 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of an accused resident of Boner rounded up from the parking area of PIMS Hospital Islamabad. In third operation, 80 intoxicated tablets were recovered from the possession of an accused, resident of Islamabad net-

ted from F-10 Center Islamabad. 115 grams cocaine was recovered from a foreigner, riding a motorcycle and was arrested from British Homes Rawalpindi. 288 kg hashish recovered from an oil tanker intercepted on Peshawar-Kohat Indus Highway which was concealed in secret cavities of the tanker. The accused resident of Karachi was trying to smuggle hashish from Peshawar to

# China's expertise in agricultural technology

### DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Hitech Hybrid Seed Association (PHHSA) Shahzad Ali Malik Sunday said China had made substantial advancements in agricultural technology, including hybrid seed development, and had the expertise to share the practices with Pakistan. Shahzad Ali Malik currently visiting China with a delegation said, "More collaboration between Pakistan and China in the agricultural sector, particularly in the development of new varieties of hybrid seeds in the private sector, is possible and could have significant benefits for both countries," said a news release issued here. He said, "Collaboration in the private sector allows for joint research and development initiatives between both countries." He said, "Such projects can lead to the creation of tailored hybrid seed varieties that cater to the specific needs of Pakistani farmers and align with the country's agricultural practices and climate." He said, "China and Pakistan have longstanding ties, and such meetings could potentially lead to advancements in hybrid seed technology and agricultural practices, benefiting both countries' agricultural sectors." He said, "Fruitful meetings between agricultural organizations from different countries can be beneficial for exchanging knowledge, technology, and expertise in the field of seed development and agriculture." He said, "Hybrid seeds are created by crossing two genetically different parent plants to produce offspring with desired traits, such as improved yield, resistance to pests and diseases, or better adaptability to local environmental conditions." He hoped, "Such collaborations with Chinese counterparts can further help Pakistan enhance its agricultural productivity and food security." Shahzad Ali Malik said, "The Chinese private sector is taking a keen interest in further enhancing collaboration with Guard Agriculture Research and Services as we have excellent experience with the Chinese for evolving the first-ever variety of hybrid rice in Pakistan and still a team of ten Chinese scientists engaged with us."

# Awareness campaign about Smog Rules 2023

### DNA

RAWALPINDI: Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Liaquat Ali Chhatta on Sunday directed the authorities concerned to launch a thorough public awareness campaign about Smog Rules 2023 and all-out efforts should be made to ensure full implementation of the Rules. The Government of Punjab had implemented Smog Rules 2023 across the province from June 06 this year, he said and directed the departments concerned to raise awareness about the rules. The smog rules prohibit the use of weak engines, burning of solid waste and tires, he said adding, the kilns without zigzag technology and factories creating pollution would not be allowed to work. Burning of crop residues and smoke emitting vehicles are strictly prohibited under the rules, the Commissioner added. Violation of the rules could result in immediate closure of the business, fine up to one million rupees and registration of FIRs against the violators, Liaquat Ali Chhatta said. He also directed the departments concerned to actively participate in the plantation campaign to prevent smog and control diseases spread as a result of this air pollution.

# Diabetes: Treatment Options and Lifestyle Strategies

### ADEEL MAQBOOL



**T**ype 1 diabetes occurs when the body's immune system attacks and destroys the cells in the pancreas that produce insulin, a hormone that regulates blood sugar levels. Type 1 diabetes typically develops during childhood or adolescence, and individuals with this form of diabetes require lifelong insulin therapy. Type 2 diabetes occurs when the body becomes resistant to insulin or does not produce enough insulin to properly regulate blood sugar levels. Type 2 diabetes is more prevalent than type 1 and is often associated with unhealthy lifestyle habits, such as an inadequate diet, lack of physical activity, and being overweight or obese. Type 2 diabetes can often be managed through lifestyle changes, including a healthy diet and regular exercise, but medication may also be necessary. Symptoms of diabetes may include increased thirst, frequent urination, fatigue, blurred vision, slow wound healing, and

increased vulnerability to infections. It is crucial to consult a healthcare provider if experiencing any of these symptoms or if there are risk factors for diabetes, such as a family history of the condition or being overweight. Early diagnosis and treatment of diabetes can help prevent or delay complications like heart disease, kidney disease, and nerve damage. Diabetes can lead to various complications, particularly if not properly managed. Some common complications of diabetes include: Diabetes increases the risk of heart attack, stroke, and other cardiovascular problems. Over time, high blood sugar levels can damage the kidneys, leading to chronic kidney disease or even kidney failure. Diabetes can harm the blood vessels in the retina, causing diabetic retinopathy, which can result in vision loss or blindness. High blood sugar levels can damage nerves throughout the body, causing a condition called diabetic neuropathy. This can result in numbness, tingling, or pain in the hands and feet. It is essential for individuals with diabetes to collaborate closely with their healthcare providers to manage their blood sugar levels and monitor for potential complications. By maintaining good blood sugar control, adopting healthy lifestyle habits, and receiving appropriate medical care, individuals with diabetes can reduce their risk of developing complications and enhance their overall health and well-being. Additional information on

the complications of diabetes: Diabetes heightens the risk of developing atherosclerosis, a condition characterized by the buildup of fatty deposits inside the arteries, restricting blood flow. High blood sugar levels can also damage the lining of blood vessels, making them more susceptible to narrowing and blood clots. The kidneys contain tiny blood vessels that filter waste products from the blood. Over time, high blood sugar levels can damage these blood vessels and impair kidney function. This can lead to chronic kidney disease or even kidney failure, which may necessitate dialysis or a kidney transplant. Eye damage: Diabetes can damage the blood vessels in the retina, leading to diabetic retinopathy, which can cause vision loss or blindness. Diabetes can also increase the risk of developing other eye problems, such as cataracts and glaucoma. Nerve damage: High blood sugar levels can damage the nerves throughout the body, resulting in a condition called diabetic neuropathy. This can cause numbness, tingling, or pain in the hands and feet, as well as other symptoms like digestive problems and sexual dysfunction. Foot problems: Diabetes can cause poor circulation and nerve damage in the feet, making it difficult to sense pain or other sensations. This can lead to foot ulcers, infections, and even gangrene, which may require amputation. Skin problems: Individuals with diabetes are more prone to skin infections and conditions,

such as fungal infections, bacterial. Dental Issues: Diabetes can elevate the risk of gum disease, which can result in tooth loss and other dental complications. High levels of blood sugar can also hinder the body's ability to fight off infections, including those in the oral cavity. It is crucial for individuals with diabetes to closely collaborate with their healthcare providers to manage their blood sugar levels and monitor for potential complications. By maintaining proper blood sugar control, adopting healthy lifestyle practices, and receiving appropriate medical care, individuals with diabetes can reduce the likelihood of developing complications and enhance their overall health and well-being.

There are several treatments available for diabetic neuropathy, a condition in which high blood sugar levels damage nerves throughout the body. The treatment approach may vary depending on the severity and type of neuropathy, as well as the individual's overall health and medical history. Some common treatments for diabetic neuropathy include: The most important step in treating diabetic neuropathy is to control blood sugar levels. This can help prevent further nerve damage and may even improve symptoms in some cases. Medications: Various medications can be used to treat diabetic neuropathy. These include pain relievers such as over-the-counter pain medications, prescription opioids, and topical creams. Other medi-

cations may include anticonvulsants, antidepressants, and drugs that enhance blood flow. Physical therapy: Physical therapy can aid in improving balance and coordination, reducing pain, and preventing muscle weakness or atrophy. Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS): TENS is a non-invasive therapy that employs a small device to deliver electrical impulses to the nerves. This can help alleviate pain and improve nerve function. Adopting healthy lifestyle habits, such as maintaining a healthy weight, engaging in regular physical activity, and following a balanced diet, can contribute to improved overall health and potentially reduce symptoms of diabetic neuropathy. Individuals with diabetic neuropathy should work closely with their healthcare providers to develop a personalized treatment plan that suits their specific needs. With proper treatment and management, many people with diabetic neuropathy can alleviate their symptoms and enhance their quality of life. Exercise can be beneficial for individuals with diabetic neuropathy as it can improve blood flow, reduce pain, and strengthen muscles. However, it is important to consult with a healthcare provider before initiating any new exercise program, especially if diabetic neuropathy is present, as certain exercises may not be suitable for everyone. The following exercises may be helpful for individuals with diabetic neuropathy: It is important to consult with

your healthcare provider before starting any new exercise program, especially if you have a medical condition such as diabetes, high blood pressure, or heart disease. Start slowly: If you are new to exercise or have not exercised in a while, begin with low-intensity activities such as walking, biking, or swimming. Warm up and cool down: Always warm up before exercising to prepare your body for the work-out and cool down afterward to help prevent injury. Stay hydrated: Drink plenty of water before, during, and after exercise to prevent dehydration. Wear appropriate footwear: Wear comfortable and supportive footwear that is suitable for the type of exercise you will be doing. Monitor blood sugar levels: If you have diabetes, check your blood sugar levels before and after exercise to ensure they are within a safe range.

In managing diabetes, it is essential to maintain proper form and technique during exercises to prevent injuries. Seeking guidance from a certified professional, such as a personal trainer or physical therapist, can help ensure safe and effective workouts. With a proactive approach to diabetes management, individuals can lead healthier lives and reduce the risk of complications associated with the condition. Regular medical check-ups, blood sugar monitoring, lifestyle modifications, and adherence to prescribed treatments are essential in achieving optimal outcomes for those with diabetes.

## Briefs

Debut of  
New Gwadar  
Int'l Airport  
enthuses CPEC  
romanticism

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Inauguration of airbase infrastructure of New Gwadar International Airport (NGIA) on July 27 has opened brand new chapter of infrastructure development of CPEC that will usher in modern air transport connectivity among regional and international players, promoting ripple of economic opportunities in terms of trade, business, employability and tourism. Undrapping of New Gwadar International Airport (NGIA) will unleash avalanche of promises of high-octane commerce growth and development headway. It will also set vibrant tone of leading-edge air transport infrastructure and economic upward trajectory, according to a report carried by Gwadar Pro on Friday. Covering an area of 4,300 acres, as the second biggest airport in Pakistan, NGIA is designed to accommodate ATR 72, Boeing B-737, Airbus A-380 and Boeing B-747 for domestic and international routes. NGIA possesses the role as significant drivers of Sino-Pak and regional economies. It will facilitate trade and create jobs for many people directly and indirectly in supporting services. Equipped with advanced facilities including aeronautical and non-aeronautical in coming time, it has the potential to bolster economic growth in Gwadar as well as surrounding areas. For this reason, Gwadar Master plan will frame development plans around the entire 'airport region'. In the wave of contemporary globalization, countries need more connectivity. The global movement of goods and services requires more advanced infrastructure. Therefore, for Pakistan, NGIA offers more possibilities for international trade and tourism. Indeed, more visitors mean more money effectively feeding the local economy.

China's  
expertise  
sparks growth  
for Pak Electric  
Vehicle  
Industry

DNA

ISLAMABAD: "Over the past two decades, China has successfully established a complete and efficient supply chain for Electric Vehicles, with strengths in technology, design & development, and manufacturing. According to Dr. Li Xiangping, Former Director of Dongfeng Motor Co., Ltd. and Doctor of Mechanical Engineering at the Polytechnic University of Turin, China's experience suggests EVs can be an opportunity for developing countries to leapfrog developed countries. During the China Pakistan Electric Vehicle Industry Technology Service Cooperation Forum held earlier this month, Dr. Li noted that the most growth potential will likely come from 'emerging Asia,' including Pakistan, which has a large population, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday. The region will continue to need more EVs for its energy transition even after China's domestic market becomes saturated. China's dominance in the global electric vehicle (EV) market has positioned the country as a key player in the industry. China has been the world's No. 1 auto market for more than a decade. In 2022, worldwide auto sales were 80.18 million units, with China selling 23.24 million (27.48 million including CV) units, accounting for a 33% market share. It was followed by the United States with 13.73 million and Europe with 11.29 million. What has shocked the world is China's rapid progress in mobility electrification. Last year, worldwide EV production was 10.31 million, with China producing 6.5 million PV (plus 0.3 million CV EV), representing 63% of worldwide EV sales. China's EV penetration rate was 28%. Among the top 10 EV brands, 8 are local Chinese brands, and two are from other countries, namely Tesla and Volkswagen.

China-Pak education coop  
promotion conference next month

The 2023 SCO Summer' event would further promote cultural and tourism linkages between Pakistan and SCO member states," said Haseeb Gohar, Pakistani Political Counsellor to China

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Theme Day and China-Pakistan Education Cooperation Promotion Conference likely to be held next month under Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), China Economic Net reported on Sunday. The ongoing 2023 "SCO Summer" series of activities will last until September 23, during which nearly 50 special activities will be held, including the SCO Media Think Tank Forum, cultural and artistic performances, special products promotions, and sports and leisure events. The 2023 SCO Summer' event would further

promote cultural and tourism linkages between Pakistan and SCO member states," said Haseeb Gohar, Pakistani Political Counsellor to China.

SCO countries have great potential in culexchanges and mutually beneficial cooperation in tourism. Meanwhile, the launch ceremony of the 2023 "SCO Summer" China-SCO Culture and Tourism Promotion Week 2023 was held at Qingdao Pearl International Expo Center this week. Addressing the event, Zhang Xinzhu, Member of the Standing Committee of the CPC Qingdao Municipal Committee and Secretary of the Party Working Committee of SCO Demonstration Area (SCODA), stated that the 2023 "SCO

Summer" series of events aims to build a bridge of people-to-people integration, create a model of deepening mutual trust and cooperation, and open a new chapter in business, tourism and cultural exchanges among SCO countries.

Highlighting the SCO as a dynamic international organization with diverse civilizations, Grigory Logvinov, Deputy Secretary General of SCO noted that cultural exchanges and cooperation among the SCO countries have become increasingly close. Taking the event as an opportunity, the SCO countries will further strengthen cooperation and deepen understanding in the fields of tourism interaction and cultural heritage protection,

and push the cultural and people-to-people exchanges within the SCO family to a new level. The SCO States Artist Style Collection event was launched at the same time. Sculptors and painters from SCO countries will be invited to Qingdao and other places to explore the rich natural and cultural heritage. The 2023 "SCO Summer" China-SCO National Culture and Tourism Promotion Week, co-sponsored by Sino-Foreign Cultural Exchange Center and the Management Committee of the SCODA, will last until August 6. During the week, the cultures of the SCO countries will be exhibited in Qingdao Pearl International Expo Center.

FTO  
Coordinator  
advocates  
for corporate  
farming

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to Federal Tax Ombudsman Meher Kashif Younis on Sunday said with corporate farming, Pakistan would not only stimulate economic activities but also revolutionize its agriculture sector unlocking potential opportunities in food-related various industries.

Speaking at a seminar on "Corporate Farming Promise Food Security" held under the aegis of Gold Ring Economic Forum, he said adopting corporate farming on state lands will not only facilitate the implementation of modern irrigation systems but also contribute to land development in Pakistan, said a news release issued here. He said, "It entails reclaiming barren lands including deserts and hilly areas and transforming them into arable lands suitable for farming and agriculture." "Corporate farming requires simultaneously addressing the needs of small-scale farmers giving them access to modern processes, quality inputs, tools, and techniques for sustainable competition," he emphasized. He said, "For attracting foreign direct investment, the government must declare agriculture as an industry and implement a timely investment policy tailored to induce foreign investment which will pave the way for the country's progress and prosperity." Meher Kashif Younis said, "Agriculture development is one of the most powerful tools to end abject poverty, boost shared prosperity and feed a projected 9.7 billion people by 2050." He said, "Growth in the agriculture sector is two to four times more effective in raising the income among the poorest compared to other sectors. However, he said the potential in this sector is not being fully exploited in Pakistan." He said, "Approximately seven million acres of identified land suitable for corporate agriculture across all provinces is available that needs the immediate attention of the stakeholders at the helm of affairs. He said, "Pakistan is among the countries facing the potential threat of food insecurity as ranked 99 out of 121 countries in the world hunger index." He said, "Food security remains a significant challenge and with escalating inflation of food-related products, the affordability of essential commodities for common man may become difficult in coming years."

Therefore, the timely move towards corporate farming is the right step by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif."—DNA

Role of photojournalists is  
very important in media

DNA

ISLAMABAD : Baloch leader and Chairman of Dera Bugti Mir Chakar Bugti said that the role of photojournalism is very important in the world of media and photojournalist

are backbone of newspapers. Photojournalist jobs are risky and painful. He has to cover emergency situations. Bomb blast accidents and even firing situations. He expressed these views while addressing the closing ceremony of the annual training workshop of

Rawalpindi Islamabad Photojournalists Association Professional at PID Centre. Earlier President of Association Sajjad Haider thanked the guests and said that photojournalists are the name of a thought that closes historical events in the eye of their cameras in

every season and in every situation and publishes the reflection of the society in the newspaper. A large number of photojournalists of twin cities attended the event. At the end, the chief guest distributed certificates among all the participants.

ICCI asks CDA to  
focus on development  
of Blue Area

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) said that Blue Area is the largest commercial center of Islamabad, which plays an important role in the development of the economy and urged that CDA should focus on its better development to facilitate the growth of trade activities. He said that parking is the most serious issue of the Blue Area, so parking should be allowed on the green area of Fazal Haq Road until the construction of a parking plaza. He said this while addressing a delegation of the Traders Welfare Association, Blue Area, Islamabad that visited ICCI led by its President Raja Hasan Akhtar and highlighted the key issues faced by the traders. Ahsan Bakhtawari further said that ICCI intends to organize a mega shopping festival in the Blue Area in collaboration with Association so that trade activities can flourish and the customers can also get a chance of shopping at reasonable rates. Raja Hassan Akhtar, President, Blue Area Traders Welfare Association, highlighted the important issues of traders of his market. He said that non-availability of parking, old sewage system and non-functional street lights are the main issues of the Blue Area, so CDA should solve them on an urgent basis. He stressed for a flower market in Blue Area besides pruning of trees, and said that CDA should take steps in this regard. He assured President ICCI of full support from the traders of Blue Area and said that the respect given to the traders of Blue Area during his tenure was probably never given in the history of the Chamber. He said that during Ahsan Bakhtawari's tenure, the problems of traders are being solved and the remaining ones are expected to be solved soon. Khalid Iqbal Malik, Group Leader ICCI, said that the Blue Area Association is very important in trade politics as its members are more than any market or industrial area association. He said that ICCI has always given importance to the traders of the Blue Area, and during his tenure as President ICCI, the traders of the Blue Area were also given a red-carpet reception. He assured that ICCI will play an active role in solving the issues of the traders of Blue Area.

Yousuf Rajput, Group Leader, Blue Area, said that the traders of his market are standing like a strong wall with Ahsan Bakhtawari and will continue to cooperate with ICCI to solve the problems of the traders.—DNA

A group is determined to  
bring Pak to its knees

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Murtaza Mughal, President of Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) on Sunday said that differences between the ruling parties on the issue of a caretaker prime minister are worrisome. The state of the country's economy is bad, the country is on the brink of default, and the danger has not been averted yet, so an expert economist should be made caretaker prime minister, he said. The name of Ishaq Dar should also be considered, as he can better deal with the IMF and other lenders, said Dr. Murtaza Mughal. He said that Dar will be able to introduce the necessary reforms and work on the special council will continue at the same pace. He said that the coalition and allied parties

should not make this issue a matter of ego, understand the sensitivity of the situation, and cooperate with the government. The MD of the IMF has already issued a warning about the economy of Pakistan, and people are very concerned, but a misguided political group is eager to see Pakistan bankrupt and hatching conspiracies for it, he added. He noted that cooperation between political parties is crucial in these alarming situations. There is a strong possibility of a further increase in interest rates and further depreciation of the rupee, which will cause more distress to people and destroy businesses. Therefore, all political forces should not try to increase their share in the following setup but should struggle to save the economy. The IMF

will not solve our economic problems, but it is here to get the economy out of the current vortex, for which uniformity and political cooperation are necessary which will help keep the programme on track. The next review of the IMF will be held in November, and if successful, the loan instalment will be disbursed by the month of December. Therefore, the incoming caretaker government must do everything possible to ensure the success of this programme. In this situation, the presence of an expert economist in the new setup is necessary. The worrying economic conditions of the country are proving to be a boon for a former prime minister and his party which is busy spreading rumours to disappoint the masses, he said.

World's indigenous  
people day on Aug 9

ISLAMABAD: International Day of the World's Indigenous People will be marked on August 9 (Wednesday) across the globe. The purpose is to promote and protect the rights of the world's indigenous population. The day also recognizes the achievements and contributions that indigenous people make to improve world issues such as environmental protection. The International Day of the World's Indigenous People is celebrated on August 9 each year to recognize the first UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations meeting in Geneva in 1982. On December 23, 1994, the UN General Assembly decided that the International Day of the World's Indigenous People should be observed on August 9 annually during the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. In 2004, the assembly proclaimed the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (2005-2014). The assembly also decided to continue observing the International Day of Indigenous People annually during the second decade.—DNA

Pakistan is losing the  
war against poverty


DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former Vice President of FPCCI Atif Ikram Sheikh said on Sunday Pakistan is losing the war against poverty while neighbouring countries are winning this war and they have been reducing poverty successfully. People in Pakistan are continuously getting poorer while people in India and Bangladesh are getting out of poverty, he said. Per capita income in Pakistan has fallen to \$1,550, while per capita income in India has reached \$2,210 and Bangladesh has reached \$2,660, he added. Atif Ikram Sheikh who has also served as President ICCI and Chairman PVMA said in a statement issued here today that Pakistan ranks 99 out of 129 countries in terms of hunger and there is a possibility of further degradation. An international organization has warned that by 2030, forty-six countries, including Pakistan, will not be able to achieve suf-




ficient success in reducing hunger, he informed. Atif Ikram Sheikh said that millions of people in Pakistan are not able to eat enough food due to inflation which is a big challenge. The business leader said that last year's floods, political conflict and the decline of the economy have made the situation very serious, while the debts of 77 billion dollars have to be paid in three years, which will prove to be a big problem. He noted that the value of the rupee, production, exports and remittances continue to be falling, while electricity and gas are becoming more expensive, which has broken the back of the people.

The WFP estimates that an average Pakistani household spends more than 50% of its monthly income on food. As a result, events such as floods can have calamitous effects on households across the country. According to the World Bank, there are several changes that Pakistan needs to implement to deal with the pressing issue of hunger and food scarcity. The Government of Pakistan needs to "address food insecurity in rural and urban areas through multi-sectoral operations." These operations need to make markets more accessible to both producers and consumers and to reduce institutional inequality in sectors such as agriculture. In these circumstances, Russia has terminated the contract allowing Ukraine to export grain through the Black Sea, which will increase hunger, poverty and anxiety in the whole world, including Pakistan, he warned.



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## Hasty legislation

**T**HE National Assembly is continuing its trend of introducing hasty legislation in the run up to the election, as on Thursday 28 private member bills were passed, with 24 of them seeking the establishment of private universities in different parts of the country. The manner in which this legislation is being pursued and the timing of it too, only goes to show how education is understood and addressed by our legislators and policymakers.

As per reports, the bills were passed without quorum as Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf allowed lawmakers to move motions for the passage of the bills, even on behalf of those members who were absent from proceedings. Further, of the 24 bills for the new universities, 16 had been introduced by the members in the same sitting, and the speaker put them for a vote after the house through motions allowed him to do so without referring them to committees concerned. On top of that, these bills were introduced without the HEC being consulted regarding codal formalities.

Thankfully, some members did protest over the manner in which such legislation was being pushed through in the absence of ministers and members, the Education Minister Rana Tanveer Hussain was also right in pointing out that this tradition of tabling bills without the proper groundwork only results in the mushroom growth of educational institutions, without addressing the quality of education.

As it is, universities in Pakistan have been experiencing severe financial crises, which has resulted in them being unable to pay the monthly salaries of their faculty and staff members. The availability of qualified teachers has been a longstanding issue, and not much progress has been made when it comes to teacher training either. The main issues are a lack of funds, poor quality of education, and institutions that are unable to invest in research, technology and infrastructure. The future of Pakistan is dependent on the quality of education and research produced by its universities. What we need is more thoughtful policymaking and legislation when it comes to education, and not opportunistic promises with elections around the corner.

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## Washington is fanning war

**T**HE freshly announced \$345 million package of military aid to Taiwan shows Washington is apparently attempting to export war to the Asia-Pacific as part of its containment strategy toward China.

The move, which betrays earlier promises from senior US officials including Secretary of State Antony Blinken not to support the secessionists in that island, has again exposed how they fail to walk the talk.

Besides "man-portable air defense systems, intelligence and surveillance capabilities, firearms and missiles" that cannot be more obvious in targeting the Chinese mainland, the package also includes "education and training" for the locals, an extremely detrimental move aimed at planting the seed of secessionism in the minds of the young so as to turn them into cannon fodder of the secessionists in power.

In some sense, the US is trying to make use of Taiwan as a "nail" to pin down its imaginary enemy. But Taiwan as an inseparable part of China is not its tool so the US better give up that daydream because it will crash like a bubble.

Echoing the move, Taiwan's "trade office" in Washington said it's "an important tool to support Taiwan's self-defense" and they would maintain "peace, stability and the status quo across the Taiwan Strait". They need to learn that US weapons will not make them safer. The Chinese central government's determination for national reunification will never be compromised no matter how much US sells arms to the island.

## Russia and Africa... Concealed Pragmatism

Emile Ameen

Russia finally seems to be in need of a revitalization of its global diplomacy. Renewing its old friendships and even making new ones has become particularly pressing in light of the effort to impose a suffocating blockade on the country. It seems that they can plausibly build influence on the African continent, where Russia is trying to exploit the vacuum left by Washington, which is busy facing off with China, as well as the waning influence of Europe. Indeed, it was hard to believe our eyes as we saw France's recent losses in Niger. One might wonder, "Are Russia and Africa singing a duet to the tune of self-interest shaped by global politics?" This seems likely. First and foremost, Russia is keen on gaining access to natural resources on continent

**W**ITH the Russia-Africa Summit in Saint Petersburg having drawn to a close, many fundamental questions remain unanswered. First and foremost: "Did Tzar Putin manage to win over the African leaders in one go, or did the talks definitively dispel illusions that Russia operates differently than the US, affirming that both are caught in a deadly cycle of pragmatism, even when the lives of other nations and peoples are at stake?" The second summit was held amid a very different global climate to that of the 2019 Sochi Summit. Indeed, a battle that has yet to be decided began a year and a half ago, splitting the countries of the world into two camps: those who are with Putin and those who oppose him. It should be noted that his supporters are very few. He can only count on the support of China and a few African countries where Russia maintains some influence, be it inherited or newly established. Russia's recent decision to withdraw from the grain deal dealt a major blow to the countries of Africa, especially the less fortunate ones.

The first thought that comes to mind regarding the summit is the difference in attendance as compared to the 2019 summit. Indeed, no more than 27 heads of state flew to Saint Petersburg, far fewer than the 43 who attended in 2019. This raises questions about the effectiveness of the US and European effort to break the ties linking Russia and Africa together, or perhaps whether African leaders are apprehensive about Russia's future. In fact, Moscow has already accused the United States of trying to undermine the summit.

Russia finally seems to be in need of a revitalization of its global diplomacy. Renewing its old friendships and even making new ones has become particularly pressing in light of the effort to impose a suffocating blockade on the country. It seems that they can plausibly build influence on the African continent, where Russia is trying to exploit the vacuum left by Washington, which is busy facing off with China, as well as the waning influence of Europe. Indeed, it was hard to believe our eyes

as we saw France's recent losses in Niger. One might wonder, "Are Russia and Africa singing a duet to the tune of self-interest shaped by global politics?" This seems likely. First and foremost, Russia is keen on gaining access to the natural resources on the continent. Second, it wants to sell its weapons and bolster certain governments that the West labels authoritarian. Moreover, the Wagner Group - the militia arm of the Russian army, so to speak - is expanding its sphere of operations, to say nothing about the infrastructure contracts it has acquired in countries that need decades to rebuild.

On the African side, there is a similar keenness to reap personal benefits. Evgeny Minchenko, the director of the International Institute for Political Expertise think tank at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations, has said that "Africans seek to benefit from the clash between Russia and the West, as well as the actions of other countries that have not openly entered the conflict but are nearby." If material interests are driving their behavior, we can definitively conclude that most African countries do not see Russia as the ideological leader of a new world. Moscow is not exporting a theory for the third world as it had during the Soviet era. This raises a question: "Why is Putin betting on a breakthrough in Africa?" Putin certainly did not build his network of relations in Africa from scratch. Indeed, he is building on the deep roots the Soviets created in the continent between the 1950s and the 1990s, offering ideological scientific support (by, for example, drawing its brightest minds to prestigious Russian universities) and, subsequently, fortifying trust through the efforts of Soviet intelligence agencies.

As for Putin, he managed to build, in the 2000s, unprecedented relations with African republics that had been considered exclusively European spheres of influence, including Francophone states. Then Wagner stepped in. Russia continues to make the contentious claim that it supports African unity against former colonial powers. Indeed, this claim is far

from straightforward given the repercussions of Russia's withdrawal from the grain deal, which has more significant and dangerous implications for human and economic development in many African countries that depend on grains imported from Ukraine for nutrition. Commenting on the ramifications of the grain deal's collapse, Putin tried to downplay its impact on Africa, claiming that it had not offered the Africans much in the first place.

However, his opening remarks at the summit seemed evasive, especially to those familiar with Russia's political playbook. Many were particularly alarmed by his claim that Moscow could supply African countries with grain and wheat and that it might offer these grains for free over the next three to four months to six of the poorest African countries. Putin's speech alarmed UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who hit back saying that an agreement that had allowed the export of millions of tons of grain could not be replaced with promises of meager donations.

Do the Africans now see the Russian ruse for what it is?

Some have begun to suspect that Russia is weaponizing grain against the hungry, using it to demand loyalty, fealty, and a greater presence in Africa.

Their actions are not very different from those of the US. The latter dumps millions of tons of wheat into the ocean to prevent prices from dropping, while Russia is bombing Ukrainian wheat silos and threatening to destroy the infrastructure that the West seeks to use to export Ukrainian wheat. The summit left perplexing questions about the Africans. The most prominent among them are: "Is Putin still the only man in charge of Russia? And how could Prigozhin, whose mutiny supposedly led to his exile to Belarus, make a presence in the corridors of the summit?"

The conclusion... Pragmatism builds short-lived ties in the world of international politics as, sooner or later, ordinary citizens will inevitably rise up.

Source: Asharq Al-Awsat

## Is Saudi normalization with Israel possible?

Faisal J. Abbas

Apart from that, this would be a huge foreign policy win for the highly criticized Biden administration before a crucial election year — although pushing such a decision for Congressional approval will require an enormous effort by the White House despite some bipartisan approval as demonstrated by Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham giving it a public endorsement last April. Last but not least, this might be a much-needed double-edged instrument which could both rein in the far-right lunatics in Israeli PM Netanyahu's current...

**M**UCH has been said about the recent visit of US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan to Jeddah. According to US press reports, one of the topics on the table was the prospect of a US-brokered Saudi-Israeli normalization deal. Of course, there has been no official confirmation from the Kingdom. However, one has only to speculate, contextualize, and take recent developments into consideration to reach the conclusion that it is highly likely that such a deal might be possible.

Before I go on, allow me to shush conspiracy theorists who will jump to the conclusion that Saudi Arabia has "sold out" the Palestinian cause. They will argue that proof of this theory is that the discussions — if they occurred — happened in secret, which in itself is reason for them to believe that something dodgy was cooking. Well, with all due respect to the intellect — or, rather, the very little intellect — of those who propagate such views, the norm for any talks of this nature is that they happen in secret and are announced only when/if successful. Just ask the Palestinians, or watch the film "Oslo."

Second, Saudi Arabia is one of the few countries that actually practices what it preaches. Unlike Tehran, Riyadh's position has never been ideological in the sense that we never preached — or to be more precise pretended to preach — throwing Jews into the sea (while secretly getting weapons from Israel during the war with Iraq, as Iran did in the 1980s). In fact, since the Madrid conference of 1991, Saudi Arabia has been at the forefront of trying to achieve a peace deal that puts Palestinian rights first, while at the same time offering Israel the recognition and guarantees it needs.

As a reminder, it was actually the late King Abdullah who offered Israel the Arab Peace Initiative

adopted by the Arab League in 2002. More recently, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman told the Atlantic magazine last year that the Kingdom sees Israel as "a potential ally." "We don't look at Israel as an enemy; we look to them as a potential ally, with many interests that we can pursue together," he said in remarks carried by the official Saudi Press Agency. "But we have to solve some issues before we get to that," the crown prince added, saying that he hopes conflicts between Israelis and Palestinians will be resolved.

Third, comes the aspect of the additional Saudi demands that have been reported since late 2022. As mentioned in this column last March, a fair and just solution for Palestinians has always been the Kingdom's first priority. However, let us suppose Israel takes serious and satisfactory steps toward a solution, and suddenly a Saudi-Israeli normalization and peace treaty becomes a potential reality. What, then, would the subsequent consequences be?

If such a treaty were signed, then the US should have no more concerns about a Saudi nuclear program (which was always meant to be peaceful anyway), nor should it have any reservations about putting its verbal commitments to protect the Kingdom in writing. Indeed, although Israel has never been a security threat to Saudi Arabia, a peace treaty with Israel would mean that the only real threat to the Kingdom would be from Iran and the Houthis. Given that the first refers to the US as the Great Satan, and the latter's official slogan is "Death to America," then the Biden administration should really have no reservations committing to a signed treaty with the Kingdom, be it in the form of a "major non-NATO ally" or something else. (This, of course, is assuming Iran doesn't abide by the

China brokered peace treaty with Riyadh).

In fact, apart from the deeply rooted, multifaceted 80-year relationship between the two countries, it makes perfect sense for the US to safeguard the oil wells from any attack that would cause a supply shortage, which would, in turn, ultimately cause a huge increase in price — something any junior economist would be able to point out to cynics.

Apart from that, this would be a huge foreign policy win for the highly criticized Biden administration before a crucial election year — although pushing such a decision for Congressional approval will require an enormous effort by the White House despite some bipartisan approval as demonstrated by Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham giving it a public endorsement last April.

Last but not least, this might be a much-needed double-edged instrument which could both rein in the far-right lunatics in Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's current government, and also guarantee Palestinians a state, once and for all.

As our respected colleague Thomas Friedman eloquently wrote in The New York Times: "Netanyahu's ruling coalition of Jewish supremacists and religious extremists would have to answer this question: You can annex the West Bank, or you can have peace with Saudi Arabia and the whole Muslim world, but you can't have both, so which will it be?"

Once again, none of this is official, but even the prospect is a huge step forward for Palestinians, Israelis, and indeed for Saudi Arabia, which has embarked on a new, remarkable foreign policy that safeguards not only the huge prosperity Vision 2030 has achieved, but also aspires to be a force for good across the region and the world.

Source: Arab news

## Briefs

## 40 killed in Bajaur blast

FROM PAGE 01  
IG Frontier Corps (FC) Major General Noor Wali Khan has reached Bajaur to supervise the situation. Meanwhile, CMH Peshawar has been put on an alert and a rescue operation by the security forces and other law enforcement agencies is underway. JUI-F Khyber Pakhtunkhwa spokesperson Abdul Jalil Khan, told that the explosion took place at around 4pm as Maulana Laeeq was addressing the convention. The provincial spokesperson said that JUI-F MNA Maulana Jamaluddin and Senator Abdul Rashid were also present during the convention. He confirmed that one of the dead includes JUI-F's Tehsil Khar Amir Maulana Ziaullah.

JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman demanded Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and KP Caretaker Chief Minister Azam Khan to carry out an inquiry into the incident. Condemning the blast, Fazl prayed for the health of the injured and the higher ranks of the deceased. He also urged the party workers to reach to the hospital and donate blood. "JUI workers should remain peaceful and federal and provincial governments should provide the best treatment to the injured," said Fazl.

## President Aliv, PM Shehbaz...

FROM PAGE 01  
families on the martyrdom of JUI-F's office bearers and workers including JUI-F Kharr Amir Molana Zia Ullah Jan. He said terrorists have targeted the people who talk about Islam, Quran and Pakistan. He expressed the resolve to eliminate terrorists as they are enemies of Pakistan. Shehbaz Sharif also sought a report of the incident from the Interior Ministry and the provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He said terrorists have targeted the people who talk about Islam, Quran and Pakistan. He expressed the resolve to eliminate terrorists as they are enemies of Pakistan. Shehbaz Sharif has also sought a report of the incident from the Interior Ministry and the provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Prime Minister said elements involved in this incident will be taken to the task. He also expressed sympathy with all the injured of the incident including geo news cameraman Sami Ullah.

## Marriyum condemns explosion

FROM PAGE 01  
souls in the highest ranks of Jannah and grant courage to the bereaved families to bear the irreparable loss with equanimity.

## PM says development projects...

FROM PAGE 01  
foundation stone ceremony of various development projects held in Lahore on Sunday. The Prime Minister lauded the services of all provincial governments on ensuring peace and maintaining Law and order across the country. He said the government is making efforts to provide every possible facility to the public by laying the foundation stone of the Medical city project costing 50 billion rupees. He said this project will be the state of the art project and will be according to the international standards and this project will be completed by Punjab and Federal governments collectively. - DNA

## Asad for end to...

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Democratic Movement) group think? Do they think they can eliminate the PTI through such propaganda? "It is their misunderstanding. The more negative propaganda they are doing, the more the PTI is becoming popular," he said as he criticised the incumbent government's performance and questioned whether it had managed to tackle inflation and improved governance during its tenure.

## Colombia stun Germany with 97th-minute winner at WC

Their victory left Colombia top of Group H with a perfect six points. Germany and Morocco have three each and all to play for. South Korea are still just about alive on zero points

SYDNEY: Colombia scored a 97th-minute winner through a Manuela Vanegas header to snatch a dramatic 2-1 victory over Germany and stand on the cusp of the Women's World Cup last 16 on Sunday. Skipper Alexandra Popp thought she had rescued a point for Germany as she held her nerve to score from the spot on 89 minutes. But in an incredible finish to a pulsating clash, Vanegas popped up deep into stoppage time for all three points with a close-range header. It came after Linda Caicedo scored one of the goals of the tournament in front of 40,000 fans in Sydney near the start of the second half, but that was just the beginning of the drama. Their victory left Colombia top of Group H with a perfect six points. Germany and Morocco have three each and all to play for. South Korea are still just about alive on zero points. Germany face the Koreans in the last round of matches while Colombia are up against Morocco. Singing and dancing Colombian fans vastly outnumbered German supporters in a raucous crowd at Sydney Football Stadium. Loud boos and whistles went up each time Germany had the ball, and they had plenty of it in the first half. Lina Magull swung and missed the ball as it sat up invitingly for her in the Colombian penalty area.



Magull was a menace and after making life difficult once more for the Colombian defence, the ball fell to striker Popp with the goal gaping just before the break. But the usually deadly striker skied her volley high and wide to give the South Americans a huge let-off. The second half started with Germany, champions in 2003 and 2007, again looking the more likely to score. Teenager Caicedo started the game for Colombia following a training-ground scare on Thursday when she went down holding her chest. On 52 minutes she added to her goal from the opening 2-0 win over South Korea with a strike of the highest quality. The Real Madrid attacker dinked inside, fooled the German defence with a body swerve and bent the ball wonderfully into the top corner. Germany went in the search of an equaliser and Lena Oberdorfer skewed just wide after a corner fell her way. Colombia thought they had won it but goalkeeper Catalina Perez brought down Oberdorfer in the box and Popp defied the whistles to score her penalty, before Vanegas's late intervention. Earlier in the day Morocco won a Women's World Cup match for the first time with a 1-0 victory over a disappointing South Korea who failed to muster a shot on target. - APP

## Switzerland, Norway qualify for Women's World Cup last 16

AUCKLAND: Switzerland and Norway qualified for the last 16 of the Women's World Cup on Sunday as co-hosts New Zealand were eliminated along with the Philippines. The Swiss finished top of Group A thanks to a 0-0 draw with New Zealand in Dunedin, while Norway hammered the Philippines 6-0 in Auckland to overtake the co-hosts in the standings on goal difference. Norway had to beat the tournament debutants

to stand a chance of advancing and they cruised to victory at Eden Park with Sophie Roman Haug scoring a hat-trick. Roman Haug, filling in for the injured Ada Hegerberg, netted twice early on before the recalled Caroline Graham Hansen made it 3-0 at the break. Alicia Barker scored an own goal just after half-time and Guro Reiten netted a penalty before crossing for Roman Haug to complete her hat-trick, and the victory, in injury time. The scoreline allowed the 1995 World Cup winners Norway to pass in front of New Zealand into second place on goal difference, as both teams finished with four points. The Football Ferns, who beat Norway in their opening game to record a historic first ever World Cup win, will not go any further in their home tournament. The Philippines, who themselves marked their World Cup debut with a famous

## Diego Godin announces retirement from football

LONDON: Legendary Uruguayan defender Diego Godin on Sunday announced his retirement from professional football after a prestigious 20-year-long career. Godin started his career with a small Uruguayan club C.A. Cerro where he spent three years and served them in 63 matches. After this, he joined another Uruguayan club Nacional de Futbol where he only spent one season. His impressive performances for the Uruguayan sides earned him a move to La Liga where he was roped in by Villarreal. The 37-year-old played for three seasons for the Yellow Submarines, playing a total of 91 matches from 2007 to 2010. Godin's life changed after a move to the Spanish capital where he signed with Atletico Madrid for an 8 million fee. The centre-back spent a whopping nine years at the club and earned the status of a legend. Godin played a massive part in Atletico's exceptional success during the last decade when the club won many trophies. However, his most iconic moment with the club is when he scored an equalizer against Barcelona at Camp Nou on match day 38 in 2014, the goal that ensured Madrid's first league title in 18 years. - Agencies

## British HC-designate, Jane Marriott arrives in...

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and simplifying trade terms. Arriving in Islamabad, Jane said: "I am delighted to be here in Pakistan, a country that deeply matters to, and has a long-standing relationship with, the UK. With over 1.6 million people of Pakistani heritage in the UK making up every part of British society, we have a special and ever-growing special bond. "Our friendship stems from our shared history and values, deep people-to-people ties, growing trade links and a renewed development partnership. I will be working hard to continue to expand these. "With the climate emergency a growing threat to health and livelihoods across the world, I have a particular interest in ensuring the bilateral relationship between our countries is a green, sustainable one."

## Chinese Vice Premier in Pakistan...

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flagship project. As the chairman of China's National Development and Reform Commission from 2017 to 2023, he was "instrumental in the planning and execution of multiple CPEC projects in Pakistan", the FO had said. It had added that his visit was a part of regular high-level exchanges and dialogue between Pakistan and China and reflected the importance attached by both countries to further deepen their "all-weather strategic cooperative partnership, enhance economic and financial cooperation, advance high-quality development of CPEC and explore new avenues for strengthening trade and investment ties". Meanwhile, a notification issued by the district magistrate of Islamabad said that all public and private schools, universities and colleges, all private companies, all markets and shops, and all commercial banks would remain closed on July 31 (Monday) and August 1 (Tuesday).

## Ahsan Iqbal highlights CPEC...

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CPEC's 10-year celebrations, he signified the CPEC agreements signed in 2015, which transformed Pakistan's profile from a security state to an investment destination. He lauded Chinese President Xi Jinping's role in elevating Pakistan's image globally as an attractive investment destination, fostering economic cooperation and development. The minister highlighted that in the span of three years, CPEC saw the successful completion of numerous projects worth around \$25 billion.

## Bill dropped after MPs' reservations

FROM PAGE 01  
under 2178 and 2354. He further clarified that this particular legislation was being made to stop the violent extremism from the country as entire nation stands united against it. Senator Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) expressed his concerns and threatened to boycott the session if the bill was brought to the house. He proposed that the bill be sent to the relevant committee for a thorough review of its potential pros and cons to prevent misuse against any political party in the future. Similarly, Senator Mushtaq Ahmed of Jamaat-e-Islami criticized the bill, stating that it targeted not just a specific party but all political parties. He argued that non-political forces might have designed it to undermine the democratic process repeatedly. Senator Muhammad Tahir Bizinjo of the National Party also opposed the bill, describing it as an attack on democracy and urged against its hasty passage. Senator Kamran Murtaza from JUI-F proposed that the bill should not be passed without obtaining the consensus of all allied parties.

## Man Utd in reported deal for Hojlund

LAS VEGAS: Manchester United have reportedly agreed a deal worth an initial £64 million to sign Atalanta striker Rasmus Hojlund. The Denmark international is the third major arrival at Old Trafford during the summer transfer window after the signings of Chelsea midfielder Mason Mount and Inter Milan goalkeeper Andre Onana. United are understood to have agreed a fee of £64 million (\$82 million) for Hojlund, with a further £8 million in add-ons. The 20-year-old is reported to have agreed terms on a five-year deal with the option of a further season. Hojlund joined Atalanta in August 2022 from Austrian club Sturm Graz for a reported 17 million euros. He scored nine goals in 32 appearances in Serie A last season. United manager Erik ten Hag was tight-lipped about the reports when asked by reporters on Saturday ahead of Sunday's friendly against Borussia Dortmund in Las Vegas. "I can't talk about the player who is still under contract (with) another club," said the Dutchman. Ten Hag said however that he hoped Mount and Onana would be joined by a new forward, as he tries to get United back in contention at the top of the table. "With this squad, we built a foundation last season...now we have to find the right players to fit in and who can help to raise the bar. I think we succeeded with Andre Onana, we succeeded with Mason Mount and now we are looking for a striker," he said. The Red Devils finished third in the Premier League but scored just 58 goals - 36 fewer than champions Manchester City. - Agencies

## Crawford stops Spence in ninth round

LOS ANGELES: Terence Crawford punished Errol Spence on the way to a ninth-round technical knockout to claim the undisputed welterweight world title in Las Vegas on Saturday. Unbeaten Crawford had knocked down Spence three times and had his previously unbeaten foe staggering under a hail of blows when referee Harvey Dock called a halt at 2:32 in the ninth. Crawford added Spence's World Boxing Association, World Boxing Council and International Boxing Federation titles to his own World Boxing Organization crown. Crawford became the first undisputed welterweight world champion of boxing's four-belt era, which began in 2004. A former lightweight and undisputed light welterweight world champion, he became the first man to win all the belts in two weight divisions. "It means everything because of who I took the belts from," Crawford said. "They tried to blackball me, they kept me out, they kept me out. They talked bad about me, they said I wasn't good enough, that I couldn't beat these top welterweights, and I just kept my head to the sky and I kept praying to God that I would get the opportunity to show the world who Terence Crawford is." "And tonight, I believe I showed how great I am," added Crawford, who improved to 40-0 with 31 knockouts, taking his string of knockouts to 11 fights. - Agencies

## Verstappen secures eighth straight win at Belgium Grand Prix

SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS: Max Verstappen reeled off his eighth successive win of the season at the Belgian Grand Prix on Sunday with his Red Bull teammate Sergio Perez in Verstappen also won Saturday's sprint race at Spa-Francorchamps to maintain his relentless charge to a third Formula One world title. "I knew we had a great car, it was just about surviving turn one," said Verstappen, who started in sixth on the grid despite topping qualifying after a penalty for a new gearbox. "It is a new spot P6 (to win from). We made all the right moves," added Verstappen. Perez, who led for much of the early part of the race, said: "It was a good race for the team. We had a great start, to get through Charles (Leclerc), and I was doing my own race - but Max came through pretty fast on



the second stint. There was nothing I could do." Pole-sitter Leclerc took third with Lewis Hamilton in fourth.

"It was pretty good for us in terms of pace, but looking at Red Bull we have a lot of work to do" said Leclerc. Verstappen's latest demonstration of dominance extended Red Bull's record this year to 15 wins from 15 races - 12 grands prix and the three sprints. He can draw level with Sebastian Vettel's 2013 record of nine straight Formula One wins in front of his home fans at the Dutch Grand Prix at the end of August. In the drivers championship he moved on to 314 points, 125 clear of Perez. Perez had taken the lead at the start from pole-sitter Leclerc with Verstappen soon climbing up to race second. And by lap 17 of 44 the Belgian-born Dutch driver was back in the place he has spent the majority of this season - out in front, sweeping past Perez to his 45th career win. - APP

## Hijab-clad Benzina creates history as Morocco stun South Korea

SYDNEY: Morocco defender Nou-haila Benzina became the first player to wear a headscarf, hijab, at the FIFA Women's World Cup on Sunday as her side stunned South Korea with a 1-0 win at the Hindmarsh Stadium. This was the first-ever victory at the Women's World Cup for debutants Morocco, which all but confirmed the Asian side's exit. Morocco are 55 rungs below South Korea in the women's rankings, but the African side made an early breakthrough with their first-ever World Cup goal in the sixth minute from striker Ibtissam Jraidi. Hanane Ait El Haj whipped in a cross from the right and Jraidi dived forward to make contact with a deft glancing head-



er that went in post. Benzina made crucial interventions, while she almost scored from a set-piece when she volleyed a snapshot over the bar. South Korea's Casey Phair nearly equalised late in the game, but the 16-year-old, who became the youngest player to take the field in Women's football World Cup history in their opener, fired wide to leave them bottom of the group. Morocco are level with Germany and Colombia with three points ahead of their game later on Sunday. South Korea have zero points and will be eliminated if Germany avoid defeat. - Agencies

## Delight for Norway as floodgates open to keep WC dream alive

Norway were again without star striker Ada Hegerberg, with the former Ballon d'Or winner still recovering from a groin injury. However, Riise recalled Graham Hansen after controversially dropping the Barcelona winger in the last match

AUCKLAND: Norway coach Hege Riise was delighted to see her side finally click in attack after a 6-0 hammering of the Philippines on Sunday took them through to the last 16 at the Women's World Cup at the expense of co-hosts New Zealand. Sophie Roman Haug scored a hat-trick as Norway demolished the tournament debutants at Eden Park, and that scoreline allowed them to overtake New Zealand on goal difference. Switzerland finished on top of Group A after a 0-0 draw in Dunedin with New Zealand, who went out along with a Philippines side who finished Sunday's game with 10 players. Norway had failed to score

in their first two matches at the tournament, a 1-0 defeat against New Zealand followed by a goalless draw against the Swiss. Those results meant they had to beat the Philippines and the floodgates opened as Roman Haug scored twice early on. Caroline Graham Hansen made it 3-0 before Alicia Barker scored an own goal and Guro Reiten added a penalty as Norway came to life. Roman Haug completed her hat-trick late on and also hit the post at the death. "We have been talking quite a bit about how scoring the first goal would release us," said Riise, whose side went ahead inside six minutes and never looked back. "We know that we are strong in

attack and today was the day when we got the first goal and then we knew we could score more." Norway advanced to a last-16 tie in Wellington next Saturday against whoever tops Group C between Japan and Spain. Switzerland will head to Auckland to face the Group C runners-up the same day. Roman Haug hat-trick: Roman Haug, the 24-year-old Roma forward, again filled in for Hegerberg and she opened the scoring by hooking a Thea Bjelde cross over goalkeeper Olivia McDaniel and into the net. The second goal arrived in similar fashion in the 17th minute. This time Vilde Boe Risa delivered a high ball into the box for Roman Haug to send a header looping over the goalkeeper. Graham Hansen made it 3-0 in the 31st minute with a great long-range strike as the Philippines, with eight US-born players in their starting line-up, were totally overrun. The fourth goal arrived three minutes after half-time when Barker turned Frida Maanum's low cross into her own net. Moments later the Canadian referee awarded a penalty after reviewing a challenge on Reiten by Jaclyn Sawicki. Reiten comfortably stroked home the spotkick. Salt was rubbed into Filipino wounds as substitute Sofia Harrison, another of their US-born contingent, was shown a red card following a VAR review for a late challenge on Bjelde. Roman Haug then got her third and Norway's sixth when she headed home a Reiten cross in injury time. "They picked us apart," admitted Philippines coach Alen Stajcic. "We tried all the way to the end. I am proud of the heart and spirit of our team." In Dunedin, New Zealand came closest to scoring in front of a sell-out crowd when Jacqui Hand rattled the post on 24 minutes. The home side pushed in vain for a winner and many of their players were in tears as their elimination was confirmed. - Agencies

## Briefs

## Wagner not planning reduction in Africa presence

MOSCOW: The Wagner paramilitary group has no plans to downscale its presence in African countries following an aborted mutiny against Russia's military chiefs, its chief, Yevgeny Prigozhin, has said. "We are not cutting (the staff), and moreover, we are ready to increase our presence. At the moment, all obligations are being fulfilled and will be fulfilled at all costs," Yevgeny Prigozhin said in a phone interview with Cameroon-based outlet AfriqueMedia released online on Tuesday. "Not a single word that I or the representatives of our company gave will be violated," Prigozhin said. Prigozhin had shared no information on the interview on his personal social media pages or on those of Wagner. But several days ago, he posted a photo with AfriqueMedia's director, Justin Tagouh, on the sidelines of the 2nd Russia-Africa summit, which took place in St. Petersburg on July 27-28. "We are ready to develop relations with African countries. We currently have a large number of trained fighters who have passed, as they say, fire, water, and copper pipes and are ready to perform a large number of tasks to combat terrorism and gangs," Prigozhin said.—Agencies

## Tens of thousands evacuated as northern China hit by torrential rain

BEIJING: Tens of thousands of people were evacuated from flood-prone areas of Beijing as Typhoon Dokuri lashed China's capital with heavy rain on Sunday and residents were urged to stay indoors. The deadly storm has been sweeping northeast over China since Friday, when it careened into the southern Fujian province after battering the Philippines. The Chinese capital and surrounding region were drenched over the weekend, with officials warning of potentially hazardous conditions including floods, swelling rivers, mudslides and landslides. More than 27,000 people in high-risk areas of Beijing have been evacuated, and another 20,000 were relocated from parts of Hebei's capital Shijiazhuang, state media said. Hundreds of millions of people in northern China, including in Beijing, remain under a red alert - the highest level - for heavy precipitation through at least Monday afternoon. It is the first time since 2011 that such a heavy rainfall warning has been issued, according to local media. Beijing residents were urged not to go outside unless necessary, advice that appeared widely heeded with the usually buzzing streets empty of many cars or pedestrians.—Agencies

## Children among eight dead after storm pummels Russia campsite

MOSCOW: Eight people including three small children died in Russia when trees crashed into a lakeside campsite during a storm described as a "hurricane", authorities said on Sunday. Several hundred people camped in a national park in Mari El, a Russian region located along the northern bank of the Volga River when the storm struck on Saturday. The Investigative Committee, which probes serious crimes, said in a statement that the bodies of seven people including three small children were found following what it called a "hurricane", after debris was cleared at the campsite overnight. Another person died in a hospital, the statement said. In a separate statement, the emergency ministry said that 29 people were injured and 16 hospitalised. "Vacationers did not take into account the weather forecast," the ministry said on messaging app Telegram.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: A view of decorated road with Chinese and Pakistani national flags due to Chinese Vice Prime Minister He Lifeng will visit Pakistan on July 30 to attend the 10th anniversary celebrations of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), in Federal Capital.—Online

## ICCI to give awards to Conveners of top performing Sub-Committee

He said that the future leadership of ICCI would emerge from these committees as those Executives who would show excellent performance in Committees would have a good chance to lead ICCI in future

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) said that the top performing sub-committees of the Chamber would be given awards to recognize and acknowledge their effective role in resolving the issues of the business community of their respective sectors. He said this while presiding over a meeting of the conveners of ICCI sub-committees. A large number of conveners including women attended the meeting and briefed the President ICCI about the performance of their respective sub-committees. Ahsan Bakhtawari said that during his tenure, 150 sub-committees have been formed in the Chamber, but only some of them are showing good performance. He urged all the conveners to further improve the performance of their committees and present their performance reports on a monthly basis to ICCI. He assured that ICCI would provide all possible support to the committees

in discharging their responsibilities. He announced that conveners of high performing committees will be given special awards while inactive committees will be replaced next year and the whole process will be done on merit basis. ICCI Group Leader Khalid Iqbal Malik said that just as

the standing committees of the Parliament play an active role in the legislative process, the sub-committees of the Chamber can play an effective role in solving the issues of the business community of their respective sectors. He said that the purpose of forming committees is to highlight the issues

faced by the business community in their respective fields so that the Chamber can take up them with the relevant departments for their solution. He emphasized that all Committees should play their active role in this regard. Zafar Bakhtawari, former President ICCI and Secre-

tary General UBG, said that the sub-committees led by the executive members are working in various fields and the well-performing committees also reflect the excellent performance of the executive members. He said that these committees have an important role in the decision-making process of the

Chamber and they should play their role in order to deliver up to the expectations of the business community. He said that the future leadership of ICCI would emerge from these committees as those Executives who would show excellent performance in Committees would have a good chance to lead ICCI in future. Vice President ICCI Engineer Azharul Islam Zafar, Former Presidents Zahid Maqboo & Mohammad Ijaz Abbasi, Khalid Chaudhry, Ms. Fatma Azim, Ms. Zeenat Ayesha, Abbas Hashmi, Aizaz Muhammad, Tahir Ali Naqvi, Baber Chaudhry, Ch. Ashraf Farzand, Dr. Usman, Ch. Muhammad Ali, Ameer Hamza, Malik Shabbir, Rizwan Chheena, Faheem Iqbal, Hazoorul Islam, Kashif Zaheer, Ms. Nasira Ali, Musharraf Janjua, Nasir Chaudry, Naveed Satti, Nisar Mirza, Rohail Anwar Butt, Sohail Chaudhry, Waqas Khan, Zulqarnain Abbasi, Raja Imtiaz, Ch. Irfan, Shahid Abbasi and others also spoke on the occasion and presented performance reports of their committees.



## Volatile exchange rate, record hike in markup to shut local industry

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Industrial and Traders Association Front (PIAF) has said that the country's economy has been facing crisis majorly due to non-serious and poor domestic policy decisions and mismanagement, as the rupee continued to remain unstable while the key interest rate have been escalated to the record historic high level, which will destroy the economy completely. Asking the authorities to include serious and progressive fiscal reforms in the IMF program PIAF Chairman Faheemur Rehman Saigol observed that it is very clear that IMF programs focus on stabilization and crisis management rather than growth-oriented policies that require structural reforms. He stressed need for a revisit of government policies including the coordination exercise between the Ministry of Finance and SBP, as no independent economist

could support the economic policies that are currently in place. He added volatility continued to exist despite IMF program is revived and inflows are materialized. He said the delay in IMF funding created uncertainty in currency market and added that a number of payments related to imports have been made, leading to pressure on the rupee, as the move to a market-based currency exchange rate regime is one of a list of actions the IMF wants Pakistan to complete to clear its 9th review. Meanwhile, Pakistan has already taken most of the other prior actions, which include hikes in fuel and energy tariffs, the imposition of new taxation measures, and withdrawal of subsidies in export and power sectors. PIAF Chairman said that the Pakistan's economy can grow sustainably only if the country introduces productivity-enhancing reforms that facilitate a better allocation of resources into more

dynamic activities, and productive uses. He stated that the country's inability to allocate all its resources to the most productive uses has stunted economic growth. It presents evidence of systematic productivity stagnation across firms and farms. In manufacturing and services, most of the productivity stagnation is related to firms losing efficiency over time. The government needs reminding that remittance inflows were 29.4 billion dollars last fiscal year and this large inflow was also due to the fact that the interbank and open market rates did not diverge significantly during the previous tenures. Thus the current untenable situation is due to a perceived policy of exchange rate manipulation and cannot be attributed entirely to the warnings of impending default or criticism of the handling of the economy. Faheem Saigol observed that coordinating fiscal and monetary policies may be beneficial yet with inflation

attributed to administrative decisions in nearly all recent Monetary Policy Statements and the government unwilling to implement key reforms in the power sector and tax structure the SBP needs to be vigilant in ensuring market-based exchange rate policy and a positive discount rate while the Ministry needs to revisit its tax policy, utility pricing policy and of course continued massive injections into loss-making state-owned entities. The country has had several finance ministers, who massively misjudged their capacity to get the International Monetary Fund to agree to phasing out the harsh upfront conditions that were agreed a misjudgment that delayed the success of the mandatory quarterly reviews and thereby delayed the disbursement of the tranches on which rollovers by friendly countries as well as pledged new loans estimated at around 4.2 billion dollars are dependent.—DNA

## Further jump in key policy rate to deepen economic crisis

The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry's Businessmen Panel (BMP) has warned the central bank of any further jump in the key policy rate, as it would deepen the economic crisis amidst record highest markup rate in the region. FPCCI former president and Businessmen Panel (BMP) chairman Mian Anjum Nisar said that already unprecedented inflation and high markup rate have drastically reduced private sector borrowing during the outgoing fiscal year. The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) is all set to announce its latest monetary policy on Monday, with many experts fearing further hike in interest rate which is already touching the historic-high of 22 per cent. He said that the central bank raised its key interest rate to 22 percent, exceeding investor expectations, as the cash-strapped country attempts to encourage the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to release critical funding. The key rate of the State Bank of Pakistan now stands at 22 percent, its highest level since October 1996. Now, there are reports that the SBP would raise the interest rate by another 1 percent at the upcoming meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) to please IMF. The Businessmen Panel (BMP) chief suggested the central bank to adopt an accommodative monetary policy stance, asking the finance minister to fulfil his commitment of reining in inflation besides cutting interest rate and strengthening the undervalued local currency against dollar. The SBP has raised its key policy rate by 12.25 percentage points since April 2022, mainly to curb soaring inflation. However, it held rates steady in June saying inflation had peaked at 38pc in the preceding month.—DNA

## UAE bans rice exports, re-exports for 4 months

ABU DHABI: The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has imposed a four-month ban on rice exports and re-exports, the country's Ministry of Economy said Saturday. The ban, with effect from July 28, covers the free zones in the UAE and applies to all rice varieties, including brown rice, fully or partially milled rice, and broken rice, according to a statement released on the ministry's social media account. Companies interested in exporting or re-exporting rice must request an export permit from the Ministry of Economy, said the statement. The ban can be automatically extended unless a decision is made to cancel its implementation, it added. The UAE ban comes after the Indian government decided last week to halt exports of non-basmati white rice because of the price rise in domestic market and significant crop damage caused by late but heavy monsoon rains. The UAE imports nearly 90 percent of its needed food.—Agencies



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Baligh ur Rehman calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Syed Mohsin Naqvi, Chief Secretary and IG Punjab Police are also present in the meeting.—APP

## African Union tells Niger's coup leaders to return to barracks

KIGALI: The African Union told military coup leaders in Niger on Saturday they had 15 days to return to their barracks and restore constitutional authority following a coup earlier this week. The Peace and Security Council of the African Union made the demand in a statement following a meeting Friday on the situation in Niger. Gen. Abdourahmane Tchiani, the commander of Niger's presidential guard, declared himself the head of a transitional government on Friday, two days after soldiers deposed President Mohamed Bazoum. The Peace and Security Council demands that the military immediately and unconditionally return to their barracks and the restoration of constitutional authority, within a maximum period of fifteen (15) days, it said in a statement. It expressed deep concern about the worrying resurgence of military coups it said undermine democracy, peace, security and stability on the continent and reiterated its zero-tolerance policy towards unconstitutional changes of government. Warning of punitive measures, including sanctions against the perpetrators, the statement demanded the immediate and unconditional release of ousted Bazoum and all detainees. Leaders of the Economic Community of West African States bloc (ECOWAS) are due to meet Sunday in Nigeria to discuss the political situation in Niger.—APP

## Economic decoupling from China is impossible

PARIS: France's finance minister said during a visit to Beijing on Sunday that cutting all economic ties with China was "an illusion", as some Western countries question their reliance on the Asian giant. "We are totally opposed to the idea of decoupling. Decoupling is an illusion," Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire told reporters at the French embassy. "There is no possibility of having any kind of decoupling between the American, European and Chinese economies." Le Maire nonetheless defended France's ambition to become more economically independent in certain sectors. But, he added, the concept of de-risking, which has become a byword in the West in recent months, "does not mean that China is a risk". "De-risking means that we want to be more independent... We don't want to realign, as we realised during the Covid crisis, that we have too much dependence on some very specific components," he added, citing microchips as one example. Le Maire's remarks come as some Western countries seek to reduce their economic dependence on China, particularly Germany, which counts the Asian country as its top trading partner and an important market for its automotive industry.—DNA

## Wagner troops on Polish border, towards 'attack' position

WARSAW: A group of about 100 soldiers from the Wagner Group of Russian mercenaries has moved towards the Belarusian city of Grodno, near the Polish border, Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki said on Saturday. This is certainly a step towards a further hybrid attack on Polish territory, Morawiecki said in Gliwice, southwestern Poland. Now the situation is even more dangerous. The Wagner troops - who have been in Poland since a short-lived revolt last month against Russia - could disguise themselves as Belarusian border guards and help illegal immigrants get into Poland or else impersonate immigrants illegally crossing the border, the premier added. The Polish government and European Commission have both accused Minsk of orchestrating the passage of thousands of migrants from the Middle East and Africa through the Belarusian border with Poland since 2021 as a way of destabilizing the Polish state and deepening tensions within Poland and between Warsaw and Brussels.—Agencies

## Briefs

### OIC for immediate release of Nigerien President

DNA

JEDDAH: Hissein Brahim Taha, the Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), who is following with great concern the developments of the situation in the Republic of Niger, and who has strongly condemned any attempt to seize power by force, called for the immediate release of President Mohamed Bazoum, Niger's democratically elected President, and to ensure the protection of his physical well-being and restoration of constitutional order in Niger. The Secretary-General stressed the importance that the OIC attaches to maintaining peace, security, and stability in Niger and the Sahel region while expressing his support for regional efforts toward this goal. Brahim Taha reaffirmed his full solidarity with the people of Niger.

### Islamophobia in Europe hit 'alarming level'

DNA

ANKARA: In a phone call with his Danish counterpart, Türkiye's foreign minister on Saturday stressed Ankara's concern over the alarming rise of islamophobia in Europe, especially in attacks on the holy Quran. During his call with Lars Lokke Rasmussen, Hakan Fidan said, "Islamophobia in Europe has reached an alarming level, even turning into an epidemic, and allowing such despicable actions under the guise of freedom of expression is unacceptable," said a Foreign Ministry statement. Fidan reiterated Türkiye's condemnation of the ongoing and escalating "vile attacks on our holy book, the Quran, in Denmark." He added that Türkiye expects the Danish government to take "immediate action to prevent these attacks."

### France condemns Niger embassy violence

DNA

PARIS: France on Sunday condemned violence that erupted around its embassy in Niger, where a junta seized power this week in a coup, and demanded that local authorities protect the building. "Nigerien forces have an obligation to ensure the security of our diplomatic missions and consulates as part of the Vienna convention," the French foreign ministry said, condemning "all violence against diplomatic missions." "We call on them to immediately fulfil this obligation." Thousands of junta supporters gathered outside the French embassy in Niger's capital Niamey on Sunday after Paris suspended aid, with some trying to enter the building.

### Twelve killed in Thailand as firecrackers explode

BANGKOK: Twelve people were killed and more than 100 injured when firecrackers kept in a warehouse exploded in southern Thailand, an official said on Sunday. The firecrackers set off a fire on Saturday at the unauthorized warehouse at the Muno market in Su-ngai Kolok district in the southern province of Narathiwat bordering Malaysia, Narathiwat's Governor Sanan Phongakorn said. "There are 10 deaths plus the remains of two unidentified persons, which were sent for DNA checks," Sanan said. He said 121 people were injured, two severely, while 111 had been discharged from hospital, he said. "But there should be no more deaths." - Agencies

## CEO MONAL HOSTS DINNER FOR OUTGOING JORDAN AMBASSADOR



ISLAMABAD: Ambassadors of Yeman, Algeria, Morocco, Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq, Jordan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Editor Daily Islamabad POST posing for a picture on the occasion of a farewell dinner hosted by CEO Monal Group Luqman Ali Afzal for the outgoing Ambassador of Jordan Ibrahim Al Madani, at the Asian Wok. - DNA

## Putin says Russia does not reject peace talks

Moscow: Russian President Vladimir Putin has said he does not reject the idea of peace talks on Ukraine. Speaking after meeting African leaders in St Petersburg, he said African and Chinese initiatives could serve as a basis for finding peace. But Mr Putin also said there could be no ceasefire while the Ukrainian army was on the offensive. In the hours after he spoke, Russia said a Ukrainian drone attack on Moscow had damaged two office blocks. Flights were briefly suspended from Vnukovo Airport, south-west of the city centre, and one person was injured, Russia's state news agency Tass reported. Ukraine has not commented on the drone incident. One eyewitness, who only gave her first name as Liya, told Reuters she could see fire and smoke. "We heard an explosion and it was like a wave, everyone jumped," she said. "Then there was a lot of smoke and you couldn't see anything. From above, you could see fire." On peace talks, both Ukraine and Russia have previously said they will not come to the negotiating table without certain preconditions. Kyiv says it will

not concede any territory but Moscow says Kyiv must accept its country's "new territorial reality". Russia invaded its neighbour last year and is occupying territory in the country's south and east. Mr Putin told the late-night press conference on Saturday that there were no plans to intensify action on the Ukrainian front for now. He also defended the arrest of critical voices, claiming some people were harming Russia from inside. Criticism of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine is outlawed and most prominent opposition members are behind bars or in exile. In the wide-ranging briefing, the Russian president also told reporters that Moscow carried out some "preventive strikes" after an explosion on a Crimean bridge earlier this month. Following the bridge incident - which left two people dead - Mr Putin vowed to respond to what he claimed was a "terrorist" act by Ukraine. Kyiv did not officially say it was responsible for the blast on the bridge, which links the occupied peninsula to Russia. The Russia-Africa summit comes after an African contingent including lead-

ers and representatives from seven countries met Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky and Mr Putin last month. President Zelensky has in recent days been visiting Ukrainian special forces near Bakhmut, the city where some of the fiercest fighting of the war has been taking place. Ukrainian authorities have said Kyiv's troops are gradually moving forward near the eastern city, which Russian forces seized in May. Overnight the north-eastern Ukrainian city of Sumy was hit by rockets, killing one person and injuring five others, the country's interior ministry said. The ministry said on Telegram that a Russian missile hit an educational institution on Saturday evening. The BBC has not verified this information. Elsewhere, two people were killed and another was injured after a missile hit "an open area" in the southern Ukrainian city of Zaporizhzhia on Saturday, an official said. Anatoliy Kurtyev, secretary of the city council, said the blast wave caused by the "enemy missile" blew out apartment windows and damaged an educational institution and supermarket. - Agencies

## COAS condoles death of UAE President's brother

Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, receives General Syed Asim Munir, COAS of Pakistan Army, who offered condolences on the death of late Sheikh Saeed bin Zayed Al Nahyan



ABU DHABI: Chief of Army Staff Gen Asim Munir undertook a visit to the United Arab Emirates. During his visit, the army chief met with Emirati President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, and condoled over the death of his brother. The UAE Embassy in Pakistan

tweeted that UAE President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan received General Munir. "H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, receives General Syed Asim Munir, COAS of Pakistan Army, who offered condolences on the death of late Sheikh Saeed bin Zayed Al Nahyan," the tweet read. On the other hand, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari is also on a visit to the Emirati kingdom. He is scheduled to meet his UAE counterpart, among other engagements. On July 28, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had flown to the United Arab Emirates on a daylong visit to condole over the death of Sheikh Saeed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the brother of the UAE president. Pakistan's ambassador to the UAE, Emirati officials and personnel of the Pakistan embassy had greeted the prime minister at the airport. - DNA

## PTI leaders strongly condemn Bajaur blast

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leadership strongly condemned the blast at the JUIF workers convention in Bajaur and extended their condolences to the grieving families and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured. PTI leadership expressed their grief over the loss of precious lives and prayed for the departed souls and patience to the families of the martyrs. The hoped that no stone would be left unturned to wipe out the menace of terrorism from the country. PTI Secretary General Omar Ayub Khan strongly condemn the bomb blast at a JUIF function in Bajaur. "May Allah grant the Shuhdah of the bomb blast the highest place in Jannat-ul-Firdos and grant their families the strength to bear this irreparable loss. May Allah grant the injured complete shifah at the earliest," he prayed. PTI Central Information Secretary Raof

Hasan said that Pakistan got rid of the scourge of terrorism after making great sacrifices and they would not allow the homeland to be burnt in this fire again. He expressed optimism that appropriate and immediate steps would be taken to flush the country completely from the scourge of terrorism. PTI senior leader Hammad Azhar said that the blast in Bajaur was very unfortunate, wherein over 35 precious lives were lost. However, he advised that the rulers should fix their priorities and they should shun the power games and political engineering. Hammad said that all the resources and strength of state institutions should be devoted to monitoring and apprehending terrorist groups. PTI Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa President Ali Amin Gandapur strongly condemned the explosion and said that the families of the martyrs and the injured were not alone in the grief as PTI and its leadership and workers were equally grieved and saddened by the tragic terror incident. PTI KP President demanded that IG KP should need to take practical steps against the growing terrorism in the province. He said that PTI as a democratic party condemned terrorism or state violence against any political party. PTI senior leader Taimur Jhagra condemned the blast at the JUIF workers convention in Bajaur. "Whatever our political differences, as human beings, as Pashtuns and as Pakistanis, we are one. Praying for all those who have left this world, for their families, and for all the injured to recover," he added

## Air Chief holds key meetings during his visit to China



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force called on various dignitaries during his visit to China. In these meetings, the Air Chief called on Chinese Defence Minister and State Councillor General Li Shangfu, People's Liberation Army Air Force Commander General Chang Dingqiu, Chief of Equipment Development Department General Xu Xueqiang and Director General Bureau of Military Equipment

and Technical Cooperation (Bometec) Major General Fan Jianjun. During the meetings matters pertaining to mutual interest and regional security situation were discussed. The dignitaries also discussed the evolving geo-political environment and regional developments having significant implications for both the countries. During this historical engagement between the highest level military leadership of the two nations, Chief of the Air Staff said that Pakistan values its strong diplomatic and defence ties with China which are based on convergence on all important issues related to regional peace and security while reiterating strong strategic partnership in the face of shared challenges. A smartly turned out contingent presented guard of honor to Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force on his arrival at the PLAAF Headquarters, Beijing, China. The PLAAF Commander expressed his admiration for the professionalism of the Pakistan Air Force personnel and praised the remarkable progress made by the Pakistan Air Force through indigenization. The Air Chief reiterated his unwavering commitment to enhancing the existing bilateral ties in military-to-military cooperation, strategic alliance and the training domain.

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