



Islamabad POST

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Briefs

Imran says his arrest inevitable

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: PTI Chairman Imran Khan on Wednesday again claimed that his arrest was inevitable and could happen as early as next Monday or the upcoming week, saying that he did not see himself being "out of jail for long". "I was expecting to be jailed this week but my lawyers really put up a great fight ... but I have no doubt that it is just a question of time ... whether it is on Monday or some other day next week ... they are going to put me in jail," the former prime minister said in an interview with Fox News.

US vows to standby Islamabad

DNA

WASHINGTON: The United States Tuesday welcomed the staff-level agreement between Pakistan and the IMF designed to stabilize the South Asian country's economy from recent external shocks, saying Washington would continue to support Islamabad through the process. "Our support for the country's economic success is unwavering," State Department Spokesperson Mathew Miller said when asked at his daily press briefing whether the U.S. had played a key role in securing the \$3 billion IMF package for Pakistan.

Khattak's PTI membership terminated

DNA

ISLAMABAD: PTI terminated the basic PTI membership of former party Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa President Parvez Khattak for not providing a satisfactory reply to the show cause notice served to him on 21 June, 2023 for inciting party members to quit the party. PTI Secretary General Omar Ayub issued notice of termination to Parvez Khattak for not providing a satisfactory reply within the given stipulated time regarding contacting party members and inciting them to leave the party.

Good news for dwindling economy
IMF approves \$3 billion loan for Pakistan

Pakistan to receive first tranche of 1.2 billion US dollars

DNA

WASHINGTON: The executive board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Wednesday approved the \$3 billion Standby Arrangement for Pakistan, which was finalised at the end of June. The lender also approved the release of the first tranche of US\$ 1.2 Billion to Pakistan. The global lender said that the programme would focus on the "implementation of the FY24 budget to facilitate Pakistan's needed fiscal adjustment and ensure debt sustainability". The approval allows for an immediate disbursement of \$1.2 billion. "The remaining amount will be phased over the programme's duration, subject to two quarterly reviews," it added. Islamabad signed a short-term IMF deal on June 30 under a standby arrangement, under which the nation is set to receive \$3 billion over nine months, subject to approval by the IMF's board. Pakistan's external financing environment has improved since then as Fitch Ratings Inc. upgraded the cash-strapped country by one notch to CCC long-term foreign currency issuer rating this week. Finance Minister Ishaq Dar on Wednesday said the United Arab Emirates had deposited \$1 billion with the State Bank of Pakistan. Saudi Arabia has also deposited \$2 billion into the account of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Finance Minister Ishaq Dar confirmed Tuesday, a major development to ease the country's fiscal turmoil. These funds are crucial for securing the IMF deal as the global lender had conditioned the release of loan with the deposition of funds by countries including the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and China.

UAE deposits \$1bn in State Bank: Dar

Saudi Arabia has already credited \$2 billion into the SBP's account

SHUJAAT HAMZA

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Ishaq Dar on Wednesday said the United Arab Emirates had deposited \$1 billion with the State Bank of Pakistan. These funds are crucial for securing the IMF deal as the global lender had conditioned the release of loan with the deposition of funds by countries including the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and China. Saudi Arabia has already credited \$2 billion into the SBP's account. Addressing the presser, Dar said this deposit would improve the SBP's forex reserves, adding that he was thankful to the UAE's government on behalf of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Army Staff Gen Asim Munir. "Pakistan will restore its image in the world," he vowed. Earlier, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said he was optimistic that the International Monetary Fund will approve a \$3 billion bailout at its board meeting on Wednesday. Pakistan and the Fund reached a

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9 soldiers martyred in Zhob terror attack
Five terrorists also sent to hell

NEWS DESK

RAWALPINDI: Nine Pakistan Army soldiers were martyred while five others were critically injured after militants launched a "dastardly attack" on the Zhob garrison in northern Balochistan during the early hours of Wednesday, the military's media affairs wing said. In a statement, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said that terrorists' initial attempt "to sneak into the facility was checked by soldiers on duty". "In ensuing heavy exchange of fire, the terrorists have been contained into a small area at the boundary," the ISPR said, adding that three "heavily armed terrorists" had been killed so far. "A clearance operation by security forces is under way to apprehend remaining two terrorists as well," the statement said. "Security forces remain determined to thwart all such ghastly attempts at destroying peace of Balochistan and Pakistan," it added. Earlier, Zhob District Commissioner (DC) Azeem Kakar had told media that the cantonment area in Zhob was under attack. He further said that a woman civilian was killed after being caught in the crossfire while five other civilians were left injured.

Martyred troops are nation's pride: PM

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday termed martyred soldiers the "pride of the nation" said their invaluable sacrifices of lives could never be forgotten. The prime minister expressed these remarks in a statement issued after four soldiers of the Pakistan army lost their lives in a terrorist attack in the Zhob garrison of Balochistan. He paid tribute to the martyred soldiers and said that their sacrifice for the homeland would be remembered forever. - DNA

The official added that the severely injured were being referred to Quetta. DC Kakar said that a passenger bus coming from Dera Ismail Khan was also caught in the firing. He added that "nothing can be said about the number of attackers", and asserted that all departments were on alert and an operation was under way.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif distributes scholarship cheques among high-achieving students on merit basis under the Pakistan Endowment Fund for Education. - DNA

Fresh monsoon system to hit Pakistan

Rains, hailstorm likely to hit most parts of the country

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) Tuesday predicted more rains from July 13 to 17 as a deadly monsoon system continues to wreak havoc in the country that has claimed nearly 90 lives since June 25. Monsoon currents from the Arabian Sea, according to the Met Office, are expected to arrive towards the country's upper and central parts from the evening of July 12, which will likely intensify on July 14. The PMD added that a westerly wave might also enter the upper parts on July 14's evening or night. The Met department mentioned that rain alongside wind and thundershower (with few heavy falls) is expected in Kashmir's Neelum valley, Muzaffarabad, Poonch, Hattian, Bagh, Haveli, Sudhanoti, Kotli, Bhimber, Mirpur, as well as other cities including Murree, Galiyat, Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Attock, Chakwal, Jehlum, Mandi Bahauddin, Sialkot, Narowal, Lahore, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Kasur and Okara from July 12's evening and/or night to July 17, with occasional gaps. Meanwhile, similar weather pattern is also expected in Gilgit Baltistan's Diamir, Astore, Ghizer, Skardu, Hunza, Gilgit, Ghanche, Shigar districts, as well as other cities including Chitral, Dir, Swat, Shangla, Buner, Mansehra, Kohistan, Abbottabad, Haripur, Peshawar, Mardan, Swabi, Nowshera,

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Education top priority
Elections to be held in October or November

Prime Minister says ECP will announce date for next general election

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Amid uncertainty surrounding the next general elections, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said that the coalition government's tenure will end on August 14 and the date for the next polls will be announced by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) either in "October or November". The premier's statement suggested that the incumbent rulers are not contemplating dissolving the National Assembly before its scheduled date which is due to expire on August 14 this year. The general elections take place

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Shaheen Chowk Flyover inaugurated

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif laid the foundation stone of Shaheen Chowk Flyover at the junction of 9th avenue and Khayaban-e-Iqbal in Islamabad this evening. The project will be completed at a cost of 2 billion rupees within an estimated time of 8 months, but the

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Rwanda a great place to invest, HC Kimonyo says - Page 06

West offers Ukraine security commitments outside NATO - Page 07

Pak gives shut-up call to Israel over rights issue - Page 08

Pak-Uzbek trade relations on right trajectory: PM

PM talks to President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, felicitates him on his re-election

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif held a telephone call with the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev. During the call, the Prime Minister congratulated the Uzbek President on his re-election in the presidential elections held on 9th July 2023. Terming the re-election of President Mirziyoyev as the reiteration of the confidence of the Uzbek people in his leadership, the Prime Minister expressed his strong confidence that bilateral relations between the two countries would continue to strengthen under his stewardship. The Prime Minister underscored the importance attached by Pakistan to bilateral relations with Uzbekistan. He noted



with satisfaction the operationalization of the Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) and the Uzbekistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (UPTTA). Both these agreements would enhance economic and trade relations between the two countries, he added. Recalling their previous interactions in Samarkand and Astana, the two leaders discussed the prospects of accelerating regional development and agreed on the need to further expand bilateral cooperation in the fields of energy, connectivity, agriculture, IT, textiles, and logistics. It may be mentioned here that the Uzbek President clinched a seven-year term after landslide victory in the Presidential elections held on Sunday July 9, 2023. The President returned to the office by grabbing more than 87 per cent votes.

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Minister inaugurates project to boost regional languages

PESHAWAR: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Marriyum Aurangzeb Tuesday inaugurated a project aimed at ensuring regional languages around-the-clock transmission on Pakistan Television (PTV) National. The initiative was meant to promote regional languages and provide quality entertainment to locals and overseas Pakistanis. Addressing the inaugural ceremony at PTV Peshawar Center, Marriyum Aurangzeb said besides people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the overseas Pakistanis living in Saudi Arabia, UAE and other Gulf countries would also be able to watch their favourite programs and musical shows through satellite on PTV. Congratulating the Ministry of Information team and PTV management, she said the project was launched in response to the long-standing demand of the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It would not only promote the culture and heritage of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa abroad but would also bring people of different languages closer. She said the closure of cinemas in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa especially in Peshawar had adversely affected the entertainment industry. PTV was a family channel and its transmission could be watched across the country, she added. Marriyum Aurangzeb said KP was rich in culture and heritage and its entertainment industry would be instrumental in curbing intolerance in society. To promote cinema culture, she said a cinema was inaugurated on the premises of Radio Pakistan Lahore and Peshawar to provide recreational op-

portunities to the public. The minister said those who ransacked and burnt the Radio Pakistan Peshawar building, its Chaghi model mountains, studios, auditorium and dramas/music archives had been exposed before the masses. She said under national digitalization program, the music and other archives of Radio Pakistan and PTV would be digitalized. The minister said that the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had bravely fought the war against terrorism and the promotion of cinema and films was meant to provide them with healthy entertainment, information and education. Marriyum Aurangzeb lashed out at the previous government for its poor policies and hollow slogans, saying that she had neither seen 350 dams nor billions of trees in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Through PTV Flix, she said the people of Pakistan could now watch their favourite dramas, films and songs through their mobile phones. She said one party had put on fire the national installations and attacked national monuments on May 9 after its politics became irrelevant while Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz had constructed motorways, energy projects and made Pakistan's defense impregnable. The minister said that Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif had launched free laptops scheme for students of Pakistan including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. She said the prime minister distributed laptops among talented students of different universities in Peshawar today. She said Fata University Phase-1 completed with an

estimated cost of Rs1.5 billion was inaugurated by the prime minister today, however, its foundation was laid during the previous Government of PML-N. She said the development projects launched by the PML-N government had brought positive changes in people's lives.

Engr Amir Muqam, Adviser to the Prime Minister for Political and Public Affairs and National Heritage said that PTV being a family channel had provided quality education, information and entertainment since its establishment. He said extension of transmission of PTV National was the long awaited demand of the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and overseas Pakistanis that was fulfilled today by the Government. He expressed that PTV National would give appropriate time to all languages of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Secretary Information and Managing Director PTV, Sohail Ali Khan said that existing resources were used in the extension of the transmission period of the PTV National. He said it would help create national cohesion and bring people of different languages closer. He said that the transmission time of PTV Multan's Seraiki, PTV Lahore's Punjabi and PTV Sindh's Sindhi would be increased shortly. Besides PTV authorities, the function was also attended by Adviser to the Chief Minister for Revenue, Pir Haroon Shah, Principal Information Officer, Mubashir Hassan, DG PID Ashfaq Khalil and GM PTV Peshawar Aurangzeb Afridi.



ISLAMABAD: Syed Naveed Qamar Federal Minister for Commerce, presenting souvenir to delegates at opening ceremony of the 6th Pakistan Pharma Summit and Awards 2023.—DNA

Electricity prices to go up to control circular debt

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has assured International Monetary Fund (IMF) to increase electricity prices in the current FY2023-24 to control increasing circular debt of the power sector. Pakistan secured a badly needed \$3 billion stand-by arrangement (SBA) from the International Monetary Fund on Friday, giving the South Asian economy a much-awaited respite as it teeters on the brink of default. Sources having knowledge of the matter said Pakistan's finance ministry and IMF have finalised the plan to control the circular debt in the current financial year. According to the plan, the circular debt of the power sector will be curtailed to Rs2,340 billion for which Pakistan has also assured the international lender of release of Rs400 billion. The amount will be released in installments, the sources said and added recoveries from the defaulters of the power sector will be improved. The IMF has 'warned' Pakistan that failure to curtail circular debt of the power sector will be considered a violation of the agreement and conditions for the loan programme in the future will be tough. It is to be noted that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Executive Board meeting will take place today (Wednesday) to review the \$3 billion stand-by arrangement with Pakistan to release the first tranche of \$1.1 billion as part of the loan programme.

Pakistan eyes to enhance pharma exports to \$5 bln

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar Wednesday stressed the need for collective efforts to boost pharmaceutical exports upto \$1 billion by 2025 and by \$5 billion by 2030 to improve exchange reserves of the country. Realizing the export potential of the pharmaceutical sector, he said the government, pharma industry players and regulatory bodies should join together to tap the true potential of this particular sector and help economic development of the country. Speaking at the 6th Pakistan Pharma Summit and Awards (PESA) 2023, the minister outlined the gov-

ernment's plans to significantly increase Pakistan's pharmaceutical exports. The event was organized by the Pakistan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Association (PPMA), brought together industry leaders, experts, and stakeholders to discuss strategies for growth and innovation in the pharmaceutical sector. While highlighting the immense opportunities for growth in the global pharmaceutical market, valued at \$1.4 trillion, the minister emphasized the need for Pakistan to benefit from it. Expressing gratitude to Chairman of PPMA Syed Farooq Bukhari, and Chairman of the organizing committee Dr. Kaiser Waheed, for their exceptional leadership in arranging the prestigious summit, the

minister said pharmaceutical market of Pakistan was growing very fast and together, we could make Pakistan a leading player in the global pharmaceutical market. He said in order to enhance pharmaceutical exports, we must prioritize local manufacturing of active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) to reduce our dependence on imports besides aligning with international standards. This would not only make us self-reliant but also create opportunities for export-oriented growth, he remarked. He said by complying with global regulations and certifications, we could access more lucrative export markets, ensuring the quality and competitiveness of our pharmaceutical products.

LHC dismisses Khadija Shah, others' pleas

DNA

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court on Wednesday dismissed petitions filed by Khadija Shah and others to declare their detention illegal regarding the events of May 9. A two-member bench comprising Justice Ali Baqar Najafi and Justice Amjad Rafique issued a 26-page written judgment on the petitions of Khadija Shah, Huma Saeed, Rizwan Zia and Zubair Malik. The bench observed that the "law is taking its course, the detention of the petitioners cannot be declared illegal at this stage." The legal process cannot be bypassed. "Whoever was involved in the events of May 9 have been identified. The unfortunate events revealed the intolerance and dangerous fanaticism of a charged mob. The events of May 9 also challenged the judicial system. Before this incident the public had not seen such vandalism in Jinnah House.

Larkana family holds world record for sharing same birthday

LARKANA: A Pakistani family from Larkana has held a Guinness World Record since 2019 for more than just their shared surname. This family of nine has something extraordinary in common: they blow out birthday candles on the same day - August 1. With this, the family holds the record for 'Most family members born on the same day'. The Mangi family comprises Ameer and Khudija, the proud parents who share the joy of raising seven children with the same birthday on August 1. Their children, Sindho, Sasui, Sapna, Aamir, Ambar, Ammar, and Ahmar, are aged between 19 and 30. This record-breaking accomplishment is further underscored by the fact that the Mangi children also hold the record for

the 'most siblings born on the same day.' What makes August 1 even more special for Ameer and Khudija is that it marks their wedding anniversary. The couple tied the knot on their birthday in 1991. And exactly a year after, they gave birth to their eldest daughter, Sindho. Little did they know then that their family would grow to share the same day as their birthday. The Mangi family gave birth to two sets of twins, each born on August 1. Five years after twin girls Sasui and Sapna were born, twin boys Ammar and Ahmar were born in 2003. This marks the fifth verified instance of a mother giving birth to two sets of twins with coincident birthdays, equalling the record for the 'most twin siblings born on the same day'.

Ameer told Guinness World Records that he hadn't consciously planned for his kids to be born on the same day and that "it was all natural; from Allah." The organization further reports that all the children were conceived and born naturally. None of the children were delivered prematurely via caesarean section, nor was Khudija's labour ever induced early. August 1 has transformed into a day of great celebration in the Mangi household. "Earlier we used to celebrate our birthdays in a simple manner, but now we do it a lot more and with a lot of happiness," Sasui told Guinness World Records. They also told the record-keeping organization that nine of them share the same cake on August 1. _APP

Overflowing Chenab, Sutlej damage crops, enter households

DNA

LAHORE: The outflow of water at Head Sulemanki has exceeded 71,000 cusecs owing to India's release of the second largest current of water in River Sutlej. The river was completely filled to capacity at Pakpattan and started entering nearby villages. Hundreds of acres of land have been inundated, said the irrigation officials. On the other hand, due to

the erosion on the banks of the Chenab River at Chinot, standing crops on hundreds of acres of land have been submerged. While the displaced flood victims will start to return as the water level begins decreasing. The water level in Chinot has reduced to 50,000 cusecs after a continuous decline. Hundreds of acres of standing crops at 35 mauzas in the district were inundated. The flood in Chenab River damaged the crops of fodder, maize,

sugarcane and others. Flood relief camps will remain active in areas suffering from erosion. However, the water level has started to decrease in the Chenab at Heads Khanki and Qadirabad. The inflow of water in Head Khanki is 71,203 cusecs, while the outflow is 63,861 cusecs. While at Head Qadirabad, the inflow of water is 70,735 cusecs, and the discharge from there is 60,735 cusecs. The River Ravi is reported to be in a low-level flood at Narowal

and the water level is continuously decreasing. Moreover, 20,000 cusecs of water are currently flowing in the Ravi at Jassar area, said the deputy commissioner, adding the water level in the river is decreasing continuously. All government departments are on high alert in view of the current flood situation. Moreover, the forecast of a new spell of rains has sounded alarm bells. In Sialkot, there is a fear of urban flooding due to the possible rains.

Child killed in house fire in KP's Shangla

PESHAWAR: A seven-year-old child was killed when a house in Guddusar Pitao area of Shangla district caught fire during the wheat thresher process, police informed on Wednesday. The unfortunate incident occurred in the house of one, Aurangzeb when all his children were present in the house. The police, Rescue 1122 and locals succeeded in dousing the fire after hectic efforts, however, Aurangzeb's seven-year-old son, Muhammad Shan was burnt to death. _APP

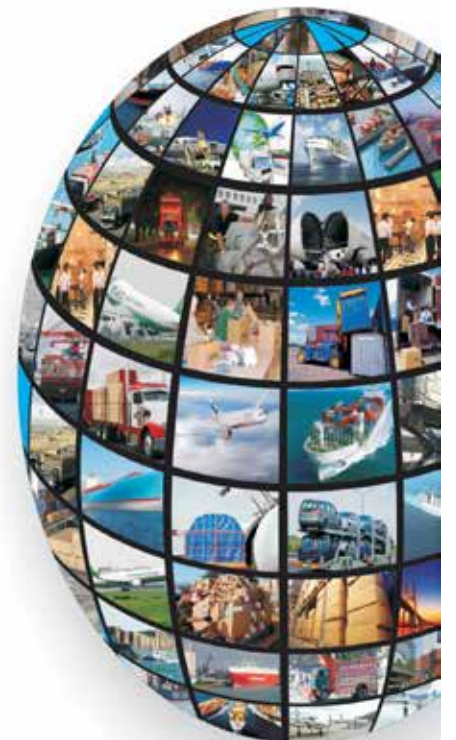
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Speakers call for building strong energy links with Iran at CASS seminar

DNA

LAHORE: A seminar was conducted by the Centre for Aerospace and Security Studies (CASS), Lahore on the theme of "Pakistan's Foreign Policy Choices in the Evolving Global Order". The seminar featured a keynote address by Ambassador (Retd) Javid Husain who underscored the need for a pragmatic approach in Pakistan's foreign policy towards the great powers, regional countries, and especially the neighboring states. Ambassador (Retd) Naghmana Hashmi dwelt in detail on how to further deepen Pakistan's strategic ties with China. Ambassador (Retd) Riffat Masood in a video message, reflected on policy options vis a vis India and Pakistan's representative on Afghanistan, Ambassador (Retd) Asif Durrani emphasized the utmost importance of a stable and peaceful Af-



ghanistan. The statements of the guest speakers were followed by an extensive question-and-answer session. Earlier, in the beginning, Ambassador (Retd) Muhammad Haroon Shaukat, Director, Foreign Affairs CASS, made an introductory statement. President, CASS, Lahore, Air Marshal Asim Suleiman (Retd) made the concluding remarks while summing up

the recommendations. Recognizing the vital importance of economic health for national security, the seminar speakers emphasized the need to attach high priority to economic diplomacy; The need for adopting a pragmatic approach in policies was stressed; There was a unanimous view that Pakistan should continue to attach utmost importance to fur-

ther deepening and diversifying its strategic partnership with its all-weather friend and iron brother China and to fast track CPEC; Pakistan should eschew the cold war era block politics, and promote mutually beneficial relations with great powers. A reset of relations with the US is desirable and efforts should be made to strengthen ties with Russia; The seminar underscored

the importance of a peaceful neighbourhood and reiterated Pakistan's desire for good neighbourly relations with India on the basis of sovereign equality, mutual respect and the peaceful settlement of all outstanding issues, especially the Jammu and Kashmir dispute; Pakistan's search for peace with India should not be interpreted as a sign of weakness.

National Days and Armed Forces Days

JULY

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

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



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115
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Railway Exchange9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi.5555489
CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

CMH.....5611111
MH.....5611116
Cantt Hospital..9270907-11
DHQ.....5556311-4
RGH.....9290301-7
Holy Family.....9290322-7
PIMS.....9261170-79
Polyclinic.....9218300-09
Shifa International 4603666



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CDA.....9221334-43
CDA.....9208301-04
Met Office.....9250360-6
RDA.....5555864
TMA.....5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

RASTA launched two much-awaited reports on "Power, Profit & Plans"

PIDE has also proposed introducing paid Parking in Islamabad to mitigate traffic congestion in the city; 69.3% of the parkers are willing to pay for Parking

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) and RASTA jointly hold a book/report launch event at the Planning Commission of Pakistan, Islamabad. The highly anticipated gathering brought together esteemed experts, policy-makers, and stakeholders to address the urgent challenges surrounding the housing sector in the country. Dr. Nadeem Ul Haque, Vice Chancellor of the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), addressed the audience and highlighted key challenges and opportunities in the sector. "Power, Profit & Plans" delves into the political economy of housing in Pakistan, uncovering the unequal development patterns and socio-economic disparities prevalent in the urban landscape. The book underscores the pressing need for institutional and policy reforms, highlighting the role of improved governance in addressing the housing crisis. The book offers a comprehensive analysis and roadmap for addressing Pakistan's housing challenges. Mr. Nasir Javed, Editor of the book,



apprised the participants by presenting key features of the Book titled: "Power, Profit & Plans: The Political Economy of Housing in Pakistan" is a multi-author book that highlights that urbanization in Pakistan, addition to the Slow and Steady flow of economic migrants from a rural area, had added at least six spikes starting with the migration of 1947, wars, floods, terrorism, etc. These unusual spikes placed pressure on urban housing, coupled with rapid population growth and institutional inefficiencies and complexities, described as 'institutional spaghetti,' has led to the housing crisis. While speaking at the occasion, Mr. Pervaiz Latif Qureshi, Urban Development Expert, said that the Book offers a number of policy, institutional, financing, and taxation reforms that are likely to improve housing affordability, especially for the middle and lower classes. PIDE has also proposed introducing paid Parking in Islamabad to mitigate traffic congestion in the city. The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) also launched a study on introducing paid Parking in Islamabad at the occasion. Speaking at the book launch titled "Traffic Management & Congestion Mitigation: Parking Policy for ICT", in his presentation by Dr. Idrees Khawaja, Former Chief of Research, PIDE, said that the study undertaken on the demand of the Capital Development Authority argues that free Parking is, in a sense a

subsidy to car owners and encourages car use beyond the optimal limit. The idea of the study emerged in a meeting between VC PIDE Dr. Nadeem Ul Haque and the then Chairman CDA, Mr. Amer Ali Ahmed, in January 2022. Dr. Haque proposed introducing paid Parking in Islamabad to reduce traffic congestion. Mr. Ahmed jumped on the idea and formally asked PIDE to propose the conceptual design and determine the idea's viability. To devise a parking plan for Islamabad

on a pilot basis, the PIDE team surveyed 66 parking locations in 17 busy markets of Islamabad. The survey was undertaken to determine the demand and supply of Parking. The survey findings suggest that in several locations and during several hours of the day, the demand for Parking exceeds the supply, leading motorists to spend considerable time cruising for Parking, spending extra fuel, and Parking in the streets. A survey was also undertaken

at selected locations to assess the willingness to pay for Parking. The findings suggest that 69.3% of the parkers are willing to pay for Parking. The conceptual design of parking lots and other designated parking places, recommended by the PIDE study, would have the following elements: Car parking stalls, Motorbike parking stalls, buffers; sidewalks & frontages; crosswalks, ramps & bollards; vegetation medians & green parking stalls, Accessibility to Parking for differentially abled persons, Bus stops, delivery parking & taxi stand. Parking of cars at different angles (perpendicular, parallel, 30°, 45°, and 60°) has been recommended depending on the layout of the parking lot and other situational factors. The study recommends the installation of parking meters and the developing of a parking app to collect parking fees. The study contains suggestions on viable meters and gives a prototype of the proposed parking app for collecting parking fees. The entire mechanism must be monitored by CCTV cameras and supplemented by manual monitoring by traffic wardens.

to its customers, it was incumbent upon the bank to educate its customers about its pros and cons. He also directed BAFL to refund the lost amount of Rs 66,850 along with the profit to the customer. The President gave these remarks while deciding upon a case wherein Muhammad Yar (the complainant) had filed a complaint before the Banking Mohtasib stating that he had a Bank Alfalah Credit Card and a scam of Rs.66,850/- occurred on his Credit Card when his card was used at Noon-e-Commerce solution. He informed the bank that he had not done this transaction and requested to stop this online transaction/payment. The bank had initially reversed this transaction amount but surprisingly after six months, the bank had deducted this amount from his Credit Card. Feeling aggrieved, he escalated his complaint before the Banking Mohtasib which directed BAFL to refund the lost amount. The Bank, then, filed a representation with the President against the decision of the Mohtasib. The President held a personal hearing of the case and rejected the representation of the bank. In his decision, he noted that the complainant was not conversant with Internet/Digital Banking and became aware of the transaction on receipt of a call from the bank's real-time Monitoring Unit wherein he told the Bank's representative that he did not perform the disputed transaction.—DNA

'Around 600 illegal housing societies operating in twin cities'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Around 600 illegal housing societies have been operating in twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad without any formal approval, Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) Captain (R) Noorul Amin Mengal told the National Assembly Standing Committee on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination. The 35th meeting of the committee was held here at the CDA Secretariat to receive briefing on comprehensive report on implementation status of the previous recommendations of the Committee, complete details of Housing Societies in Islamabad (legal and illegal) causing severe damage to the environment and sewerage system in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), briefing on all restaurants located on Margalla Hills causing severe damage to the environment with poor sewerage system, and especially the complete case study of Monal Restaurant with previous follow up. Chairperson MNA, Nuzhat Pathan presided the com-

mittee and expressed her resentment over late arrival of the Chairman CDA in the Committee meeting whereas the Authority officials had informed the chair that the latter was in the Court for personal hearing. The Chairman CDA informed that there were some 318 illegal housing societies in Rawalpindi and 150 housing societies in Islamabad whereas most of these societies were in Fatehjang, Rawalpindi Tehsil. The cumulative figure of these illegal or unauthorized societies was falling between 568-600 societies along with some 100 illegal societies being established in the adjoining Attock district. The Chairperson took the floor to seek information from the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination on Soybean Seeds import summary pending in the Ministry causing increase in the prices of poultry products. Additional Secretary, Ministry of Climate Change, Musaddik Ahmed Khan briefed the forum in detail on the context of the issue and informed that there were alternates to the poultry feed already available in

the market and there was no such shortage but rather it was exploitative tactic by the Poultry industry. MNA, Romina Khrushid Alam on her agenda item expressed her resentment on the response submitted by IWMB and CDA pertaining to installation of streetlights in the National Park. "There are serious concerns of CDA on installing street lights in Margalla Hills National Park is strange. There are solutions to it as sensor-based lights could be used to illuminate the hiking tracks. The language needs to be changed," she said. There are 102 gutter lids stolen in the federal capital and a day earlier two individuals including a father and son died after the boy fell into the gutter and got suffocated due to gas. She proposed that the Committee should strongly recommend the federal cabinet for appointing a highly qualified member in CDA to take environmental matters on priority basis and also from EPA. Member, Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (IWMB), Waqar Zekria informed the forum that most of the species in Margalla Hills National Park

were nocturnal and were impacted by lights at night. The guidelines for visitors of trails were very clear that they should after sunrise and leave the national park before sunset, he added. He mentioned that the more the traffic the more would be the damage to nature in the national park whereas on average there were over 5,000 visitors visiting trails at the weekends. "We will propose a timing of 9-10 pm to provide full lights in the national park and then halt entry into the national park to sustain wildlife," he added. Chairman CDA Noor ul Amin Mengal said there were few view points and paths that needed street lights and it should be installed there but the rest was a protected and jungle area with a controlled entry. "The CDA Environment Wing has planted 700,000 trees across the federal capital out of which one third are fruit trees that are primarily to enhance green cover. Moreover, section 144 has been imposed in the Margalla Hills National Park on no smoking and cooking food as it all has been banned," he said. Exercising its powers, the Capital Administration had sent 4-5 people in jail on average per day violating section 14.

President asks bank to apologize to fraud victim

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has rejected a representation of Banking Mohtasib directing it to send an apology to a customer for enabling an online transaction/system on his credit card without his consent and netting a complaint when In-Bank-Facility was provided by bank to its customers, it was incumbent upon the bank to educate its customers about its pros and cons. He also directed BAFL to refund the lost amount of Rs 66,850 along with the profit to the customer. The President gave these remarks while deciding upon a case wherein Muhammad Yar (the complainant) had filed a complaint before the Banking Mohtasib stating that he had a Bank Alfalah Credit Card and a scam of Rs.66,850/- occurred on his Credit Card when his card was used at Noon-e-Commerce solution. He informed the bank that he had not done this transaction and requested to stop this online transaction/payment. The bank had initially reversed this transaction amount but surprisingly after six months, the bank had deducted this amount from his Credit Card. Feeling aggrieved, he escalated his complaint before the Banking Mohtasib which directed BAFL to refund the lost amount. The Bank, then, filed a representation with the President against the decision of the Mohtasib. The President held a personal hearing of the case and rejected the representation of the bank. In his decision, he noted that the complainant was not conversant with Internet/Digital Banking and became aware of the transaction on receipt of a call from the bank's real-time Monitoring Unit wherein he told the Bank's representative that he did not perform the disputed transaction.—DNA

Religious tourism can generate millions

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) and Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) Punjab have agreed to put joint efforts to promote religious tourism to earn foreign exchange. These views were expressed by Acting President RCCI Faisal Shahzad in a meeting with Secretary Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) Punjab Rana Muhammad Arif at the chamber house. Faisal said that Pakistan has a largely unexplored avenue of tourism in the religious sector primarily Sikh and Buddhist tourism which can potentially generate millions of dollars for Pakistan, and create over 100,000 jobs. Pakistan contains numerous sacred sites of different religions like Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism that can easily be transformed into tourist destinations, he added. Secretary ETPB Punjab Rana Muhammad Arif informed that the ETPB was working to develop international competitive religious tourism sector to fully realize its diverse potential and making religious tourism a leading economic sector for the country through public-private partnership.

13 PDM parties will be at daggers drawn soon

RAWALPINDI: Awami Muslim League chief and former interior minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmad said on Wednesday that unholy alliance of 13 parties will be at daggers drawn soon. Their ill-assorted group would dismember shortly and differences among parties will be out in public. In a message on the social networking site Twitter, Mr Rashid said that the countdown would begin from 20th and result will be out by 12th August. Public would come to know by August 10 that elections would be held in 60 or 90 days, he said. The AML head said what happened with Punjab elections could not happen with National Assembly polls. He said everyone was giving his own date, but Supreme Court would give stunning decisions in this regard and the election will essentially be held. He said the Election Commission was busy in making preparations for elections. The former interior minister said Nawaz Sharif's disqualification could only be revoked through a constitutional amendment. Sharif started his self-accountability from the National Assembly and addressed the lower house. He said the Supreme Court asked him (Sharif) to establish a JIT, he complied with the orders. The former federal minister said that the JIT and the Supreme Court extended full opportunity to Sharif for defending himself. The five-member bench pronounced the verdict and Qatari letter could not rescue him. He was disqualified for life, Mr Rashid said. The AML chief said Sharif went to Saudi Arabia after tendering a written apology. Using a 50-rupee stamp paper, he departed for London on pretext of his illness. The head of Awami Muslim League said, "His (Sharif's) brother is the sitting prime minister of Pakistan, he himself has a diplomatic passport. So what fear prevents him from returning to Pakistan?" —DNA

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Briefs

192 Pakistani students get scholarships in European universities

ISLAMABAD: The highest number of 192 Pakistani students have received scholarships to study in European universities under the EU's flagship Erasmus Mundus Joint Master scholarships programme including 103 men and 89 women during the current year. The European Union Delegation to Pakistan hosted a pre-departure event to celebrate the achievement of the recipients of the scholarship, said a news release. This is the second year in a row that Pakistan ranked top in the world for the number of scholarships awarded and remained in the lead in terms of scholarship applications. In his welcome remarks, EU Chargé d'Affaires a.i. Thomas Seiler said, "Today we congratulate the young men and women who will embark on an educational and cultural journey through the Erasmus+ programme over the coming months. I am sure that they will return with strong knowledge and rich experiences, and their exposure to European universities will also contribute to the development of Pakistan." The EU Chargé d'Affaires a.i. further added, "The results of the scholarship's selection demonstrate that Pakistani students are well prepared and that the Pakistani universities provide them with the necessary skills to compete at the global level." He added that he is particularly pleased to see more students from Pakistan have accessed the Erasmus+ programme. This year 2,835 students from 128 countries were selected for the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master scholarships. —APP

Govt dismisses Baitul Mal board members

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has dismissed the Baitul Mal board members appointed during the tenure of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government. The government has also issued a notification to form a new board of the Baitul Mal, official sources have said. "With the approval of the federal cabinet, old members of the board were dismissed, and a new board has been formed. Six non-official members have been appointed in the new board," it added. "Barrister Zafarullah Khan from Islamabad, Mir Changez Jamali from Balochistan, Musarrat Rafique from Sindh, Muhammad Humayun from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Fauzia Habib from Punjab and Pervaiz Ashraf from Azad Kashmir have been appointed as members of the board," it stated. The old board members were dismissed for unsatisfactory performance. More than three years had also passed since their appointment, the government sources said.

PDM differences can cause instability

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of National Business Group Pakistan, President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Wednesday that differences have started in the various parties that are part of the ruling PDM. There are differences over the date of elections and the issue of power sharing, as a result of which political instability may increase, which worries the business community, he said. Mian Zahid Hussain said that Pakistan has narrowly avoided bankruptcy and the fear of default has not ended, therefore, the need for economic reforms is becoming more and more serious. Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that politicians should resolve their internal differences and not bring them to public forums so that investors are not harassed. He said that the news of differences in the ruling coalition is everywhere, and the main reason for these differences is that different parties demand more than their right and try to deprive others of their legitimate rights. According to the reports, at present, the tussle is going on over the slots of chairman of the Senate and president. —DNA



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Energy Engr. Khurram Dastgir Khan held a meeting with the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany H.E. Arnold Grannas today to discuss the Power Purchase Agreement and Clean Energy Funding. —DNA

Pakistan-China collaboration will have impact on agri sector

To mark the conclusion of the visit, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali presented PARC shields as tokens of appreciation to the delegation

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: A delegation, led by Mr. Wu Yuelang, Department of Science and Technology, Hubei Province, China visited the National Agricultural Research Center (NARC) in Islamabad as part of their visit to Pakistan. Prof. Dr. Iqbal Ahmed Khan, Vice Chancellor University of Agriculture Faisalabad, and Dr. Muhammad Jaffar Jaskani, Director ORIC, along with other high officials from University of Agriculture Faisalabad were also present at the occasion. The delegation included Ms. Shi Hong, Director of the Social Development Technology Division, Mr. Ye Lin, an Officer from Hubei Province, Mr. Xiao Xuan, the Deputy Dean of Hubei General Hospital, and other esteemed officials from Hubei Province, China. Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman of Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC), extended a warm welcome to the esteemed guests and presented an overview of PARC's endeavors dedicated to fostering innovation in the agriculture sec-



tor. Dr. Ali highlighted that PARC actively engaged in agricultural research and development across ten distinct agro-ecological regions of the country, forging collaborations with domestic as well as international institutions. Furthermore, Dr. Ali highlighted the longstanding partnership between PARC and Chinese research institutes in the field of agriculture. Mr. Wu Yuelang conveyed his gratitude to Chairman PARC for the warm reception and highlighted the sig-

nificant expertise of the Hubei Agriculture Research Institute in areas such as hybrid rice, soybean, citrus, and animal vaccination. In addition, he stressed the institute's exceptional competence in carrying out scientific research activities. Mr. Yuelang expressed a keen interest in sharing their research findings and fostering collaboration with PARC, aiming to gain insights from the experiences of Pakistani agricultural researchers. Furthermore, he emphasized

that fostering collaboration in agricultural research would not only enhance scientific advancements but also reinforce the brotherly ties between the two nations. During their visit, the delegation had the opportunity to explore the research laboratories at the National Institute of Genomics and Agricultural Biotechnology (NIGAB) and the Plant Genetic Resources Institute (PGR), where they expressed their admiration for the ongoing research activities. Chairman of PARC provided a briefing on the ongoing activities and research highlights taking place at NARC, covering diverse areas including the enhancement of crop genetics and advancements in functional genomics. Chairman of PARC also extended his gratitude to Prof. Dr. Iqbal Ahmed Khan, Vice Chancellor University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, and his team for their exceptional organization and facilitation of the visit, acknowledging their efforts in strengthening collaboration between the two countries in the field of agricultural research. To mark the conclusion of the visit, Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Ali presented PARC shields as tokens of appreciation to the delegation.

Masses need to know about beneficiaries of \$3bn in loans

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Dr. Shahid Rasheed Butt said on Wednesday that the nation wants to know the names of those businessmen who got three billion dollars in interest-free loans amid the pandemic during the previous regime. Keeping the names of those who took interest-free loans of three billion dollars secret by various institutions shows that there is something wrong in the whole

drama, he said. Shahid Rasheed Butt said in a statement issued here today that the secrecy shrouding the whole matter and the efforts of different banks to keep the names of recipients hidden is suspicious and an insult to the masses and the taxpayers. He said that during the previous regime, 620 people were given interest-free loans worth three billion dollars in the name of helping the business community during the Coronavirus pandemic. Their names are being kept secret, and the masses are being denied the right to

know about them, which is a clear violation of their fundamental rights. The public has the right to know who received this money and whether this investment was in the country's interest or against it, he added. The business leader said that there is a need to hold accountable the politicians who took loans from foreign institutions and allowed them to be distributed among cronies while ignoring the plight of the public. Shahid Rashid Butt said that the arguments by banks to keep the names of these people a secret are lame arguments that hold

no water. That money did not belong to the banks but the masses; therefore, they have every right to know about it. In other countries, such matters are kept transparent and public access to details is ensured, while here everything is kept secret so that nepotism can thrive. When action can be taken against those who benefited from fraud during the epidemic in Western countries, why can't this happen in Pakistan, he questioned. He lamented that the matter has come to light, but so far no meaningful action has been taken against the offenders, which is regrettable.

Elections to take place on time

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Mian Javed Latif on Wednesday said the threats and conspiracies against the country could only be thwarted through transparent and timely elections. Addressing a press conference here, he said the vision of the Pakistan Muslim League (N) regarding the upcoming general elections was very clear as people and institutions of the country agreed that only Nawaz Sharif could steer out the country from the prevailing crises. The minister said that decision regarding the upcoming government would be taken by people of the country. He said that if efforts had been made to stop threats, blackmailing and attacks in 2014, the incident of 9th May would not have happened. "Facilitators are equally complicit with the main culprit. Today, Israel is talking about going to the United Nations. When such a game (played in Pakistan) takes place in these countries, do other states try to protect these criminals," he questioned. Javed Latif observed that foreign funding was given to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) chief from India and Israel with the aim to destabilize Pakistan. He was of the view the objectives which our enemy could not achieve by army, it achieved on 9th May by investing in the PTI chairman. The minister said that today some institutions were deliberately expressing pressure on them but in actuality, there was no pressure on them, adding that Parvez Elahi also got relief. The injustice with Nawaz Sharif should be redressed and action should be taken against the elements involved in the conspiracy, he demanded. —APP

Homeopathy council calls for establishing research center


ISLAMABAD: President of the National Council for Homeopathy, Rao Ghulam Murtaza emphasized the urgent need to establish a research center for homeopathic treatment which will further enhance the potential of alternative medicine. Talking to APP here on Wednesday, Murtaza said that according to World Health Organization (WHO), forty percent of approved pharmaceutical products in use are derived from natural substances which highlights the vital importance and sustainability of the homeopathic system of treatment. Introducing the National Council for Homeopathy, he said that the council is a federal government organization that is dedicated to promoting the homeopathic system of treatment, regulating colleges, registering practitioners, and ensuring adherence to a code of conduct. Murtaza noted that several pricing matters were pending with the Drug Regulatory Au-

thority of Pakistan (DRAP), leading to high prices for various medicines. He emphasized that the regularization of these medicines under DRAP would make homeopathic treatment more effective and affordable. In response to a question, Murtaza stated that homeopathic practitioners are not allowed to provide medications in blank covers, and patients should be informed about the treatment and prescribed medicines. He mentioned the collaboration between the council and healthcare commissions to regulate the practice of homeopathy. He highlighted that healthcare commissions have established minimum standards of delivery, which state that practitioners cannot provide medicines to patients without a prescription and must disclose the name of the medicine. Approximately 170,000 homeopathic doctors are registered with the council, but only around 40,000 are actively practicing, he said

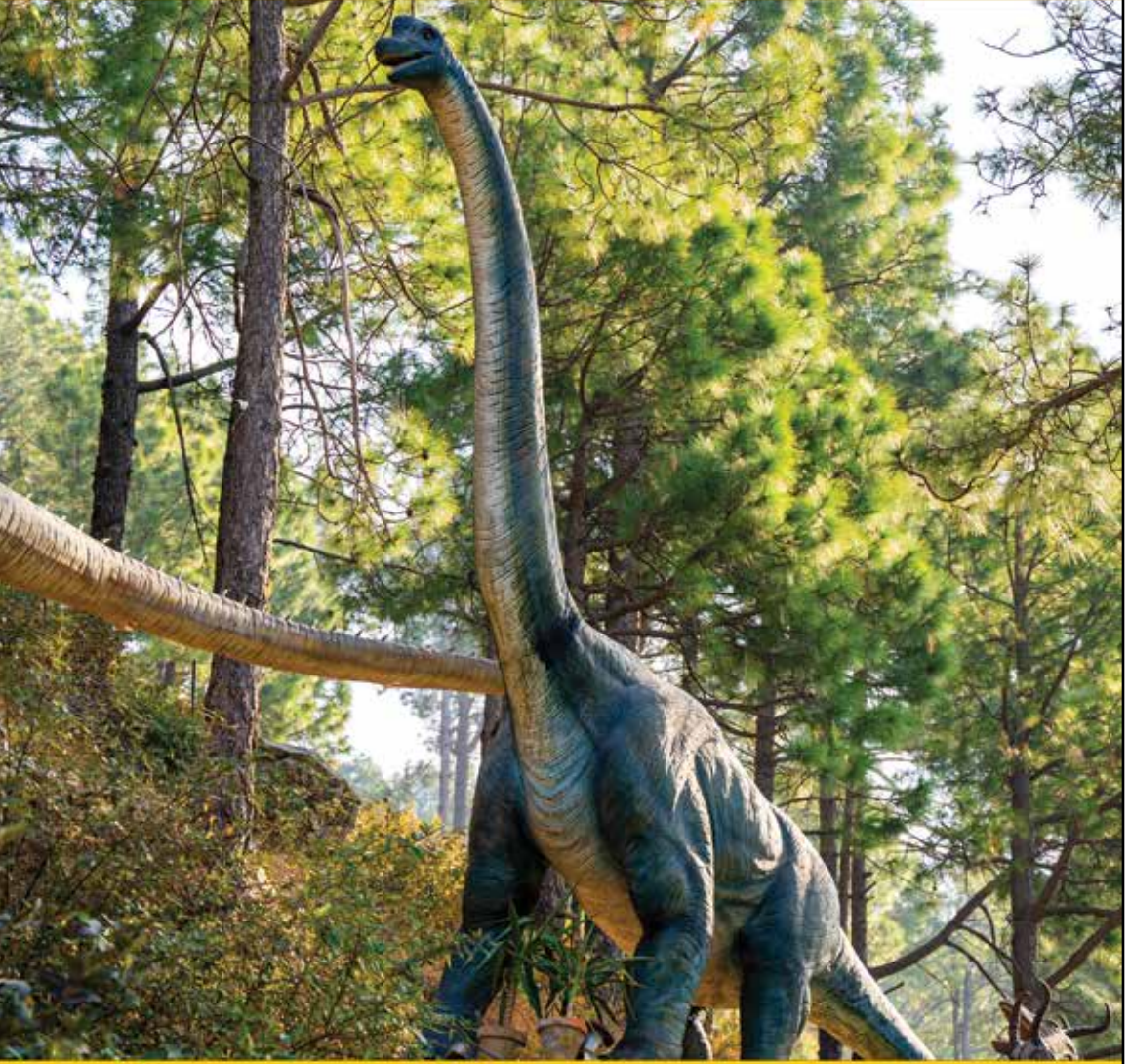
adding that lack of passion for the healthcare system and the difficulty some individuals face in practicing homeopathy. Murtaza explained that the fundamental philosophy of homeopathy requires a lifelong commitment which differs from conventional treatment methods. He mentioned that pharmaceutical companies traditionally support doctors with research and brands, while homeopathic doctors rely on symptoms to determine appropriate treatments. He noted that the same health issue might require different medicines in the homeopathic system of treatment. Regarding the traditional single-dose approach, Murtaza emphasized that practitioners who do not adhere to the principles of homeopathy will not achieve the desired efficacy and effectiveness. "Treatment effectiveness lies in following the philosophy of Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of homeopathy", he added. —APP

Posters in IIOJK urge people to observe strike

ISLAMABAD: The posters have appeared in Srinagar and other areas of Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, paying tributes to the martyrs of 13th July 1931 and other martyrs. According to Kashmir media service, the Kashmir Martyrs' Day is observed on July 13 every year not only on both sides of the Line of Control but also all over the world by the Kashmiris to pay homage to 22 Kashmiris who were martyred by the forces of Dogra ruler in 1931. These 22 martyrs were among thousands of people who had assembled outside the Srinagar Central Jail on July 13, 1931 during the court proceedings against one Abdul Qadeer who had asked the people to defy the Dogra rule. At the time of Namaz-e-Zuhr, a young man started Azaan and was shot dead by the Dogra soldiers. Another took his place and he too was martyred by the troops. In this way, 22 youth lost their lives till the completion of Azaan. The posters were displayed by All Parties Hurriyat Conference, Nawjawan-e-Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir, Jammu and Kashmir Political Resistance Movement (JKPRM), Jammu and Kashmir Justice League Forum (JKJLF), Democratic Youth Forum, Wareseen-e-Shuhada, Jammu and Kashmir Sada-i-Mazloom, Jammu. —APP



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Huawei Powers first national Hyper-Scale Financial Cloud

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Huawei Technologies Ltd and Khazana Enterprise have taken a monumental step to build the first of its kind, hyper-scaler financial cloud in the country. They announced this at the launch event attended by the key leaders from the financial industry, government and business sectors of Pakistan.

The First National In-Country Cloud is a leap... not just for the ICT Industry in Pakistan but for the economy as a whole. Pakistan is denied of millions of dollars for access to Cloud Services. No longer will that be the case. This initiative paves the way for entities to opt for a solution in Pakistan that benefits local businesses and the exchequer.

Mr. Nadeem Hussain the Executive Chairman of Planet N Group said in his welcome note; "I congratulate Huawei Management and Khazana team for this successful cloud launch which is first of its type. If you want digital Pakistan, then you have tons of data and this data needs to be stored somewhere either physical storage or on a cloud and the world has demonstrated the benefits of cloud over physical data storage i.e. flexibility, agility, cost cyber security etc. Huawei Cloud is the answer to all above being one of the top cloud service providers. Lastly SBP is giving an enabling environment for the in-country cloud that can be used both for the material or non-material data"

Mr. Bob Din, Chairman Khazana said, "I congratulate the tech industry of Pakistan specially Khazana Team and Huawei Cloud Team for this progressive initiative and the conducive environment provided by the regulators in Pakistan for the development of Cloud Infrastructure" Mr. Shahzad Rasheed, CEO, Huawei Cloud Pakistan said "We are living in the era of disruption, either disrupt or get disrupted. The upcoming time will completely change the way banks have been operating. This Digital transformation of organizations is not possible without using digital divers like AI, IOT, Machine Learning and these digital drivers need to be hosted somewhere on a cloud and Huawei Cloud differentiate itself by 2 ways; firstly being one of the three hyper scaler federated cloud available in Pakistan; secondly for the digital banks, Huawei Cloud provides software services and out of book solutions just by a single click.

Crucial stabilizer of global supply chains

CHINA'S announcement last week that it will impose export controls on germanium and gallium – two raw materials that are used in a wide variety of products including computer chips and solar panels – should be beyond reproach, given that controls on exports are a customary international practice. Yet the step China has taken has drawn strong opposition from the United States which, out of ulterior motives, is deliberately misportraying the move as being disruptive to the global supply chains. A US Commerce Department spokesperson saying that the US will engage with its allies “to address this (problem) and to build resilience in critical supply chains” is an ironical case of a thief crying “stop thief”, because no other country has inflicted such huge damage on the global supply chains as the US, not least through the wanton restrictions it has imposed on supplying China with advanced memory chips and chip-making equipment. In its latest move, the US government is reportedly preparing to restrict Chinese companies’ access to US cloud-computing services, by requiring cloud-service providers such as Amazon and Microsoft to seek the US government’s permission before providing services to Chinese customers. Although Chinese companies are the main suppliers of the two metals, there are other suppliers in Japan, the Republic of Korea, Europe and the US that also provide the materials. The Chinese authorities are just requiring that the Chinese suppliers get approval before exporting certain products that might be employed in ways that threaten the country’s security. It is the US’ weaponizing of such a practice targeting China that is rattling global supply chains. China, despite all the claims to the contrary, has always worked to safeguard the global supply chains, which have become more vulnerable nowadays due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, high inflation worldwide, and soaring global commodity prices. For years, the country has been a stabilizing force for the global supply chains, through its robust trade with other countries, as well as its manufacturing prowess that has enabled it to provide the bulk of components, raw and processed materials, to manufacturers globally. Those who worry about China’s “fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory” rules on germanium and gallium, that will come into effect on Aug 1, ignore the fact that they will have a limited impact on global supply given their targeted scope. Under the new rules, exporters in China only need to get approval from the authorities for exports of eight gallium and six germanium products. Some Chinese producers and their foreign customers have reportedly already started to apply for the permits. In today’s interdependent world, countries must work together to make the global supply chains secure and stable. Confrontational sanctions and protectionist policies, such as those loved and abused by the US, serve no good.



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NATO's communique

ALTHOUGH the North Atlantic Treaty Organization claims in the opening of the Vilnius Summit Communique it issued on Tuesday that its member states are “bound by shared values of individual liberty, human rights, democracy, and the rule of law”, what the rest of the lengthy document of nearly 12,000 words shows is somewhat different. Thirty members of the bloc are certainly bound by something they have in common. That is the surrendering of their autonomy in subservience to the other member. The 90 points of the communique expose how the bloc has been transformed from a so-called shared defense organization to a geopolitical tool of the United States. Notably, at least five to six out of the communique’s 90 points are partly or wholly related to China, whose “stated ambitions and coercive policies” supposedly challenge the interests, security and values of the NATO members. The communique alleges that China poses “systemic challenges” to “Euro-Atlantic security” and the country is employing “a broad range of political, economic and military tools to increase its global footprint and project power, while remaining opaque about its strategy, intentions and military build-up”. However, the world has heard such remarks time and again. Pensive US administrations have distorted China’s position and policy and deliberately sought to smear China with such talk. The communique’s virtue signaling is intended to contrast the self-professed moral correctness of the NATO members with the rise of a “despicable evil empire”. It is a scheme they have presented to the world before. Yet no matter how hard they try, the US and its NATO allies cannot blot out the true revealers of China’s character. The country has made unique contributions to global development, peace and stability, whether it be the public goods of its four initiatives, its poverty alleviation efforts or its role as a driver of the world economy. Washington cannot cover up the true nature of NATO either. As a product of the Cold War, NATO has a long history of wrongdoing. Against the backdrop of the deteriorating international security situation, the NATO members, instead of reflecting on how they can fulfill the organization’s stated purpose of building trust and preventing conflict, continue to interfere in extraterritorial affairs and promote confrontation. Moreover, NATO’s repeated declaration in the communique that it is a “nuclear alliance” is not at all helpful to realizing the goal of a world without such weapons. NATO, as a whole, unlike some of its members, has never been “open to constructive engagement with” China as it claims in the joint statement. And as long as it continues to cling to its Cold War mentality and the US security umbrella, it will never be able to have “constructive engagement” with counties both without, and within, the alliance.

Creating awareness about population growth

AB Khan

The stakeholders in the corridors of power, in election campaigns, in the parliament and in the air-condition board meetings over luncheons toy with the words like, empowerment of women, promotion of gender, female emancipation, decision making so on and so forth. Unfortunately, these words cannot walk the talk until and unless another four-letter word “male” is added along because “do in Rome as the Romans do”. Along with educating the women, men need to be educated as well. Similarly, when we talk about women empowerment, men need to be told that this does not imply as men’s disempowerment. The point is, take the partner along, apply the gender equality formula in decision making as well by not divorcing the male gender who is part and parcel in this decision, as well as on its outcomes

IN the world of today, information is available on a click of a finger. I did the same to know Pakistan’s population as of now and www.worldometers.info showed a figure of 234,480,525 LIVE whereas the world’s population is 8 billion LIVE. However, having said that do keep in mind that no matter how fast you are scrolling, the world population is growing with every word that skitters beneath your eyeballs and when you will read this piece, do not hold the writer responsible for wrong information. Scrolling down on the home page, the information material available is a treasure-trove as one finds, charts, data’s, statistics, analysis and all sorts of numbers but please be forewarned, its not at all a pleasant reading rather an eye opener.

The onus is not only on the government, the rulers, the politicians, the NGO’s but also the quintessential... the citizens of Pakistan. Now the question arises how will the stakeholders be handling the issues such as environment science, economics, healthcare and urban planning directly related to over population, when the world continues to add relentlessly to the number of consumers and Pakistan in the winning line being the 5th most populous country in the world. The right answer to this question is politics and politicians. If Over Population issue is even in the same cliched list were fighting Corruption, making Pakistan a business-friendly hub, deterrence against the country’s staunch enemies is drummed again and again in the election campaigns, rallies and political manifesto’s, house of Senate and Parliament, then it cannot be over looked or put in a freezer. The stakeholders in the corridors of power, in election campaigns, in the parliament and in the air-condition board meetings over luncheons toy with the words like, empowerment of women, promotion of gender, female emancipation, decision making so on and so forth. Unfortunately, these words cannot

walk the talk until and unless another four-letter word “male” is added along because “do in Rome as the Romans do”. Along with educating the women, men need to be educated as well. Similarly, when we talk about women empowerment, men need to be told that this does not imply as men’s disempowerment. The point is, take the partner along, apply the gender equality formula in decision making as well by not divorcing the male gender who is part and parcel in this decision, as well as on its outcomes.

The World Population Day, 11th of July has been observed since 1990 but how much has been achieved is what needs to be looked into. Are the wheels turning backwards on environmental control, is Healthcare in a better shape now, has urban planning yielded any results or are the economic figures showing an upward trend!

The growing human population is looking for any nook and corner to settle down and built a shelter, be it in urban or rural area thus directly affecting the environment. “Population rise and environment degradation is considered to be the biggest threat to humankind” according to UN survey of a select few Nobel laureates placing even nuclear war below in the list to Over Population. Zeroing it on developing countries, this threat is here to stay along with its multiple effects expanding on daily bases. The challenge is not one but numerous, starting with unemployment, healthcare, income distribution and security, leave alone, education, clean water, food and living conditions. How will the development countries achieve social and economic development when rapid growth makes it even more difficult for the developing countries to provide basic healthcare to its people leave alone a roof to sleep or even on meal a day. The natural disasters in the shape of floods and earthquakes are a prime example in Pakistan where so much was pledged during the visits of foreign

leaders, international donors, NGO’s and during international conferences held in the name of “Climate Change”. How much has been delivered to Pakistan and how much has Pakistan delivered onwards to its affected citizens.

Therefore, SDG goals and targets like reproductive health, gender equality, empowerment of women to have her say do not take priority on top of the list when even basic health is in scarcity, when gender equality is looked from one eye and when empowerment of women only means her right to say yes or no.

Pakistan is slowly inching towards General Elections which provides a golden opportunity for the political parties to revisit their manifestos and upgrade the issue of Population Control in their agendas. Those planning to run independently too should not divorce themselves from this responsibility as well. However, having said that, the onus is not just on the politicians, NGOs, influencers and media industry should also needs to take responsibility and play its decisive role in hammering the issue over and over again through their respective mediums starting from today. Actions speak louder than words, so just sitting in a Primetime talk show and making a statement or pledge is not where the discussion should end, but a serious commitment, a factual timeline and resolute solution will guarantee a viewer’s decision on the candidacy during the election fever. Support audience as an International donor, private sectors will also be very important to galvanize through direct engagements with government stakeholders, Influencer audience should engage principal audience to increase motivation and commitment towards elections through social media, podcast, tools whereas Core audience should engage through direct advocacy supported by strategic tools. Yes, we will not only achieve Sustainable Development Goals but also the goals we set as a Pakistani for Pakistan.

Pakistan's Role to promote unity and co-op in muslim world

Arooj Fatima



Pakistan’s ideological basis as an Islamic country has shaped its relationships with the Muslim world. It holds a prominent position among nations due to being the only atomic power in the Islamic world. Pakistan plays a crucial role in resolving controversies among Islamic nations and addressing global issues

PAKISTAN is a country with Islam as its ideological basis. It came into existence based on the principle of a state. Consequently, it is known as the fortress of Islam. Pakistan is the only atomic power in the Islamic world, which gives it a prominent position among nations worldwide. Not only does Pakistan play an important role in resolving controversies among Islamic nations, but it also has a significant influence in solving global issues. Pakistan maintains religious, political, economic, and social relationships with Muslim countries. In this regard, the reawakening of the Islamic conference and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation is particularly noteworthy. Pakistan is actively working towards the mutual interests of the Islamic world. Considering the current situation in Afghanistan and to promote trade and economic relations with Central Asian states, Pakistan is implementing practical policies. International efforts for the reconstruction of infrastructure in western Afghanistan draw inspiration from Pakistan’s example. If Pakistan succeeds in creating unity among Islamic nations, the Muslim world will gain a significant position on the global stage. Pakistan’s relations with important nations in the Islamic world are outlined below, highlighting their political, social, economic, and military cooperation and development. First component is the basis of Pakistan’s relations with the Muslim world and why Pakistan attaches great importance to these relationships. Pakistan advocates for Pan-Islamism in the global system, emphasizing unity and cooperation among Muslim states to effectively project and protect their interests. Pakistan also supports Muslim causes at the international level, both in global forums and on bilateral platforms. The Muslims of the subcontinent have deep-rooted connections with Islamic countries based on religion. They have consistently demonstrated brotherhood and support on numerous

occasions. Even during the Pakistan movement, Muslims in India followed a policy of close bilateral relations with Muslim countries. Pan-Islamism and Islamic values were strong drivers behind the demand for a separate Muslim nation. After partition, Pakistan continued to prioritize close bilateral relations with Muslim nations.

Furthermore, Pakistan’s relations with the Muslim world on a country-to-country basis, or what we call bilateral levels, are also significant. The Constitution of Pakistan highlights the importance of maintaining and pursuing close and cordial relations with the Muslim world as one of its guiding principles. Therefore, it is constitutionally imperative for the government of Pakistan to maintain friendly relations with the Muslim world. It is not a recent development; even before independence, the Muslims of this region and the leadership of the independence movement supported the Muslim cause globally. After independence, this commitment became a permanent and integral part of Pakistan’s foreign policy. Now let’s move on to the second aspect of today’s lecture, which deals with multilateral relations. These are the relations of Pakistan with other countries involving several nations simultaneously. In the multilateral arena, we can discuss Pakistan’s support for the decolonization of the Muslim world. After gaining independence, Pakistan championed the cause of liberation for Muslim states under foreign control or domination. Pakistan provided moral support for the independence of Indonesia, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Sudan, and Eritrea. Notably, Pakistan played a significant role in supporting Algeria’s long freedom movement, and upon Algeria’s independence, Pakistan welcomed this positive change as another Muslim nation had achieved independence and sovereignty. Pakistan’s ideological basis as an Islamic country

has shaped its relationships with the Muslim world. It holds a prominent position among nations due to being the only atomic power in the Islamic world. Pakistan plays a crucial role in resolving controversies among Islamic nations and addressing global issues. The country has religious, political, economic, and social ties with Muslim countries, demonstrated through its participation in organizations like the Islamic Conference and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. Pakistan strives for mutual interests and unity among Islamic nations, and its cooperation with Central Asian states and efforts in reconstructing Afghanistan contribute to regional stability. By promoting unity among Islamic nations, Pakistan aims to elevate the Muslim world’s position on the global stage. Pakistan’s relations with Muslim countries are built on the foundations of Pan-Islamism, support for Muslim causes, and the deep-rooted association of the Muslims of the subcontinent with the Islamic world. Pakistan’s constitution emphasizes maintaining cordial relations with the Muslim world, both on a bilateral and multilateral level. It has consistently supported the liberation movements of Muslim countries and has provided moral support to nations seeking independence. Overall, Pakistan’s strong bonds with the Muslim world reflect its commitment to Islamic solidarity and its active role in shaping regional and international affairs. At the end, I thank to Respected Sir Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer for his valuable source of guidance to write this piece of opinion. He generously shared his time and knowledge, providing me with valuable feedback and constructive criticism that has significantly improved the quality of my work. His patience, encouragement, and willingness to engage in meaningful discussions have been truly inspiring.

– The writer is BS Human nutrition and Dietetics University of Okara

Briefs

UAE deposits \$1bn in State Bank: Dar

FROM PAGE 01

staff level agreement last month, securing much-needed funding for the cash-starved country. The agreement needs the board's approval before disbursing \$1.1 billion upfront and the rest of the money in instalments. "The meeting is happening today," Sharif said at an event in Islamabad. "I hope the board will approve the programme. This programme will help Pakistan's economy to stabilise." The nine-month short-term lifeline for Pakistan's ailing economy, which has been on the cusp of default, came after eight months of tough negotiations over fiscal discipline.

The \$350 billion South Asian economy faced a crippling balance of payments crisis, with its central bank's reserves barely enough to cover a month of controlled imports. The IMF board approval will also unlock other bilateral and multilateral external financing for Pakistan. Beijing rolled over \$5 billion of Pakistan's loan in the last three months, which Sharif said he believed played a major role in averting the debt default. Saudi Arabia deposited \$2 billion in support funds with the central bank on Tuesday. Dar added that the inflows from the UAE and Saudi Arabia would be reflected in the country's reserve data that will be released on Thursday. Fitch credit rating agency on Monday upgraded Pakistan's sovereign rating to CCC from CCC-, and the bailout has brought relief to investors in the country's stocks and bonds.

Elections to be held in October or November

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after 60 days when National Assembly completes its Constitutional tenure. However, if the government dissolves the lower house of parliament before its constitutional term ends then the polls date can be extended to 90 days of the dissolution.

"Our government's tenure will end on August 14 [...] the election commission will decide when the polls will take place - whether in October or November," he said during the Education Endowment Fund launch ceremony in Islamabad on Wednesday. "...whosoever forms the next government after elections, their top priority should be education so they can make this nation great," the prime minister said.

A budget of Rs3 billion, he said, had been earmarked this fiscal year for the endowment fund to equip the youth with education and make them "builders of the nation". All major ruling coalition partners - Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) - are seemingly on the same page for holding polls in line with the constitutional provision. Earlier this week, the PPP - a key coalition partner - proposed the federal government dissolve all the assemblies on August 8. Federal Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar had also categorically stated that there would be no extension in the term of the National Assembly.

Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah had said the assemblies could be dissolved earlier than the scheduled date of August 13 to "facilitate" the ECP. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has also demanded the elections take place at their stipulated time as it sees "its victory" in the upcoming polls.

The government is under pressure as Pakistan sees one of its worst economic crises, fueling inflation to record highs and the prices not coming down despite the authorities' claims of "providing relief to the masses". The PDM's popularity has gone down, according to recent surveys, and it faces an uphill task of wooing supporters to vote for them in the next elections.

Rwanda a great place to invest, HC Kimonyo says

Pakistan High Commissioner in Rwanda Naeem Khan said that there has been satisfactory progress in relations between Pakistan and Rwanda in recent times

DNA

ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner of Rwanda to Pakistan, James KIMONYO, has said that Rwanda is the best investment destination for Pakistan's business community with its peace, business-friendly environment and transparency. Rwanda can be a launching pad for Pakistan in the Central Africa region. This region is a vast market with 30 crore people and 8 countries. Rwanda has overcome the difficulties of the past to become a strong and fast developing country. The private sector has a big hand in the economic development of Rwanda. I invite the business community of Pakistan to invest in Rwanda and the embassy will provide full support in this regard. He expressed these views while talking to President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari on the occasion of his visit to Islamabad Chamber on Wednesday. On this occasion, Pakistani High Commissioner for Rwanda Naeem Khan and Defense Attaché of Rwanda were also present with him. Ambassador James KIMONYO said that Rwanda has pulled itself out of difficult situations in the last 20 years due to continuity in pol-



icies and strong leadership. Our country has left the conflicts and rebellions of the past far behind. Rwanda has now become the best place for investment, business and tourism not only in Africa but also in the whole world. He said that I invite the Pakistani business community to take advantage of the business-friendly environment of Rwanda. There are many possibilities to take the trade relations between Pakistan and Rwanda to new heights. Speaking on this occasion, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan

Zafar Bakhtawari said that the development of Rwanda in just 20 years after the long civil war is an example for Pakistan. At present, the volume of mutual trade between Pakistan and Rwanda is 34 million dollars, in which Pakistan's share is only 4 million dollars. This trade volume is far below the potential of both countries. It needs to be at least doubled in the next few years. He said that pharmaceuticals is a sector in which Pakistan has the most investment opportunities. Apart from this, sectors like sports goods, leather, textile and con-

struction can also play an important role in improving the trade relations between Pakistan and Rwanda. Pakistan's defense export sector has a unique position in the world. Rwanda should take advantage of it. Both Pakistan and Rwanda have faced security challenges in the past. Now both countries have come out of it. Both countries can benefit from each other's experiences. Pakistan High Commissioner in Rwanda Naeem Khan said that there has been satisfactory progress in the relations between Pakistan and Rwanda in recent

times. As Pakistan's High Commissioner, improving trade relations is one of my priorities. We have decided to build a display center in the building of the Pakistan High Commissioner in Kigali, which will house the products of Pakistan. He said that the High Commission will play its role for the B2B and one-to-one meetings of Pakistan's trade delegation. On this occasion, Vice President Chamber Engineer Azhar Islam said that it is necessary to continuously exchange business delegations to evaluate business opportunities between the two countries. In this regard, the diplomatic staff posted in both countries should play their role. Speaking on the occasion, Honorary Consul General of Rwanda in Pakistan Farooq Azam Khawaja said that Rwanda's business-friendly environment is the best in Africa. International organizations praise the transparency of Rwanda's system. Relations between Pakistan and Rwanda are improving. In the last 2 years alone, more than 200 people from different fields have migrated to Rwanda with their families. Secretary General UBG Zafar Bakhtawari, Tuseef Rehman, Humayun Kabir and others also participated in the meeting.

Shaheen Chowk Flyover inaugurated

FROM PAGE 01

Prime Minister has directed to complete it in 4 months. The project will benefit thousands of people especially students of National Defence University, Bahria and Air Universities. It will provide signal-free and smooth flow of traffic to the people.

Addressing the ceremony, the Prime Minister said federal and provincial governments are all endeavoring to stabilize the country. He said the coalition government along with the provincial government and Armed Forces of Pakistan, during the past one year, unveiled a project for revival of the economic development of the country and is successfully implementing it, which will steer Pakistan towards path of development again. He lauded the leaders of the allied parties for compromising their politics to save the State.

Fresh monsoon system to hit Pakistan

FORM PAGE 01

Kurram, Lakki Marwat, Kohat, Dera Ismail Khan, Bannu, Karak, Waziristan, Mianwali, Khusab, Sargodha, Hafizabad, Sheikhpura, Faisalabad, Jhang and Toba Tek Singh from July 13's evening and/or night to July 17 with occasional gaps.

Philipsen bags fourth stage win of Tour de France

MOULINS: Belgian Jasper Philipsen sprinted to his fourth stage win on this year's Tour de France with a powerful last burst on stage 11 from Clermont-Ferrand to Moulins. The Alpein sprinter edged Dutch rider Dylan Groenewegen to the line on Wednesday with Phil Bauhaus in third. There was no change in the overall standings between race favourites Jonas Vingegaard and Tadej Pogacar.

Philipsen has dominated the bunch sprints on the 2023 Tour although two of his three previous triumphs were garnered with some wobbly manoeuvres that had to be validated by the race commissaire. In the final sprint during his first win at Bayonne, he appeared to swerve in front of Wout Van Aert.

He then won out after a series of falls at the Nogaro motorbike circuit.

On the banks of the Garonne at Bordeaux for his third stage win he also appeared to cut off the path for Biniam Girmay, who waved his arms in anger before Philipsen was again cleared. Philipsen leads the sprint points race by 145 points, with Frenchman Bryan Coquard second on 178. Race leader Vingegaard and second-placed Pogacar remain separated by just 17 seconds, with Australian rider Jai Hindley in third at 2min 40sec. - APP

Information department to start talent hunt program

PESHAWAR: The KP Directorate General Information on Wednesday decided to start a talent hunt program under the auspices of Pakhtunkhwa Radio Peshawar, as per instructions of Minister Information Mian Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel and Secretary Information. It will give an opportunity to the students of various colleges and universities to test their artistic and creative skills.

In this regard, DG Information and Public Relations Baseer Ali Rehman, Station Director Pakhtunkhwa Radio Ghulam Hussain Ghazi, Producer and Deputy Director Nizamuddin, Transmission Engineer Sajid Mehmood, and other radio experts visited the Institute of Management Sciences in Hayatabad Peshawar and called on Prof Dr. Usman Ghani while Manager IT Nauman Raza and Manager Care Service Asad Ashfaq were also present on the occasion. In the meeting, it was unanimously decided to hold the talent hunt show on Tuesday July 18, 2023 morning. - APP



LONDON: Elena Rybakina in action during her match at Wimbledon 2023. - DNA

EU parliament backs biodiversity bill in close vote

STRASBOURG: The European Parliament on Wednesday narrowly backed a key biodiversity bill aimed at rewilding EU land and water habitats, overcoming a backlash by conservative lawmakers who said it would hurt farmers. The text endorsing the Nature Restoration Law passed with 336 votes in favour, 300 against and 13 abstentions, setting the scene for the parliament to negotiate a final law on the issue with EU member state governments. The parliament's biggest political grouping, the conservative European People's Party (EPP), had sought to shoot down the text, arguing that it would reduce EU food security and limit possibilities to build wind and hydroelectric energy facilities. But it was outnumbered by other lawmakers who feared defeat of the text would send a signal that Europe was backing away from its green goals. The conservative opposition to it, supported by extreme-right lawmakers, meant parts of the text were amended in ways that leftwing lawmakers said watered it down.

Much of the political fight around the text stemmed from electoral manoeuvres as parties positioned themselves ahead of EU elections to take place in June 2024. The Nature Restoration Act, initiated by the European Commission, aims to resuscitate degraded ecosystems by boosting forested areas, marine habitats and increasing connectivity between rivers. It notably seeks to grow populations of bees, birds and butterflies - especially on farmland, which would also be encouraged to bring back marsh- and peatlands previously drained. The EPP, which woos Europe's farmers as a key constituency, had called the bill a "bad proposal" and that farmers' concerns deserved to be listened to. - Agencies

BCCI Secretary denies reports of touring Pakistan

Reports regarding Shah's visit were attributed to PCB Management Committee Chairman Zaka Ashraf, who said that the BCCI official would come to Pakistan during or before the start of the Asia Cup

SPORTS DESK

NEW DELHI: Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) Secretary Jay Shah has denied the reports of accepting an invitation to visit Pakistan, terming it "plain miscommunication". Reports regarding Shah's visit were attributed to Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Management Committee Chairman Zaka Ashraf, who said that the BCCI official would come to Pakistan during or before the start of the Asia Cup. It was reported that Shah had accepted Ashraf's invitation during a meeting on the sidelines of the

chief executives' committee (CEC) meeting of the International Cricket Council (ICC)'s annual session in Durban, South Africa, on Tuesday. "I have not agreed to anything. This is just plain miscommunication. Probably done deliberately or mischievously. I'll not be making any visit," Jay Shah told News 18 Cricket.

Next on



Wednesday morning. Earlier, while talking to The News from Durban, PCB's Ashraf confirmed his two meetings with Indian officials on Tuesday. "First, it was three on three meeting with all leading officials present from both countries, who engaged in group meetings," said Ashraf.

"Later, it was one on one meeting. I discussed different options to resume cricketing ties with Jay Shah, who was also positive and accepted my invitation to tour Pakistan during or before the start of the Asia Cup. "He also invited me to take a trip to India during the World Cup, which I accepted. I told him that the Pakistani nation always respected their guests and welcomed them."

Ashraf said that both sets of meetings were fruitful as cricketing officials of both countries heard each other's points of view. The best thing is that both the cricketing boards have agreed to improve ties through future talks, added Ashraf.

Real Madrid under the scanner over irregularities

The club has refused to answer on a deal that was signed in the 2017-18 financial year with the private equity group called "Providence," which gave the club money in exchange for sale of future income streams, and deal has since been lengthened and increased in value

SPORTS DESK

MADRID: Spanish club Real Madrid are facing some serious questions over irregular financial activities after publishing their recent financial results, reported The Telegraph on Wednesday. As per Sam Wallace - a journalist at the Telegraph - the Los Blancos have declined to elaborate on why 20 per cent of the club's

costs are unaccounted for. In the most recent results, approximately €135 million in payments went into a subcategory of "other operating expenses," out of which €122 million remains unexplained. The club has refused to answer on a deal that was signed in the 2017-18 financial year with the private equity group called "Providence," which gave the club money in exchange for the sale of future income

streams, and the deal has since been lengthened and increased in value. However, the sums that the club earned from the unspecified percentage of the future sponsorship - the deal was renewed in 2019-20 - were titled as revenue rather than debt in Madrid's books. It must be noted that there is no guarantee or any kind of suggestion that indicates that the deal with Providence was illegal in

any way, but it is only questioned whether it is compliant with UEFA financial controls or not. The question that arises is whether clubs should be allowed to sell future revenues as marketing income rather than debt or not while we're living in a state-owned clubs era where clubs like Manchester City are under heavy scrutiny over breach of financial fair play rules. It has to be mentioned that the Spanish tax authorities

consider these kinds of payments as debt, not revenue. This irregularity has raised genuine questions in football as the Whites were one of the only few clubs who remained stable even in the Covid-19 era. Earlier, Real Madrid announced the signing of Turkish prodigy Arda Guler, closing the deal for a fee of €18m plus add-ons, with a sell-on clause also included. The Whites have already signed four players in the

summer transfer window. Fran Garcia, Brahim Diaz, Jude Bellingham and Joselu were the first four signings done by Los Blancos. Garcia was bought from Rayo Vallecano for €3m, Brahim returned from his three-year loan spell at AC Milan while Bellingham was bought for a record fee of €103m from the German club Borussia Dortmund and Joselu was brought on loan from Espanyol on a one-year deal.

Briefs

Pakistan committed to improve regional trade

ABBAS HASHMI

LAHORE: Punjab Governor Balighur Rehman has felicitated veteran business leader and Businessmen Panel (BMP) Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar on his election as the SAARC Chamber Vice President, expressing the hope that he would continue to exploit his potential for the promotion of regional trade in South Asia.

In a meeting with Mian Anjum Nisar, who met him here on Wednesday at Governor's House along with a delegation of top businessmen, the Punjab Governor said that Mian Anjum Nisar would utilize his best abilities to bring closer the SAARC member states besides promoting regional trade.

Economic situation of the country and the problems faced by the businessmen associated with various industries were discussed in the meeting.

The Punjab Governor said that Pakistan is fully committed to improve regional trade among SAARC countries to make South Asia a prosperous and economically integrated region, as it is one of the most dynamic regions in the world.

The Governor said that the role of business community is vital for the economic uplift and stability of the country. He appreciated the role being played by the private sector, particularly the Businessmen Panel, in the country's economic development.

The governor said that the strengthening of the country's economy and promotion of trade and industry were the priorities of the government. He said that the government has steered the country's economy out of the crisis by making sincere efforts. He said that the country's economy was showing the signs of stability which bodes well for the development and prosperity of the country.

The Punjab Governor further said that Mian Anjum Nisar's election as a vice president was a proof of his untiring efforts for the business community of the region, as the measures taken by him as a BMP Chairman and FPCCI President for the promotion of trade and industry speaks volumes of his business acumen.

He said the present government was fully committed to restoring peace and ensuring prosperity in the SAARC region and at the same time, Pakistan wants to maintain her foreign and trade relations with other countries on the basis of mutual respect.

Officials from China, Pakistan review CPEC achievements

BEIJING: Officials from China and Pakistan have reviewed the achievements of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) over the past decade.

At a meeting in Beijing of the two countries' Special Joint Cooperation Committee, they also looked to future opportunities, CGTN reported on Wednesday.

Promoting the high-quality development of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, or CPEC as it marks its 10th anniversary. Officials from China and Pakistan joined to discuss key achievements, major projects and future plans of the CPEC.

CONG LIANG Vice Chairman National Development and Reform Commission Cong Liang said, "In the past 10 years, China has been Pakistan's largest trading partner for eight consecutive years. In 2022, the bilateral trade volume between the two sides has reached 26.5 billion U.S. dollars. Some sections of Pakistan's first subway and first intelligent expressway have been completed and opened to traffic." Achievements in various sectors such as infrastructure, energy, and ports under the CPEC were also discussed. As a flagship project under the Belt and Road Initiative, the CPEC highlights energy, transportation, and industrial cooperation and had created over 230,000 jobs by the end of 2022.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif being briefed about Moonson Tree Plantation Drive 2023.—DNA

West offers Ukraine security commitments outside NATO

The Ukrainian leader to hold talks with NATO's 31 leaders at their summit in the Lithuanian capital Vilnius

VILNIUS: Western powers will offer Ukraine a package of long-term security commitments on Wednesday, after NATO dashed President Volodymyr Zelensky's hopes of a clear timeline for joining the alliance.

The Ukrainian leader was to hold talks with NATO's 31 leaders at their summit in the Lithuanian capital Vilnius, a day after blasting them for not moving faster to bring Ukraine into the fold. In an effort to reassure the Ukrainian leader, the G7 group of nations are expected to issue a declaration on how they will help Kyiv defeat Russia

and deter any new aggression in the years to come while it sits in NATO's waiting room. As he arrived for the meeting, Zelensky said he wanted to get on the "same page" with NATO over what were the conditions for joining the alliance.

"We will speak today and fight for these security guarantees for Ukraine on the way to NATO," he said before striding up the red carpet. The G7 announcement will provide a framework under which individual nations will later agree bilateral deals with Kyiv detailing the weapons they will give. The West wants to send a message to Rus-

sian President Vladimir Putin that he cannot keep the war grinding in the hope that international backing for Ukraine will eventually falter. "This multilateral declaration will send a significant signal to Russia that time is not on its side," White House advisor for European affairs Amanda Sloat said. US President Joe Biden has previously suggested a model for Ukraine similar to one under which Washington has committed to giving Israel \$3.8 billion in military aid per year over a decade.

Russia launched drone strikes on Kyiv for the second night in a row, the

Ukraine says shot down 11 Russian drones

KYIV: Ukraine said Wednesday it had shot down 11 Russian drones overnight in a second consecutive night of attacks on the capital Kyiv, as NATO leaders prepared to meet with President Volodymyr Zelensky in Vilnius. "A total of 15 kamikaze drones were involved in the strike. Eleven of them were destroyed in the areas of responsibility of the Centre and East air commands," Ukraine's air force said on social media. The statement did not say if other drones were shot down in other parts of Ukraine. Igor Taburets, governor of Cherkasy region in central Ukraine, said two people were hospitalised with burns after a drone hit a non-residential building, sparking a fire. "Cherkasy was on alert for more than three and a half hours," he said. Kyiv military authorities said there was also a drone attack on the capital but did not say how many drones were involved.—APP

head of the city's military administration said early Wednesday. All of the Iranian-made Shahed explosive

drones launched at Kyiv were "detected and destroyed," Sergiy Popko said on Telegram,

adding "there was no information about victims or destruction as of now."—Agencies

Business Forum held to promote investment



DNA

BEIJING: The Pakistan China Business Forum, aimed at exploring trade and investment opportunities in Pakistan, was held here at the Pakistan Embassy in Beijing to promote investment opportunities in Pakistan, China Economic Net reported. Speaking at the occasion, Professor Ahsan Iqbal, the Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, emphasized the need to work

together in order to share the benefits of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) not only between the two countries but also with the rest of the world. "CPEC has transformed Pakistan's energy landscape and has also played a crucial role in constructing hundreds and thousands of kilometers of roads, revolutionizing connectivity in the country. We must never forget that China extended its assistance to Pakistan during a critical time when we

faced an energy shortage," he added. The minister further highlighted that over \$25 billion worth of projects have been executed in Pakistan to help build its energy infrastructure, logistics infrastructure, information technology, and other ports in the past 10 years. During the business forum, the Commercial Counselor at the Pakistan Embassy in Beijing mentioned that following the visit of the Prime Minister of Pakistan to China in November

2022, protocols have been finalized for the export of cherries, boiled meat, milk and dairy products, chillies, and donkey skin, which opens up a market worth \$30 billion. He also stated that in the Gwadar Zone area, complete tax holidays of 23 years are available for establishing businesses, as well as complete tax holidays of 20 years for contractors and sub-contractors. Additionally, there is an exemption from customs duty for 40 years on the import of equipment and materials for the construction and operation of the free zone. Chinese companies were invited to attend the International Food & Agriculture Expo, scheduled for August 10th to 12th in Karachi. It was mentioned that over 100 registrations from major enterprises have already been received. The forum highlighted the advantages of relocating Chinese industries, particularly labor-intensive ones, to Pakistan in the short to medium term, taking advantage of the demographic dividend and market access for small.

JCC resolves to make next decade glorious

DNA

BEIJING: The 12th Special Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) meeting, held here, resolved to build upon the foundation laid in the last 10 years and make the next decade glorious. Professor Ahsan Iqbal, the Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, co-chaired the 12th (Special) JCC of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) alongside Mr. Cong Liang, the Vice Chairman of the National Development & Reform Commission (NDRC) of China, at the NDRC office. JCC also emphasized the significance of key projects in energy, IT, transportation, and infrastructure development. These projects are now operational and providing numerous opportunities for socio-economic development in Pakistan. Earlier, in his remarks at the meeting at JCC Ahsan Iqbal has said there is a massive potential for expanding Pakistan-China relations in the areas of agriculture, industry, technology and mining. Ahsan Iqbal noted that CPEC is a remarkable endeavour that symbolizes the deep-rooted ties between China and Pakistan. He recalled that this monumental project, initiated under the visionary leadership of President Xi and the then Prime Minister of Pakistan Nawaz Sharif, had been instrumental in transforming the economic landscape of the region. It has fostered connectivity, enhanced trade, and opened up new avenues for shared prosperity. The Minister emphasized that CPEC is the topmost national priority of the Pakistan-China All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership and these avenues provided an opportunity to consolidate successes and further enhance potential future cooperation. Ahsan Iqbal reiterated Pakistan's commitment to provide consistent policies and conducive environment for Chinese companies and citizens working in Pakistan, according to Gwadar Pro.

Russia under fire over killing of Putin opponent

NEWS DESK

LONDON: The European Court of Human Rights has strongly criticised Russia over its investigation into the murder of Putin opponent, Boris Nemtsov in 2015. The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) has condemned Russia for failing to conduct an adequate and effective investigation into the 2015 murder in Moscow of Boris Nemtsov, one of Vladimir Putin's main opponents. Nemtsov was shot four times at close range on a bridge near to the Kremlin on 27 February 2015. The case was brought before the court by his daughter Zhanna. The Court, on 11 July, found the Russian authorities did not adequately investigate the identity of the persons who had organised and ordered the assassination. Nor did they examine the allegations of political motivation or involvement of State actors. Five suspects were arrested after the murder and a sixth was killed while being questioned. Following their trial in July 2017, these five men from the republics of Chechnya and Ingushetia, in the Russian Caucasus, were sentenced to between 11 and 20 years in prison for the murder. One of the suspects had claimed the murder was a reaction to Mr Nemtsov's support for the publication of cartoons of Mohammed in the French satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo, before retracting his statement, explaining that he had given this version under duress. However, Boris Nemtsov's family condemned what it called the "total fiasco" on the part of the Russian justice system, which failed to identify the true instigator of the murder.

Iran and Kenya leaders vow to deepen ties

DNA

NAIROBI: The leaders of Iran and Kenya pledged to strengthen ties as their governments signed a raft of trade agreements Wednesday during Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi's maiden visit to the East African nation. The visit comes as the Islamic republic tries to shore up diplomatic support to ease its international isolation, with Raisi also due to travel to Uganda and Zimbabwe this week on the first Africa tour by an Iranian leader in 11 years. In addition to meeting Kenyan President William Ruto, Raisi will head to Uganda later Wednesday for talks with his Ugandan counterpart Yoweri Museveni and see Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa on Thursday. Africa has emerged as a diplomatic battleground in recent months, with Russia and the West also trying to court support over Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, which has had a devastating economic impact on the continent, sending food prices soaring. Western powers have also sought to deepen trade ties with the continent, along with India and China, which has been on an infrastructure spending spree in Africa. Raisi described his visit to Kenya as "a turning point in the development of relations between (the) two countries".

Pakistan offers attractive investment incentives: Ahsan

BEIJING: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday said that Pakistan offers very attractive investment incentives and welcomes all investors especially Chinese businessmen to invest in Information Technology, agriculture, dairy farming, housing, mining and manufacturing sectors. The present government has taken several steps to put the country's economy back on track and look forward to a period of growth, he said while addressing the participants of the Pakistan China Business Forum titled Exploring Trade and Investment Opportunities in Pakistan. The forum was organized by the Embassy of Pakistan and supported by the National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) and Habib Bank Limited (HBL). He said that a special investment facilitation council has been set up to facilitate foreign investors and added, it is a one-window organization which has members from the federal government and provincial

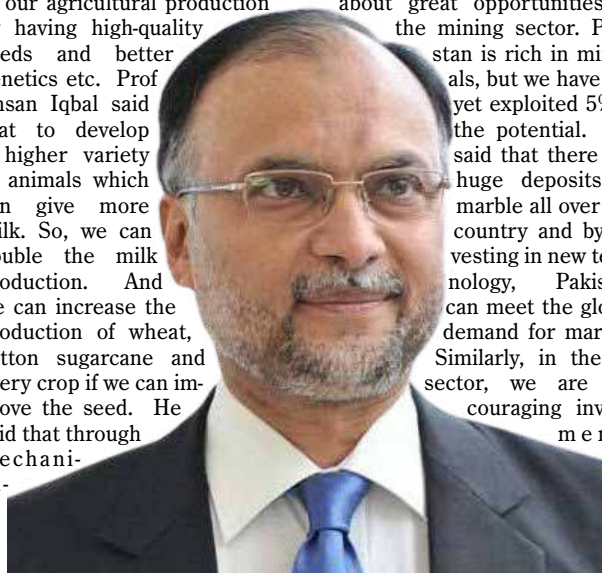
governments. Prof Ahsan Iqbal said that the government offers a great advantage in cost of production for those Chinese enterprises, which are looking at relocation to countries with low cost of production. We have over two 30 million population with two-thirds of the population less than 35 years old. So, a very young population, which has technical skills and education to provide support to those Chinese businesses which want to invest overseas to make more profits, he added. The minister said that there was a big opportunity for the Chinese big real estate companies to come and invest in Pakistan and develop housing projects on a public-private partnership basis. He said that there was also a good opportunity for many companies to develop manufacturing facilities in Pakistan to export to third countries. Many companies are also relocating to third countries to have better access to European markets and to United States markets. Through joint ventures in Paki-

stan, the Chinese company could export their products to third countries. He said that Pakistan was among the top 10 producers in agriculture production but our yield and productivity were very low. So, we need technology and help to improve the productivity of our agricultural production by having high-quality seeds and better genetics etc. Prof Ahsan Iqbal said that to develop a higher variety of animals which can give more milk. So, we can double the milk production. And we can increase the production of wheat, cotton sugarcane and every crop if we can improve the seed. He said that through mechaniza-

tion, Pakistan can also increase agricultural production. The government is actively trying to promote renewable energy and solar energy and will welcome investments in Pakistan to increase solar energy production. He informed the investors about great opportunities in the mining sector. Pakistan is rich in minerals, but we have not yet exploited 5% of the potential. He said that there are huge deposits of marble all over the country and by investing in new technology, Pakistan can meet the global demand for marble. Similarly, in the IT sector, we are encouraging investments

because Pakistan has a young IT workforce. Huawei recently shifted its data research centre to Pakistan. So, the IT sector of China and big tech companies can take advantage of very economical IT resource which exists in Pakistan, he added. Terming the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as a new dimension of the economic relationship between the two friendly countries, he said that during the last 10 years, there are projects over \$25 billion worth have been executed in Pakistan to help Pakistan build its energy infrastructure. The projects include infrastructure development, power generation units and Gwadar port, he added. He said that the CPEC project was not only beneficial for the future of Pakistan but it also for the future of the region and for the future of China. Welcoming the distinguished guests, Commercial Counselor, Ghulam Qadir briefed them about the recent development in Pakistan particularly the government's steps to attract foreign direct investment in the country.

He asked the Chinese investors to take advantage of attractive policies and invest in various sectors and set up industrial units in the special economic zones. He informed that Chinese companies could export their products back to China and to third countries and take advantage of incentives in this regard. Ghulam Qadir said that Gwadar port enjoys a complete tax holiday for 23 years and exemption from customs duty for 40 years on the import of equipment and material for the construction and operation of free zones. Vice President and Chief Representative of National Bank of Pakistan, Sheikh Muhammad Shariq briefed the audience about the role of his bank to facilitate Chinese companies which intend to do business in Pakistan. Ms Cheng Wei, County Manager of Habib Bank Limited also spoke on the occasion and informed the participant about different facilities offered by her bank to the potential investors.—APP



Briefs

Ukraine foreign minister likely to visit Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmitry Koliba will make an emergency visit to Pakistan this week, media reported on Wednesday. Sources said that the Ukrainian FM is likely to visit Pakistan during the next three days and meet FM Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari. The two will discuss the food crisis in Ukraine after the Russia-led war. Meanwhile, government officials say that Pakistan wants an end to the Russian-Ukrainian war and a peaceful resolution of the conflict. It may be noted that Islamabad maintains a neutral stance on the Russia-Ukraine conflict as it has expressed concerns over the humanitarian crisis in the war-torn country but never openly condemns Russia. Pakistan has multiple times abstained from voting on the United Nations against Russia, seeking support for the call for the withdrawal of troops from Ukraine. Last year, FM Bilawal reiterated Pakistan's neutrality on the Russia-Ukraine conflict, saying that Islamabad was not taking sides.

Dar seeks roadmap for airport outsourcing

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar here on Wednesday sought roadmap with timelines to move forward for the outsourcing of first airport to improve service delivery and match best international aviation practices in Pakistan. The minister was chairing a meeting of the Steering Committee to oversee the outsourcing of airports' operations, according to a press statement issued by the Finance Ministry. The International Finance Corporation, the transaction advisor, briefed the meeting with the latest status and progress on the matter, the statement added. Among others, the meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Aviation and Railways, Khawaja Saad Rafique; SAPM on Finance, Tariq Bajwa; SAPM on Government Effectiveness, Dr. Muhammad Jehanzeb Khan; Aviation authorities, IFC team and senior officers from Finance Division. - APP

Dasu bus attack 'mastermind' killed in Afghanistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) terrorist Muhammad Tariq Rafiq, believed to be responsible for the 2021 Dasu attack, has been killed in Afghanistan's Kunar. The death of Tariq was announced by Radio Pakistan on Wednesday. Tariq, who is a member of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, is the main brains behind the suicide bombing that killed nine 13 people including Chinese workers near Dasu hydropower plant in the Upper Kohistan district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on July 14, 2021.

It is being reported that Rafiq, also known as Buton Kharab, was killed near Pach Dara, Kunar Province, Afghanistan. At least three Pakistani employees and 10 Chinese engineers were on board the bus when it crashed into a deep ravine following an explosion. They were headed to the Dasu Hydro Power Project construction site. The suicide explosion that murdered 13 persons, mainly Chinese labourers, near the Dasu hydropower project in the Upper Kohistan district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on July 14, 2021, was planned mainly by Tariq, a TTP member. According to the Foreign Office, the network involved in the terrorist attack was supported and facilitated by RAW-NDS nexus in Afghanistan.

Pak gives shut-up call to Israel over rights issue

The minister during a news conference here said, Israel's statement on human rights situation in Pakistan was to overshadow the May 9 culprits, who had been trying to bring country to doom since they came into power after elections 2018

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Power Engineer Khurram Dastgir Khan on Wednesday said the people of Pakistan would bring the May 9 violence culprits to justice and teach them a lesson in the General Elections through voting. The minister during a news conference here said, Israel's statement on human rights situation in Pakistan was to overshadow the May 9 culprits, who had been trying to bring the country to doom since they came into power after the elections 2018. Khan said the Foreign office had strongly

and aptly condemned Israel's statement on human rights situation in Pakistan. "Pakistan has never recognized Israel and it can be seen on Pakistan's passport as through it a Pakistani can travel to all countries but not Israel. We have showed solidarity with our Palestinian brothers and sisters," he said. He was of the view that after the 2018 General Elections, voices were being echoed to recognize Israel and this came from the same political party (Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf PTI) which was involved in the horrific incidents. "We can easily see who benefitted from May 9 incidents and who suffered loss. A sickening campaign was run against

the Pakistan Army and Martyrs on social media. Same type of drive was run against the Martyrs when a Pakistan Army helicopter was crashed during flood response," he said. Dastgir said everyone clearly knew who was separating and destroying the country and was involved in de-seating Former Primer Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. "They (PTI) were involved in the bargain deal on the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK). When India took over Kashmir all what the then government did was a 1:30 minute silence on Friday," he said. He said as to safeguard foreign involvement in the country was necessary to

identify and bar those involved in destabilizing the country. "It was the PTI's tenure in which Pakistanis were allowed to travel to Israel," he added. Dastgir said PTI was involved in attack on Radio Pakistan in Peshawar and also back in 2014 on the building of Pakistan Television. "PTI asked people to burn electricity bills in 2014 and told overseas Pakistanis to send money through hundi and then civil disobedience. They gave statements for perpetrating disturbance in the ranks of Pakistan Army as well," he said. He said the people of Pakistan would elect a government who would take them out of challenges and help Pakistan flourish and prosper.



VILNIUS: Leaders of G7 countries pose for a photo along with the Ukraine President. - DNA

10 of a family burnt alive in Lahore house blaze

ABBAS HASHMI

LAHORE: At least 10 members of a family were killed when their house inside Bhati Gate caught fire in the wee hours of Wednesday. According to initial reports, a fire broke out in the house in Mohallah Samian in Bhati Gate area due to a short-circuit. Ten members of the ill-fated family including women and children were burnt alive. Rescue officials confirmed that the fire broke out due to an explosion in fridge's compressor. They said the house had no ventilation to let the smoke out. Teams of fire-fighters and Rescue 1122 reached the spot and brought the fire under control after some time. The rescue teams shifted the dead bodies to a hospital. Some of the deceased were identified as Adil Hussain, Saira Bano, Farzana, Amber, Ghazal, Fatima, while the identification of the remaining was underway. Police said that the bodies of the deceased will be handed over to the heirs after completion of identification and medico-legal formalities. Meanwhile, the rescue team said that the cooling process of the burnt building was underway. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed "deep sorrow and grief" over the incident and "prayed for the departed souls". Meanwhile, Punjab's interim chief minister Mohsin Naqvi has taken notice of the matter and sought a report from the Lahore commissioner on it. He ordered a comprehensive investigation into the matter and offered his condolences to the heirs of the deceased family. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the loss of lives in a tragic house blaze incident.

UN body approves Pakistan-led motion on religious hatred

In his address via video link, FM Bilawal called upon the world to stand united against hatred, discrimination, intolerance

NEW YORK: The 47-member United Nations Human Rights Council on Wednesday approved a Pakistan-backed resolution on religious hatred in the wake of the burning of the Holy Quran in Sweden. Major Western powers - the United States, European Union, and the United Kingdom - opposed the resolution, claiming it was against their views on human rights and freedom of expression. Pakistan had moved the resolution titled "countering religious hatred constituting incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence" after a man in Sweden burned pages of the holy book, triggering a diplomatic backlash across the Muslim world. As many as 28 countries - including China, India, South Africa, and Ukraine - voted in favour, 12 voted against, and seven countries abstained. Among countries other than the UK and the US, Belgium, Costa Rica, Czechia, Finland, France, Germany, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monte Negro, and Romania voted against the resolution. Pakistan's resolution condemns all manifestations of religious hatred, including "public and premeditated acts of desecration of the Holy Quran", and underscores the need to hold those responsible to account. It urges states to adopt laws to "address, prevent and prosecute acts and advocacy of religious hatred that constitute incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence". It also wants the UN rights chief Volker Turk to identify gaps in countries' laws in light of the Quran burning debate.

In his address via video link to the body on Tuesday, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari called upon the world to stand united against hatred, discrimination, intolerance, and promote mutual respect, understanding and tolerance. Bilawal said unfortunately, deliberate desecration of the Holy Quran had continued under government sanction and impunity. "We must see this incitement to hatred, discrimination and attempts to provoke violence. We must join hands to condemn it. We must isolate those who stoke hatred," he said. "It is important to understand the deep hurt that at public and premeditated act of Quran's desecration causes to Muslims," he remarked. Terming the desecration of the Holy Quran as an attack on the Muslim faith, FM Bilawal said the call in the draft text presented before the council for prevention and accountability was reasonable and necessary. - Agencies

USAID supports Pakistan's climate research coordination

ISLAMABAD: The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through its Higher Education System Strengthening Activity organized a workshop on climate resilience research coordination. This forum aims to advance the capability of researchers to co-produce science-to-action interdisciplinary research, education and workforce development that improves climate adaptation and resilience in Pakistan. The inauguration session of this 3-day workshop was chaired by Mr. Yohannes Araya, Deputy Mission Director USAID/Pakistan. Ms. Asima Rehman,

Acting Director Education, USAID/Pakistan, Dr. Michael Barber, University of Utah, Dr. Steve Burian, University of Alabama, Ms. Nadia Rehman, Member Planning Commission, and Mr. Nisar Memon, Water Environment Forum were amongst the senior officials present at the session. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Michael Barber emphasized the importance of academia to tackle the climate crisis. "Pakistan is particularly vulnerable to climate change, being amongst the top 10 most impacted countries. Therefore, the USAID's project is very pleased to kickstart this research coordination network on climate change to support Pakistani faculty researchers to do more applied research and collaborate with peers locally as well as globally to arrive at locally relevant innovative solutions that will make Pakistan more climate resilient," he said. Pakistan's higher education sector can take a leadership role in catalyzing teams and ideas to help communities adapt and build resilience through teaching, research, and local community service. USAID/Pakistan's Deputy Mission Director, Mr. Yohannes Araya announced, "We are working with partner countries including Pakistan to implement emissions reduction measures, transition to renewable energy, and build resilience against the impacts of climate change." - Agencies

'We're not Amazon': UK tells Ukraine to be grateful

Ben Wallace says west would like to see gratitude for help, as Zelenskiy complains over caution on Nato membership

NEWS DESK

VILNIUS: The British defence secretary, Ben Wallace, has suggested Ukraine needs to put more emphasis on thanking the west for its assistance after Volodymyr Zelenskiy's complaints on Tuesday that his country had not been issued a firm timetable or set of conditions for joining Nato. "Whether we like it or not, people want to see a bit of gratitude," Wallace said at a briefing in the margins of the Nato summit in the Lithuanian capital, Vilnius, when asked about the Ukrainian president's comments that it was "absurd" for Kyiv to be told it would be welcome in the alliance but not given a date or exact conditions. "Sometimes you are asking countries to give up their own stocks [of weapons]," Wallace said. "Sometimes you have to persuade lawmakers on the [Capitol] Hill in America." The US national security adviser, Jake Sullivan, told a public forum at the summit he

believed "the American people do deserve a degree of gratitude from the United States government for their willingness to step up and from the rest of the world as well". He said: "The United States of America has stepped up to provide an enormous amount of capacity to help ensure that Ukraine's brave soldiers have the ammunition, air defence, the infantry, fighting vehicles, the mine clearing equipment and so much else to be able to effectively defend against Russia's onslaught and to take territory back as well." Zelenskiy, speaking in Vilnius on Wednesday, said it was "understandable that Ukraine cannot join Nato when at war" but it would have been ideal if there had been

an invitation for Kyiv to join the alliance. He welcomed the results of the Nato summit, in particular the recognition that Ukraine did not need to follow a membership action plan, as well as the positive news on defence packages announced during the summit, but warned that, in the face of Russian invasion, this would be no substitute for eventual Nato membership. Wallace revealed at the briefing that he had travelled to Ukraine last year to be presented with a shopping list of weapons. "You know, we're not Amazon," he said. "I told them that last year, when I drove 11 hours to be given a list." But he said he understood Zelenskiy was speaking to his own public and that, despite

his complaint on Tuesday, the final summit deal was a good one for Ukraine. There was an acceptance that "Ukraine belongs at Nato" and that amounted to an effective invitation for membership once the conflict had died down. Britain, the US and global allies were due to unveil new security assurances for Ukraine on Wednesday. A declaration by the G7 industrialised countries "will set out how allies will support Ukraine over the coming years to end the war and deter and respond to any future attack", a British government statement said. In practice, this would come as bilateral agreements with Kyiv on long-term military and financial aid to keep Ukraine's army and economy running. A White House official said the US would start such talks with Kyiv soon. This was enough to draw a furious condemnation from the Kremlin, but not sufficient for Zelenskiy, who came to the Lithuanian capital seeking an invitation and clear timetable for Ukraine to join the alliance.



NDMA for protective measures amid flood forecast

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Wednesday issued an advisory alert for the provincial departments to ensure proper protective measures amid medium to high-level flood forecast in River Sutlej. According to the NDMA, during the next 24-48 hours, a medium to high level of flood was expected in Ganda Singhwala in the area along River Sutlej, and adjoining low-lying areas may come under the influence of the possible impacts. Moreover, it said there was a possibility of heavy rain with strong winds, and thunderstorms in different cities of the country. There would be a risk of floods in low-lying areas and landslides in the mountainous areas, strong winds and thunderstorms can damage weak and dilapidated power poles, solar panels, billboards, tall trees or structures under construction, it said. The safety measures included that the district administration should ensure the provision of emergency personnel and machinery including dewatering pumps in flood-prone areas, to maintain the flow of traffic, the administration should ensure a parallel traffic plan during drainage operation from underpasses and low roads, ensure the completion of stock taking by the concerned district administration. - APP

Ali Nawaz Awan vows brutalities could not dampen courage

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Additional Secretary General and PTI Islamabad Region President Ali Nawaz Awan fired a broadside at Islamabad police for expressing their ignorance before the court about his younger brother Umar Nawaz Awan's whereabouts who was kidnapped from federal capital in front of his little children. PTI Islamabad Region President said that Islamabad Police crossed all limits of barbarity to kidnap his little children in front of his little daughters who were yet to come out of the shock. He said that the little souls suffered the shock because their father was brutally treated their presence. Ali Awan said that the IG Islamabad and the district administration submitted false reports to the IHC expressing ignorance about Umar Nawaz Awan's whereabouts. PTI senior leader raised question as to why Umar Awan was abducted and why his house was attacked repeatedly, adding that his house was smashed and his mother and sister were harassed, besides arresting his private secretary. - DNA

Toshakhana case: Judge angry at Khan's absence

DNA

ISLAMABAD: An additional district and sessions judge on Wednesday expressed his anger at the PTI chairman's absence in the Toshakhana case hearings, noting that he had appeared once before the court during the seven-month-long trial. Additional District and Sessions Judge (ADSJ) Humayun Dilwar became angry as the hearing of the reference restarted a week after the court ruled that the case filed by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) against the PTI chairman was maintainable. The PTI chief had challenged the sessions court's decision in the Islamabad High Court (IHC) yesterday, arguing that the ECP did not follow the prescribed procedure in filing the complaint and requested the court to set aside the sessions court decision. His counsel Niazullah Niazi informed the court that his client had challenged the sessions court's July 8 verdict in the IHC, and the hearing for the plea was scheduled for today. The judge angrily asked where the suspect was. Niazi stated that he wanted to file a plea for his client's exemption from appearing in court and requested a two-day adjournment of the hearing.

ASEAN chair urges solution to Myanmar crisis

JAKARTA: ASEAN chair Indonesia on Wednesday urged a political solution to the Myanmar crisis at regional talks where Thailand's envoy announced he met the country's deposed democratic leader Aung San Suu Kyi last week. Myanmar has been ravaged by deadly violence since a military coup ousted Suu Kyi's government more than two years ago, unleashing a bloody crackdown on dissent. The 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations has long been decried as a toothless talking shop, and it remains split over diplomatic attempts to resolve the crisis as it tries to form a united position on the junta-run country. "Only a political solution will lead to a durable peace," Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi told ASEAN counterparts in her opening remarks on the second day of talks in Jakarta. - APP